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Dear Enfield Council

Response to the Draft Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation. I attended the information session at Palmers Green Library. It would have been easier if either of the two women from Planning had been able to define the Green Belt and under what circumstances it could be built on, but they were unable to say anything on this matter. Do they need some training? We were, however, told that if we did not like the proposals, we should come up with a better solution. This did not go down too well. (Although several of the people there DID know something about the Green Belt and about Planning so maybe they would come up with something better if they had time.) We were also told that if we objected to the Council using the Green Belt, various other green areas, various existing parking spaces, and various shops' space (by getting rid of e.g. Winchmore Hill Sainsbury's), then Central Government would simply step in and make the decisions for Enfield. You can see that this would not make for a useful exchange of views. It shuts down the conversation, because the implication is clearly that we can object but that it will not make a difference. If the council acknowledges and acts on our views, Central Government will override them and us. However, as you can see, we are still trying to make our views heard.

I have endeavoured to complete the online consultation form but find it impossible to do without a copy of the deliberately obfuscating 300 plus pages of the report in front of me. The extremely limited questions to which the answers are either No or Yes are quite manipulative. They seem designed to cut down any exchange of views. See Yes Minister for examples.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0ZZJXw4MTA>

The fact also that when you look ahead to see how many questions are still to be answered if you go too far your response

is automatically sent, allowing no opportunity to review, revise, or even complete the remaining questions, is to say the least very annoying.

I strongly object to building on the Green Belt. There are clear reasons given below, but in addition I would like to add that we all know that these developments will be expensive luxury properties, possibly bought by overseas investors, and certainly nothing that will be of benefit to the average Enfield resident. (Yes, developers promise some Affordable units, but quite often these do not materialise because of a surprise increase in costs or some such reason.)

At our meeting, one resident (presumably; he could have been an agitator) arrived very late and said "I suppose you people here all have houses." Nobody said anything in reply. We are waiting to see where this is going. He then says "And I bet you all have gardens." Everyone waits. He then says "So why can I not have a house and garden?" and leaves. This was worrying, because it tries to stop the debate by in effect saying "You are all selfish, you do not want other people to have what you have, and you will try to stop it." If he had waited, he might have realised that this is not the issue at all. The housing that is scheduled is not going to be lovely streets full of starter homes, where everyone has a garden, at affordable prices. I don't think anyone there would want him not to have a house with a garden. I'd like my children to be able to have a house and a garden. But we all recognise that the planned dwellings are not going to be what he wants, and that any houses built with gardens are going to be in the Green Belt at very high prices. It is interesting because if he thinks that opposing voices are NIMBYs, rather than people desperate to keep green spaces (and local shops) for as long as possible, then you start to get an Us and Them situation which is never good, because then you get Winner and Losers, and Losers (don't even talk to me about Brexit) can be very bitter indeed.

I also want to stress that you should not be building on golf courses. You have already closed White Webbs. Trent park has altered its policy towards members. Other clubs exist, but they may be full or extraordinarily expensive. Golf is no longer the

prerogative of the rich, and those that want to play it should not be pushed into having to travel further/pay more money. It is, however, a way for many people to exercise, to get fresh air, to spend time with others, and to let off steam. The courses also offer much to local wildlife, at a time when so much is under threat. During lockdown, we were able to walk round the courses, which was wonderful for so many local residents.

I am therefore writing to you to object to the following Policies: SP PL10, pages 80-87, and Figure 3.11; Policy SP PL9, pages 77-80 and Concept Plan Figure 3.10; Policy SA45: Land Between Camlet Way and Crescent Way, Hadley Wood, page 364; Policy SA54, page 374; Policy SA52 page 372; and Policy SA62 page 383 and SP CL4 pages 277-279 – all of which propose the de-designation of Green Belt for housing and other purposes.

Most of these sites are part of historic Enfield Chase, which played an important role in the development of Enfield. The remaining parts of the Chase are unique in the southeast and a rare and valuable landscape asset. The loss of these sites would cause permanent harm not only to the Green Belt, but also to the very character of the borough. Vicarage Farm is crossed by the Merryhills Way footpath, much used by Enfield residents and others for exercise and relaxation, and the physical and mental health attributes of the footpath would be destroyed by development. The farmland could be put back into productive use growing local food for local people. Crews Hill is equally important to the borough and should not be destroyed. Its garden centres and other businesses provide employment and a resource for people from Enfield and beyond. Instead of losing Crews Hill for housing, its horticultural activities should be encouraged and enhanced so that it can once again be a hub for food and plant production.

While I support housing development and support the ambition to meet Enfield's housing needs, I strongly object to the proposal to release Green Belt for housing or other purposes. I believe that there are alternatives available to meet housing targets and that the Green Belt is a precious resource that should be protected and preserved for future generations. It is too valuable to lose for

all the many environmental, ecological, economic, public health and other reasons that have been identified, especially during the recent pandemic. The Council has a duty of care for the Green Belt, in accordance with the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], and any intentions to release parts of it should be taken out of the local plan.

The comments provided in this response to the consultation are my own views.