
General

- Fulfilling a legal obligation to put a Local Plan together is unavoidable but if you really want support for it from local residents, you need to re-shape it. A flier from the Council Leader summarises the current incoherent baggy monster of 400+ pages rather too simplistically. What the lay person would welcome is a clear succinct Plan, maybe of 20 pages max., that sets out the rationale for the proposals and the relevant priorities, strategies and policies. A handy version of the Plan will be easier to promote and to refer to over the coming years. A professional writer should be engaged to purge the current text of the repetitive use of consultants' and developers' leaden vocabulary - how much credence do these hackneyed terms "vibrant"/"exciting"/ "beautiful"/"high quality design" carry when trotted out time and again?
- Moreover, I question whether a planning authority, ostensibly a body with objective legal responsibilities, should bandy about such subjective, often meretricious, terms so freely.

Priorities

- The document does identify Enfield's own priorities but they deserve greater prominence. Of course, you have to dance to the London Plan's tune, especially on housing, but Enfield's Local Plan has to be more than a developers' charter. Some key priorities are:
- (a) Combatting the climate emergency - the top overarching priority that will be with us for the duration of the Local Plan - and beyond. You need to win over local people to meet the challenge. It can't be reduced to a set of add-on considerations that projects have to take into account. Taking a hard revisionist look at the North London Waste Plan might also be pertinent.
- (b) Eastern Enfield - the plan refers to the imbalances between the East and the West of the Borough but this longstanding feature is not just one problem among many. A real concentration of effort and resources is required to secure a decisive resolution of the chronic structural condition of the Eastern half of the Borough. The glittering prospects for Chase Park look to lie some way ahead, but such a development - which anyway some will find hard to swallow as a bite into the green belt - should be well down the queue, behind the manifest needs of the Eastern wards in terms of employment, housing, air quality and wider infrastructure provision.
- (c) Transport - the draft recognises Enfield's transportation deficiencies and their constraining impact on the Borough's development. Enfield is less a destination than a set of through-routes to other places, and so coherent cross-Borough schemes for improvement including traffic management and reduction of car-dependency are required. Clearly, close co-operation with neighbouring boroughs and transport agencies is needed in this field.
- Some significant ideas/proposals in the document look forward a long way - beyond 2039 - for their fulfilment. Unavoidably perhaps, aspiration over that time span gets higher but the credibility and likelihood of delivery gets thinner. Presentationally, a clearer distinction accordingly needs to be made between schemes that might come

to fruition within, say, the next ten years and those that are much longer-term. This information is buried in the various appendices of the draft Plan. In this context, a hard-headed appraisal is needed of whether the stalled Crossrail2 proposals will ever materialise and whether, in the light of potential changes in patterns of working prompted by the pandemic, new office accommodation in Enfield is warranted.

Delivery

- However many housing units eventually emerge out of this document, residents old and new will reasonably expect not just thousands of “little boxes” - affordable or not, in tall towers or not - but also the infrastructure that helps to make for well-supported communities.
- The experience of how LBE has implemented the North Circular Area Action Plan - or rather, has half-implemented it - engenders little confidence that promises of “nurturing” place-making on a larger scale will be fulfilled. Seven or more years on, the housing blocks are up (with more to come) but the NCAAP’s rhetoric has yielded nothing for a much increased population along the A406 by way of (e.g.) new local employment, community space, sport, cultural and medical facilities, public green/open spaces and retail outlets. An under-used, fragmented cycle path and increased volumes of vehicular traffic - with corresponding deterioration in air quality - complete this sorry picture.
- Let’s hope that a comparable fate does not await the various grand schemes trumpeted in the new Local Plan.