

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

Stakeholder ID	3818	Name	Leon	Girling
Method	Letter			
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Letter or Email Response:

I am writing as part of the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Draft Local Plan public consultation. I would like to stress that I and the majority of Loughton/Debden residents do not wish to see urban intensification in our town. I/we are opposed to the development on any of our vitally needed open green (recreational) spaces. There has already been significant development in our area with the Winston Churchill pub, Burton Road and Vere Road developments and the College site voicing their intention to build housing on Luctons fields and the middle site. The transport infrastructure in Loughton is already far from adequate. Most of the roads across the town were never built for the level of car ownership we are now facing.Redacted.... certainly have not maintained our roads and pavements to an adequate standard. We are also faced with Bus services being cut across the District and the Central Line is at full capacity, fact. The only reason Transport for London would say it is not at full capacity is because its policy is let the council/developer build their houses where they want, let them cause the problem and then we can apply to central government for funding to TRY and fix it. The point is TfL will not actual solve the capacity problem, but they will be seen to have tried. This is a poor path for EFDC to take. Future development needs to take part away from the Central Line and towards areas that will encourage residents/commuters to use main line train networks, eg. Harlow, Enfield, Potters Bar etc. Also why not look for the opportunity towards Stapleford Abbots to encourage more people to travel to Romford/Harold Wood for their transport connections. I use Jessel Green three times a week, taking my twin 2 years there to play. I have used the Jessel Green Open spaces for 20+ years personally for recreation use. I am also the organiser of Loughton Town Council's community fun day, which uses the green. We on average have in access of 2,800+ residents attend our event. The community as a whole values this space and would like to see EFDC provide many more community events for local residents on the green. Could the council explain to its residents why whenRedacted.... made representations to the council regarding the Temple Farm site in Roydon, it was incorrectly assessed by officers and therefore EFDC has failed to consider it as a viable development site? Promoting the plan I would like to start my response by expressing how terrible I have the promotion of the Local Plan to the public. There are still huge volumes of local residents that have no idea what EFDC are proposing to do to the area in which they live, work or learn. Many people did not receive the AS leaflet, we did not. The design of the leaflet was terrible and gave no real relevant information for people to understand how important the process would be. I attended the public exhibition at Lopping Hall, which was very well attended. I found Derek Macnab's (EFDC Director) presence was very welcome as he genuinely wanted to hear what people had to say. However, some of the Future Planning team was rude and almost dismissed the public's questions out of hand, in some cases even refusing to give answers. There were some staff that appeared to know nothing about the sites proposed, in particular the Jessel Green Open Space and how much of the land was being proposed for development. There were errors in some of the Local Plan news articles, where the

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consultation email was incorrectly written. Whilst I appreciate the council did not have to consult with the public, this would have been a major PR disaster if they had not. I found the short consultation period a barrier, as many members of the public were only just starting to become aware of the Local Plan in the last few days of the consultation. The Councillor workshops These were merely a tick box exercise, it was clear at numerous workshops that ...Redacted.... The sessions in general were death by PowerPoint. The Sustainable Transport sessions held at the Civic offices was absolutely pointless, and I have a background in this area of work. The young consultant that presented relied mainly on modelling software for his proposals, which is a terrible, unrealistic approach. The local ward Councillors knew a lot more about the local transport network, issues and hurdles to tackle and yet ...Redacted.... comments were dismissed out of hand. Councillors had the opportunity to feed into the proposed sites in their wards. However, none of these comments and suggestions have been taken into account in the Laughton area. There is no section within the plan that highlights what local ward members did propose and why EFDC have chosen to overall elected members input. The proposed sites in the draft Local Plan My views and those of 2000+ Save the Jessel Green campaign supporters are: SR-0289 - Vere Road (10 homes) I/we reluctantly accept this site as most of the road is brown fill and we should consider these sites before and Open Green space or Green belt. I would stress that I am grateful that EFDC have seen sense that the priority on Vere Road should be parking. SR-0356 - Borders Lane Playing Field (304) I/we reluctantly accept this site as it is owned by Epping Forest College and they intend to put housing on the land to bring in revenue anyway. I/we do strongly object to the volume of housing proposed. I/we must insist that this site is allocated no more than 150 new homes. The rest of the land should be used as open green space and a replacement sports facility for residents after the college removed the old sports facilities as part of their re-development of the Lower site. There was always an agreement with Epping Forest College that they would at some point provide a replacement sports facility. SR-0526 - Golden Lion Public House (30 homes) I/we believe that this is site has already been before the local planning committee and is progressing into a new housing development. S R-0548 - Loughton Resource Centre (44 homes) Many families with young children use this facility as it includes a much needed local Children's Centre, Little Oaks. It astounds me that after ...Redacted.... trying so hard in the last 12 months to keep our District Children Centres open that one is on the list to be developed. However, if the amount of homes is reduced by 50% to 22 homes and a new purpose built Children's Centre/Health centre is built as part of the new development I/we would support this. SR-0527 - Royal Oak Public House, Forest Road (14 homes) If the land owner has agreed to sell the land it is not my place to object to this site. However, may be the volume of households needs to be reduced to more like 8 homes. SR-0834 - Former Post Office depot, west of High Road (44 homes) If the land owner has agreed to sell the land it is not my place to object to this site. I support the development of this site. SR-0835 - Old Epping Forest College Middle site (158 homes) ...Redacted.... allowing the covenant to be lifted on this land, which safeguarded its future as possible school site. I have been informed that ...Redacted.... and believed that population growth showed no need for a future school in the area, what absolute rubbish. All the schools in Laughton are at full capacity, so much so that children are now being given places in Chigwell and Epping. This is hardly promoting sustainability on the school run. A free school or Academy Trust should have been asked if they wished to take on the site before ...Redacted.... rushed to sign of the covenant release, it was totally irresponsible, particular on the basis of the amount of new homes (1,190) being proposed in the Draft Local Plan. I would only agree for 60 new homes to be built on this site. The rest of the land should be used for a new school and health centre. I am aware of a Free school organisation that is interested in the land to provide a new school. SR-0878 - 46-48 Station Road (12 homes) If the land owner has agreed to sell the land it is not my place to object to this site. SR-0226 - Loughton station car park (114 homes) I think this is a terrible idea, which I cannot support. It is completely out of character. However, if the land owner (eg. TfL) agree not to loose any of the existing car parking and any future development has a sympathetic design, in keeping with the locality, I may support the development. SR-0227 - Debden Station (193 homes) I think this is a terrible idea, which I cannot support. It is completely out of character. However, if the land owner (eg. TfL) agree not to loose any of the existing car parking and any future development has a sympathetic design, in keeping with the locality, I may support the development. SR-0358 - Sandford Ave, Westall Road Open Space (53 homes) SR-0361- Colebrook lane, Jessel Drive Open Space (195 homes) The fact that this site is even included in the Draft ocal Plan, demonstrates EFDC's attitude towards peoples quality of life, their health and well-being and the local environment. The Air Ambulance service has landed on the flat area of Jessel Green five times in 2016 alone. This is one of the only remaining safe places for the helicopter to land as EFDC has already built on many of the original green spaces on the estate. Laughton Town Council applied to Essex County Council three years ago for Village Green status for this site. This was before Jessel Green was officially ever listed as a 'Draft ocal Plan' site. To make this application Laughton Town Council has compiled a strong evidence base

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of its importance to the community. The space is used by the public as a recreational space, local groups use it as does many local families. The last four years Laughton Town Council and local churches have used this site to deliver annual Town show/Fun Day. Residents use the hill every year in the winter to sledge and build snowmen. Parent and toddler, dog walker and sports groups use the site weekly. Residents use the Open space for picnics etc. EFDC would have people believe the reason this site ticks the boxes is because it has strong transport links. The local Bus services are being cut by Essex County Council and further reductions are in the pipeline. There are 5 schools on the Debden estate currently. All Headteachers have confirmed they are at full capacity, with long waiting lists. The local GP surgeries are at full capacity with huge waiting times for appointments. Further demands with additional housing will just exasperate the situation. Has EFDC fully explored the stream, which runs under the green. The ground is prone to flooding. The ...Redacted... has no seller because of the water table below. The trees located around the green are there to control the risk of flooding. Epping Forest and most of the surrounding green Belt is not accessible to elderly, young people, those with mobility or transport issues. Our Open Green spaces enable people to play in a safe environment. Taking our greens away from our children and adult population will affect their health. The greens reduce pollution levels and the access to recreational space will encourage physical activity, which helps tackle the rise in obesity. Many of the arguments for Jessel Green Open Space (SR.;0358) apply also to Sandford Ave/Westall Road Green Space (SR-0361). They are community assets, which have historic, social and economic importance to the estate, Town and District. There is huge public opinion that the two Laughton greens (Rochford and Jessel) must not appear in the final list of Local Plan sites. We as a community are willing to fight this at Inspector stage, and delay the process in anyway possible if EFDC ignore considerable objection and public wishes. My proposals My main proposal is that I wish EFDC to develop a new Garden Village (much like Debden was originally, before EFDC destroyed it) away from the South of the District. Wherever future developers plan to build homes will require significant infrastructure and amenities, it makes common and business sense to relieve all existing Epping Forest towns of additional housing pressure, when their local amenities, transport links, roads, schools etc. are fully stretch. EFDC MUST look to build a new settlement, which will encourage future home owners to use Harlow, Enfield, Chingford or Harold Wood main line train stations, taking much needed pressure away from the Central Line Underground stations. A clutch of Essex local authorities has taken a further key step on the route towards building three new garden communities in the northern part of the county. The four local authorities; Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council have all entered into joint arrangements to create an overarching body, to be known as North Essex Garden Communities Limited (NEGC). This body will coordinate the development of the new settlements, subject to the outcome of the draft local plan process. Why is EFDC not involved in this? Alternative sites The David Lloyd Centre in Chigwell/Buckhurst Hill is sited on EFDC owned land. It has been made known to me that ...Redacted... this would be a good opportunity for EFDC to take back their land for urgent housing need. This site would at least provide 100+ new homes}. As a voter and tax payer I would be furious if I was to discover EFDC had extended the land lease to a ...Redacted..., when housing land is desperately needed to fulfil the Draft Local Plan requirements. Woolston Manor Golf Course in Chigwell borders Loughton Broadway ward. I have been informed that a business/developer wishes to build a minimum of 600+ new homes on this site. If this is the case this should be explored further to reduce pressure on proposed sites in the Oebden area of Laughton. I have also heard that the developer was seeking as many as 1,000 new dwellings on this site. That would assist Chigwell, Buckhurst Hill and Laughton fulfil some of the housing quota. Loughton Hire land close to Debden Underground station. I believe that this land should be explored as it has access to transport links. I would only say that as Loughton Hire is a local business, run by local residents, they should be assisted by EFDC by every means possible to relocate them to an alternative local site. St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church site, located at Willingale Road/Collard Ave. The church is clearly not interested in investing money in improving the site. I would therefore like EFDC to explore if the land owner would consider selling this off for much needed housing development. However, I would want EFDC to ensure that any future developer also ensures there is a community facility/hall included within any future development/building plans. The Metropolitan Police Park, Chigwell This site was originally in the 2012 Issues and Options list of sites. I do not understand when all Police forces are slashing their budgets, reducing number of officers and Police Stations that continuing to keep a sports facility asset seems to take priority. The Mayor of London in 2012 decided to remove the site from the list. However, I have been advised by the Deputy Mayor of London for Police and Crime that their entire estate is being reviewed. The original plan was to build up to 500 households. Chigwell most certainly should be taking more housing before Loughton as they neighbour the London Borough's and should be effected by any out of London spill, by future home owners. Langston Road, Loughton I proposed at the member workshops where possible sections of

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Langston Road that are close to the Central Line should be developed for residential use. In particular any wasted land close to the Clinton Cards site. Loughton Police Station, High Road, Loughton I would support a development, in which the existing Police building on Loughton High Road is demolished and a slightly higher new development is put in its place. In summary The Save Jessel Green Facebook page, which has 2,000+ Likes is an example of public opinion PICTURE PROVIDED Being a member of this Facebook page has enabled me to understand a great many things: 1. Was the Local Plan well written - NO 2. Was the Local Plan written and designed in a way that residents could understand it - NO 3. Do many EFDC residents know about the Local Plan - NO 4. Have EFDC failed the tax payer - YES 5. Do people support the EFDC Draft Local Plan - NO 6. Have the public voiced their anger about the future of Jessel Green and Rochford Green to Cllr Chris Whitbread, Cllr John Philip and Mr Macnab - YES, very clearly at both the Murray Hall public meeting and the Lopping Hall Exhibition 7. Should the two Debden Greens appear in the final list of sites - NO 8. Should EFDC be responsible land owners and protect this sites from any future development - YES 9. Will Loughton/Debden Residents, District Cllrs and the Loughton Residents Association find every way possible to block this plan if our Debden greens are still in the final Local Plan - YES 10. The phase one local plan public consultation 'Issues and Options 2012' asked, What do you think the priorities are for the District over the next 20 years? The largest public response was 32.4% 'Protect & enhance green spaces. - YOU THEN ADDED OUR GREEN SPACES TO THE LIST 11. Next question was - 'What planning issues do you think most need to be addressed in your local area? -The top answer was - 20.6% "Protect green spaces - YOU THEN ADDED OUR GREEN SPACES TO THE LIST I appreciate what a hard job EFDC have in trying to find additional housing to support our future growth. However, this should at the risk of taking away the few remaining recreational green spaces Debden/Loughton has. The Debden estate was built to be an urban green village, irresponsible development has destroyed this vision for the area. The way in which this Draft Local Plan has been both produced and marketed to the public has left me feeling embarrassedRedacted.... If the decision was made to continue to put forward the last remaining recreation spaces in Debden, showing no regard for the welfare of our residents and their health and well-being I would not wish to continueRedacted.... I hope that the views of all the Loughton residents that have written, emailed and completed questionnaires will be listened to as promised in the forward of the Draft local Plan and their requests will be acted upon.

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