

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

Stakeholder ID	3464	Name	G K
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Method	Letter
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Date	5/12/2016
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Letter or Email Response:

PAVING PARADISE (building on/taking Green Belt Land by Stealth) Opposition to proposed plan for residential development, particularly (but not solely) for Jessel Green, Loughton. 1. Property Prices (residents investments)/Scenic views: It goes without saying that lovely views and availability of Loughton's greens affect property prices which would all suffer from loss of any local green land and light obstructing building. But value isn't always financial. 2. Current Use of land at Jessel Green The greens were deliberately planned as part of a garden suburb for the physical and mental health of residents and are vital recreation spaces. Community events regularly occur on Jessel Green encouraging residents, to meet, work, exercise and play together. The green is regularly used by walkers and dog walkers and is a relatively 'safe' area for children to play outside often within sight/earshot of parents/neighbours, etc. as opposed to sitting in front of TV/computer screens. This makes for a safer, happier and healthier childhood, as an over-run NHS tries to ensure we all live healthier lifestyles (physical, emotional and mental). Local residents outside immediate area also visit via bus/car to enjoy the space. Young and old regularly come in droves when it snows as the hill is perfect for sledging. The manager of the adjacent Public House is very community minded adding to the attraction. There is some wildlife in the area and residents benefit from the few fruit trees planted by the Council - better option than non-fruiting trees as they tend not to grow too high/exclude light. 3. My Personal Experience of the Area : I have lived in Loughton since birth and my family, friends and I have regularly used many of the green spaces over the years from dog walking, picnics, games and community events. Since moving near Jessel Green in the 1980s and bringing up a family, we have all used the green on a regular basis. Local schools, Brownies, Cubs, regular exercise and training groups also take advantage of the greens. 4. Emergency Helicopter Landing sites Building on green sites would mean less available space for Emergency Services (eg: Police, Ambulance) to land helicopters if required. 5. Local Infrastructure Traffic is already busy and higher use of cars/transport would place extra pressure on local roads and an already overburdened central line and more passengers during daily commutes would not be sustainable. Certain areas are very congested at peak times with double parking, bus routes/school runs currently causing heavy jams. A number of 'rat-runs' have sprung up in the area including Colebrook Lane and Willingale Rd and drivers often speed jeopardising lives especially during school runs. Some potholes are left months or years in the area. Pollution (a killer - now under scrutiny) and litter are also issues. Car parking and water (flood) management are other considerations. Clay soil in Epping Forest area may mean existing building is undermined. Further building can only exacerbate these problems. All Public Services eg: Education, NHS, Police, Social Care, Emergency Services are already underfunded/under great strain, therefore unable to sustain 'good enough' services for current residents so any future plans/suggestions for building on 'this' infrastructure appear invalid. - where would extra funding come from to staff proposed schools, GPs surgeries, Dentists, etc? Policing is also a consideration

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as is maintenance of roads, drainage, refuse collections, etc. EFDC funding itself is under tremendous strain, though overseas advisors or other consulting agencies (IDF) financial agencies (eg: PW&C) - with little interest in local areas but all with their own monetary agendas, and selling land to 'highest bidders' (usually private profiteering companies) should not be options. There is already a great deal of private land in the area. EFDC should be preventing not encouraging private companies to purchase land and concentrate on maintaining/increasing EFDC housing stock (for income). Too many private Landlords have bought up ex-council properties (unfortunate but maybe not unforeseen result of 'Thatcher Government' selling off council housing), resulting in insecure leases with increasing rents affecting tenant's lives and wellbeing. Schools were previously closed to make way for homes but then more built to accommodate resulting growth in young population, edging nearer/further into green belt land to the detriment of the local area. With regard to Lucton's Field, (which I used regularly when younger) covenants should be honoured not disregarded. The current indigenous population should be considered first with regard to housing, education and employment, or Epping Forest will begin to resemble one of the overburdened London Boroughs where Education, NHS and other public services, etc. are mostly in 'crisis'. Long-term (permanent) loss for short-term financial gain. The cost of looking after an increased population, traffic, infrastructure over the years is infinite and obtaining funds from selling land finite and may lead to an unrecognisable or non-existent EFDC. Once Epping Forest Council Assets have gone they are gone for good.

6. Elderly Population In your small leaflet you state 'We have a growing & ageing population' - but neither qualify nor quantify this statement. Blaming this on a burgeoning elderly population is a 'red herring'. Would elderly Residential Homes be built? if so, who would run them and how would they be staffed? (bearing in mind so many providers are currently closing care homes because of underfunding). How many buildings suitable for elderly, eg: smaller homes, warden assisted, etc are in your plans? Perhaps you could provide numbers showing how the 'elderly' particularly affects the housing situation/what percentage of new build would be specifically for elderly as opposed to others groups (families, singletons, etc) and specify what types of homes/properties are proposed. NB: initial rentals could have revisable clauses in contracts that encourage residents to move to smaller/other dwellings as circumstances change which could free up more social housing for needy families. Obviously, every case is different. >

7. SAINSBURY MONOPOLY: I like shopping at Sainsbury but there are 4 in Loughton (including Homebase), most recent is the Express shop opposite Homebase, which could have been better utilised regarding affordable/social housing. There are over 4 largish grocery stores in Loughton, including M&S with smaller supermarkets/grocers dotted around smaller shopping areas - I believe another supermarket may be planned at Langston Rd - One large supermarket in this location might be a good idea with a couple of smaller grocery stores throughout existing shopping areas for easier access - but current sites could be utilised more efficiently. Perhaps liaising with Sainsbury regarding the above might produce a better outcome & less of a monopoly.

8. Other Building Suggestions (Preferably EFDC/Housing Association Properties/Assets as opposed to private). FIRSTLY, consider a garden village as has been done in other Essex Districts. Otherwise: Met. Police Sports Ground, Chigwell/'brownfield' site apparently sited at Laughton College and the small car park next to Morrisons in The Drive, Loughton. The Small piece of land between the controversial Luxe Club in the High Road and High Beech Road. However, the trees may be protected so this could be an issue. Higgins, who built the monstrosity on Churchill site (out of keeping with local area) apparently have two empty floors at their own offices - perhaps these could be rented/utilised!!! © Many shops/factories are closing partly due to the internet so perhaps a little 'jiggling' of some empty/currently unrented units in the High Road could leave either end free for residential use, eg: from Nat West to Laughton Baptist Church and opposite (Abbots Estate Agents, etc). Further into Old Station road, eg: Haslars, Mode, etc. and, at the other end of Laughton, From Laughton Methodist Church opposite Traps Hill uphill from the memorial area to the end of the row of shops leading up to York Hill. Banks/ Estate agents have lower footfalls due to internet banking/advertising so could be encouraged to move to smaller outlets in the High Road. Most buildings in Loughton should be lower builds to conform with local area. However, Langston Rd site could be mainly multi-storey without compromising local character. And include car parking with offices/shops/units above or the Hotel that is planned. Clinton Cards is an existing 'brownfield' site that could be utilised. This would cause further congestion at the Traffic lights leading to Langston Rd but traffic calming measures such as a roundabout may be an option. If building on Country Club/Woolston Manor golf course access via this to Langston Rd may alleviate some congestion and enable Abridge residents to access industrial/shopping area without impacting on Rectory/Chigwell Lanes. Perhaps a road bridge at/near the old ATC new builds for access between Debden and Langston Rd might also avoid further traffic entering Chigwell Lane. Liaison with TfL regarding upgrading current footbridge over Debden Station and/or access to Debden Station's West travelling platform may assist commuters to/from Langston Rd. and may avoid further congestion for current residential areas further into the town. There would still be issues as mentioned above but this

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could mean less impact on current residents/infrastructure enabling green spaces to remain intact. 9. Further thoughts: In draft plan leaflet you say 'with a strong local plan we can ensure necessary infrastructure be delivered to ensure development is sustainable & Epping Forest remains an 'attractive' place to live work & visit! and that utilising open space with settlements where such selections uldmaintain adequate open space provision within the settlement and make best use of existing land without compromising local character. So, promote green sites asplay/recreation areas to benefit current residents and encourage more community cohesion especially if schools/other groups are involved in maintaining and cultivating the greens with small amounts of vegetation or planting, etc. which would cut some costs to EFDC. Jessel Green could be a great community platform, encouraging more use. Make the Loughton/Epping Forest area a lovely place to visit. You say there would be a 'limited' release of Green Belt Land (Until next time!!). Be more transparent - honesty & openness will illicit more trust from residents. Give more time to digest & suggest options - work together with your communities & consider their opinions and wellbeing. More discussion time and involvement with residents will assist in getting a strong plan together. Development of the site would represent the loss of a sporting facility, cricket/tennis & bowls clubs, reducing the area's facilities while increasing the number of homes.

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