

Epping Forest District Council Representations to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016 (Regulation 18)

Stakeholder ID	4593	Name	Jennifer	Gilbert
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Date	11/12/2016
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Letter or Email Response:

I am writing to express my concerns about some of the areas under consideration for housing development. I quite appreciate the demands of the Government and the increasing and endless need for more housing, however, utilizing station and central Loughton car parks as well as valuable greens is staggeringly short sighted. It is well recognized of the value to physical and mental health of outside recreation, of exercise, caring for pets, and of social groups. Loughton has some valuable and well used Greens, such as Jessel Green and Rochford Green. More residents will only increase the need for these valuable green spaces. Flat green spaces are particularly suitable for games and social activities and so are absolutely necessary for the town, so should be protected. As for Town and Station car parks, I am simply staggered that these are considered suitable sites. They provide valuable parking for commuters and will be more valuable as more houses are built in the town and district. We can not rely on any increase in public transport (bus) as the population of the town increases, this has been clearly demonstrated with the gradual reduction in bus services, as recent as this year the 167 route was reduced. Little by little the bus services have been 'rationalized' for efficiency savings. Instead of using the station and town car parks, we should be thinking of how much more valuable they will be for the increasing population. Even though the number of spaces in the car park is apparently not being reduced, by making them 'underground' or with flats above, thus provides no opportunity for enlarging the car park as the demand increases with the population expansion over the decades. It is impractical to consider the potential of less use of motor vehicles, despite the concerns of carbon emissions, because, for instance there will be more houses in the town and district that are beyond reasonable walking distance from the stations and parents simply don't have the time in the mornings to take the children to school and themselves to the station for traveling to work, without using a car. As for the central town car park off Traps Hill, this is an essential car park for attending the sports centre and pool, and for shopping in the High Street. Without car parking space people will travel to shopping malls and essential town retail will be reduced. Loughton is a green town, it values its Greens. Increasing housing is necessary but not at the expense of our Greens and our car parks. Badly utilized industrial Brownfield land should be considered first. The flat greens have been deliberately planned for the enduring benefit of the residents. They are necessary for our mental and physical health, our exercise, public space, and the beauty of the town.

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