

Representation Statement.

Rectory Farm

Prepared on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield

13 September 2021

Public

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13 September 2021	Name		Name	
	Position	Senior Planner	Position	Partner

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Representation Statement has been prepared by Knight Frank on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield Property Department ('LBE Client'), the landowners of Rectory Farm ('the site'). This Statement has been submitted to the Regulation 18 Local Plan ('draft Local Plan') consultation currently being undertaken by the London Borough of Enfield ('LBE').
- 1.2 As outlined in the latest Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021), the site source reference is LP1143.
- 1.3 We support the preparation of a new Local Plan and agree with the overall development strategy. Our comments (including recommendations and points of clarification) aim to help strengthen the plan so that it is found to be sound by the Inspector at examination in public ('EiP').
- 1.4 In summary, the site represents a logical and sustainable location for future residential development. It is suburban in nature and adjacent to existing built development within the Crews Hill settlement. It is available, suitable and achievable as a potential housing site in the short-medium term of the draft Local Plan period and would add flexibility to the Borough's housing delivery targets to ensure that objectively-assessed requirements are met in full. The site can help to deliver high-quality residential-led development in a well-connected and sustainable location, in accordance with the fundamental principles and objectives of the draft Local Plan.
- 1.5 The site is currently Green Belt however given the level of housing need within the Borough and based on exceptional circumstances, we recommend that the site is allocated for residential development. The site would make a logical addition to the wider Crews Hill site allocation.
- 1.6 This Statement covers the following: Site description (section 2); Potential Development (section 3); Response to draft Local Plan (section 4); Case for Development (section 5); Conclusion (section 6).

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located on the northern side of Strayfield Road adjacent to the settlement of Crews Hill in the central northern part of the Borough. A site location plan is set out at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 Rectory Farm comprises a vast area of undeveloped agricultural land with associated farm house and agricultural buildings. The site subject of this statement is a small portion of the wider Rectory Road site. It is flat and is bounded by Crews Hill Golf Course to the north; the railway line to the east; Strayfield Road to the south and Turkey Brook to the east. Access to the site appears to be currently sought directly off Strayfield Road however this section of the road is not an adopted highway.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is relatively built up / urban fringe in nature. The Crews Hill area to the east comprises predominately commercial uses including horticultural glasshouses and associated agricultural structures and building supply premises. There is a cluster of large detached residential properties in the centre of the settlement. The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating – 0/1a – which is at the lowest end of the scoring system. Crews Hill train station is located approximately 0.9 miles (18 minute walk / 6 minute cycle) away which provides two services an hour towards Hertford North and two services an hour towards Moorgate, London. The closest bus stops are on Theobalds Park Road (5 minute walk) which provide access to route 456 with 2 stops an hour providing access between Crews Hill and Edmonton. In terms of local services, Crews Hill contains a selection of local shops, a pub and an existing primary school.

2.4 The site has the following designations:

Adopted Local Plan	Draft Local Plan
Metropolitan Green Belt	Metropolitan Green Belt
Area of Special Character	Rural place making areas- Crews Hill
	London National Park City

Planning History

- 2.5 In terms of planning history, the Council's planning application database indicates that no recent planning applications of relevance have been submitted in relation to the site. The most recent applications relate to the agricultural use of the site, an application for the change of use of an existing building to storage (ref: 18/02097/FUL) was approved on 29th October 2018.
- 2.6 The site in its entirety was previously promoted to LBE as part of the Call for Sites exercise (February 2021). The site was identified as "potentially suitable" in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HEELAA, 2021) for 503 dwellings.

3. Potential Development

- 3.1 We consider that the site (adjacent to Crews Hill Golf Course) offers potential for residential development, for approximately 39 to 65 new homes, based on 30-50 dwellings per hectare ('dph') and a net developable area of c. 60%. Proposals would include a policy compliant level of affordable housing and other requirements.
- 3.2 At this stage no site surveys or masterplanning exercises have been undertaken however we would be able to complete this work if useful to support the emerging Local Plan.

4. Response to draft Local Plan

- 4.1 This section considers some of the policies put forward in the draft Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') updated in July 2021 requires that any Local Plan submitted to the Secretary of State for examination must be capable of being found both legally compliant and sound. In accordance with NPPF Para 35 this places various duties on the Council including, but not limited to, ensuring the Plan is: i) Positively prepared; ii) Justified; iii) Effective; and, iv) Consistent with national policy. If the Local Plan fails to accord with each of the above requirements, it is incapable of complying with the NPPF.
- 4.2 Overall, we support the preparation of a new Local Plan for LBE, however we have some recommendations and points of clarification which aim to make the plan sound. Our comments below relate to specific draft policies and evidence base documents.
- 4.3 We suggest that all of the matters which we raise are clarified within the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

Chapter Two – Good Growth in Enfield

Vision and Objectives

- 4.4 We support the Spatial Vision and Objectives which aim to provide new homes and jobs within a green setting. We suggest that the site can help achieve the Council's aspirations for the Borough. We support the creation of the London National Park City, which is outlined in the objectives.

Spatial Strategy

- 4.5 We support draft Policy SS1 (Spatial Strategy) and agree that at least 25,000 new homes should be provided by 2039, with the focus of growth at four placemaking areas where high quality and well-designed development will come forward.
- 4.6 The Council outline in SS1 and H4 that small sites will form part of the Councils housing supply and that the Council will seek to deliver 353 homes on sites of less than 0.25 hectares however Table 4.2 of the London Plan sets a target for Enfield to deliver 3,530 homes on small sites. We assume this is a drafting error that will be amended.
- 4.7 We consider that the medium growth option is appropriate however it could be increased. We consider that the high growth option is not deliverable or realistic, and the low growth option would not sufficiently meet development needs.
- 4.8 We recommend that the Council reviews the overall housing target (medium growth option) as we consider it could be potentially increased for a number of reasons. Firstly, we consider that additional development could come forward e.g. at Crews Hill placemaking area and potentially on other sites. Secondly, London's housing need is

significant and we consider that housing needs and pressures will only increase into the future (following the next publication of the Government's standard method for calculating housing needs). We consider that an early review may need to be undertaken by the Council prior the statutory 5-year review to ensure sufficient progress towards this housing target.

- 4.9 We recommend that Rectory Farm is allocated for residential development as part of the Crew Hill place-making area to help deliver additional new homes.

Chapter 3 – Places

- 4.10 As stated above we support proposals for the Crews Hill placemaking area and the London National Park City.

Policy PL8 – Rural Enfield

- 4.11 We agree with the vision for Rural Enfield however we request the Council clarifies what status in planning policy terms the National Park City designation would carry. This is useful to understand in relation to future development taking place in the area. We also request further information on the timescales for delivery of the blue / green infrastructure.

Policy PL9 – Crews Hill

- 4.12 We support the Vision for Crews Hill placemaking area, which includes part of the site. We agree that the area can provide a mix of land use opportunities. We suggest that the placemaking area could be extended to include this sites. We recommend that the Council provides information in relation to what development could be delivered beyond 2039 and what areas of land would be safeguarded to help better understand how the area is planned to change. We also recommend that a key is provided to support Figure 3.10 (Crews Hill Concept Plan).

Chapter 8 – Homes for All

H1: Housing Development Sites

- 4.13 As explained in Para 4.5 above we agree that 24,920 new dwellings should be provided up to 2039 however we recommend that the Council reviews this figure as we consider it could be potentially increased. Also as stated in Para 4.11 we recommend that the total site capacities (beyond 2039) are set out. We recommend that the Council provides a Housing Trajectory to demonstrate delivery over the plan period.
- 4.14 In response to Table 8.3 we suggest that additional homes could be delivered during the plan period if for example start dates on sites take place sooner than expected e.g. Crews Hill placemaking area.
- 4.15 We support draft policies H2 and H3 which cover affordable housing, and housing mix and type. We would aim to achieve 35% affordable housing on site.

Site Allocation SA27 (Land at Crews Hill)

- 4.16 We support the site allocation of Crews Hill however we consider that the allocation could be extended to include this part of Rectory Farm. We consider that the site could be included within the indicative locations for housing led areas that form part of the allocation. The site would logically round off the indicative placemaking area.
- 4.17 The HELAA identifies the Rectory Farm site as a whole as 'potentially developable' for 503 units.

Other Policies

- 4.18 We also support the draft policies on sustainability (chapter 4), health and well-being (chapter 5), green and blue infrastructure (chapter 6), design and character (chapter 7), economy (chapter 9), town centres (chapter 10), rural Enfield (chapter 11), cultural, leisure and recreation (chapter 12), movement and connectivity (chapter 13), environmental protection (chapter 14) and delivery and monitoring (chapter 15).

5. Case for Development

- 5.1 We recommend that the site Sunbeam Stud is allocated for future housing or employment development within the new Local Plan. This section summarises the case for development at the site.

- 5.2 The case for development includes the following considerations:

- Sustainable Patterns of Development;

- Contribution to the role/function of the Green Belt;
- Development Needs;
- Deliverability/Developability; and
- Exceptional Circumstances.

Sustainable Patterns of Development

- 5.3 Future development at the site would support sustainable patterns of development, which is a requirement of the NPPF, because it is a brownfield site in close proximity to public transport. When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries “*the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account*” and... “*where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or is well-served by public transport*” (Para 142).
- 5.4 The site is within 0.9 miles (18 minute walk) of Crews Hill Railway Station and multiple bus stops. In addition, part of the site is located within the Crews Hill placemaking area which is proposed for significant future growth. Therefore it’s sustainability credentials are not in question.

Contribution towards the Role and Function of the Green Belt

- 5.5 We consider that the site makes a relatively limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, and should therefore be considered for future development.
- 5.6 The Council’s Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land Study Final Report (August 2020) concludes that the site (which is situated within a larger parcel) makes a strong contribution towards the Green Belt purposes as follows:

Table 10.1 | Enfield’s Green Belt Site Scoring for Rectory Farm

Green Belt Purpose	Assessment of Rectory Farm
Purpose 1 (Sprawl)	Strong/Relatively Strong
Purpose 2 (Merging)	Relatively Strong
Purpose 3 (Safeguarding)	Strong
Purpose 4 (Setting)	Weak
Purpose 5 (Regeneration)	Strong

- 5.7 We consider that the site is well defined and has clear and defensible boundaries, and as a result when assessed it isolation would make a more limited contribution.
- 5.8 Whilst recognising the impact of the expansion of Crews Hill onto the wider setting of Enfield, we consider the release of this parcel, alongside other parcels around Crews Hill would have less contribution to the Green Belt than what is stated above. Part of the site forms part of a wider site allocation proposed for release from the Green Belt therefore its impact should not be considered in isolation.
- 5.9 Rectory Farm is by Crews Hill Golf Course to the north; the railway line to the east; Strayfield Road to the south and Turkey Brook to the east. As such, the site is well contained within its setting. Furthermore, the release of the Green Belt will bring much needed housing for the Borough.

Development Needs

- 5.10 As demonstrated by the draft Local Plan, there is a requirement to identify land for future development including housing and employment uses. The allocation of the site to contribute towards development targets of the Crews Hill placemaking area would help meet local needs, including affordable housing.
- 5.11 At this early stage we consider the site could provide 39 - 65 new homes set within suitable landscaping.

Deliverability / Developability

- 5.12 In respect of the NPPF we consider that the site is 'deliverable' and / or 'developable'.
- **"Deliverable:** To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years.
 - **Developable:** To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged."
- 5.13 The site is available; offers a suitable location for development; and delivery is achievable. Further detail in respect of these three requirements is set out below:
- **Available** – The site is in a single land ownership (LBE). At this stage, there are no identified issues in relation to the Council or a third-party bringing forward the site for development. As such, there are no constraints or restrictions in terms of ownership which might mean the site cannot come forward within the Plan period.
 - **Suitable** – The Council have confirmed through their evidence base and Draft Local Plan that part of the site is proposed to be released from the Green Belt. Whilst the Green Belt Assessment raises concerns regarding the harm of releasing this area of land from the Green Belt, we consider it offers a logical extension to the Crews Hill area and also has a more limited contribution to the Green Belt overall. The site is bounded by physical and natural barriers on all sides and is located to the western side of the railway line. The site is also located in a highly sustainable location, within 0.9 miles of Crews Hill railway station. We consider that there are no insurmountable issues which cannot be overcome through appropriate mitigation measures.
 - **Achievable** – Development on the site is considered to be inherently achievable, and there are considered to be no insurmountable constraints to development. The site could be utilised to deliver a diverse range and type of housing, and would therefore be appealing to several developers and housebuilders. Crews Hill is set to be an attractive new community with great sustainability credentials and therefore we consider that development would be able to commence on-site within an earlier phase of development, and within the Plan period.

Exceptional Circumstances

- 5.14 We suggest that the following reasons cumulatively comprise "exceptional circumstances" which would justify the site's release from the Green Belt and future development, in accordance with NPPF Para. 136.

- Meeting local development needs by contributing towards local and London housing targets which must be met as a minimum;
- Helping to address house price and affordability issues within the Borough and wider Market Area;
- Balancing out housing mix to ensure that the right type of housing (such as market / affordable housing, or senior living) is delivered in the right places in the Borough;
- Contributing towards housing delivery to help ensure the Borough has a positive housing land supply position;
- Developable site which is available; offers a suitable location for development; and delivery is achievable;
- Opportunities for beneficial use of the Green Belt in terms of providing enhanced landscaping, biodiversity, public access, green and blue infrastructure, contribution to the London National Park City;
- Achieving sustainable patterns of development; and
- Lack of environmental or landscape constraints to development.

5.15 We acknowledge that as set out in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land (“MOL”) Study Final Report (August 2020), the site does make a positive contribution towards the Green Belt, however based on a variety of reasons, we agree that the site should be released from the Green Belt as outlined in the draft Local Plan.

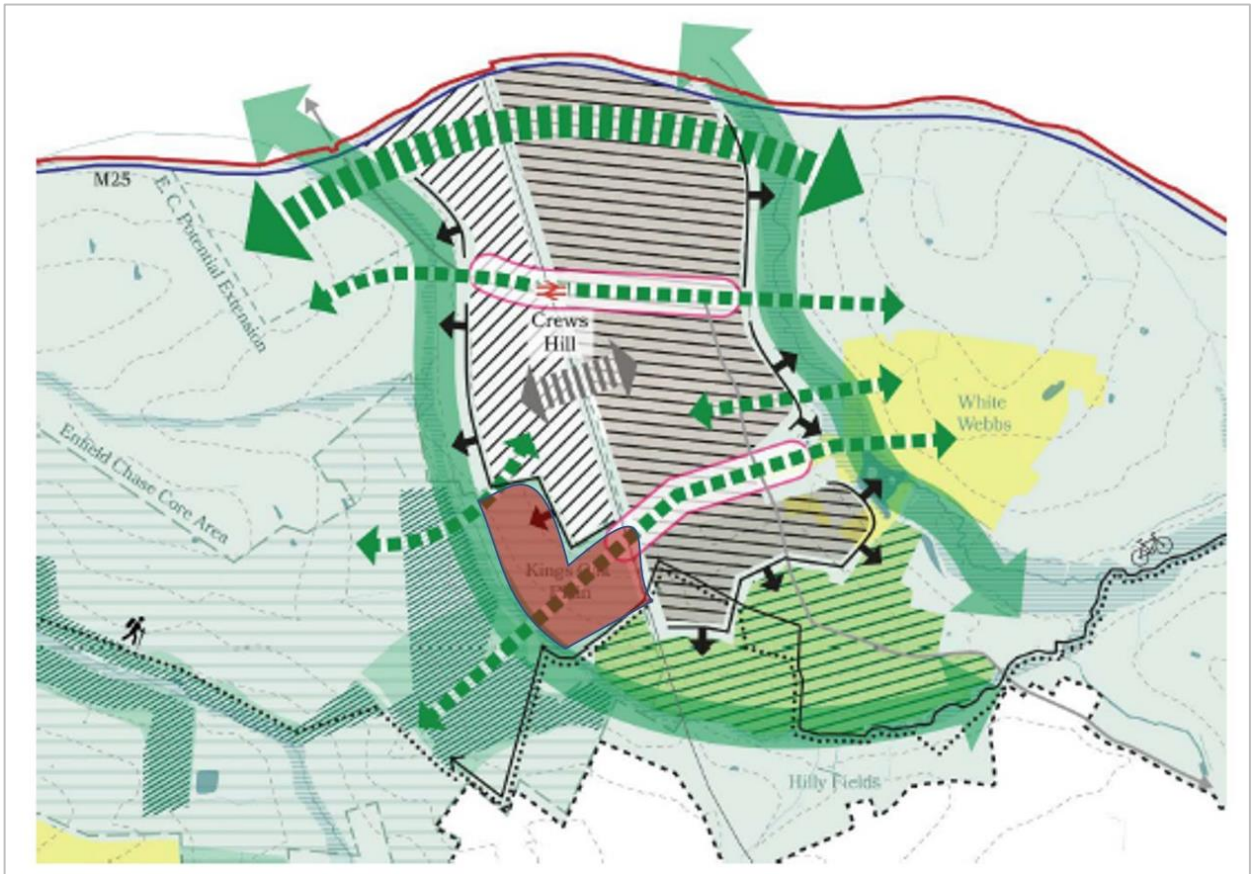
6. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 6.1 This Statement has considered the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan and the associated evidence base and, in the context of this, has outlined a number of clarifications and comments which we wish to be considered ahead of the next round of consultation.
- 6.2 Overall, we support the draft Local Plan, and consider that the site can contribute towards achieving the Council's vision and strategic objectives, because the site represents a logical and sustainable location for future development.
- 6.3 In terms of next steps, we welcome the opportunity to further discuss the site proposals with the Council and would be able to undertake any further technical studies considered necessary to support the case for development.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Rectory Farm Site Plan

Rectory Farm (marked as red), located to the south of Crews Hill Golf Course.



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