

15/06/10

*Dear Ms Higby,*

*Thank you for the recent email regarding the new Government's change of policy regarding planning and the regulations for local councils to take a leading role in this.*

*I am afraid that I do not know all the background to all the information and the recent history of planning regulations, so would like to make a few very general points:*

- The area of Hawkwell, where I live, and Hockley, where I try to shop and use local facilities, such as dentist, doctor etc, is very heavily developed now, as compared to when I moved here in 1971.*
- The town has suffered due to heavy building density as regards traffic and road use. It is very difficult to travel with any degree of certainty of time of arrival, during the morning and evening rush hours. This adds to environmental concerns such as air quality, pollution etc.*
- The town and village centres should be developed cautiously, with regard to attracting new shoppers and developing interesting and creative businesses. This would keep more people shopping locally and relieve the traffic leaving the area to shop at larger, out-of-town outlets, as well as enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area. This may lead to enhanced house prices in the long run.*
- The work done by the local parish councils and tradesmen's associations has improved the appearance and the social opportunities for residents (flower planting, war memorial,*

*Christmas lights festivals etc. Could this be developed to enhance what is already a thriving community?*

- *Any development which uses green areas should be resisted, including traveller site permissions in the area. This would decrease the environmental assets of the area and (in the case of traveller site development) possibly add to the incidence of anti-social behaviour and crime. The local police and associated initiatives have done much to solve problems of anti-social behaviour in the area around Clements Hall in the last two years. This should be developed rather than endangered.*

*If the transfer of powers to Rochford District Council would lead to more local views along these lines being considered, then I am in favour. It remains to be seen how committed the Council is to ensuring that safety, environmental and aesthetic considerations are taken into account, such as those I have outlined in this letter. I hope these views are of some use in your response to the letter from Eric Pickles.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Mrs. Wendy M. Davies.*