

Subject: Draft Local Plan - Site SA45 – Land between Camlet Way and Crescent West, Hadley Wood

I moved into Hadley Wood in 2002 at the age of 6 years old and have therefore lived here for almost two decades. My parents have also been members of the Hadley Wood Association for many years. Like so many others, I have such fond memories of the green spaces in Hadley Wood, particularly of walking my family dog in the fields behind Bartrams Lane. Many of my neighbours and other residents enjoy these spaces frequently as well. It cannot be stressed enough how much this development will negatively affect the charm of Hadley Wood. People choose to live in this area specifically because of its proximity to these green spaces and beautiful natural surroundings. I feel very strongly that the Green Belt protects the special character of Hadley Wood and therefore object to the proposed site allocation, which would allow the development of 160 homes on Green Belt land.

My principal reasons for objection are:

1. The Plan fails to develop/prioritise all brownfield sites

Brownfield sites do not appear to have been prioritised in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. As an example, why has the full capacity of the Meridian Water site not been included in the 20-year plan? Instead, the Council has chosen the easy option of building on our Green Belt with poor local connections and amenities.

2. Destroys a valued part of the Green Belt

The most recent Characterisation Study undertaken by Enfield Council refers to the area as “a special area of landscape character which is a major asset for the borough. It is of both landscape and historic significance”; and “The existing Green Belt boundary should be retained and protected, and future development and land use changes resisted”. Why then has it chosen to destroy a valued part of our Green Belt?

3. Increases flood risk in other parts of Hadley Wood

Parts of the land are in flood zone 3, and local sewers/flood defences are already insufficient, resulting in frequent flooding across Hadley Wood. The existing foul and surface water sewer infrastructure has not kept up with the pace of development.

4. Makes a significant contribution to the purposes and openness of the Green Belt

The Hadley Wood Heritage and Character Assessment notes that the site provides “important views” and the landscape “acts as a buffer separating Hadley Wood from other urban areas”. No account has been taken of the fact that the site forms part of the Hornbeam Hills Area of Special Character. It also ignores the fact that the area has significant historic value as it was where the Battle of Barnet took place in the 15th Century.

5. Wildlife and biodiversity would be harmed

Building over 11ha of fields for 160 homes is an inefficient use of valuable Green Belt land that serves an important purpose, and contradicts Enfield's green policies and the declaration by the Council of a Climate Emergency. The ecology of this unique area of rough grazing and wildlife habitat, a relic of the landscape of Enfield Chase, should be protected.

6. Wrong location for a sustainable development

This is not a sustainable site. It has poor public transport links with a PTAL 1a/b. The scheme would be wholly reliant on cars, as there are very limited local amenities, no local GP, no post office, no secondary school, an oversubscribed primary school and virtually no local employment.

7. Indiscriminate intensification of density within 800 metres of any station is flawed

The indiscriminate intensification of the density within 800 metres of the station is flawed as it fails to take account of the lack of amenities, poor local public transport, distance is measured as the crow flies, etc. The additional housing to be added between, behind and above existing homes does not represent sustainable development.

8. Too small for infrastructure investment

160 new homes do not warrant the investment needed to increase schools, healthcare services, shops, leisure facilities, etc. It should be noted that currently the roads and pavements are not maintained properly by the Council. Over the last 19 years, I have rarely noticed such maintenance works having been attended to. My nearest GP is on Station Road in Barnet which relies on travel by car.

9. Site is surrounded by Conservation Areas and Grade II listed buildings

The site is bordered and overlooked by the Hadley Wood Conservation Area, the Monken Hadley Conservation Area and Grade II listed buildings on Camlet Way. It would be impossible to build on that site without it adversely impacting the setting, character and appearance of those heritage assets.

10. The proposal is an opportunistic development rather than a strategic decision

The site was not on the list for development in the 2018 consultation document and was only added when the Duchy of Lancaster, as landowner, made it a condition of their support for the Local Plan. This is morally unacceptable and smells of "you scratch my back and I will scratch yours"!

11. The Site should not be classed as 'Available' and should not be included as an allocated site

The agricultural tenant's lease runs beyond the five-year threshold and this Green Belt site should not be included for development in 10+ years' time, as other brownfield locations will become available to replace these 160 homes within that timeframe.

12. The Council has not outlined the necessary 'exceptional circumstances'

The Council has not set out the necessary "exceptional circumstances" why this specific Green Belt site should be released for development for 160 homes out of the 25,000 homes they are seeking up to 2039.