

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

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| Stakeholder ID | 3924 | Name | D | Hughes |
| Method | Letter | | | |
| Date | 12/12/2017 | | | |

This document has been created using information from the Council's database of responses to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016. Some elements of the full response such as formatting and images may not appear accurately. Should you wish to review the original response, please contact the Planning Policy team: ldfconsult@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Letter or Email Response:

Dear Sir/Madam, We are writing to oppose the Epping Draft Local Plan. We strongly object to the 'overall vision' that the Draft Local Plan sets out for Epping Forest District. In particular, our view is that the sites on the South side of Epping are not suitable for development, as that is the area of which we have the most knowledge, but we also oppose the Plan for the Epping Town area as a whole. Our reasons are as follows: 1. Loss of Green Belt: We completely oppose the development of Green Belt land in the Epping Forest area and believe that all sites proposed on Green Belt land should be removed from the plan. Once areas of Green Belt are developed, its integrity is removed and there will be considerable pressure from interested parties on further developing other Green Belt sites. 2. Epping Town has been allocated a significantly larger proportion of development sites than any other area. The population increase will be around 33% in Epping versus around 21% for the whole of Epping Forest. The number of new dwellings will be around 14% of the total for the whole of Epping Forest in Epping. This is excessive and inappropriate, especially given that not enough evidence or detail has been provided in the Plan to ensure that the town, its roads and infrastructure would be able to cope with this increase. 3. Existing roads cannot take the current amount of traffic. Please refer to our Google Traffic screenshots in Appendix One. On **...Redacted...** alone, we have to endure gridlock during 'rush hour' as well as during much of the daytime now. Morning 'rush hour' usually starts at 7am when we're woken by cars beeping at each other outside, and often continues until at least 9.30am on a weekday morning. With the weight of traffic and parked cars, it is mostly a single-lane road and cars are either gridlocked by inconsiderate drivers or subject to cars travelling at an inappropriate speed to get to the end quickly before a vehicle comes the other way. Traffic from large/heavy goods vehicles is a big problem and they often cause utter mayhem. Ivy Chimneys and Brook Road are a 'rat run' for non-local traffic and drivers keen to avoid the main roads, as well as servicing two schools. We have lived on this road for over fifteen years and the traffic worsens every year. We have our own driveway, but many **...Redacted...** residents do not and they have to put up with parking on a different road sometimes due to commuter parking. We are greatly concerned about the pollution that we are subjected to, from the heavy traffic 'flow' which is often at a standstill outside our houses. Please see photographs in Appendix Two. There is also a massive danger to the school children walking to and from Ivy Chimneys Primary School. Our children attend the school and we have witnessed many a vehicle mounting the pavement to get around other cars; foul and abusive language aimed at pedestrians as well as other drivers. Emergency vehicles struggle to get through during the so-called 'rush hours'. Incidentally, we have asked the Council for help with these traffic issues, to no avail as it is unclear how to resolve it. The road cannot be widened due to the brook alongside the road and the bottleneck going under the railway bridge. The proposed new developments will clearly exacerbate these problems. In your document, Appendix B1.4.2, the Site Suitability Assessment, it states that for SR-0113A the traffic impact is 'expected to be uncongested at peak time, or site below

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the site size threshold where it would be expected to affect congestion' and for SR-0113B, 'low level congestion expected at peak times'. This is simply not true. Anyone who has ever been to Brook Road/Ivy Chimneys Road would know that this is incorrect. Traffic flow on the Brook Road/Bower Hill junction is also heavy enough, without adding access to a housing estate presumably coming from Flux Lane. No detailed information has been provided in the Plan on the impact of traffic from any of the proposed sites. 4. By developing the South side of Epping, it is our understanding that you believe that residents on the new developments will walk to Epping High Street to use its shops and facilities. Having lived on **...Redacted...** for over fifteen years, we can confidently assure you that this will not happen. Very few of us who live at this distance from the High Street regularly walk there as it is a long walk (around twenty minutes at a swift pace) and it is up a steep hill. Add shopping bags to that, and you can see why residents on the proposed sites will not be walking there. This obviously means that traffic in and around the centre of Epping will greatly increase and the demand for parking will be impossible to meet. Epping High Road is already gridlocked for much of the day and parking is often hard to find at any time of day (either on the High Street itself, in the town car-parks or in the surrounding streets) as shoppers and commuters compete for space. 5. . Related to the issue of increased traffic is the knock-on effect of air quality and noise pollution upon residents. There is insufficient analysis and evidence in the Plan that residents will not have their health and well being negatively affected. 6. There is no sufficiently detailed infrastructure plan which will determine how viable any of the proposed sites will be. We understand that it is the County Council which is responsible for roads, schools, GP surgeries, etc, but we cannot understand at all how you can plan these developments without a detailed infrastructure plan. Children cannot get into local schools already. Ivy Chimneys School is expanding to allow 15 extra children in the Reception year from 2018. If the South Side of Epping is developed, a new school will need to be built as Ivy Chimneys School could not be extended without significant disruption (and loss of playground). Given that the majority of parents drive their children to the school already, even those who live a short distance away e.g. Bower Hill, a bigger or new primary school will increase the traffic/parking congestion even more than at current. 7. Unsuitability of Brook Road site: We have lived on **...Redacted...** for over 15 years. The land at the bottom of Brook Road is a flood plain. It is waterlogged a high percentage of the year. Brook Road itself is subject to regular flash-flooding and becomes a river during heavy rainfall. The water is then often unable to drain from the gardens of the houses along this road. No detailed information has been provided on how floodwater will be mitigated if this site is developed or what impact this will have on surrounding land. Building on these sites would mean that the water running downhill from the town will have nowhere to go. In summary, we completely oppose the Epping local Plan due to the catastrophic impact proposed upon Epping Town including loss of Green Belt; the inappropriately large proportion of development allocated to Epping; the negative impact on roads that are already heavily congested, including not only an increase in commuter traffic but also local traffic travelling to the High Street from the South side sites; insufficient analysis and evidence that such a high burden of new development (and therefore traffic) will not have a negative impact on air and noise pollution; insufficiently detailed plan for the town's infrastructure; and the unsuitability of the Brook Road site. Yours faithfully **...Redacted...** Appendices with Google traffic images - see document attached in Darzin