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Comments and Objections on Draft Local Plan and the proposals for the Sainsbury Site , 681 Green Lanes, London N21 3RS

I set out below my comments on the above document and in particular my objection to the proposals in relation to the Sainsbury's Site ,  
681 Green Lanes ,Winchmore Hill, London N21 3RS:

**Response to Updating the Local Plan Document**

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

On 13<sup>th</sup> August many of the residents of Fernleigh Road in Winchmore Hill were 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. Apparently this document was put out for 'consultation' in June with the consultation period ending on 13<sup>th</sup> September. A leaflet was subsequently posted to us on 17<sup>th</sup> August - some 2 months or more after it was produced and less than 1 month before the consultation period ends.

I subsequently attended a display of the document at Palmers Green Library on 17<sup>th</sup> August. We assumed that there would be representatives available to answer questions and explain more about the document. The Council fielded two junior members of staff who had very little knowledge and were unable to answer any of the important questions put to them. The display was therefore largely pointless. They had a map and two paper copies of the document. I had to queue to look at the document with no social distancing. The representatives did however comment that the Local Plan had been available to view from 2018 and that all residents had been consulted. This was clearly not the case as none of the residents on Fernleigh Road were aware of its existence.

The Draft Local Plan document goes in to a wealth of detail on the Council's plans for development of new homes, protection of the environment and creation of prosperity. It states that the plan has four place making areas where the majority of new homes are being built: Meridian Water, Southbury, Crews Hill and Chase Park. However, towards the end of the document it lists all of the sites being considered including a number of sites outside of these areas. I am very concerned in particular about the proposal relating to Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill on Green Lanes.

Whilst the government's plans include the building of thousands of homes over the next few years, the fact that Enfield is expected to accommodate thousands more residents as part of this process is very concerning. The borough is already overcrowded, the roads are congested, the public services cannot cope and the doctor's surgeries and schools are full. The draft plan states

that you plan to build 25,000 new homes in the next 20 years. If this is going to happen the whole nature and atmosphere of parts of the borough will change. The borough will move from a pleasant and quiet suburb to an overcrowded noisy inner London overspill area. The plan talks about Enfield being the 'green lung' of London. How can we claim to be that if we continue to build on more and more of our open land.

I would also like to challenge how you have arrived at the need for 25,000 new homes. Your plan suggests that this figure was established in 2020. This was before the pandemic and Brexit. Surely that figure is no longer appropriate due the fact that many Europeans have supposedly returned home. As a result the figures need to be reassessed.

The proposal to build 299 new homes on the Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill site is flawed for many reasons as follows:

- People from the immediate area, including the elderly, and those from further afield use the existing supermarket, as it is one of the few decent supermarkets in the area. Even though the plan may be to preserve a store on the site, how can 299 homes be squeezed on to the site without reducing car parking space or the surrounding green space.
- The immediate area is already very busy and the main roads are often congested due to LTN's and the Cycle Lane. By building even more homes this will make the problem even worse.
- We already have several new apartment developments 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. We do not need more.
- The area previously consisted mainly of Edwardian and 1930's family properties. By dropping 299 extra homes on a site must mean that a large proportion will be one and two bed apartments. As stated above, with the new apartments already built, this will totally change the character of the area.
- I understand that in order to accommodate this number of homes, the apartment blocks will have to be several storeys high. Again this would completely detract from the character of the area and 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 conditions placed on the Sainsbury's development (see below).
- The park area surrounding the store provides an area for local residents and families to meet, relax and enjoy the trees and open space. By removing this to accommodate homes you will be taking away a much needed local amenity. How can you claim Enfield is the 'green lung' of London if you are removing small local spaces. The park should be protected at the very least and made an Asset of Community Value. The park is also home to many mature trees, many of which have preservation orders on them.
- When Sainsbury's was first built, a condition of the planning permission and a condition of the land transfer was that a proportion of the land (which was 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. These principles must still apply today.
- You will be aware that this is a sensitive site having previously been a school recreation ground. From the limited information available via the Council's website it seems that its development as a supermarket was decided by the Secretary of State for the Environment rather than the local planning department. I cannot find a copy of the planning inspector's decision on the Council's online planning portal although reference is made to it when the Council dealt with subsequent applications to change some conditions imposed by the decision. Please treat this response as a request under the Freedom of Information Act for the council to provide me with a copy of the Inspector's decision dated 9 September 1987.
- By building this number of new homes in this part of Winchmore Hill will increase the local population by around 750 -1000 people. This will increase traffic on the already very busy roads, it will place more pressure on schools and other public resources such as doctors and dentists etc. It is already extremely difficult to get a doctor's appointment. This number of additional people will make these problems much worse.
- This additional number of people will make public transport even busier. In particular, the train service from Winchmore Hill (pre-pandemic) was overcrowded and unreliable. Again more people travelling from this area will exacerbate this problem.
- Some of the individual sites identified in the plan makes sense from a development perspective. They are in areas where additional homes are appropriate and the sites are not surrounded by existing properties. For example the Morrison's site on the A10 . By

building on that site it is unlikely to affect many local residents. This is not the case for the Sainsbury's site. The area already has a large number of new properties just built or in the process of being built in the area. Many local properties and residents will be affected and the properties adjacent to Sainsbury's will be blighted as a result.

- If the borough has to have such a large number of additional homes, then build them in the part of the borough which is in need of development and regeneration i.e. in the east of the borough. There is an abundance of land, which was once used for industrial purposes in that part of the borough, which should now be converted to residential use. As you are doing at Meridian Water.
- In addition as the eastern side of the borough is generally cheaper, I would imagine that homes built in these areas would be more affordable – which should be the aim as opposed to allowing developers or landowners to profit.

In summary, the proposal to build homes on the site at Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill is flawed and does not make sense for so many reasons. It is not needed and more crucially is not wanted by local residents, who will vehemently oppose it at every opportunity.