

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

Stakeholder ID	3959	Name	Christine Deacon	North Weald Bassett & District Preservation Society
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Method	Letter
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Date	7/12/2016
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Letter or Email Response:

On behalf of the above society I write with some extremely worrying views regarding the said Local Plan and the questionnaire that members of the public in this district have been asked to fill in with their opinions. As a general consensus the way the questions are worded in the questionnaire, are to say the least, ambiguous, how can an individual answer question 1 'agreeing' to what possibly most people would want - 'the enhancement of their quality life for the people of Epping Forest District' - when by studying the plan, in the case of North Weald Bassett, it will certainly not protect the Epping Forest Green Belt or the environment. The maps that have been produced are of a poor quality and don't appear to be to scale but even at a cursory glance they bear out the major controversy regarding the amount of development versus green belt land to be lost, in the village's case not 1 or 2% more like 40% of the footprint. Of the 'Local Plan' North Weald parish has approximately 5% of the overall population but looks like receiving 23% of the planned housing which equates to a village growth of 113%, no longer a village more a small town with only sketchy, at best, information regarding the infrastructure. We feel these plans are an over development of the area that will destroy the village idyll and is simply not justifiable and inconsistent with National Policy. In order to be found viable the plan needs to be sustainable and the information shows no accurate, factual detail, this in itself constitutes grounds for objecting to the plan. The purposes of the Green Belt, as stated in paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework which Local Plans should adhere to include - "check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas, "prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another, "assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, ""to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (and villages) and to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. The Green Belt Stage 1 assessment carried out in June 2015 gave EFDC land parcels top scores of max. 5 and as such, the proposals to develop Green Belt land around North Weald Bassett could be regarded as unjustifiable because they have all been assessed as strongly meeting the third Green Belt purpose, in conclusion as the Green Belt sites proposed for housing do meet NPPF green belt purposes and their removal would compromise the integrity of the Metropolitan GB, their inclusion renders the Local Plan inconsistent with National Policy. As a Society we take the loss of any part of our countryside seriously, and the fact that there are numerous marked footpaths, which are regularly walked, nature reserves and a flood meadow specifically constructed to alleviate the devastation caused by floodwater in the village on more than one occasion in the 80's & 90's. The impact on the water/sewage system will be immense the loss of natural habitats for wildlife within

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the village 'envelope' will be irretrievable, and as previously stated the infrastructure e.g. transport, health and education are all under-subscribed for what we have at present without the gradual influx of new developments over the next few years. To go into specifics on this subject will fill many pages but the Society's main objection to this Local Plan (with focus on North Weald) is that North Weald Bassett is an historic village not a sprawling eclectic mix of housing with no infrastructure and no heart. We hope that all local residents will air their views, but our objective is to speak for the village as a whole and to 'preserve' its integrity not 'obliterate' it as these plans seem destined to do. We await what outcome further discussions bring and hope that commonsense will prevail. See attachment - 00787b