

Statement on Housing from Mims Davies MP

Good evening and I apologise that I cannot be here as I have to vote in the House of Commons this evening.

As many of you will know I have been campaigning hard in order to get Eastleigh Borough Council to get on with producing a Local Plan that represents the best deal for this area. I believe that the best protection possible for green space comes from three critical factors.

1. A Council that listens to residents and recognises the value of green spaces.
2. A Local Plan that uses open and fair methodology to assess the size and position of potential strategic housing sites.
3. Neighbourhood Plans that sit alongside the Local Plan to further bring spatial decisions to communities.

In Eastleigh we have none of these three key pillars for good local planning. Instead we have a Council with no Local Plan which is taking so long to deliver one that it looks like they will be contravening the Government's required timescale. I have repeatedly offered to the Council to help them produce the plan and to get them additional resources if they so wish. These offers have been rejected and all I have had from them is political game playing which benefits no one. We need a Local Plan and we need that plan to have the right options within it.

So from the strategic to the specific issue of Bishopstoke. I completely oppose Options B & C. I want to make that very clear. I have opposed those options in formal submissions to the Council, in meetings here and in Westminster. I have spoken to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government about how important the Ancient Woodland and this green space is both to our nearby communities but also in itself. Instead of bulldozing beautiful countryside we should be using brownfield land and ensuring that the infrastructure necessary for housing is in place.

I will continue to stand alongside Action against Destructive Development as we seek to get Options B & C thrown out. I urge everyone present here who has not done so already to get in contact with your local Councillor and tell them how that this green land must be saved from tarmacking over. A local MP has no direct power over the Local Plan making process but given the extremely concerning situation Eastleigh is in I will continue to campaign for the right plan for the Eastleigh constituency.

I would be delighted to hear from constituents with any queries. I can be contacted through email (mims.davies.mp@parliament.uk), by phone (02380406344) or by post (Mims Davies MP, House of Commons, SW1A 0AA).