

1 September 2021

## Draft Local Plan

### Concerning Policy SP PL9

**Regarding: The permanent destruction of the Green Belt**

**3,500 new houses in a “sustainable settlement” at Crews Hill with the potential for longer term expansion.**

### GREEN BELT

- Crews Hill is Green Belt land and must only be encroached upon under very special circumstances. The Draft Local Plan has not made a coherent argument for encroachment on the Green Belt.
- The Green Belt is land protected from inappropriate development, preventing urban sprawl, protecting the ecology and wildlife habitats and corridors within the countryside, providing natural means of absorbing carbon dioxide and rainwater, providing areas for food production, leisure, and mental wellbeing within reach of urban and suburban dwellings.
- The Enfield Community is aware of how fortunate we are to have this within our Borough and of how important it is for us to nurture and protect it.
- **Once the precedent of official encroachment has been set, there can be no reversal. Once lost, Enfield’s Green Belt will be lost forever.**
- Enfield Council wishes to build up to the “open countryside of rural Hertfordshire”. At the same time local authorities in Hertfordshire are also building towards Enfield on the countryside. The Green Belt is there to stop this and Enfield should be at the forefront of its preservation.
- Unofficial and official encroachment is already taking place: Currently there is weak enforcement concerning the destruction of wildlife habitats by land-owners. This includes the present destruction of green fields between the M25 and Whitewebbs Lane, which is to be taken over by Tottenham Hotspur, but which will add to the collapse of ecosystems with its artificial turf, buildings and sterile sports-fields.
- It is known that there is sufficient land available for home-building on Previously Developed Sites within the borough of Enfield without further encroachment on the Green Belt. These already have an infrastructure to support them. These have not been properly considered in the Local Plan.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- The Plan states that “residentialised redevelopment of brownfield sites will integrate with the area’s horticultural and foodproducing industries, creating a unique identity and function, with residents contributing a range of skills, and benefitting from education, training and

employment opportunities close to home, reducing the need to commute to work.” Crews Hill’s glasshouse industry withered over 50 years ago. I would welcome its resurrection but it is unlikely that the economic environment has changed sufficiently to allow this to happen to the extent your vision requires.

- It is not economically viable for the development of Crews Hill to deliver affordable houses for Enfield residents. CPRE research shows that only a tenth of homes built in the Green Belt are affordable.
- It is unlikely that people working in the horticulture sector would be able to afford the homes envisaged, as it is and will continue to be, a low-paid sector.
- There is currently no infrastructure to support the extra 3,500 family homes and there is little reference in the Draft Plan to the infrastructure required to support the community: Shops, schools, transport, doctors, chemists, etc. Developers will neglect to include these or the cost of the supporting infrastructure will be inhibiting and will fall to Enfield residents not the developers or landowners.
- Family homes require cars. Without sufficient transport links, each home will have a minimum of 2 cars, ie, an addition of at least 7,000 cars. Walking and cycling from home will not be an option for the majority. Local industry and training will not support the local community. Commuting will continue to be necessary (further excluding people on low income). It will not be carbon neutral. Personal transport will continue to be essential and continue to pollute the environment.
- There are three road routes into Crews Hill, all of which have current long queues and waiting at peak times and whenever the M25 is under stress.
  - To the West, the railway is a barrier, blocking large containers from Junction 24 of the M25 and the proposed hub at Holly Hill Farm; the junctions at both ends of East Lodge Lane and also at Cattlegate Road into Cuffley and Coopers End Lane into Potters Bar are inadequate and dangerous even now.
  - To the East, the A10 is a barrier, with Whitewebbs Lane/Road the only access and with increased problems due to the new Tottenham Hotspur developments.
  - To the South, Clay Hill is the only access leading to Enfield or the A10.
  - To the North, the M25 creates a barrier for exit into Cuffley and Goffs Oak and under a different authority’s control.
  - Even with improved or new roads cutting across the countryside and parks, access and egress will continue to be limited by these surrounding barriers.
- Crews Hill already has businesses which support many local people and which are an attraction for large numbers of people from Enfield and much further afield.
- Crews Hill Golf Course, although not perfect for ecology supports a diverse amount of wildlife, is a large green space absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>, and is able to absorb a substantial amount of rainwater, which a housing estate with the concreting of “gardens” would not.
- There are many well-used local footpaths through the Green Belt, including a junction of three paths at Holly Hill Farm. The huge mound of waste material is already a blight on an interesting landscape and to convert farmland into a distribution/storage hub is a very disappointing decision by the Council.

### **"GATEWAY SETTLEMENT"**

- It is unclear from the jargon-loaded local plan how Crews Hill will be developed as a "Gateway Settlement" to meet the mutually incompatible objectives of such a development:
  - of having 3,500 new homes
  - with enhanced access to nature,
  - sufficient industry and employment opportunities for a self-sufficient community
  - and to continue to encourage and welcome people to the "wild spaces of the rural north" (which will have been destroyed).

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Our objectives in Enfield should be:
  - Urban regeneration
  - genuinely affordable homes
  - a sustainable future.
- Building on the Green Belt will not meet these objectives, and the Local Plan is not realistic in tackling these vital issues.

**London's Green Belt must be preserved for future generations and not squandered for a short-term gain for the Council and large financial benefit to landowners and developers.**

**The Local Plan is developer-led and fails to properly consider the needs of local people.**

Yours sincerely