

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

Stakeholder ID	4485	Name	K	Cahill
Method	Email			
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Letter or Email Response:

RE: Local Plan I have looked at the current local plan in some detail and I am very concerned with the level of housing that is trying to be squeezed into Debden, Loughton. I live near Rochford Green so my main experiences are of that green and surrounding area, which I use daily and I occasionally use Jessel Green. Currently I object to building this number of houses around Debden for the reasons I set out in my entire letter. Debden seems to be a main target for the housing in Loughton, this will likely have a huge impact on the following:

- Loss of widely used recreation space within easy reach - residents health, physical/mental wellbeing is likely to decline if these greens are no longer available
- nowhere green for children, dog walkers, lone walkers, elderly and less abled
- nowhere for ball games and team playing (ad-hoc and/or planned) a lot of other local land is unsuitable or private
- less social interaction between residents/community
- less security as a consequence of less community interaction (ie. neighbours looking out for each other)
- where will air ambulances land?
- more pollution
- huge impact adding to problems that already exist such as o already congested roads o current parking issues/problems o overcrowded tube trains o healthcare facilities already under strain o school places

In addition:

- We have yet to see the impact of new homes going up on garage sites/Winston Churchill.
- Planning application EPF/2592/15 (Etheridge Rd garages) is not shown in the Local Plan, although only 3 homes it needs to be accounted for - I wonder if there are others missing that have been approved that would lessen the number in the local plan?
- Roads and parking around here are congested already - with the loss of parking in the garage sites that are being developed, parking will be more crowded - roads that are only going to get busier with the current building and the new retail park, we need green spaces for leisure and wellbeing without having to use a car on already congested roads.

WELLBEING/LEISURE/COMMUNITY I feel that the green spaces should be enhanced not destroyed, we consider them to be our parkland so why not encourage the community to get together more and enhance them. Ultimately this will be better for residents health and wellbeing, security (surely neighbourhood watch is more powerful where communities communicate more) and consequently saving the area in health and policing costs. As a resident, I have used Rochford Green for over 15 years and I walk alone on the green and see football matches, rounders games, picnics, children playing and always see/talk with dog walkers. The green and playground is used a lot on a regular basis so why not enhance the green and make it an even better small park for its local residents providing:

- Safe Green area where people can regularly visit alone, confidently in an open space Eg. Both I and many elderly/young people would not go alone into the forest or Roding Nature reserve and to go with others means using my car, adding to traffic, and I could not do this daily - whereas I can easily visit the green daily and the forest occasionally with others
- Encouraging communication with others/neighbours - for some single residents this is the only face to face communication - Within walking distance for local residents so less traffic on roads - Keeps children off the streets, they can play safely in an open area - Encourages better security through better community eg

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neighbourhood watch - Rochford Green is an ideal public green for football matches, and other sports - it is reasonably level for this. Jessel Green is a good hilly area for play, kite flying and longer walks as it is a lot larger. TRAFFIC AND ROADS Traffic will be unbearable, the majority of houses have two cars minimum, several of my neighbours have three. Roads around Debden are already congested particularly Rectory Lane, the Broadway and Westall Rd. As you know, they are widening Rectory Lane but more traffic will arise from the Retail Park and the houses that have already been passed (particularly the out of character complex on the Winston Churchill site) and as much as this is well received it just pushes the bottle neck further up the road. Rectory lane is often queued back to the M11 and back to Newmans Lane through weight of traffic. Loughton High Rd is always congested and Goldings Hill is often queued right back too. It only takes a small incident or breakdown and it can be gridlock as it is. In this current day with warnings of air pollution, traffic building up in this area is already causing issues, more traffic will just cause further problems and consequently health issues. As the Local Plan stands I cannot see that this area will be able to cope with the numerous cars arising from the existing new homes going up along with the traffic the Retail Park will bring, let alone adding even more. PARKING Currently, parking is a problem on Debden and many park on pavements. When this happens, as it does in Rochford Avenue when cars double park, larger vehicles (eg dustcarts, emergency vehicles) cannot get through. Also there are many roads where non residents park. Westall Road can be very difficult for two way traffic in/out of Rectory Lane during the week, I often have trouble getting through and have witnessed near misses. I think to build any homes in the area without providing parking spaces is ridiculous and irresponsible - very few homes nowadays have no car, residents will still want to go out and shop/visit and if the home doesn't have parking it will likely mean residents will look to park a car in other areas of Debden that are already congested for parking, causing even more issues and stress for existing residents (who incidentally will not be able to de-stress without greens!) Some planners seem to want to ignore this issue. TUBES/BUSES I believe tubes are already running to capacity and overcrowded in rush hour. They would struggle to cope with an influx of new commuters. Bus services have already been cut too! OTHER FACILITIES Doctors, dentists and schools. How will they cope with increasing numbers? If you use up all the green spaces you will likely increase health issues and numbers requiring these facilities, I believe it is irresponsible to build new homes and not have proposals of locations for these facilities. For example, Roding Garden Village includes some of these facilities for 600 new residents, yet the Local Plan numbers are far more than that and they do not seem to be catering for this influx at all. ALTERNATIVES Exhaust all the brownfield sites first (Compulsory purchase?) Build around the existing train 'main line' areas Garden Villages out of town • More garden villages, maybe around Ongar area? • Could they not look at extending the tube back out to Ongar? • Maybe introduce park and ride that comes into the tube stations from garden villages further afield - assuming that TFL allow for more commuters of course. This would mean one coach on the road instead of numerous cars. • Roding Garden Village has recently had some press - an excellent idea! I am hoping this will reduce the number of houses you are suggesting on Debden? This is good planning to build a new area complete with facilities and I do agree with the Garden Village - more will need to be done with increasing tube numbers though and the traffic. EFDC News Reported that 410 homes were empty between 28/11 to 2/12/16...surely these could be investigated and some used as opposed to building some of the new ones? St Thomas More church site on Debden will at some point become available and will no doubt be developed into new homes, could this not form part of the local plan and reduce the numbers to avoid using green spaces. For all of the reasons I cover in my letter: I object strongly to any building on Rochford Green, it is a small well used green space that I feel is vital to the surrounding residents. I object to building on the other greens - I believe the greens are well spaced out to cater for their surrounding residents without having to use a car. The greens were included when Debden was designed, to aid the physical and mental wellbeing of the residents, why would you change something that was well planned and works well - only to be a detriment to so many things and people? I notice that the garden villages are planned with parkland whereas your Local Plan suggests taking ours away - to do this would be a step backwards! There has been a lot of support to protect Debden's greens from development and I believe they should be protected/designated as "District Open Land". Whilst writing, I would also like to stress that the majority of Loughton housing is one or two storeys high, I believe any new homes should be the same to maintain the character of the town. Overall, I am sorry but I do not believe this Local Plan will enhance the quality of life of Loughton residents, I think it will make Loughton over populated and cause more problems than it solves. Ultimately I feel the out of town garden villages are the way forward.

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