

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

Stakeholder ID	3351	Name	P	Evans
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Date	18/1/2017
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Letter or Email Response:

1. Do you agree with the overall vision that the Draft Local Plan sets out for Epping Forest District? (See paragraph 3.26, Chapter 3). No. As a layman, I have spent many hours reading the district plan in order to respond to the draft with the intention of not making comments that can be ruled invalid because they do not meet one of the policies. The relatively short period allowed for comment is disproportionately small compared to the time that has been taken, producing the draft. The conclusion I have reached is that the plan refers to policies and decisions made by various levels of government from the EU directives down to local council policies and decisions, thereby giving people affected by new housing little scope for challenge. With regard to the draft vision for the district, if the proposals for development north of Ongar are approved, it is my view that none of the residents in properties adjacent to the sites SR-0183, SR-0184, SR-0185, SR-0186 "will continue to enjoy a good quality of life." (Ref. Chapter 3). 2. Do you agree with our approach to the distribution of new housing across Epping Forest District?(See Draft Policy SP 2, Chapter 3). No. Existing communities away from Epping Forest are being asked to accept too large a number of new houses imposed thereby changing the nature of those communities over a relatively short time span. The number of houses allocated to each area of land identified is excessive. 3. Do you agree with the proposals for development around Harlow?(See Draft Policy SP 3, Chapter 3). No comment 4. For the two town centres and four district centres in the District the Draft Local Plan sets out a proposed primary shopping area which is intended to protect and encourage retail uses(See Draft Policy E 2 and Section 5 - Places). Do you agree with the proposed shopping areas? Within this question is revealed I believe the biased within the Council against those communities having little or no contact with Epping Forest. The reference to "two town centres" I assume are Epping and Loughton, as they are referred to in the document. Ongar is also a town. 5. Do you agree with the proposals for new employment development?(See Draft Policy E 1, Chapter 4). No comment 6. Do you agree with the proposed sites in your area?(See Chapter 5) Do not feel that you have to comment on all of the areas. With reference to Chipping Ongar and the proposal for 600 new homes, I believe the quantity proposed is too many. As planned, they will change the nature of the community and make unreasonable demands on the resources in the town.. In recent years, at least four new multiple home developments have been provided: on the west side of the town centre between the line of Cripsey Brook and the high-street shops, Weighbridge Court at the station, plus those at Great Stony Park and Bowes House. Whilst these permitted developments have been built over a longer period allowing gradual integration, they will already be putting pressure on existing services; roads, parking, healthcare facilities, water provision, sewage disposal, employment opportunities etc. Additionally, there is the approval given for a new estate at the North of the town at Fyfield Business Park. No new infrastructure has been provided. The proposal (SR0390) for 175 homes on the narrow, bendy* and dangerous Greensted Road, where any access road is going to be somewhere near the entrance to the primary

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school is surely a dangerous concept and potentially providing a flood hazard for homes on Fairfield Road 7. Do you agree with the approach to infrastructure provision being proposed in the plan?(See Chapter 6). If the proposal is permitted for 600 new dwellings, the land behind 57A and 57B Fyfield road should be retained to allow expansion of the health facilities and associated parking. 8. An Interim Sustainability Appraisal has been commissioned to support the Draft Local Plan. We would welcome any comments you may have on this. (See Technical Document page). 9. Do you wish to comment on any other policies in the Draft Local Plan? Threats - change of this magnitude is a threat and needs to be seen and responded to as such. Housing proposals for sites which are presently part of community resources in the district and Ongar town need greater explanation and justification. Specifically, I refer to: St Margaret Hospital. The District Civic offices Ongar sports centre. The car park of The Stag public house (SR-0842) would surely lead to the closure of the pub, one of the few surviving in Ongar. (A housing development has already been built alongside).

The impact of housing development on sites SR0185 and SR0186, how the proposals will directly impact on me, our property, its environment, value and quality of life. Our property has the total of its western boundary boarded by site proposal SR0186 with site SR0185 along our northern boundary. Both plots are classed as agricultural land in the Greenbelt. The proposal is to push the residential envelope of the town into the agricultural greenbelt, a proposal I thoroughly object to. One of my primary objections is the danger of excess flooding to our plot, (and those plots below us). From the Four Wantz roundabout the road declines past plot SR0186 and our property, right to the River Roding. In heavy rain the plot will hold and absorb a lot of the water and areas will have standing water. The water will flow from the plot onto a large depression in our lawn which fills up to a depth of at least 6 inches, deep enough for ducks to land and swim, (which does happen!). The shared watercourse (ditch) boundary along my and my neighbours Northern boundary will be compromised by development. My house surface water discharges into this ditch. Along my bank are large mature trees with sections of hedge all providing habitat. Similarly, plot SR0185 and the rest of the plots in the field behind us will absorb and hold rain/snow water. To cover the land with building and roadways will surely present a flooding risk to the properties below us in the High Ongar Road. The proposal is that site SR0186 is a suitable area for 12 homes. When I look across at this plot it is evident that the number envisaged gives no consideration to their quality. There will be no room for them to have gardens, three-storey buildings or flats maybe being thought suitable for this size of plot (allowing for an access road and parking). To consider this number is appropriate in the middle of a row of detached homes is plainly wrong. This leads me to question the number and type of property envisaged for site SR0185. The proposal will lower the value of the existing homes which border the present Greenbelt. Along with my neighbour but one, surely few other single residential plots are threatened with such life changing development. Being overlooked from two sides during and after construction will permanently result in increased noise levels, decrease in daylight and increased light pollution at night. These changes will be life changing for both rural homes as they unwillingly become urban. We have lived alongside site SR0185 for over 40 years. During this time: · the road was upgraded to a main A class east-west arterial route · over £1 million was spent bi-passing the old High Ongar Road with construction of a new river bridge. (These changes mean my neighbour on the westerly side of the plot and I are the only two properties whose driveways lead directly onto the A 414) · traffic flow is much increased and constant. At times it can take from 10-15 minutes to pull onto the carriageway. · planning applications for the plot have been made and refused on the grounds of reducing the number of properties having direct access to the carriageway. This reason is more valid today than before. An important question. Where the probable 300 cars from these two proposed sites will access the road network into or out of Ongar, without making the existing problem worse? (A valid question for other proposed housing sites). · We bought an uninhabitable rural bungalow in the early 1970s. Initially, my wife and I with friends did the work to make it habitable. During the next two decades we invested in two major projects to make it a modern home, the front of which faces the paddock (SR0185). Following my diagnosis of an incurable progressive long-term health condition, at the turn of the century, we decided that to stay in our rural surroundings would be best for my well-being and so spent £80,000 adapting the property to meet my future health care needs. Moving is no longer an option for us. If the proposed development is proved, I dread a depressing future from this development. Greenbelt and agricultural land protection.(Page 14, section 3.54) An environmental impact study should be produced for each of the proposed sites. There are a lot of mature standalone trees without preservation orders, the destruction of which should be challenged The effect on the quantity and diversity of wildlife. Wildlife that have colonised or used the plot SR0186 have been rabbit and which were cleared by fox and stoat. We also see deer, badger, and hedgehog. Add the birdlife, such as the sparrowhawk using it as a hunting ground, the large flock of nesting starlings, the cock pheasant and his hens, doves, both green and pied woodpecker and numerous other small songbirds. Frog and newt have come from the

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boundary to our pond. Nettles, (butterfly habitat), bramble, (feed for birdlife), blackthorn and mature trees for habitat. Housing development pushes these species further out with the destruction of their environment. A positive proposal for urgent consideration. My desire is to offer a positive proposal. The proposal is for an additional 600 houses, (even allowing for those recently built). These will probably account for an additional 1000+ cars around the town. One does not have to live in Ongar long to realise that improvement is needed to the roads through and leading out of the town. Ongar needs a bypass now to reduce the carriageway damage by HGV through traffic in the town and hold-ups in and around it. It is reported that, for Loughton, EFDC is prepared to assess an earlier privately produced plan for housing. I request that the same is done by revisiting the 1991 privately produced plan. "A fresh face for Ongar" a key component of which was an eastern bypass. The eastern bypass need was reportedly first recognised in 1928 and reconfirmed by both district and county councils in 1968 and again acknowledged in 1988. The need has continued to grow in the 88 Intervening years, and with the new housing proposed, will grow at a faster exponential rate. The bypass need and house building could be combined together. Bypass building should not be delayed further. Whilst the land needed for it is in private ownership, as the government is in the process of purchasing large quantities of agricultural land on which to build the unwanted HS2 railway, perhaps now could be an opportune time to push for an eastern bypass infrastructure. If the eastern bypass was built, possibly using a PPI funding initiative, areas between the town and bypass could be released for the total housing, minimising distress and disruption in the town and to Ongar residents. This bypass development need, more important than housing need, could be included as an overall project, which includes both. The present proposal for Ongar is piecemeal, filling out any green grassy knoll or agricultural field with buildings denying our town its character. What is needed is some creative thinking on a different scale. There have been too many individual proposals dotted around. I implore the council to consider this proposal and not to avoid the bypass need again before expanding the town.

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