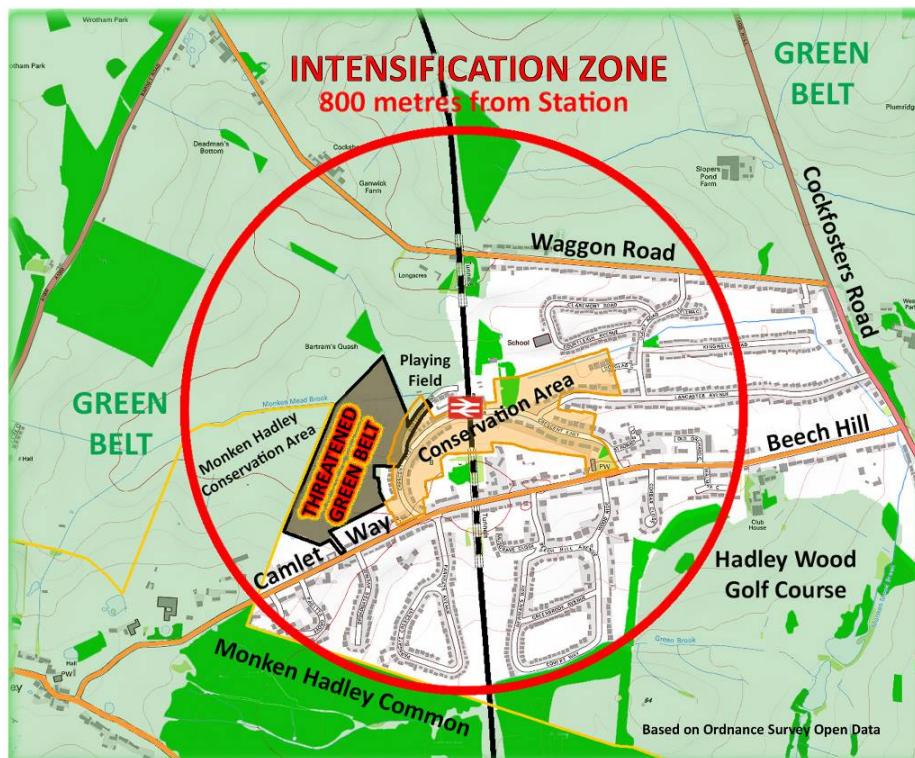


RESPONSE FROM HADLEY WOOD CONSERVATION AREA RESIDENTS

3 September 2021

We are writing as residents of the Hadley Wood Conservation Area to object to the proposals in the new Enfield Local Plan to create an Intensification Zone around Hadley Wood Station and to release 11.5 hectares of Green Belt for development as both are irreconcilable with the principles of the Conservation Area, the Green Belt and sustainability for future generations.

INTENSIFICATION AROUND HADLEY WOOD STATION



As this map shows the Hadley Wood Conservation Area straddles the railway in the centre of the proposed Intensification Zone and extends over 350 metres to the south-west and over 450 metres to the north-east. Any relaxation of the planning regulations regarding taller buildings and more intensive development not only within the Conservation Area but anywhere within the 800 metres radius from Hadley Wood Station would harm the character and ambience of the area and destroy the purpose for which the Conservation Area was established over thirty years ago.

Intensification cannot be applied within the Conservation Area and anywhere around it that would damage the integrity of the Conservation Area. In particular the heights of new buildings should be no higher than the rooflines of existing houses and shall be for residential occupation only.

High cost of protecting the Conservation Area

Owners and occupiers within the Conservation Area pay a high price for maintaining and making sympathetic alterations to their properties in compliance with the stringent planning regulations currently in force and expect the same regulations to be rigorously applied to any new development within the Conservation Area and around it that could damage the character of the area as described in the Characterisation Study.

Hadley Wood unsuitable for Intensification

Hadley Wood Station is identified on Figure 2.1 Key diagram for 'Intensification around transport nodes and town centres' but is not referred to in this context in any other part of the Enfield Local Plan. Hadley Wood is not a suitable site for Intensification for housing development as it fails three of the four criteria for selection and is centred over the Conservation Area that specifically precludes development that is not in keeping with the style of the historic architecture of the area.

Selection Criteria

a. Sites with good public transport accessibility (PTAL 3-6).

Hadley Wood is rated in the lowest accessibility category, PTAL 1a/b, because the train service is infrequent off-peak and at weekends, and there are just four return bus services to Barnet during the week and none on Sunday. Supermarket shopping involves car journeys of 2 miles to Barnet, 2.4 miles to Cockfosters, 2.9 miles to Potters Bar or 4.8 miles to Enfield.

b. Sites within 800 metres of a tube, rail station or the boundary of a major, district or town centre.

Hadley Wood has a rail station but access to town centres, shopping, medical services and other amenities is highly reliant on cars in this unsustainable location.

c. Sites with good local infrastructure e.g. local centre, local shopping parade, local schools and community facilities;

Medical services, post offices, supermarkets, bookshops and libraries, pubs and entertainment and state secondary schools are all more than two miles away and are only accessible by car. The only local primary school has a small catchment area within Hadley Wood and a long waiting list. There are no plans to improve local facilities.

d. Places with planned infrastructure improvements that will improve PTAL and walking/cycling accessibility over time.

There are no infrastructure and transport improvements listed in the new Enfield Local Plan. Minor improvements to the local infrastructure have failed to prevent houses from being repeatedly damaged by surface flooding over many years. Sewage periodically spills onto the rail station platform when the main sewer from Crescent West gets blocked, which happened most recently on 27 July 2021.

Walkability in Hadley Wood is in the lowest categories because of the lack of local services and facilities within walking distance and the disjointed network of residential roads in cul-de-sacs and loops off through roads that cannot be improved.

Conservation Area

The Conservation Area lies in the middle of the proposed Intensification Zone and is protected as a heritage asset with a consistent architectural style and a spacious leafy suburb of high quality, unsuitable as a site for intensification. Trees, some protected by Tree Preservation Orders, in the streets and in front and back gardens that rise above the rooftops are an intrinsic part of the character of the area and must not be destroyed.

Hadley Wood is not an appropriate site for intensification and should be removed from the Enfield Local Plan.

RELEASE OF GREEN BELT SITE SA45 FOR DEVELOPMENT



The grassland fields that Enfield Council proposes to release from the Green Belt for development overlap the Hadley Wood Conservation Area as indicated on this Google Earth image.

Site SA45 is sandwiched between the Hadley Wood Conservation Area and the Hadley Wood Association Open Space and playing field to the east, the Monken Hadley Conservation Area to the west, three listed buildings to the south and underlying Green Belt to the west, north and east that extends into Barnet and Hertsmere. Removing this site from the Green Belt would tear the heart out of the whole neighbourhood, destroy its integrity, cause visual damage, expose the five protected assets to urban development and threaten further harm to the rural landscape.

Whereas Hertsmere has applied a wider-than-district approach, the draft Enfield Plan stops abruptly at the Borough boundary and has ignored the contiguous expanse of Green Belt that extends for many miles from Enfield into Barnet and Hertsmere. Hertsmere could find no reason to release any part of the Green Belt in this area for development.

The National Planning Policy Framework, mirrored by the London Plan and London Borough of Enfield policies, states that green belt should only be released for development in exceptional circumstances. There are no exceptional circumstances to justify releasing this site.

The need for housing in the borough has been exaggerated and alternative sites, particularly brownfield sites, have not been properly investigated and prioritised. The Mayor of London, our local MP Bambos Charalambous, and our ward councillors, have all declared that release of this site cannot be justified.

The wide entrance proposed to access Site SA45 from Crescent West would blow a gaping hole in the hedge exposing the new build houses beside the Conservation Area, where meadows currently provide the foreground to a vista that extends to the Monken Hadley Conservation Area and the Green Belt in Barnet and Hertsmere, an idyllic rural landscape at the edge of the Metropolis. This view is highlighted in the Conservation Area Characterisation Study and stretches across the Monken Mead valley to Hadley Highstone, interrupted only by natural features such as grass, trees and hedges. Development between these two Conservation Areas would do irreversible harm by breaking the coherent link between them and destroying the natural landscape.



Historical and heritage context of Site SA45

The three fields that the Duchy of Lancaster has put forward for development have been owned by the Sovereign since 1399, and by Norman Barons and Saxon Lords of the Manor before that. The hedge along the north-west edge of the site marked the boundary between the Saxon Manors of Enfield and South Mimms and between the now ceremonial counties of Middlesex and Hertfordshire since the ninth century. This site is included by GLAAS in the Enfield Chase and Camlet Moat area of archaeological importance.

Before the Battle of Barnet in 1471 the Yorkist army marched through here in the night and tore down the palisade surrounding the deer park in Enfield Chase. Lancastrian cannonballs and arrows were fired in retaliation and an archaeological survey is needed to see if any of these still lie buried in these fields.

By the Act of Disenchantment in 1777, George III divided his entitlement to Enfield Chase into plots for sale as agricultural leases. The outer parts of the Chase were distributed to the surrounding parishes. Uniquely the parish of Monken Hadley resisted enclosure and has retained Monken Hadley Common as community space, which is shortly to be protected by a new Act of Parliament; a clear indication of the importance attached to securing the heritage and rural landscape of the Green Belt so close to London.

In 1882 the Duchy converted the agricultural leases around the new railway station, in what became Hadley Wood, into building leases, leading to the construction of the houses in the Conservation Area in a characteristic style. The land west of Crescent West, including the SA45 fields, was retained as an agricultural lease. After the building leases expired, the land around the station that had not been built on was sold by the Duchy to Enfield Council in 1944, facilitated by the Green Belt Act of 1938. This became the Open Space, including Bartrams Lane field and the tennis courts, and is currently leased to the Hadley Wood Association. The agricultural lease identified as SA45 is the only open land in Hadley Wood that remains in the freehold of the Duchy, and has been left as rough pasture, a peculiar relic of the historic Chase.

The Duchy has been the custodian of Enfield Chase for over seven centuries and landlord of many of the properties in Hadley Wood until quite recently. Restrictive covenants were imposed to prevent these properties being used for purposes that might be a nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to neighbours, and consent is required from the Chancellor of the Duchy to erect any building for which the Duchy charges fees. The construction of 160 houses would constitute nuisance, annoyance and disturbance to neighbours and the wider community. We would have expected the Duchy to consult with the local residents before putting forward these fields for development. We request that they now do so to find sustainable and permissible ways of using this Green Belt land to enable the local community and visitors to enjoy this priceless part of the countryside so close to London and almost surrounded by protected areas.

London's National Park City

Fig 3.9 Rural Enfield placemaking vision shows the London's National Park City (LNPC) map covering a large part of the old Enfield Chase and Hadley Wood Golf Course but excludes the Open Space to the west of the railway that is owned by Enfield Council and leased to the Hadley Wood Association and the fields owned by the Duchy that the Enfield Plan proposes to release from the Green Belt. These areas are both shown on the published LNPC map as open space. Releasing the Duchy fields for development would remove about three-quarters of this open space west of the railway and leave the remainder and the adjoining Green Belt in Barnet and Hertsmere severed and exposed to further development.

We are aware that the National Park City Foundation has complained to ELB that it has been misrepresented to justify releasing Green Belt for development as other areas are being improved under the LNPC plan.

All the land west of the railway should remain in the Green Belt in conformity with London's National Park City map. This would be compliant with Policy PL8 para 3.8.7. and the Blue and Green Strategy.



View across the Hadley Wood Association Open Space to the threatened fields in SA45

Restoration of Woodlands and Wetlands along Salmons Brook in Enfield Chase

Under ELB's Blue and Green Strategy the project to replant trees, excavate ponds and create wetlands along Salmons Brook is well advanced with grants of £748,000 from the Mayor of London and £425,000 from the Forestry Commission, and is being executed with the help of volunteers from the charity 'Thames 21'. The stated purpose is to improve the local environment by absorbing carbon emissions, reducing flooding, trapping agricultural pollutants, and providing more public access to the Chase. We ask whether these donors and volunteers were consulted before ELB proposed to release 11.5 hectares of grassland from the Green Belt in conflict with all these objectives, at a time when the effects of climate change are becoming visibly more destructive.

Instead of destroying a pivotal part of the Green Belt, ELB should grasp the opportunity to create a similar wildlife corridor along Monken Mead Brook with ponds, wetlands and leaky SUDS dams to improve the rural landscape, enhance the wildlife corridor, reduce the increasing risk of flooding downstream and improve public access.

Grassland Biodiversity

The three fields in SA45 have been protected as rough grazing for cattle and horses for many decades or longer, giving time for a unique biodiversity to develop. The hedgerows are largely self-seeded with native trees and vegetation. This has created a protected habitat for foxes, muntjak deer, buzzards, owls, small birds, bats, insects and recent arrivals such as red kites. 24 species of butterflies and 11 day-flying moths have been observed in the HWA meadows over the last 23 years, some coming every year and some but rarely. Destroying this habitat would do serious harm to wildlife and the visual character of the landscape.

Not only is it vital to retain grassland to act as a carbon sink to absorb pollution, excavating the site for development would release carbon stored in the soil into the atmosphere. With global warming, forests are becoming more susceptible to drought and wildfires that release huge quantities of carbon into the air, making the conservation of grasslands ever more important to achieve global carbon targets, capture rainwater to reduce flooding and erosion, and bring benefits for biodiversity conservation.

This site must continue to be protected within the Green Belt for future generations in perpetuity.

Bartrams Lane

The upper part of Bartrams Lane has been included in the SA45 site in error. The Duchy owns the freehold and there is a right of way along the lane granted by King George VI in 1951. The lane, verges and hedge are in the Conservation Area. Only the verge and hedge on the north side are in the Green Belt. All these features need to be protected.

Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Enfield Council has been in discussion with the Hadley Wood Neighbourhood Forum for over five years and is well aware that the draft plan seeks to protect the Green Belt and retain the verdant character of the whole residential area with views between houses to open countryside. The proposals to release SA45 from the Green Belt and to create an Intensification zone around Hadley Wood Station have been included in the Draft Local Plan without consultation with the Forum and in violation of the expressed aspirations of local residents and should be removed.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Hadley Wood Station is not an appropriate site for intensification as the Conservation Area lies in the middle of it and it fails to meet the criteria set by Enfield Council. It should be withdrawn from the draft local plan.
2. There are no exceptional circumstances to justify the proposal to release Site SA45 from the Green Belt for development. Nor will it contribute to sustainable development. It should be withdrawn from the draft local plan.

**Submitted on behalf of the Residents of the Hadley Wood Conservation Area
3 September 2021**

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