

Dear Enfield Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation.

I strongly 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 dedesignation of Green Belt for housing and other purposes.

My objections are as follows:

The trees within the greenbelt help London “breathe” by removing harmful air born pollutants. They also help mitigate against the risk of flooding as well as provide a valuable refuge for our native wildlife. Removing such trees would increase air pollution, including greenhouse gases, and damage the local ecology irreparably.

The areas involved provide a valuable “safety valve” for locals such as myself to escape to open and unspoilt countryside, in my case within a mile and a half of my home. During the more severe form of lock-down we experienced in 2020 when driving was not an option, this was the only open countryside I was able to visit. If these areas were taken away, I and many others would be driving out of London more, adding to road congestion and pollution.

My wife and I visit the garden centres in Crews Hill frequently. If we were unable to go there, we would once again be driving further out of London, this time for gardening supplies.

In most of these greenfield sites, there is little infrastructure to support the development of additional housing. This would require the development of new roads and add further to traffic pollution as residents drive to local stations, schools, etc.

Much has been made of the provision of “affordable housing”. I strongly believe that these developments, which would have the benefit of being in a semi-rural area, would be highly desirable and therefore not by any stretch of the imagination “affordable”. As an example, I believe the houses in the new development inside Oakwood Park (Willow Walk entrance) sell for over £1m each. A further example is the development in Trent Park, where I believe the cheapest property is a 1-bed apartment for over £550k and prices for houses run to over £2m.

I don't believe the use of existing brownfield sites has been fully explored. These would benefit from having existing transport infrastructure, and in many cases be nearer to amenities such as shops and schools. An existing benefit is that a lot of these brownfield sites, due to their state of dereliction, are unsightly, and building there should actually improve these sites.

Whilst meeting Enfield's housing needs is stated as an ambition, this is really just attempting to

solve the wrong problem. There needs to be a fundamental rethink about where in the country people will choose to live. Since the pandemic, many companies, including my own employer, have accelerated plans to make home working a viable option. As this continues, this will reduce pressure on public transport, the road infrastructure and consequentially decrease atmospheric pollution. There will no longer be a need for millions of people to gravitate towards London in search of employment, as in many cases they could work for a London-based company whilst living in the north, with occasional commutes, helping in many ways the Government's stated aims of "Levelling up". By the same token, it should be possible for London-based companies to move North, releasing space in the capital which could be repurposed for housing, for those that choose to live in a city environment. It was certainly the case over 30 years ago that many people, including myself, were forced to uproot from their home towns to seek employment, so surely this trend can be reversed? There are many brownfield sites outside of London which could provide the much-needed extra housing, whilst generating much needed employment and increasing prosperity for their local populations.

The Council should be mindful of its duty of care for the Green Belt, in accordance with the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]. Therefore, rather than accepting government targets it should push back and force the government to develop elsewhere.

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