
I am grateful for the opportunity to offer my views as part of the consultation exercise on the Local Plan for Enfield. Such plans are vitally important as they allow for long term strategic planning and act as a framework for assessing planning applications for the future. Additionally, and importantly, the Local Plan supports the Council in addressing critical challenges faced in terms of employment, transport, housing, our economy, amenities, health & social care and, most vital of all, how we can address the climate crisis.

I would add that I think it foolish that any single local authority might believe it is able to address some of these more fundamental challenges - these can only be truly addressed by working with and under the Mayor's guidance and with Government so that there is a strategic and holistic approach across all Councils in London, if not the Southeast and beyond.

I have been a resident of Enfield now for over 30 years and I have never been as shocked and angry at the threat posed by the draft development plan to large parts of the Borough's character and heritage. In particular, the blatant attack on the much-cherished Green Belt which has provided an essential and hard-fought for check against avaricious 'creep' of London across the southeast and local counties. That my authority is now proposing such development, under highly spurious claims, is bitterly disappointing to me and many residents who have been galvanized to action with the threat of such unfettered plans. Once you give the green light to developers, it will lead directly to continued 'bleed' of development beyond the planned area – just as happened in London as it grew and swallowed many villages and towns in the past – including Enfield Town itself.

There is no doubt that the Borough needs to provide **affordable** housing for residents, particularly those on the housing waiting list, but your plans will significantly advantage developers (like in Trent Park) who see this as prime land for small, medium and executive homes. This will not address our severe housing shortage.

As a Council, you have a direct responsibility to protect AGAINST such development and not be the cause of it.

In terms of development on the Green Belt and other similar locations within the Borough I am objecting to the following elements of the Plan:

- Policy SP PL 10, pages 80-87 and figure 3.11. In my case specifically that to the North of the A110 Enfield Road.
- Policy SP PL9 pages 77-80 and Concept Plan Figure 3.10.
- SA45, page 364.
- SA52, page 372.
- SA54, page 374.

My reasons for objecting are:

- The Green Belt, and other green spaces, should be protected – full stop, no argument. It is not acceptable for the Leader of the Council to be proposing to develop on “only 7% of

the Green Belt” as if this is a mere trifle. This is a huge part of the green belt – there is no ‘only’ about it. Does she not realise such actions will open the flood gates for future development? These lands provide vital natural environments to; help sustain a wide biodiversity, act as carbon sinks, as areas for amenity for residents and visitors (be that sports, walking, taking-in the view etc.), specific accessible areas to all whether able or less so, education to enable learning, physical and mental well-being – indeed many have relied on these spaces during the Covid pandemic. It is rather ironic that the Council’s own Heritage Group have been celebrating over the summer the great heritage the Borough has for growing food and that the LBE continues to promote the ‘greenness’ of our Borough!!! Much of this land should (and could in many cases) be providing valuable opportunities for sustainable solutions for food production.

- I would add to the above that the Mayor’s Office have been very clear to the LBE in respect of a previous Local Plan that they do not support, condone or see necessary development of the Green Belt. Specifically, they see no justification for any exceptional claims under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to do so.
- The Council has declared a Climate Emergency, yet the local plan will directly lead to concreting over valuable natural landscapes and, despite any ‘best intentions’ to limit car ownership as part of those plans, experience would suggest that this is completely unrealistic for many of the development areas you have identified and this will lead to increased vehicular and residential emitted pollution plus exacerbating already heavily trafficked roads – not just in the immediate area but beyond. As a specific example, the proposed development at Crews Hill, includes for building on swathes of land and the jargonistic ‘sustainable settlement’ description within the plan is a blatant attempt at ‘greenwashing’ and to obscure that fact. The Mayor’s Office has already noted in 2019 in relation to a previous iteration of the Local Plan that the capacity of the railway station and trains cannot cope with any increase in use (and if you think that is the case, Councillors and Officers should experience the overcrowded nature of those trains further down the line in our own Borough), that the area is poorly served by buses (indeed at least one local bus no longer goes to the station!) and that Enfield Town is too far away for a reasonable person to be expected to walk or cycle for daily needs.
- With its industrial past, there remain many other brown-field sites in the Borough that should be the focus for any new housing development. Meridian Water (once trumpeted by the Council as addressing all future housing needs in the Borough for the foreseeable future), has demonstrated how such land can be appropriately developed. The cynic in me wonders if executive homes on greenfield sites may lead to higher Council Tax income and benefits to some local developers which may be attractive to some vested interests.
- The housing demand itself and the numbers associated with them, are now highly conjectural. Following Brexit, the pandemic and other factors, there is some doubt in the Mayor’s Office that the scale of growth in demand will be as previously thought. Thus, the figures the plan refers to may well be significant over-estimates and more research work is needed to justify the scale of growth expected. In addition, we already have major challenges in providing for schools, GP surgeries and other important infrastructural needs. Any development without such provision will lead to unacceptable stresses on an already stretched system.
- The area around Enfield Chase is rightly lauded by many as being of significant historical value. The heritage of the Chase area is profound and a highly valuable asset. It has been an important area for centuries, in relative terms only recently being more accessible to the general public as opposed to royalty or the aristocracy and their servants. One only has to witness the joy many gain from accessing these areas to see that amenity value. Our Councillors should be using every lever available to protect and, yes, enhance this legacy. Or they will be directly responsible for the destruction of centuries of heritage in a few, short years and their legacy will be a shameful one.

I would also like to enter my objections to the tall building policies on pages 156-160, Figure 7.3, Figure 7.4 and Policy DE6 and SA2. Even with the proposed reduced maximum heights, such tall buildings will dramatically impact negatively on the visual amenity and local environments and, in some cases, directly onto adjacent conservation areas. The relevance for tall buildings in a suburban environment is now highly questionable when other lower-level developments can provide the same levels of occupancy. It is simply lazy planning and architecture.

I would also like to object to SA31 page 350, SA43 page 362, and SA42 page 361 all of which involve building on existing car parks, many at stations. Perhaps this is an attempt to reduce cars

entering the Borough in the first place. But that logic is flawed if there are no 'realistic' alternatives. People are moving out to the edges of the Borough and beyond but without adequate alternatives many drive. The 'choice' of where to send children to school and the gradual removal of local schooling opportunities for many has exacerbated this but it is a real issue. Studies have shown just how impactful school related traffic is. How can it be of value to remove car parking at stations when we are trying to encourage those drivers to use that same public transport, particularly at sites on the edge of the Borough? The logic for that is just not clear. And what about businesses that rely on people having access to those parking spaces to use their services and shops? This does not seem to be a logical or well-thought through aspect of the local plan.

I would also like to object specifically to those elements in Policy SP PL9 regarding Crews Hill Golf course. Following the Council's heavy handed approach, with little factual justification nor consultation, for the closure of Whitewebbs Golf Course and, effectively, as a result on the verge of passing on large chunks of publicly owned land to a business, I am beginning to wonder if there is some golf-course witch-hunt underway at the LBE?! These are really important amenities and, being more affordable than many clubs in the area, are used by a remarkable range of social class groups.

In conclusion, I would urge the Council to drastically rethink this Local Plan and to remove any proposed development on Green Belt land. I am an academic by profession and my normal writing style would be far less emotional than some of my content above. But the potential environmental destruction wrought by this Local Plan proposal does deserve both a factual and emotional response – as residents we feel proud of our heritage and green spaces which define much of the Borough – we are passionate about this. As a community we should be going out of our way to protect these green spaces for ourselves and future generations, especially, and in some ways because of, the climate emergency we face. We should all be working together to ensure such spaces remain accessible to all, are productive for food and as biologically diverse 'zones' to contribute to future sustainability, support a wider economy and retain the essential 'feel good' factor of Enfield that has done so much to promote positive physical and mental health outcomes.

I would add that I am a lifelong labour supporter. But I, like many I know in the Borough, are ashamed of the current lack of respect the Council appears to show to the views of large parts of their electorate and I have no doubt that this will be demonstrated at the next ballot boxes.