

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

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Method	Email			
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Letter or Email Response:

Dear Sir/Madam. Re- The Draft Local Plan Here is my response to the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Draft Local Plan. I have chosen not to use the official questionnaire provided by EFDC as I found it too restrictive and knew I would not be able to express my comments on it sufficiently as I feel it has been designed to prevent full and precise answers. I want to highlight that I feel this process has prevented many people responding, despite how angry they feel about this plan, because no provision was made for the elderly, housebound, sick and infirm, those with learning difficulties etc. to respond this consultation and so this consultation will definitely not reflect the feelings of a huge number of the districts residents. North Weald Airfield I only fully support the retention and intensification of aviation at North Weald airfield. I do not support any further housing in or around the airfield as I feel it is inappropriate both to safety and for noise pollution to any further dwelling there. The infrastructure needed for building of housing and business units will disturb both historical areas there and nature that is thriving in that area. Our airfield is of great historical importance, being a Battle of Britain airfield and an airfield that was operational from WW1, Paragraph 157 of the NPPF states that 'Crucially, Local Plans should identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance.' Clearly this paragraph applies to North Weald Airfield. It needs protecting for our future generations of which I belong, to educate all of them to understand what our past generations had to experience for their freedom. Its preservation is vital. Allocation A massive 24.29% of the proposed housing allocation for the Epping Forest District would be accommodated within the Parish of North Weald Bassett. This is excessive, disproportionate and very unfair. North Weald will be changed from a village to a town, that scale will cause our village to lose its character and village-feel. The proposed allocation for North Weald Village (1,580 homes) equates to a 78% increase in the number of dwellings for North Weald Village, and an additional 80.14% in residents. The number of sites proposed for North Weald Bassett must be reduced. The number of sites allocated in the Draft Local Plan is way in excess of the actual number of sites needed. This in turn results in the release of green belt to accommodate housing that is not needed. Page 151 of the Draft Local Plan (5.123) is placed under a heading of 'Town Centre'. This is clearly incorrect, as North Weald is a Village, and a village that is supported within the Masterplan as being retained as a village. Historical Sensitivity We are an area of great historical sensitivity. North Weald and it surrounding areas have Ancient Landscapes which need to be preserved at all costs. "This entire area is classified as having a 'high sensitivity' to change within the Settlement Edge Landscape Sensitivity Study 2010, identified as being a key landscape/environmental feature having a significant role in contributing to the structure, character and setting of the settlement," Infrastructure I am incredibly concerned that a failure to adequately provide the appropriate infrastructure will have a serious detrimental affect not only on current residents, but new residents and residents in Epping, Thornwood and surrounding areas and those who pass through North Weald Village to reach Epping. • Major

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improvements to the routes connecting North Weald Village to Epping; to the road, pavements, cycling would need to be done. At periods of rush hour it is problematical trying to get through Epping, The Plain, Bell Common, Epping High Street, with the huge amounts of traffic that use the area. With the amount of proposed development for this area and the amount of increase in traffic that will bring, well it doesn't bear thinking about. • Relying on increased public transport (i.e. buses) to meet the transport needs of new and current local residents to link to Epping is not sufficient, and will cause considerable additional problems at 'The Plain' junction, which is already suffering capacity issues. • The proposed residential area - SR-0158A, has given no consideration to the fact that the access to this site firstly for the actual building of and then residents of the dwellings, would never cope with the increased amount of traffic for that amount of houses. It is essentially a B road and was not built to take that amount of constant traffic. • GP Surgery and School. It is one thing for developers to say they will provide as part of the plan, a new surgery, a new school or extensions to existing ones. BUT.... These then have to be staffed. It is not the developers that pay for and provide the staffing for these. The NHS is already cash strapped and it is highly unlikely that they will be providing money to set up, run and staff a new doctor's surgery. As with a school, Essex Education and the DfE are already under great financial pressure and a new school is highly unlikely to materialise because there will not be the money to pay for the staffing and running of it. There are always promises that are never kept with developers; it's an easy cop-out for them to get their own way. The Sustainability Appraisal regularly refers to North Weald Bassett as a 'Town', when in fact it is a village more accurately a trio of villages. Who in the planning of the draft plan does not have a clear understanding of the settlements within the District? Traveller Site With regard to the Traveller and Travelling Show people community, the total allocation within the Draft Plan is for 36¹ pitches, 1 yard, which in terms of pitches is hugely excessive and should be hugely reduced, if not abandoned completely. The movement of the traveller community is usually considerable with many moving at once, it would be hugely disruptive to local residents, roads and will be another pressure on the local infrastructure. It was a plan that was looked at before and dismissed because of all the problems it would cause the local area; I cannot believe it is being considered again. SR-0158A (land south of Vicarage Lane) - for approx. 590 homes. I feel it's important to point out that Draft Local Plan figure 5.15 (site allocations for North Weald Bassett) details the site SR-0158A; however this has incorporated SR-0076 which has not been included as a potential site for development. It is noted within the Overview and Assessment of Residential Sites that SR-0076 is part of a larger site (presumably SR-0158A) which has been identified as suitable for allocation and it is unlikely that it would come forward as a standalone development, and that it should not be allocated. However, the results of the stage 2 assessment on SR-0158A were competed purely on the original SR-0158A site. It is therefore not clear exactly what site SR-0158A is, or the size of the site. If the entire site (including SR-0076) was to be allocated, the relevant evidence paperwork should show this. The original site of SR-0158a is a significant site of 28.11ha of well used grade 2 agricultural land. This would be a considerable loss of prime agricultural land that provides to the country's food production industry. Green Belt. The areas of green, open land to the west of Station Road which provides an essential 'buffer' between Waterman's Way and the noise and air pollution from the Epping and Ongar Heritage Railway should be protected and designated as 'District Open Land'. Green Belt land should be protected as that. It should not be allocated to any development in any area. We should be looking at existing areas that can be re-developed for housing, looking at empty properties that can be improved and re-used, not destroying our green belt land forever. Again our future generations may need housing and employment but not at the cost of our green open spaces. Flooding in North Weald. Something that hugely concerns me with the proposals for North Weald is that building in such massive numbers is going to affect the flood risk here. Both North Weald and Thornwood Common have a history of Flooding, and various alleviation measures have been implemented over recent years. Even with these flooding is still occurring. Houses and businesses were flooded here this summer again, the impact the proposals for the village will have on the flooding could potentially be catastrophic, especially the building on the SR-0158A site. If you take away all that agricultural land that allows for drainage you will greatly increase the risk for; Queens Road, the High Road, Oak Piece, and George Avey Croft. I am sending in my response knowing full well that the wishes of the 'residents' of the district are going to be ignored whatever we say. The wishes and aspirations of local residents will be entirely ignored, with Government leaving the Local Planning Authorities unable to consider the opinions of its existing population. Building will take place even if the roads, schools, health care cannot cope, building will take place at the expense of everything in the locality, and our areas will be changed beyond recognition. The quote 'this is not the Council's Local Plan, but rather your Plan for the area' This statement is a joke, because whatever our wishes are they will be ignored and it should not have been included in the documents. It is patronising, treating us like idiots. I am utterly disheartened with the entire process. I feel ignored and undervalued, I have been an EFDC resident for 13 years yet

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feel that counts for nothing as I will have absolutely no control over what is going to happen. We have had consultation after consultation over the last few years, and it feels rather like 'let's keep on inundating them until they get jaded with it all, they'll give up, than we can do what we want.' EFDC must state that the level of development proposed for North Weald is simply unacceptable. 1580 homes for North Weald are a ludicrous proposal and one that must be reconsidered. Yours faithfully ...Redacted...