

30th August 2021

Strategic Planning and Design

Enfield Council

FREEPOST

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Dear Sirs,

Response to the Draft Local Plan Document

Comments re Sainsbury's site, 681 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill, London N21 3RS (Site Reference SA32)

On 13th August many of the residents of Fernleigh Road in Winchmore Hill were made aware of the existence of the a document which had been produced by Enfield Council entitled - Enfield Local Plan - Main issues and preferred approaches - June 2021. Apparently this document was put out for 'consultation' in June with the consultation period ending on 13th September. A leaflet was subsequently posted to us on 17th August - some 2 months or more after it was produced and less than 1 month before the consultation period ends. This is not the first time that the Council has attempted to push through its policies by cleverly concealing its plans and claiming that there is a consultation process in place– but without actually properly consulting with residents. I refer to the Green Lanes Cycle Lane and the LTNs.

Nevertheless, we subsequently attended a display of the document at Palmers Green Library on 17th August. We assumed that there would be representatives available to answer questions and explain more about the document. The Council fielded two junior members of staff who had very little knowledge and were unable to answer any of the important questions put to them. The display was therefore largely pointless. They had a map and two paper copies of the document. My wife had to queue to look at the document with no social distancing. The representatives did however comment that the Local Plan had been available to view from 2018 and that all residents had been consulted. This was clearly not the case as none of the residents on Fernleigh Road were aware of its existence.

Notwithstanding the above, I turn now to the document itself. The document goes in to a wealth of detail on the Council's plans for development of new homes, protection of the environment and creation of prosperity. It states that the plan has four place making areas where the majority of new homes are being built: Meridian Water, Southbury, Crews Hill and Chase Park. There are also other

areas, including Southgate, where other major developments are planned. However, towards the end of the document it lists all of the sites being considered including a number of sites outside of these areas. I am very concerned in particular about the proposal relating to **Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill on Green Lanes**.

Whilst the government's plans include the building of thousands of homes over the next few years, the fact that Enfield is expected to accommodate thousands more residents as part of this process is very concerning. The borough is already overcrowded, the roads are congested, the public services cannot cope and the doctor's surgeries and schools are full. The draft plan states that you plan to build 25,000 new homes in the next 20 years. If this is going to happen the whole nature and atmosphere of parts of the borough will change. The borough will move from a pleasant and quiet suburb to an overcrowded noisy inner London overspill area. The plan talks about Enfield being the 'green lung' of London. How can we claim to be that if we continue to build on more and more of our open land.

The proposal to build 299 new homes on the Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill site is flawed for many reasons as follows:

- People from the immediate area, including the elderly, and those from further afield use the existing supermarket, as it is one of the few decent supermarkets in the area. Even though the plan may be to preserve a store on the site, how can 299 homes be squeezed on to the site without reducing car parking space or the surrounding green space.
- The immediate area is already very busy and the main roads are often congested due to LTN's and the Cycle Lane. By building even more homes this will make the problem even worse.
- We already have several new apartment developments on this part of Green Lanes – including the former Century House, Capitol House, the site opposite Sainsbury's, the old Police Station and the Travis Perkins site. We do not need more.
- The area previously consisted mainly of Edwardian and 1930's family properties. By dropping 299 extra homes on a site must mean that a large proportion will be one and two bed apartments. As stated above, with the new apartments already built, this will totally change the character of the area.
- I understand that in order to accommodate this number of homes, the apartment blocks will have to be several storeys high. Again this would completely detract from the character of the area and any development should, at least, be restricted to no more than 2 storeys high to match the surrounding properties and to reflect the original planning conditions placed on the Sainsbury's development (see below).
- The park area surrounding the store provides an area for local residents and families to meet, relax and enjoy the trees and open space. By removing this to accommodate homes you will be taking away a much needed local amenity. How can you claim Enfield is the 'green lung' of London if you are removing small local spaces. The park should be protected at the very least and made an Asset of Community Value.
- When Sainsbury's was first built, a condition of the planning permission was that a proportion of the land (which was previously playing fields) should be retained as green space for use by the local community. It was also a condition that the store could not be built over two storeys high to preserve the character of the immediate area. Surely, these principles still apply today.
- By building this number of new homes in this part of Winchmore Hill will increase the local population by around 750 -1000 people. This will increase traffic on the already very busy

roads, it will place more pressure on schools and other public resources such as doctors and dentists etc. It is already extremely difficult to get a doctor's appointment. This number of additional people will make these problems much worse.

- This additional number of people will make public transport even busier. In particular, the train service from Winchmore Hill (pre-pandemic) was overcrowded and unreliable. Again more people travelling from this area will exacerbate this problem.
- Some of the individual sites identified in the plan makes sense from a development perspective. They are in areas where additional homes are appropriate and the sites are not surrounded by existing properties. For example the Morrison's site on the A10 . By building on that site it is unlikely to affect many local residents. This is not the case for the Sainsbury's site. The area already has a large number of new properties just built or in the process of being built in the area. Many local properties and residents will be affected and the properties adjacent to Sainsbury's will be blighted as a result.
- If the borough has to have such a large number of additional homes, then build them in the part of the borough which is in need of development and regeneration i.e. in the east of the borough. There is an abundance of land, which was once used for industrial purposes in that part of the borough, which should now be converted to residential use. As you are doing at Meridian Water.
- In addition as the eastern side of the borough is generally cheaper, I would imagine that homes built in these areas would be more affordable – which should be the aim as opposed to allowing developers or landowners to profit.

In summary, the proposal to build homes on the site at Sainsbury's Winchmore Hill is flawed and does not make sense for so many reasons. It is not needed and more crucially is not wanted by local residents, who will vehemently oppose it at every opportunity.

Yours sincerely