

Enfield Local Plan

General comments

I wish to put forward my objections to the Draft Enfield Local plan. At the outset I want to make it clear that I recognise the need for more and better housing within LBE and that the many thousands of people on the housing list have a right to decent, affordable homes.

However, any building now must be seen in the context of a post-COVID, post-Grenfell world on the brink of climate disaster. The local plan seems to be addressing a mid-21st century need with a mid-20th century remedy. The 21st century needs housing that is built on sustainability principles in terms of insulation, heating and lighting i.e. use of renewable energy sources. It is unclear how this draft plan addresses these important requirements.

It is unclear how the proposed developments can possibly meet 21st century needs and make an impact on reducing the current housing list. For example, the type of housing will be largely for sale at prices presumably in line with other new developments within Enfield such as the new build on the Chase Farm site. Here family homes are currently on the market for in excess of £700,000. How does this reduce the numbers of people on the housing list?

I have focussed my objections to two main sites i.e. Crews Hill and Chase Park; however, I object in principle to all development in the Green Belt especially when there is no unequivocal evidence that this is either necessary or desirable.

Policy SP PL9, pages 77-80 and Concept Plan Figure 3.10, Crews Hill

I raise objections in the following four key areas:

Destruction of the Green Belt: The proposed development is extremely large, the equivalent of building a large village or small town. It extends far beyond any 'derelict' areas and requires the destruction of high-quality Green Belt land including a golf course and possibly a riding stable.

Increased car use: This development would eventually accommodate at least 9000 or 10,000 people at a conservative estimate. If the rumoured further development of up to a total 7500 houses is agreed then eventually the population in this area will be significantly greater.

As the Royal Institute of Architects and others have observed large developments on Green Belt land generally give rise to increased car use: this is required for access to schools, employment, shopping and other activities. At Crews Hill existing transport links are poor and there appears to be no firm strategy to improve this situation as indicated by the use of vague phrases such as '*Development at Crews Hill should improve the functionality and connectivity of the east-west green corridors*' or '*the development will need to address limitations in the capacity of the existing road*'.

Infrastructure needs: As well as a lack of a clear plan for improving transport links there seems to be no clear strategy on how to address the other infrastructure needed to support such a development, for example, schools, GP facilities, shared workspace, community amenities or local shopping opportunities. A development of this size requires significant investment in sewage and water provision as well as a sustainable energy supply. Overall, installation of such infrastructure would result in major disruption in the Crews Hill area for several years which in turn would adversely affect neighbouring areas.

Increased pollution: The development of the Crews Hill area would give rise to increased transport and light pollution in both the short and long term with the resultant effects on the health of its inhabitants. As this site borders Hilly Fields and White Webbs Park the effect of such pollution would be to detriment of these extremely valuable green areas

Strategic Policy PL10, pages 80-87 and figure 3.11: Chase Park/Vicarage Farm development

I raise objections in the following four key areas:

Loss of Enfield Chase: As Dr J Langton has made clear in his submission to the Council '*Enfield is the only surviving example of a chase, within which rights to game and over vegetation varied*

slightly from those in forests.... Thus, Enfield possesses an extremely rare and very valuable landscape asset'. The proposed development at Vicarage Farm (now re-named Chase Park) would destroy a significant part of this rare and valuable asset. It would also irreparably and irreversibly deprive the Chase of its overall integrity

Infrastructure needs: If this were to go ahead it would be the equivalent of building a large village or small town without the benefit of enhanced infrastructure and facilities and the comments I have made with regards to Crews Hill also apply here.

Unsubstantiated claims for employment and transport: This proposed plan makes much of the availability of local transport and employment. There is much emphasis on potential employment at the Chase Farm site without reference to the development already there and which would surely go a long way to satisfying any employment needs.

As far as transport is concerned I would reiterate the point made above i.e. the more houses you build the more car use is increased. In any case the plan is only based on current use of transport and other facilities such as schools not on the increased use that would eventually be needed to support 3000 households.

Increased pollution: This proposed development borders Trent Park an area of great beauty that is well used and valued by inhabitants of LBE and beyond. A development of this nature would by its very nature significantly increase both transport and light pollution to the detriment of this extremely valuable green area.

In conclusion

I believe that the Council has failed adequately to make the case for the destruction of Green Belt land in the service of providing much needed decent housing.

I earnestly request that the Council reconsiders the plan for destruction of the valuable Green Belt which is a benefit to all in the LBE and beyond. Once destroyed it is gone for ever. Please shelve this draft plan, go back to the drawing board and diligently review other options for providing much needed affordable housing in the Borough.