

I am writing to you today to object to your draft policy 'DM BG16' with particular regards to Site ID SA59 over your proposed plans to build on Firs Farm Wetlands as a site for burial and/or crematorium use.

Both sites suggested in the plans, Firs Farm Wetlands and Church Street Recreation Grounds are in close proximity to my family home, and both sites have been a refuge for my family, in pre and post pandemic times for our Health & Wellbeing, Recreational and Sport purposes. I believe that both these sites, given their close proximity to schools, residential housing, and sporting facilities are highly unsuitable, as they will have a direct impactful affect on the local environment, its community, and also increase local traffic in the area.

I oppose this policy for both sites, however I strongly oppose in particular the allocated Firs Farm Wetlands site for the following reasons;

1. Firs Farm Wetlands is a vitally important community resource which is essential to the health and well-being of the local people in many ways. Since the wonderful redevelopment of the wetlands was created in 2014 by Enfield council and Thames Water, it has transformed the local area's 'living quality' by enriching every life, be it human or wildlife who use it.

2. The proposal will significantly affect the local Site of Interest for Nature Conservation, and reduce the biodiversity and nature conservation interest of Firs Farm wetlands, contrary to several other policies in the draft Local Plan.

3. The draft Policy directly contradicts Strategic Policy SP CL4 in the draft Local Plan. This identifies Firs Farm as facilitating and contributing towards developing sport and leisure facilities in Enfield. As I understand, plans were in place for a 'Community cafe and Hub' which would be an extremely versatile and lucrative asset to the community in this now 'WFH' world we live in, plus an amazing focal meeting point for local residents who do not have many facilities such as these this side of Winchmore Hill. With the recent relocation of the wonderful tennis courts, a cafe in close proximity of them, instead of a crematorium would be a desirable place for refreshments after a match, likewise the plans for a Hockey field and Basketball pitch, plus outdoor education programmes have also been discussed and would add furthermore to enrich the lives of the local people.

4. The proposal will reduce the effectiveness of the flood alleviation provided by Firs Farm Wetlands, which Enfield Council has spent more than 1 million to provide.

5. The proposal will also reduce the effectiveness of urban pollution to the area. The wetlands has been created as a combined wetland and flood storage area that reduces the impact of flooding and also diffuses urban pollution across a wide urban area. By adding a Crematorium to the area is a direct contradiction to the creation of the wetlands and the hard work both the council, and local community groups which have supported its growth. A crematorium which requires a lot of fuel and results in millions of tons of carbon dioxide emissions; not to mention other toxic emissions such as Mercury pollution and furans produced per year, to the direct vicinity of the wetlands will increase the sheer amount of urban pollution and will have a direct severe effects on the surrounding environment and an extreme effect to human health.

6. The proposal will adversely affect the environment and local traffic, and this has not been properly considered in the integrated Impact Assessment of the draft local plan, and contradicts the councils drive to lower car pollution in the borough of Enfield.

7. The policy introduces uncertainty for the future use of Firs Farm Wetlands that jeopardises funding for projects secured by local community groups (e.g. from Thames Water) that have been endorsed and supported by Enfield Council.

8. Finally, 'The Friends of Firs Farm' community group are an absolute treasure for our society. Before the pandemic they had created many glorious areas for children and local community to enjoy, however during the lockdowns they went above and beyond to make the wetlands a saviour particularly for the local children. They created fun game posters for the children to play in the woods, e.g find the hidden cuddly toys in the trees. A fairy wood has been created along with a play area directly next the the football playing fields where you propose to build the crematorium. They have successfully organised cherry tree planting, tree adoption schemes, created woodland paths, complete regular litter picking and organised a community festival for over 2000 local residents to enjoy. All this wonderful work, absolutely appreciated by all who use the wetlands. However, sadly I can not see the children wanting to enjoy these magical areas, nor will the runners, cyclists, scooterists, roller skaters, footballers and dog walkers enjoy the one mile cycleway / footpath and playing fields, -if indeed they will still exist at all-, should your plan go ahead.

Firs Farm Wetlands and playing fields is a testament to the collaboration between organisations and communities in transforming an unused public space into an amenity that can be enjoyed by both wildlife and people alike. This is because of all your well doing Enfield Council,... please do not ruin all your amazing work with one very bad decision.

Therefore because of these reasons, I call on the Council to remove all reference to Firs Farm wetlands from Policy SP SL4.

Thank you for reading my heartfelt objections.