

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

Stakeholder ID	4460	Name	fiona	McGrath
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Letter or Email Response:

I have lived on Debden estate in Loughton since the age of five, that's forty years of watching the estate change and become the green, leafy and pleasant place it is now. My Grandparents were one of the first families to move onto the new estate, with my mother arriving as a small child after the war. I spent many happy hours as a child running up and down the hill at Jessel Green - Sledging there in the snow is a tradition for most of Debden's residents. The park and green space at Rochford Green became my own children's play space, and the many trees (I still consider them new) growing to maturity on the wide green verges have helped to transform Debden from the grey council estate I remember in the 70's, to a thriving community of professionals and young families who take advantage of the open community spaces but still have transport links to London. Over the years I have watched schools disappear, then new schools appear. (Was it not considered where all those new families going to send their children?) I have watched new pockets of housing spring up all over the estate, and most of it has been sensitively done. I was even in favour of the new flats on the site of The Winston Churchill pub. However I don't believe that the draft plan for local development in and around the Epping Forest District is realistic or fair to the residents of Debden Estate. The impact of increasing the population of an already busy urban area will be huge. The roads are already in a shocking state of repair, increased traffic will worsen them. Doctors and Dentists have waiting lists that mean it's extremely difficult to get appointments within a short time frame. Transport is over stretched and crowded, commuters travel into Debden in the hope of getting a seat on the Central Line. Removing the car parks at the stations will increase the number of commuters parking around the estate and walking to the station. Most days I'm unable to park outside of my own house because of this reason. Besides the impact of a larger population on the current residents, it seems that the choice of sites is also particularly unfair when compared to the alternatives in and around the Epping Forest district. Nowhere else is it suggested that sites within settlements should be built upon. All other sites are on the outskirts of towns or villages or on pre-existing brown sites. In this age of increasing obesity and concern for the health and wellbeing of our young people, building on green open spaces that are in constant use for sport, games and recreation seems extremely short sighted. It does sometimes feel that Debden Estate is seen as the poor relation to its neighbouring suburbs, of Loughton (proper), Buckhurst hill, Epping and Theydon Bois, and is therefore seen as the preferable location. I have no objection to the construction of new affordable housing, but I do object to the suggestion that building on the green areas in and around Debden Estate is a viable option. The council should look to alternative options such as the badly utilised brown field land along Langston road, or look to increase the size of some of the smaller towns and villages in the district. There has been some suggestion of creating new garden villages in the local area - this is an option that should be given more consideration.

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