

Dear Enfield Council,

Response to the Draft Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation 2021.

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

1. I am writing 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; 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. These sites are part of historic Enfield Chase, which is unique in the southeast and played an important role in the development of Enfield. It is a rare and valuable landscape asset and its loss would cause permanent harm not only to the Green Belt, but also to the very character of the borough.
2. I also object to Policies SA62 page 383 and SP CL4 pages 277-279 because they transfer part of Whitewebbs Park, a public amenity, into private management. I reject the Council's analysis that Whitewebbs Golf Course was losing money and call for its reinstatement.
3. I am also objecting to Policy SA52 page 372, which would remove part of Rammey Marsh, a wildlife area and public amenity, from the Green Belt.
4. I am also objecting to the tall building policies on pages 156-160, Figure 7.3, Figure 7.4 and Policy DE6, and SA2 Palace Gardens Shopping Centre page 321 which propose areas for and the acceptable height of tall buildings which, in many cases would mar the landscape and are unnecessary because other lower-rise building forms could provide the same accommodation, as stated in the policy.

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 the 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.

CPRE's new report shows that we still have enough brownfield land in England for at least 1 million homes - land we can use to tackle the housing crisis without unnecessary loss of our countryside. Therefore, I am in favour of developing previously-used brownfield land in the borough to meet Enfield's challenging housing target without eating into the Green Belt and other open spaces. The height and dominance of the proposed tall buildings (even within the town centre conservation area!) are also a cause for concern.

Over the space of the next 18 years, this Administration intends to build more homes on the greenbelt [at Crews Hill and Chase Park] than on Meridian Water, the Council's own brownfield site! Worse still, this preferred option is itself at variance with the Mayor of London's own London Plan.

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