

I would make the following comments about the council's draft local plan.

In the '**Rural Enfield Placemaking Vision**' the proposed Local Plan has this preamble, *'By 2039, the arc of open spaces and woodland around Enfield Chase and Lee Valley Regional Park will be transformed into the leading outdoor countryside destination in North London and surrounding area, serving as a unique and exemplar place within London's "National Park City". On the doorstep of the city's urban communities, a mosaic of sustainable and highly accessible rural activities including local food production, forestry, re-wilding, eco-tourism, sporting activities, natural burial, countryside education, and recreation will enhance the landscape and enable all to benefit from access to wildlife-rich blue-green spaces, clean air, local food production and world-class sporting facilities, achieving the largest environmental and health and wellbeing gains in London. Community involvement and sustainable green enterprises will enable the local rural economy to thrive contributing to significant landscape improvements, jobs, investment and renewal. Rural Enfield will drive deep into the surrounding urban communities providing better connections to the countryside and bring nature into the heart of the urban fabric.'*

These fine words are rendered meaningless by the borough's proposals to allow development of Green Belt land, even in the Enfield Chase referred to.

### **Green Belt (Policy SP PL9 and others)**

The council are custodians of the green belt for future generations. Building on the Green Belt will be irreversible. It is also unnecessary. There are sufficient brownfield sites in Enfield to supply the borough's housing needs.

Green Belt land is not needed to provide the homes Enfield needs. Several reports have indicated that there is sufficient brownfield land to meet housing targets, including a report by the Mayor of London. The council needs to use the considerable resources of brownfield sites before any thought is given to building on the Green Belt. They have a responsibility to ensure that brownfield sites in private ownership are used to build the type of housing Enfield needs. Publicly owned brownfield sites should be used to provide for housing shortages not for private profit. Meridian Water, in particular, is not doing enough to provide the affordable family sized homes that Enfield and Edmonton needs. Housing built on the sites identified by the council in the Green Belt would almost certainly be expensive executive homes adding little to satisfy local housing demand and adding more vehicles to the already overstretched road network and putting further pressure on climate emergency targets.

The very suggestion that building on the Green Belt will be considered will be a green light to developers and will remove the need to focus on maximising the potential of brownfield sites. The development of brownfield land would also ensure the best use of existing infrastructure and to help regenerate areas in need of investment. The suggestion that Green Belt land could be developed removes the incentive for owners to find productive use for their land for suitable purposes permitted in the Green Belt.

The only exception to release of Green Belt land could be where there are suitable brownfield sites in areas of Enfield with insufficient recreational green field sites, as is the case for most of Edmonton, when arrangements could be made to exchange this land for a suitable Green Belt site in an area which has sufficient provision. This would have to be dependent on the brownfield site being 'greened' before any development was permitted. For example, the proposed development at Crews Hill would only be acceptable if land corresponding in area was provided by greening of brownfield land elsewhere in the borough where a deficiency of such land exists, e.g. Edmonton.

If burial sites are considered in the Green Belt (Policy DM BG10) the land should not be removed from the Green Belt. The Local Plan should specify that burials in this land

should be natural burials only and no built infrastructure or memorials allowed. No temporary memorials, e.g. flowers especially plastic, should be permitted. Public access should be encouraged.

The Green Belt aids many of the council's stated targets, climate change mitigation, ecological recovery, removal of air pollution, localising food supplies and encouraging local wildlife. Local people would have fewer places to enjoy the outdoors, seen to be so important during lockdowns, if development in the Green Belt were permitted. The Green Belt is protected in the New London Plan and National Planning Policy. It should remain protected.

In summary, any reference to removing sites from the Green Belt for development should be removed from the local plan. We have a responsibility to preserve these sites for future generations. The council should see this as a primary target not least because the worth of access to greenfield sites for health and wellbeing has been amply demonstrated during Covid.

### **Sustainable Enfield (Policies SP SE1 – SE10)**

Whilst I support these proposals, I feel that there are too many caveats and get-out clauses. The policies should be clear and unequivocal. It should be left to developers to try to make a case against them. Cash in lieu (policy DM5) should not be acceptable in any circumstance. Exceptions should not form part of the local plan. The expectation should be net zero.

### **Tall Buildings (Policy SP DE6)**

2d. "provide high quality private and communal amenity and play space in accordance...."

The policy above seems to have something missing. A reference should be made to easy access for residents to public green space.