
Please find below our comments on the above-mentioned document and in particular the proposals pertaining to the Sainsbury's Site, 681 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill, London N21 3RS:

Response to Updating the Local Plan Document

Comments re Sainsbury's site, 681 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill, London N21 3RS

Through friends in the local area, we have recently been made aware of the existence of the a document which had been produced by Enfield Council entitled - Enfield Local Plan - Main issues and preferred approaches - June 2021. We also discovered that this document was released for 'consultation' in June with the consultation period ending on 13th September.

We were not officially notified of this document and the consultation period would have come and gone without us having a forum to express our views. _____

This is not acceptable as these proposals will directly affect everyone within proximity to the site.

Unfortunately, this is not entirely surprising as there have been other notable attempts by the Council to steamroller through its policies via quasi-transparency, obfuscation and subtle concealment of proposals. These tactics allow you to claim that there is a consultation process in place. However your prior recent consultations with residents have proved to be nothing but a superficial, box ticking exercise.

The processes deployed by you for the Green Lanes Cycle Lane and the LTNs sadly prove the point.

We also found out recently that there was a display of the document at Palmers Green Library in the middle of August. Apparently this Local Plan document had been available to view from 2018 and that all residents had been consulted.

We find it astonishing that we knew nothing about this until we are almost at the deadline date?

We have not been formally consulted and we should have been as this proposal will have an adverse effect on the amenities and surroundings of our local area.

Even residents of the roads surrounding the site were not made aware of its existence. This really is at least, questionable and at worst, irresponsible.

The document in question demonstrates a wealth of detail on the Council's plans for development of new housing, environmental protection and wealth creation.

It refers to four locations where the majority of new homes are being built: Meridian Water, Southbury, Crews Hill and Chase Park.

Additionally, towards the end of the document there is a list of all the potential development sites being considered and these include several sites out-with these named areas.

The proposal that concerns us the most is the one relating to Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill on Green Lanes.

We understand that the government has grandiose expectations in terms of building thousands of new homes within the next few years. However laudable that might be in theory, in practical terms, the expectation that Enfield can accommodate thousands more residents as part of this process is alarming as well as unrealistic.

Having lived in Enfield for over thirty years and seen a myriad of changes, the borough now seems vulnerable to overcrowding with congested roads, ongoing parking difficulties, struggling public services trying to cope with the combination of increased demands and funding cuts. The current Infrastructure is stretched to the limit, Service standards have decreased, yet our council tax has increased exponentially.

More residents will increase the demand for school places, doctors, hospitals, social services, green spaces, trains, buses, shops- the list is endless.

The draft states an ambitious plan to build 25,000 new homes over the next two decades. If this goes ahead, the very nature and living environment of parts of Enfield will be subject to change and in our view, to the detriment of all residents.

The borough will no longer be a pleasant, peaceful suburb but become an unpleasant, over-populated densely packed, noisy 'overspill area' for those who cannot afford to live closer to the city centre.

The plan uses the term 'green lung' of London to describe the Borough of Enfield. Surely that claim is negated by the proposal to build on more and more of our open land and lose our vital green spaces that intrinsically contribute to a healthy environment. The government has championed the term 'Build Back Better.' Clearly this is a political spin and will benefit the many property developers, landowners builders and connected tradespeople set to make tidy profits. Of course, the economy needs us to be active and productive in order to grow. However, we are also facing an unprecedented environmental disaster with the hasty onset of global warming.

The needs of the two driving forces are not entirely compatible unless they are inextricably interlinked. This requires long term rather than short term planning with environmental considerations being uppermost.

We believe that in general these current proposals are at odds with the requirement to protect green spaces and open land within the borough.

We believe that specifically the proposal to build 299 new homes on the Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill site is seriously flawed for the following reasons:

- Residents in the local area including the elderly, the disabled, young families and those from further afield use the existing supermarket, as it is one of the most popular stores

of its type in the area. It stocks a good range of groceries and it's loss would be felt across the immediate area and beyond.

Although the proposed plan may be to preserve a store on the site, it is unfathomable that just under 300 homes could be built on a site of that size without recourse to a reduction in car parking space or utilisation of the surrounding green space.

- The approach area is already heavily congested with the main routes often gridlocked due to LTN's and the Cycle Lane. By building even more homes this will exacerbate an already existing problem for shoppers, residents, those working in the area and those who drive through for access.
- Already there have been several new apartment developments built on this part of Green Lanes – including the former Century House, Capitol House, the site opposite Sainsbury's, the old Police Station and the Travis Perkins site. 1 Fox Lane is a prime example of 54 new homes being squeezed into a small area adding further strain on the local infrastructure and services. The impact on parking around the area will be horrendous.

We do not need more of the same.

- Our local area traditionally has consisted mainly of Edwardian and 1930's family properties. There is a feeling of space and light which makes for a healthy lifestyle. Squeezing every spare centimetre of land to accommodate 299 extra homes on a site like that will result in families living in high rise blocks, in very close proximity, close to a main transport route and so will have a negative impact on their physical and mental health.

Additionally, on an aesthetic level, combined with the plethora of new apartments already built, this proposed development of apartment blocks will totally change the character of the area. Unfortunately not for the better.

- In order to blend in and compliment our area, any development should, at least, be restricted to no more than 2 storeys high to match the surrounding properties and to reflect the original planning restrictions/ conditions placed on the Sainsbury's development
- The landscaped area surrounding the store has served as an 'oasis' for local people and shoppers alike to enjoy a natural open space. By destroying this amenity, you will be taking away a well used local facility.

Enfield cannot claim to be the 'green lung' of London if local green spaces are obliterated.

We believe the park should be protected and made an Asset of Community Value.

- When Sainsbury's was first built, a condition of the planning permission was that a proportion of the land (previously playing fields) should be retained as green space for use by the local community. It was also a condition that the store could not be built over two storeys high to preserve the character of the immediate area. We believe these principles should still apply?
- Logistically this proposed development of new homes in our area will increase the local population by up to one thousand people. This will cause an increase in traffic on the already very busy roads, place more pressure on schools and other public resources and services. It is already extremely difficult to get a doctor's appointment. An increase in the local population will only serve to exacerbate these already stretched services.
- This additional number of people will make public transport even busier. In particular, the train service from Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green under normal operating conditions is overcrowded and often unreliable. Additionally more people travelling from this area will add to the problem.
- From a property development point of view, some of the earmarked sites on the proposal make sense aesthetically and practically. They are in areas where additional homes are appropriate and the sites are not surrounded by existing properties. The Morrison's site on the A10 is a good example. It is a site in a chiefly non-residential area thus making it unlikely to adversely affect many local residents. The same cannot be said for The Sainsbury's site for reasons already identified.
- If due to central government dictate, the borough has to create such a large number of additional dwellings, then it would be advantageous to build them in the part of the borough which would benefit from development and regeneration. There is a plethora of open space on brownfield sites which were once used for industrial purposes in the eastern part of Enfield. Surely these are prime targets for conversion to residential use. This works well at Meridian Water.

- As a cheaper option, the eastern side of the borough would offer the potential for more affordable housing. Surely that should be high on your agenda rather than pandering to profiteering developers and landowners.

To summarise, we believe that Enfield Council's proposed plan to build homes on the site at Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill is intrinsically flawed and is counter-productive on a variety of levels. The housing is neither needed nor wanted by local residents both in close proximity to the site and beyond. Local people are united in their opposition to this development, to proceed would only serve to demonstrate that you are a local authority who do not listen to the people you are supposed to represent.