

**PE1534/B**

Kate Birley Email of 16 December 2014

Dear Ms Peat,

PE01534: Equal Rights of Appeal in the Planning System

I write to endorse the need for reform in the planning system, potentially through the introduction of 3<sup>rd</sup> party appeals. Currently, the system appears heavily weighted in favour of commercial developers who can use a variety of tactics and resources to secure a favourable outcome, and often even hold out for a change in local authority policy or personnel. (e.g. Developments refused on Appeal are often built 5 or so years later.) In granting planning permission, local authorities may, for a variety of reasons, fail to apply the requirements of adopted policies. The cost of going to judicial review prohibits most objectors from using this redress, which is the only way to stop development. Consequently, inappropriate decisions are implemented, despite the efforts of objectors. Whilst ordinary member of the public can appeal to the Ombudsman, she has no powers to overturn a granted planning permission, and there is scant evidence that the planning system has been improved by her decisions. It is difficult to avoid the impression that there is asymmetry in the system. I believe that the planning system is rapidly haemorrhaging public confidence, and needs urgent reform.

Yours faithfully,

Kate Birley