
Objection Firs Farm crematorium development:

There are many reasons why we are objecting these plans and key objections are detailed below.

Physical site unsuitability- according to Enfield Council's own guidance: According the Enfield Plan, a site at risk of flooding, air pollution and groundwater contamination, would be unsuitable. Why has it been identified that Firs Farm is suitable, when the wetlands were created specifically to protect against localized flooding (something only predicted to increase with climate change)? Why has this plan been proposed on a site that runs parallel to the A10 – a major source of air pollution, which would be further compounded by crematorium emissions; is it suitable in a residential area that borders a secondary school and is used for sports and recreation? Why has this site been identified when there is a risk of groundwater contamination to the watercourse, especially when the site has not been properly maintained by contractors, to prevent and combat existing pollution incidents? Why, why, why...Such questions need to be answered because from the little information so far provided, it seems to be very clear that the site is UNSUITABLE, according to their own guidance? Beyond highlighting the contradictions in the plan, we have further key objections, which are explored below.

Habitat degradation and destruction: the selected location (and boundary) for the crematorium will result in the degradation and potential destruction of key habitats at Firs Farm. Please see our map and key of the habitats that will be impacted on in the map below; it should be noted that the ancient hedgerows are designated as a site of interest in nature conservation (SINC) due to the presence of ecologically important plant species. Recently, it has also been confirmed that Water Voles have made Firs Farm their home – you can find our article on Water Voles on our Facebook Page – and this is fantastic news as it evidences how habitat naturalization and restoration bring keystone species back into the ecosystem. It is worth considering that Water Voles are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, against intentional killing, capture or injury and intentional or reckless disturbance, obstruction, damage or destruction of their burrows; the development of a crematorium, metres from the watercourse will no doubt disturb our new residents.

Further contradictions in Enfield Council's approach are reflected in Enfield's Blue and Green Strategy that was set out by Enfield Council to improve the quality and connectedness of blue (aquatic habitats) and green (terrestrial) spaces in Enfield. "Over half of the borough is classified as blue or green spaces, making us (Enfield), one of London's most treasured environments", "Our parks, trees, open spaces, routes and watercourses represent some of our best and most valued assets". Considering the apparent commitment to improving our green and blue spaces across the borough, why are they proposing this development in the heart of our diverse and thriving green space, that would be doing the *exact opposite* of what they claim to be working towards in the Blue and Green Plan?

Development and lack of pre-consultation:the Friends of Firs Farm have worked tirelessly to develop the site for the benefit of the community – and are always working to further improve the site. We are in need of an indoor accessible community space, which would allow us to take full advantage of the site year round and have an even greater positive impact upon local community and individual wellbeing – physical and mental. These plans are yet to come to fruition, despite our continued and best efforts to work with the council – they are instead prioritizing a project that would degrade the site and be of detriment to the community's wellbeing, over one that would benefit it. Surely, the answer to needing more burial grounds in the borough, is choosing a site where there is no significant conflicts of interest – particularly as they claim they are working towards improving the borough's greens spaces (Blue Green Plan) for the communities that need them. The Friends have worked with dedication with our partners (see above – a brief history of Firs Farm) and so a lack of pre-consultation about such proposals was unexpected and as a consequence this has put considerable pressure on the volunteer managed charity to respond in adequate timing to such plans.