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Comments on Major Modifications to the Local Plan

I believe the Major Modifications (and therefore the Local Plan) are not sound and therefore not justified or effective for the reasons given below.

Major Modification 78 Epping

Pollution

A 'financial contribution for air pollution' has been added to the Local Plan but given the serious health issues which can arise from air pollution this does not seem adequate. In a recent case air pollution from road traffic was linked to the death of a child ([bmj.com](https://www.bmj.com) 17 Dec 2020). Air pollution has been linked to high blood pressure and asthma among other diseases. A scientific study found the lung capacity of someone from a polluted area of East London was less than that of someone from a less polluted area by what equated to the size of a boiled egg.

'City Trees' (constructions using moss, irrigation and ventilation to clean air) have been put forward as a way to mitigate the impact of air pollution on human health. However these are relatively small structures and the impact of the M25 on the nearby houses would be huge and not something relatively small amounts of moss could change. Comprehensive independently collected data would need to be available before this could seriously be relied upon to mitigate air pollution in a meaningful way. Surely it would be better to enhance the sphagnum moss bogs that are currently in Epping Forest.

An earth bank or planting will not have a significant impact on the noise, light particulate or chemical (fumes) pollution from the M25 due to the topography of the site. The drawing supplied seem to show the site at the point where these measures we would be most favourable but this is a very small portion of the whole South Epping Masterplan Site.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

The brooks and associated vegetation are a natural green/blue corridor which should be enhanced in line with policy on green and blue infrastructure. The corridor runs down to the Merry Fiddler's and continues up to Coopersale.

Landscape Character Assessment (supporting document)

The Landscape proposed for development is Green Belt land and should remain so. If it has had this designation removed it should be reinstated. It remains an attractive landscape with many old and attractive features.

The Landscape has a natural rise and fall which allows lovely views across to Gaynes Park, an avenue of old poplar trees avenue and a wooded horizon (east of the railway line) and back toward Epping (west of the railway line). The land east of the railway contains an area which was once used as a pond by stock kept in these fields. This links this area to its past and also still helps to stop flooding as it fills with water after heavy rain. The mature oak on it's boundary bank indicates that this feature is a very old one. The trees in this area include oak, crab apple, and elderflower field maple among others. For a relatively small area the make up of the vegetation is diverse and reminiscent of a wild wood.

The brooks still follow their natural course and the flora associated with them (and along the field edges and railway line) is very diverse providing food and shelter for wildlife. The many large trees and other vegetation associated with the brooks greatly add to the Landscape Character. In the 1980's water voles lived in the banks of the stream running across the middle of the fields and grey wagtails nested beside the brook at Brook Road.. Linnets use these fields and hedgrows and are a species of farmland bird that is in decline. By modern standards these a still small fields which add to the Landscape Character and usefulness for wildlife.

The hedgerows and vegetation along the railway line were the inspiration for the charming and very successful Brambley Hedge books. They are a natural asset which add to the area and enhance the way Epping presents itself to everyone who enters or leaves by rail.

The wood which is close to Gardner's Farm and the vegetation associated with brooks seems to have been dismissed in the current Landscape Assessment.

The current Landscape Character Assessment of the South Epping Masterplan site is very negative and unfair.

## Aviation

Aviation is cited as a local employer but it is not a sustainable one and expansion of current airports or the creation of new small airports is not justified. We have many cultural, historical and natural assets which are currently under recognised and could be used to create sustainable tourism instead. Filming in the district has potential to grow (with new filming studios in Hertfordshire) and noise pollution from aircraft negatively impacts on the attractiveness of sites as filming locations.