

In response to:

The proposed East of Harlow Strategic Plan: Declassification of Green Belt SP4.3

A clear and present threat to the delicate balance and welfare of rural community and environment.

SP4.3 Does appear to be a callous and cynical attack on the Green Belt with the effect to fundamentally change the entire context of existence for the Village of Sheering from a rural community of hundreds of years with the natural habitat surrounding it, a true Village, to effectively a suburb of Greater Harlow.

Question: Why? What is the credible justification for such an idea?

Green Belt is more important now than ever before. It's not there as an expansion zone when it suits, it's there to resist expansion, that's the point! It's function is vital and no statistics however generated can credibly challenge that, especially with the climate crisis evermore apparent and threatening.

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in development in the areas around London and the exponential demands that stem from it while crumbling Infrastructure and services are always failing to keep up.

Question: Why? Where has the increased pressure come from that demands the Green Belt be targeted in such a way? What is the Exceptional Circumstance to justify this?

If there is an assumption in anyway that SP4.3 has a London commuter function because of Junction 7a? Then clearly the regular dysfunction of the M11 has been conveniently overlooked. It doesn't take much to imagine the greater chaos and misery that will follow from any increase.

A line has to be drawn for London's expansion in this all consuming way and now must be the time. Green Belt is a finite and precious resource, it was created for and belongs to the communities it connects. It's corridors provide for natural cycles, movements and needs for people and wildlife equally. It's loss will have far reaching effects beyond any surveys and impact modeling predictions.

What price is worth all this risk. The loss of rural community, wildlife habitat, agricultural capacity, a physical connection with the natural world, a sense of freedom in simply being in fresher air with trees, fields, meadows, woods, flowers, bees & butterflies. That all exists in the area now labeled SP4.3 but for how long?

It should be for future generations, a gift of sanity and reason.

I am surprised Epping Forest District Council hasn't utilised it's community voices to push back against the pressure for further development in this region given Central Government's proclaimed desire re balance the country and level up, thereby taking the emphasis away from the London centric South East mentality which has been the cause all along.

I am a third generation resident of [REDACTED] having been born and initially educated here, I grew up with the freedoms of village life. I've traveled and lived in towns and cities in the UK and overseas. I returned to [REDACTED] several years ago and with that experience I know the value of Village life, Natural habitats and green spaces the importance of their preservation, I just hope you do too.

S Parker, [REDACTED]