

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

Stakeholder ID	4351	Name	Margaret & Duncan	Moore
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Letter or Email Response:

Dear Sir/Madam Please find below our responses to EFDC's Questionnaire on the Draft Local Plan which we understand have to be submitted by 5 p.m. today, 12th December 2016. Following the 9 numbered questions, our responses are :-

1. No, because the Draft Local Plan is not really protecting our Green Belt. The very reason the Green Belt was firstly put into place was to protect our forests and rural/green spaces and these are supposed to be permanently protected, unless there are special circumstances. If these boundaries start to be moved, it will encourage urban sprawl and our village identity and ambience will be forever lost. Local people enjoy these green spaces and they are a valuable asset to have in terms of woodland, nature reserves, public footpaths, local countryside. These are much needed to protect from flooding and the plants, trees, grasslands, etc, all help to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere which helps to combat climate change.
2. We do not agree with the distribution of new housing, particularly in Theydon Bois, by proposing to move the established Green Belt boundaries to make way for a vastly disproportionate amount (360) new homes in Theydon Bois and nearby. Local amenities/services are already stretched so that this immediate area is not sustainable and this goes against government thinking. The distribution of the new homes is not logical as it should be more concentrated on the larger town settlements in the District that already have more robust infrastructures and facilities and which would be able to cope with such a new demand, e.g. school places/doctors' appointments. Also, these would be better suited for expansion and development in the future.
3. We think that development around the more established towns such as Harlow is more sustainable, however we are against any encroachment into valuable Green Belt land.
4. The proposed shopping areas will bring with them good retail development, however it is very important that they should also not detract, i.e. take business away from the smaller independent retailers in the smaller settlements who provide a much needed service. The location of new housing and employment should be focussed in towns and settlements which have Primary Shopping Areas.
5. No we do not agree, as it is not sustainable in the Green Belt and in small villages such as Theydon Bois. There simply isn't the infrastructure in place, which you would have in a larger town/settlement area, and it would adversely affect the local people and their local job opportunities. It makes far more sense to focus employment development towards the larger settlements in the District which are more suited for future expansion.
6. No we do not agree as 4 of the sites for Theydon Bois are in the Green Belt and this would be very harmful. As we have said in point 1. above, this would be extremely detrimental to the rural feel and ambience of the village of Theydon Bois as it would lose its character should this urban spread be allowed to happen, which is actually against the fundamental values of Green Belt policy. A 23% increase to the size of the village is not only unacceptable, it cannot be described as " Sustainable Development " as it simply can't be 'sustained' in such a small village. As it is, the local school is over-subscribed and it is difficult to get doctors'

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appointments. We understand that these sites are only in the local plan as they have been put forward by land owners, and this in itself does not feel right as vested interests would then overtake what is truly sustainable development. 7. No, as we cannot see in the plan what the requirements for infrastructure will be and this point is very vague. There do not seem to be any provisions in place that the infrastructure required will be provided in the right place at the right time. 8. With regard to Theydon Bois, the Central Line tube is already running over capacity at peak times and more housing would exacerbate the problems on the tube and the roads into the village which would not cope. People would still have to go into the larger towns/settlements which have better facilities and the increase to the population would cause further congestion and damage to the roads. Housing numbers alone are not classed as a special circumstance in the Green Belt. We feel The Sustainability Appraisal contradicts itself about protecting the Green Belt. 9. We need the Green Belt policies to be clear on what is a disproportionate extension to a property and to define what is meant by 'materially larger' in the Green Belt. Also to define what is meant by 'infill development' and how redevelopment of previously developed land should be approached in the Green Belt. If there is consistency in the new local plan we can ensure that the local character of villages such as Theydon Bois can be protected for future generations and enhanced, rather than destroyed by urban sprawl. Yours faithfully Duncan & Margaret Moore