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I am writing to object to the draft of the New Local Plan, in consultation at the moment, in particular to the point that proposes the 'conversion' of the recreation fields at Firs Farm Wetlands (Site ID SA 59) and to the east of the A10 (south of Church Street) for burial/crematorium site.

1. The Wetlands is an area of natural beauty that has been developed with money from the Mayor of London and other fund-raising activities, with the time and effort of local volunteers. A field barely used has been transformed into a meeting area for many people, with the community enjoying the nature in great variety, especially during the pandemic. This site is a vitally important community resource, essential for the health and well-being of the local community and an invaluable asset to the local schools.

It is

- an area where our children can enjoy nature and play freely, where the wildlife finds a refuge
- a great educational resource for children growing up in housing estates;
- a unique area that was the largest system of natural water filtration in England in 2018.
- at a time when we try to develop children's engagement and care for the environment, the council proposes to limit the space where this engagement is possible, by destroying the space created with a lot of money and effort by the local community;
- a place for teenagers to be actively involved in sports, keeping them off the streets and gangs.

2. 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. By using part of it for a burial/crematorium site, this area will be grossly diminished and its use will decrease significantly.

3. 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.

4. The proposal will reduce the effectiveness of the flood alleviation provided by Firs Farm wetlands, which Enfield council has spent more than £1 billion to develop and provide.

5. The proposal will adversely affect the environment and the local traffic, and this has not been properly considered in the Integrated Impact Assessment of the draft Local Plan.

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

I urge the local council to remove all reference to building on the Firs Farm wetlands from Policy DM BG 10.