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Dear Strategic Planning & Design at Enfield Council,

My name is Holly Marquez and I have been a resident of Enfield Borough for the last 21 years at 37 Bromley Road, Edmonton, N18 1LF.

I am writing to communicate my personal objection to the draft policy DM BG16 in the Draft Enfield Local Plan which allocates Firs Farm Wetlands (Site ID SA59) as a site for burial and/or crematorium use. I call on the Council to remove all reference to Firs Farm Wetlands from Policy SP CL4.

I oppose this policy for several reasons, informed by personal experience as a resident as well as from my career in behaviour change:

1. I believe this is the wrong location for a crematorium/burial site. Beyond probable reductions in biodiversity as a consequence, this space is also central to the Wetlands, serving as an area for both local youth sport and community exercise. As such, using this space for the purposes outlined in DM BG16 will hinder these activities which will both impact on residents' health and fitness, as well as the green space available.
2. As a behavioural change researcher specialised in environmental behaviour, it is my belief that the use of this particular site for the purposes outlined in DM BG16 will have a measurable negative impact on local residents' behaviour and wellbeing. Far from being positioned in a secluded corner of the green space, this site selected serves as a central pathway for accessing the Wetlands and wider park area. The use of this space would be disruptive and may lead residents to avoid travelling through the park. This reduction in footfall is problematic, as both time in nature as well as regular exercise (widely seen in this green space) have been frequently associated with improved wellbeing and health markers.
3. Local traffic is likely to increase. Beyond increases in traffic due to crematorium use, the lack of bus routes along or nearby Firs Lane and the possible reduction in use of the central pathway of the park (as mentioned above) is likely to lead to increased congestion in the area as some residents may opt to drive rather than cross the park to the A10 for public transport. This has significant implications for emissions and air pollution targets.

Having grown up in Edmonton and attended Winchmore School for my secondary and sixth form education, I crossed the Firs Farm fields (now Wetlands) every day for seven years between 2008 - 2015. Having gone to University and returned to Enfield, I was delighted to see the redevelopment of this space as a Wetlands. The amount of local people who visit and enjoy this space is amazing, and we are fortunate to have it. Walking around the Wetlands route was and continues to be a rare oasis during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. It would be a shame for the brilliant progress made in this space - funded by Enfield Council - to be adversely affected.

I am in no doubt that further crematorium and burial sites are needed, but this site within

the Firs Farm Wetlands (Site ID SA59) is simply the wrong location.