

13<sup>TH</sup> September 2021

Response to the Consultation on the Local Plan

(former councillor 2006-2010, former leader of the Save Chase Farm Campaign group)

Firstly, as you can see from my 'title' I was heavily involved in the campaign to save Chase Farm A and E and other acute services (Maternity, Women's and Children's etc.) At the time, Enfield's residents were promised that the removal of essential health services would be compensated for by the addition of a plethora of additional facilities mainly in the form of Primary Health facilities, additional GPs, etc.

Eleven years down the road and most of the promised services have not materialised. In addition, there have been extensive cuts in the provision of other public services. Local authority funding has been cut in real terms. Social Care (nationally) is in a crisis. In Enfield police stations in the borough have been closing, police numbers have fallen.

Already, the ability of the public sector to address the needs of the current population is stretched to its limit. The foundations of any strategy designated a 'Local Plan', should be to provide a detailed inventory of the required local services such as GPs, hospitals, healthcare facilities, schools etc. and to quantify how these will be funded and provided for.

### **Meeting the Housing Need**

Whilst I appreciate that the council is obliged to produce and consult on a local plan, addressing the housing crisis is not something that can be undertaken on a borough by borough basis.

Many of the problems stem from central government policy. Enfield Council's solution: To suddenly start building on Green Belt land is not even a 'sticking plaster' solution as it will destroy land that has been preserved through statute for generations. We as residents of the borough have no right to steal this land and deny this amenity from future generations.

Also, in my view, building more homes (even in large numbers) would not necessarily eliminate the housing crisis or homelessness. It may actually encourage more people to move into the borough or people who are currently living at home with parents or renting to move out.

Those who cannot afford to buy or rent (from landlords intent on making profits from accommodation) would still exist in similar numbers and would still be looking to the council to provide affordable housing.

The council's own figures for October 2020 show that the number of empty dwellings is 3,103 (2.5% of dwelling stock). If these empty properties could be brought into use for housing...(and I understand that the local authority has the powers to do this), the number of residents on the housing needs register (4 500) could be reduced at a stroke.

Within the borough, there are numerous large family sized homes which are occupied by just one or two individuals. Whilst I would not advocate any policy which would entail moving people from their own homes, there are a number of creative ways in which the empty space in many of these homes could be brought into more efficient use. The council could be a facilitator of this type of initiative.

### **Green Belt**

From 2006 to 2010, I was a councillor and a member of the Planning Committee. During this time, Enfield Council's planning committee consistently resisted efforts by developers and others to impinge on the Green Belt and adjacent areas of the borough. These efforts and efforts of previous and subsequent administrations could now all be jeopardised at a stroke by taking a knee jerk approach to resolving local problems.

I have read and agree with the views expressed in the response to this consultation by Enfield Climate Action Forum:

OUR VIEW IS THAT THERE ARE SUFFICIENT BROWNFIELD SITES WHICH CAN AND SHOULD BE USED TO DELIVER THE FAMILY HOUSING SO DESPERATELY NEEDED AND THAT DEVELOPING THESE SITES WILL HELP IMPROVE ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE ACROSS THE BOROUGH.

I also agree with their statement that:

...BUILDING IN GREEN BELT AREAS WILL NOT DELIVER AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ENFIELD'S FAMILIES IN NEED.

### **Tall Buildings**

Table 2.1 of your consultation document refers to Strategic Objective number 20 'To manage proposals for tall buildings to ensure that tall buildings can be sensitively accommodated. I note that there are several proposals for tall buildings in the Local Plan document. As a resident of Town Ward and someone who lives close to the Enfield Town Centre, I believe that the construction of a high rise residential edifice in the Palace Gardens complex would be detrimental visually, but also in terms of the added footfall, leading to congestion and increased traffic. This along with the other proposed developments (for example the proposed high rise development in the Enfield retail park), would also put an adverse strain on services (such as GP services, other Primary health services, etc.)

For the above reasons, I would urge the council to take on board the responses to this consultation and revisit the plan.

IN MY OPINION OPTION 3 WOULD BE PREFERABLE. IT REFERS TO 25000 HOMES AND PROVIDES FOR SOME FAMILY AND AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION WITH NO GREEN BELT RELEASE.