

Stakeholder Reference:

Document Reference:

Part A

Making representation as Save Jessel Green Campaign - Residents Group

	Personal Details	Agent's Details (if applicable)
Title	Mr	
First Name	Neil	
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Part B

REPRESENTATION

To which part of the Pre Submission Epping Forest District Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph: 1.10

Policy: P 2 Loughton

Policies Map: Yes

Site Reference: LOU.R5

Settlement: Loughton

Do you consider this part of the Pre Submission Local Plan to be:

Legally compliant: Don't Know

Sound: No

If no, then which of the soundness test(s) does it fail? Positively prepared

Complies with the duty to co-operate? Don't Know

Please give details either of why you consider the Submission Version of the Local Plan is not legally compliant, is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate; or of why the Submission Version of the Local Plan is legally compliant, is sound or complies with the duty to co-operate.

Please be as precise as possible. Please use this box to set out your comments.

We and our 2,400 supporters consider the submission version of the Local Plan unsound as it has failed to keep to its overall sales pitch to the public:

“This is your Local Plan. This is our opportunity as a community to ensure development in Epping Forest District takes place how and where we want it to”.

Cllr John Phillip, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, EFDC.

Community Visioning consultation 2010/11

The Community Visioning Consultation in 2011 sought to understand what the planning issues are for the local community and how people would like to see the area develop in the future:

•Q1: What do you think the priorities are for the District over the next 20 years?

32.4% (the largest response) said 'Protect & enhance green spaces' (not focused solely on greenbelt)

•Q2: What planning issues do you think most need to be addressed in your local area?

20.6% (the largest response) said 'Protect green spaces' (not focused solely on greenbelt)

Community Choices (Issues & Options consultation) 2012

3,556 real responses were received

The site now known as LOU.R5 (formally in the other Local Plan documents called 'Urban Open Space between Jessel Drive and Goldingham Avenue, Loughton) was not included in Loughton's list of sites. See question 41, page 115 of the 'Planning our Future' Issues & Options for the Local Plan. We believe EFDC always intended to keep the site in scope for the Local Plan and therefore FAILED to allow the public to respond strongly as second time to its inclusion.

Regulation 18 draft Local Plan 2016

In 2016, the council consulted with the public. Residents in Loughton wrote in large numbers (we know this as we hand delivered over 350+ responses ourselves) to object to site SR-0361 (Colebrook Lane/Jessel Drive Amenity Open Space), page 127 being included in the list of Loughton sites in Draft Policy P 2 Loughton.

The community on the Debden housing estate use this site for recreational use 24/7.

The EFD Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan has been published.

We have started a petition, which commenced on Friday 5th January 2018 <https://www.change.org/p/help-our-community-save-jessel-green> asking the Independent Local Plan Inspector to recommend that EFDC (as landowner) should remove issue Jessel Green (site LOU.R5) from the Local Plan list of housing development sites and allocate it Local Open Space designation as it meets all the criteria within the National Planning Policy Framework.

In the three weeks of the petition going live we have already received 4,700+ individual signatures. We will continue to keep the petition live until we have the opportunity to attend the open hearing, for local residents to be heard, as for 7 years we have been ignored.

We now submit (upload) a screen shot of the Change.org petition for the LP Inspectors reference.

•The EFDC Local Plan timescale has been accelerated due to interventions imposed by central government, which has prevented Councillors from having time to reconsider alternatives to Jessel Green (LOU.R5).

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It is our opinion that the Local Plan can be made sound, if EFDC remove site LOU.R5 from the list of sites to reflect that it has taken into account 7 years of public, Councillors and other parties (e.g. Loughton Town Council's) input into the Local Plan process.

Epping Forest District Council has rightly produced the Local Plan ensuring an additional 10-15% housing allocation was incorporated within the Plan, to allow for any land owners (including EFDC) who may wish to remove their site from the Local Plan, without the risk of the councils overall housing allocation being achieved.

On Page 121 of the submission version paragraph 5.33 should be replaced with, 'In its commitment to promote healthy communities, Jessel Green shall be designated as a 'Local Green Space' as having unique importance to the local community as a vital recreation space and connection point for the local community. This is consistent with National Policy in promoting healthy communities, specifically it is fully compliant and aligns with the requirements as set out in NPFF para 77, to provide this status to spaces that are particularly valued by the local community.

Therefore, on page 122 site LOU.R5 (Jessel Green) of the Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan should be removed from the list of residential sites under section B, Policy P2 Loughton.

If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

Yes, I wish to participate at the oral part of the oral examination

If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

The Save Jessel Green campaign represents the residents of the Debden housing estate in Loughton. We have been ignored for 7+ years, in which we have patiently participated in the Local Plan process only to be ignored. Politics (which should not be involved in planning) have unfairly led us to this point in time. We wish to put our case forward why Jessel Green (LOU.R5) is a valuable community asset and should be protected.

REPRESENTATION

To which part of the Pre Submission Epping Forest District Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph: 1.23, 1.44. 2.27, 2.88, 4.44-4.54 & 5.33

Policy: P 2 Loughton

Policies Map: Yes

Site Reference: LOU.R5

Settlement: Loughton

Do you consider this part of the Pre Submission Local Plan to be:

Legally compliant: Don't Know

Sound: No

If no, then which of the soundness test(s) does it fail? Positively prepared, Justified, Consistent with national policy

Complies with the duty to co-operate? Don't Know

Please give details either of why you consider the Submission Version of the Local Plan is not legally compliant, is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate; or of why the Submission Version of the Local Plan is legally compliant, is sound or complies with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. Please use this box to set out your comments.

The Plan has reviewed and aims to protect the Greenbelt. However, nowhere in the Plan does it refer to seeking to review the Districts local urban public open spaces, which the intensely populated and developed areas use for recreational purposes.

EFDC has failed to list sites to receive Local Open Space designation away from 'holes in the Greenbelt', which is non-accessible to many members of the public in the built-up areas, to ensure adequate access to recreational space in the future.

Apart from the 'Green Belt Boundary Alterations' map on page 51 of the Submission version 2017 LP there is nowhere else within the document that lists all sites that have been designated with Local Open Space status, except for holes in the Greenbelt. EFDC contradict their own document – page 87 of the Submission Version 2017 LP titled 'Designated and Undesignated Open Spaces – Para 4.44-4.54.

- Green spaces must be located within easy reach of the communities they serve.
- To say that Epping Forest is in easy reach of communities in the Debden housing estate is unrealistic and quite frankly inaccessible for most people.
- The Corporation of London also is very concerned with Epping Forest being used for recreational purposes and realise on sites like Jessel Green to ease pressure on Epping Forest.
- 'Protecting and improving the impressive range and quality of places for enjoyment of the outdoors, sport and nature conservation in the District' is also listed as an “important issue”.

In respect to the allocation of Jessel Green, site LOU.R5 for a housing development, the plan is unsound, as non-compliant with NPFF National Guidance Paras 73, 74, 76 and 77 for the following reasons:?

- 1.The evidence provided by the EFDC Open Space Strategy Nov 2017 by 4 Global identifies a significant shortfall in recreation space for young people. Furthermore, the Open space audit of March 2009 commissioned by EFDC for Loughton states that Jessel Green was well used by young people and its use has grown significantly since then. Building on this location will therefore create a further deficit in open recreational space, which is counter intuitive and contrary in the extreme to the healthy community objectives that EFDC aspire to, in its commitment to National Planning Policy.
- 2.Loughton residents through its Local Town Council have identified Jessel Green as having special importance as a Local Green Space, specifically as a highly utilised and valuable recreation space at the heart of Loughton. This request and requirement made by the Loughton community through its elected representatives, Loughton Town Council has not been taken into account by EFDC and its consultants ARUP, despite an overwhelming petition and response from local residents to the proposals for residential development on this open space. To confirm, this open space is enjoyed by all ages and abilities throughout the year, which culminates in an annual event, which brings together 1000s of residents across the district to a community fun day. This location therefore has a unique significance and provides an incredibly valuable service in connecting the community.
- 3.There is no provision in the plan for replacing this valuable recreation space, if built on, so again is not compliant with National Planning Policy.

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The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) introduced a new designation – Local Green Space (LGS), which would enable green areas of particular importance to local communities to be designated, and rule out development other than in very special circumstances, in a similar manner to Green Belt. ?

On Page 121 of the submission version paragraph 5.33 should be replaced with, 'In its commitment to promote healthy communities, Jessel Green shall be designated as a 'Local Green Space' as having unique importance to the local community as a vital recreation space and connection point for the local community. This is consistent with National Policy in promoting healthy communities, specifically it is fully compliant and aligns with the requirements as set out in NPPF para 77, to provide this status to spaces that are particularly valued by the local community.

Therefore, on page 122 site LOU.R5 (Jessel Green) of the Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan should be removed from the list of residential sites under section B, Policy P2 Loughton.

If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

Yes, I wish to participate at the oral part of the oral examination

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REPRESENTATION

To which part of the Pre Submission Epping Forest District Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph: 2.144

Policy: SP 6 Green Belt and District Open Land

Policies Map: Yes

Site Reference: LOU.R5

Settlement: Loughton

Do you consider this part of the Pre Submission Local Plan to be:

Legally compliant: Don't Know

Sound: No

If no, then which of the soundness test(s) does it fail? Positively prepared, Effective, Justified, Consistent with national policy

Complies with the duty to co-operate? Don't Know

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B. District Open Land

The description provided by EFDC implies that the designation of District Open Land merely applies to the alterations to the Green Belt Boundary, where land has been removed, which now creates holes in the green belt.

We think the EFDCs assessment is wrong. The areas identified do not serve local communities and there is no evidence that these identified sites are used by the community for recreational purposes. There are also no identified designation sites in Loughton, one of the major towns in the District.

This is not a fair representation of the district.

There should be 'Local Open Space' designation across the District including the built-up areas.

Key characteristics of District Open Land

Openness

Jessel Green (site LOU.R5) has 8.03 Ha – It is the most significant open space on the Debden housing estate. Throughout the Draft and submission Local Plan Jessel Green is referred to as public open space, so the councils has already accepted its character within the community it serves.

Permanence

When the Debden estate was initially built, site LOU.R5 Jessel Green provided an open space for the public to enjoy for recreational purposes.

I have uploaded a copy of the following for the local plan inspectors reference:

- The London Metropolitan Archive – 1945 estate scale model – view 1

This image shows the Debden housing estate in its infancy including Jessel Green.

It has always had a significant presence on the estate as a recreational space.

Local significance

Within the Debden housing estate (Loughton settlement) there is a population of approximately 8,550. This is not including any growth figures during the period of the Local Plan. EFDC have earmarked substantial development on the estate, without any consideration to the size of recreational/open space that residents should have access to.

Many green spaces on the Debden estate are not fit for recreational purposes due to:

- Close proximity to major roads
- Natural obstructions/obstacles – e.g. flowers/planting, trees, streams, land levels
- Private land – e.g. two secondary school sites with their own private sports facilities

Jessel Green (site LOU.R5) is the only suitable recreational space, which provides suitable accessibility and caters for every kind of recreational need, including community events, which no other site in Loughton offers in the same way.

Loughton Town Council applied to Essex County Council for site LOU.R5 to be issued with Village Green status in December 2013. I believe EFDC should grant the site Local Open Space designation as it is used frequently by the local community.

For the Inspectors reference: Loughton Town (Parish) Council – Village Green application

- Site LOU.R5, is well-used for informal leisure activities valued greatly by the local community it serves, also more familiarly known as Jessel Green. ?

- Site LOU.R5 has a village green application lodged (by Loughton Town Council) with Essex County Council but still pending. Sufficient evidence has been provided to justify this but the application is still pending.

- Loughton Town Council believe the Barkas judgement (Barkas v North Yorkshire County Council [2014])

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Please note our response is the same as the previous uploaded representation - We represent 2,400+ supporters and over 4,700+ petition signatories. We wish the public opinions relating to site LOU.R5 to be heard.

REPRESENTATION

To which part of the Pre Submission Epping Forest District Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph: 2.25 & 2.26

Policy: P 2 Loughton

Policies Map: Yes

Site Reference: LOU.R5

Settlement: Loughton

Do you consider this part of the Pre Submission Local Plan to be:

Legally compliant: Don't Know

Sound: No

If no, then which of the soundness test(s) does it fail? Positively prepared, Effective

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The Corporation of London – Conservators of Epping Forest submitted a response to the Draft Local Plan 2016.

Page 3

Other positive planning for green spaces ?

'An examination of the maps with this Regulation 18 Plan makes it clear that housing and employment development dominate at the expense of other planning'. 'It is noticeable that the opportunity has not been taken to map the Green Arc or other green infrastructure ambitions of the Council'. ?

page 8

'At Loughton The Conservators would disagree with the proposed loss of green space at Borders Lane and Jessel Green. The latter site in particular, if lost, would place considerable pressure on the nearby Forest and also would seem to be in contradiction to the green infrastructure policies in the draft Plan. Such a large green space is currently valuable and has considerable potential to be developed for both access and for wildlife'.

The LP Inspector should be aware EFD's neighbouring authority The London Borough of Waltham Forest is also in the process of producing their Local Plan. The Corporation of London are very concerned as future development is sandwiching Epping Forest on all sides. Public Open Green spaces are vital to ensure that residents use these sites for the greater proportion of their recreational activity, removing pressure on the Forest.

We believe the Corporation of London is submitting strong objections again to the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

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REPRESENTATION

To which part of the Pre Submission Epping Forest District Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph: 5.1, 5.3 & 5.4

Policy: P 2 Loughton

Policies Map: Yes

Site Reference: LOU.R5

Settlement: Loughton

Do you consider this part of the Pre Submission Local Plan to be:

Legally compliant: Don't Know

Sound: No

If no, then which of the soundness test(s) does it fail? Positively prepared, Effective, Justified

Complies with the duty to co-operate? Don't Know

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Epping Forest District Council have failed to release the 'Site Assessment' work, which determined which sites should be removed, not considered and remain in side the Local Plan.

This has made it very difficult and some would say unfair for landowners, developers and local residents (us), parish councils, ward members and other stakeholders to understand the council's justification in removing, adding or keeping sites within the Local Plan.

Through residents sharing news on our Facebook page 'Save Jessel Green' we were made aware of some sites that need the Independent inspector to review. We appreciate that EFDC may have conducted the process fairly, but why then has the work behind the site selection not been published with all the other public Local Plan evidence?

Speaking on behalf of our group we question the soundness behind some sites being assessed as non-viable and removed from the Regulation 19 Submission version Local Plan, for reasons such as flooding risk, impact on the Green Belt/Epping Forest, yet site LOU.R5 Jessel Green remains in the Plan, even though sound reasons apply to having it removed.

We request the Inspector review in detail how EFDC assessed EVERY site brought forward and undertake a comparison against Jessel Green, Loughton.

We have been made aware in the last two weeks of two local development proposals that have not received their official EFDC site selection feedback. We would like to know if this is consistent with sites across the District that were unsuccessful.

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The independent inspector should have the opportunity to hear objectively from landowners and developers offering alternative housing settlement sites to LOU.R5 Jessel Green.

The EFDC Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder has said throughout the Local Plan process that if 'people' do not like/wish a particular site included in the Local Plan then they MUST find alternative sites.

If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

Yes, I wish to participate at the oral part of the oral examination

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Please note our response is the same as the previous uploaded representation - We represent 2,400+ supporters and over 4,700+ petition signatories. We wish the public opinions relating to site LOU.R5 to be heard.

Please let us know if you wish to be notified when the Epping Forest District Local Plan is submitted for independent examination

Yes

Signature: Neil Bartlett Date: 28/01/2018