

The Basildon Local Plan Regulation 19 public consultation closed on December 17th. Responses have been submitted to Basildon Council on behalf of BDRA by our professional planning consultants, comprising a set of general planning representations, and also a specific road traffic representation, backed up by a very comprehensive report from our specialist traffic consultant. The Billericay Action Group Committee will also be submitting its own detailed response. The BDRA response is submitted on behalf of 4,435 households, which represents an estimated 10,600 people. The BAG response will be submitted on behalf of about 900 email subscribers plus about 4,400 members of the Facebook group. We believe that Billericay Town Council has submitted a response, and also has serious concerns about the potential impact of this housing plan on Billericay. We should find out in due course from Basildon Council how many responses were received.

Thanks to all BDRA members who have supported this campaign. We are aware that the consultation forms were complicated and time consuming. We are not expecting many responses to be declared inadmissible and thus rejected, but if anyone does experience that without a good reason then please let us know.

Thanks also to all the people who volunteered to help in any way with this campaign, particularly the 200 people who organised and carried out a leaflet drop to every home in the town.

The next stage will be submission by Basildon Council of the Local Plan in its entirety, plus all the consultation responses, to the Planning Inspectorate. An Examination in Public (set of hearings) will follow, probably during summer 2019. Our planning consultant has applied to attend the hearings held in Billericay in order to represent the BDRA.

Everything that reasonably could be done to oppose this plan has been done, with large numbers of the public engaged; a widespread publicity campaign, including the leaflet delivered to every home in Billericay ; and a substantial volume of high quality information going to the Planning Inspectorate, evidencing how this rushed, ill considered, and wrong-thinking Local Plan is fundamentally unsound, breaching both the letter and the spirit of national planning policy, and flying in the face of the principle of sustainable development. A number of people have very worked hard over a long period to get to this stage, especially this year and in the last few weeks in particular.

We can now take a break from the Local Plan for a while, with probably nothing much to be done until arrangements for the Examination in Public begin to emerge next year. So let's all aim to put in to the back of our minds for a few weeks, and have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !