

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

Stakeholder ID	3442	Name	J. E Bowden
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Method	Letter
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Date	2/12/2016
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### Letter or Email Response:

I am writing regarding the proposals put forward in the Epping Forest District Local Plan and would raise the following points, comments and objections to matters raised therein :-

- 1 My first and strongest objection is to the proposal to build on several areas of the Green Belt. The Green Belt was established after the war to prevent urban sprawl of the type seen in many large cities throughout the world. The start of the erosion of this concept is to my mind the thin end of the wedge and could lead to the gradual total removal of this vital protection. I chose to live in Epping largely because of the protection that the Green Belt provides and feel that the proposal is a betrayal of the concept established by the eminent town planners of the past. In the Plan it refers to the 'release' of Green Belt areas as if these areas are a land stock being kept for redevelopment purposes. This is not the case and the use of the word 'release' is misleading. In this context 'appropriation' would be a more suitable description. Locally there is no popular consent for the use of Green Belt land.
- 2 The proposal to build 1633 new dwellings at 2.3 persons per household represents a population increase of 3,756 on a population of around 12,000. This equates to a population increase of around 30%. There is no clear indication in the Plan as to how the necessary increase in infrastructure and services would be delivered. Local services are already fully subscribed. As examples:-
  - a There are only two doctors surgeries in the town both of which are fully subscribed. It generally takes four weeks to get a 10 minute appointment with a doctor. To anyone locally the claim in the report that The Limes surgery has capacity for nearly 50% increase in patients is absolutely ridiculous and needs to be re-examined.
  - b Local schools are fully subscribed especially at primary level. There is no mention of where further schools would be built and thus could lead to the further erosion of the Green Belt.
  - c The road systems are already struggling to cope with traffic. The High Road is constantly busy and often grid locked during rush hours.
  - d Local public transport is already inadequate. There is a less than satisfactory bus service and the Central Line underground trains become full to bursting point by the time they reach Leytonstone Station. Trains already run every few minutes and it is difficult to see how capacity could be increased.
- 3 I am horrified to find that the proposal includes plans to build on the site of the Epping Sports Club and Epping Sports Centre and two local sports fields. All of these facilities are vital to the community life of the town. There is a vague mention of replacement facilities but no indication of how or where these new facilities would be provided. The whole point of these established facilities is that they are surrounded by the communities that they serve. Providing a new centre at some date in the future on a site that would necessarily be located out of the residential areas is totally unacceptable and would lead to lack of use by those least able and therefore in greatest need of them. At present it is easily possible to walk to all of these facilities from most parts of the town and encourages use by the elderly and less able. A large new development (presumably by further erosion of the Green Belt) on the edge or out of the town is not an equivalent or suitable replacement.
- 4 The concentration of redevelopment to the South of Epping would lead to a large increase

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in traffic flow mainly to the North and East in the mornings and the reverse in the evening. The High Road, the junction at Theydon Road and the junction of Theydon Road with Ivy Chimneys Road are already heavily congested or at a standstill most mornings and evenings. The addition of more traffic would be a step too far and any improvements would inevitably lead to the loss of Epping Forest land which surrounds these points. 5 Epping is a small market town and pleasant place to live at the moment but the proposed large population increase in the way indicated in the Plan would inevitably change the character of the town that is already under pressure from increasing numbers of residents in recent developments. In my view the standard of services, road traffic and transport, which are already at breaking point would deteriorate further and even become totally dysfunctional. The proposed new housing developments appear to be planned for people who do not live or have existing roots in our community and it is of concern that the needs of the existing community would be neglected for the envisaged benefit of new residents. The Epping Society recently held a meeting for local residents to discuss the implications of the Plan. This was fully subscribed with over 250 people attending. The mood of the meeting was incredulous that such a large development was being planned which would inevitably be to the detriment of the everyday lives of Epping residents. All of the points I have raised above were touched on during the meeting and not a single voice was raised in support of the proposals. I trust that EFDC will take seriously their primary duty to protect and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the District and not be coerced into endorsing a flawed Plan prepared by people who have no particular interest in the future well being of Epping residents. The Arup Report identifies •Recreational pressure