

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

Stakeholder ID	4462	Name	peter and elaine portman
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Letter or Email Response:

We have recently attended a presentation at the Budworth Hall in Ongar, which dealt with Epping Forest District Council's plans for future housing development in the Ongar area. We have also had reports from the recent Ongar Town Council Meeting which dealt with the Town Council's response to the EFDC plan. We have to say that we are somewhat perturbed by what we understand of the plan. We realise that Ongar must accept some of the burden required by Government to build the required number of houses throughout the country, but the scale of development and what appears to us to be lack of real planning consideration for what are already shortfalls of existing infrastructure in our town. Ongar is a town of some 6,000 people surrounded by what I believe to be some of the best countryside in Essex. If 600 new houses are built together with those already in the pipeline that is likely to add around nearly 50% to the population. The current infrastructure of the town cannot support this number of new residents. We would therefore like to make the following points: * The proposal to build 12 new houses on the site of the Ongar Leisure Centre is frankly ridiculous. Why would you take away a well used facility from the town when you are planning to rapidly increase the population? Most people in the town use the leisure centre in some way or another on a fairly regular basis and the building of hundreds of new homes nearby is likely to rapidly increase demand. * The Health Centre in Ongar is already stretched to capacity and appointments on the same day are increasingly hard to get. The existing facility just will not be able to cope with the proposed influx of new people. The building of 130 new homes on the site of the Fyfield Industrial Park will also increase pressure on local healthcare * Ongar currently has three primary schools (including High Ongar) and one fledgling Secondary Academy. Those schools are already full up to capacity and new schools will need to be built in Ongar in order for the extra demand to be met. Schools take up a large amount of land which will probably have to be current green belt land. We estimate that the demand will be for at least 600 additional primary school children with possibly only slightly less secondary school places necessary by the time all these houses are built. * During the rush hour and week-ends Ongar's roads are already very busy and with a proposed 600 homes this could mean up to an additional 1,000 cars going through the High Street every day. With the huge proposed development at North Weald and the new homes in Ongar and Fyfield the A414 and is likely to be jam-packed at certain times of the day, as will the roads to Romford, Brentwood and Chigwell. We would also point out that all of these roads are already quite dangerous with several accident black spots. We are also concerned about access to the 120 or more new homes built near the A414. The A414 is a very fast road and we fear there will be accidents occurring unless there are new traffic controls that allow traffic to cross the lanes safely. The building of 12 homes near the Stag car park are also near a very dangerous 90 degree bend and junction with Stondon Road and access will be quite difficult. We would also like to point out that the roads going through Ongar are currently in an appalling state of repair and will deteriorate even further with greater volumes of traffic. * Ongar currently lacks any real form of

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reliable public transport, save for a fairly irregular bus service. Transport will therefore be mainly by private car, which will increase pollution levels in the town. * With the lack of any real police presence in the town and what seems an unwillingness from the nearest police station to attend anything but the most serious crime, we would like to ask what additional provisions are being made for extra policing in the area? * A large part of Ongar is on the flood plain and we are concerned that the building on such a grand scale on the agricultural land adjacent to the Leisure Centre, on Bowes Field and on Greenstead Road will greatly increase the scale of water run-off and increase the potential flood plain. * We are concerned that any homes that are built will not be affordable homes that young families can afford to buy or rent. We would like to know what provisions EFDC are requiring developers to accept to ensure a good proportion of new homes fall within an affordable category? With the number of houses that the Government to be built and so many local farmers wishing to cash in on non productive farmland in the area, we are surprised that it is not possible to find a reasonable area that can be purpose built as a small new town with its own infrastructure and good connections to motorway and trunk road facilities, rather than turning historic older towns with little infrastructure into bustling metropolis.

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