
Dear Enfield Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation.

Whilst we support housing development and the ambition to meet Enfield's housing needs, we strongly object to the proposal to release Green Belt for housing or other purposes. We believe that there are alternatives available to meet housing targets and that the Green Belt is a precious resource that should be protected and preserved for future generations.

We feel that the green belt is essential for London and particularly Enfield. With Enfield's close proximity to the M25, A10 and North Circular Road, green spaces are important for improving air quality.

We are particularly concerned that Firs Farm and Church Street Recreation Ground have been identified as potential sites for a crematorium. These sites are far too close to existing residential areas and a school for such a use. Studies have been undertaken that highlight possible health risks associated with living near Crematoria⁽¹⁾

The importance of Firs Farm and Church Street Recreation Ground became all too evident during lockdown as a place for people to exercise and relax.

The Green Belt is too valuable to lose for all the many environmental, ecological, economic, public health and other reasons that have been identified. The Council has a duty of care for the Green Belt, in accordance with the London Plan and the NPPF, and any intentions to release parts of it should be taken out of the local plan.

Another concern is that Crews Hill has been singled out for release from the Green Belt. The garden centres and other businesses there provide employment and a resource for people from Enfield and beyond. Instead of losing Crews Hill for housing, its horticultural activities should be encouraged and enhanced so that it can once again be a hub for food and plant production. The Council could show leadership in supporting food and plant production because poorer local residents are increasingly dependent on food banks. It is shameful that the Council is not supporting its poorest residents through supporting food production.

Once these sites are gone they cannot be reclaimed.

Enfield's ambitious housing targets can be accommodated on previously-built land [brownfield]. We refer you to the report, Space to Build, Enfield which was recently published by CPRE-London, Enfield RoadWatch and The Enfield Society. It provides evidence of sites for at least 37,000 homes, mostly in areas that need regeneration and would benefit from public transport and other infrastructure upgrades.

The comments provided in this response to the consultation are our own views.

