

Enfield is planning 3500 new homes in Crews Hill on green belt land.

I am writing to object to these plans for the following reasons as I feel that the proposals are inappropriate, not required, justified, or necessary in this area.

1 Crews Hill is green belt land

The essential argument is that house building is not permitted on green belt land, such as in Crews Hill as it is protected in law.

Since Green Belts were established in England in 1955, they have served to prevent the physical growth of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring cities and towns from merging, and there is no reason to change the principle now.

Referring to the plan document, on page 17, mention is made of “*allowing the limited release of the Green Belt*”. This argument is fundamentally flawed as a limited release means full release.

Once the green belt is lost, it is lost forever, and this encourages further development in nearby green belt land.

Page 21. Enfield aims to “*strengthen the rural parts of Enfield as a leading destination in the London National Park City – a place for people to come and experience nature, with opportunities to walk and cycle through connected habitats of rewilded corridors and experience the highlights of historic and leisure attractions. To support the varied qualities of the rural parts of Enfield, including food growing, nature recovery, thriving economic contributor and landscape value*” This cannot happen if Green Belt is lost.

The main objections to housebuilding under this heading are summarised below.

- a. Green Belt land is currently protected under planning law.
- b. Once green belt is lost it is lost forever. The Council plan 7% loss now and if allowed now it will inevitably continue in the future.
- c. The London Mayor has seen the Enfield plan and has already disagreed with the need for using green belt land.
- d. Green belt provides fresh air and green spaces as well as absorbing co2, vital in the fight against climate change.
- e. Green belt is vital to providing open green spaces and improving mental health.
- f. If agreed, the whole of Crews Hill will be a major construction site for next 20+ years.
- g. London National Park City map shows Crews Hill as open space and woodland, without housing development. Any housing would compromise this initiative.

2. Crews Hill is poorly connected

Crews Hill is poorly connected to the other main built up residential areas with poor roads, infrequent rail links and minimal public transport links. It is not walkable from any other main residential area. There are no cycle lanes to other built up areas such as Enfield Town, and the cost to provide enhanced roads would be significant. Crews Hill is simply poorly connected to

other parts of the Borough such that an increase in housing would be detrimental and not sustainable.

Referring to the plan document, Page 18. *“East-west disparities will be reduced by delivering high quality new infrastructure”* Where will the new infrastructure be built, no details have been provided in the draft local plan? On page 78 these limitations are acknowledged.

“Notwithstanding the requirement for improvements to walking and cycling, the development will need to address limitations in the capacity of the existing road network”

Development for housing at Crews Hill will require significant infrastructure to minimise noise from the M25. Page 79 point 20. *The design of all residential properties should mitigate the blight of motorway noise in their layout, design and location of outside space.* So the question is, who will build the infrastructure, bunds and noise reduction infrastructure necessary to make housing at Crews Hill viable?

The main objections under this heading are shown below.

- a. There is currently no infrastructure to support 3500 houses.
- b. Houses will need cars and not fulfil sustainability objectives such as encouraging walking and cycling.
- c. The existing roads are narrow and not suited for the increase in traffic.
- d. Construction of supporting infrastructure and amenities is often neglected and either delayed or not completed at all.

3. Loss of businesses and Golf Course

Crews Hill has many valuable and successful businesses that provide employment and income. These would be lost if houses replace businesses. In addition:-

- a. Enfield Council plan to build houses on Crews Hill golf course, despite the golf course having 34 years left on the lease with Enfield Council.
- b. Many local people enjoy visiting Crews Hill businesses, such as nurseries.

4. Other sites are available and better suited

To quote from the document and take Enfield medium growth option table 2.2 with 25,000 new homes over 18 years to 2039. Meridian Water caters for 10,000 new homes, leaving 15,000 over 18 years which is less than 850 per year. This extent of new housebuilding can be accommodated within existing development areas, brownfield sites and the other 8, non green belt placemaking areas, such as Southgate, Enfield Town etc..

Therefore, I disagree with the “Cons” section of the medium growth option, which states that medium growth requires “release of green belt land”.

5. Houses in Crews Hill will not deliver the main objectives

- a. The proposals will not deliver affordable houses for Enfield residents. Eg Chase Farm development fell well short of the proposed initial social housing provision.
- b. How can the Council guarantee that houses in Crews Hill will be for Enfield residents. Market forces would dictate who buys houses in Crews Hill.
- c. Housebuilding in Crews Hill will only benefit the Council, landowners and developers. Many of the sites in Crews Hill have already been purchased by housebuilders.

Turning to the document, I find it vague and cumbersome in parts, for example.

Use of the word sustainable without definition

The council uses the word sustainable frequently without defining what it means especially while arguing for new housing on green belt land.

To be sustainable Crews Hill housing would require new roads, transport links, cycle links, doctors, schools, shops etc further damaging green belt.

Poorly presented

On page 76 how can the Council publish a document with a map without a legend to explain the various shading and coloured areas. For example,

What do the black arrows mean?

What is the difference between cross-hatching left to right and right to left?

What do the dotted green arrows mean, why are some larger/longer than others?

Why does the map not have a scale?

There is no mention of how many houses in the next period beyond 2039.

Unclear sentences without meaning

Vague statements, such as Page 80 point 3.9.7

To the southern part of the allocation is limited to the boundary of the Clay Hill conservation area which reflects the changing character of landscape and built development to the south of the area and maintains the perceptual separation between the built north edge of Enfield at Gordon Hill and the new settlement form at Crews Hill. The development at Crews Hill is positioned to connect east to west with existing connections across or under the railway by road, track or footpath providing opportunities to improve east-west connectivity. Green links extend from the heart of area out into the wider landscape. These multi-functional corridors, extend habitats, make access to open space easy and extremely close to homes and workplaces, and provide sustainable travel opportunities to the wider Borough and in particular in an east-west direction"

And 3.9.8

Building and public realm typologies can make the most of the precedent for large glass houses related to the horticultural and market garden history. New architecture which allows communities to grow their own food and a Borough supply chain that assists local growers with the economies of scale offered by Borough wide provision can create an identity and function for this new place which is rooted in its past and builds upon the skills and enterprise already present. The availability of land indicates a supply of brownfield development over the plan period with further phases of development in the next plan period.

Statements such as these are too vague and lack proper explanation on how these ideologies will be achieved.

Summary

To conclude, Crews Hill contributes to the "green lung" that Enfield Council often promote, and housebuilding will diminish this benefit significantly. Referring to text of Page 14 (local plan)

"Growth is never just a 'numbers game' and good placemaking is needed to ensure that the valued qualities, uniqueness and distinctiveness of Enfield's neighbourhoods are celebrated."

Surely housebuilding in Crews Hill would be detrimental to Crews Hill's valued qualities, uniqueness, and distinctiveness for all of the reasons stated above and I re-iterate my opposition to the Local Plan proposals for green belt land.