

Astra Davidson-Smith

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Local Plan Regulation 19 Representation
Planning Policy Team
Epping Forest District Council
Civic Offices
323 High Street
Epping
Essex CM16 4BZ

25 January 2018

Dear Planning Policy Team,

With regards to the Submission Version of the Epping Forest District Local Plan (henceforth 'the Plan') I would like to voice my concerns that it is unsound in a number of regards and fails to comply with national policy. My objections are confined to the Epping settlement areas EPP.R1 and EPP.R2; as a residentRedacted..... affected by this part of the Plan.

Policy DM 22 on Air Quality

The development of EPP. R1 and EPP.R2 will extend right up to the M25, one of the busiest motorways in the country. Currently this land acts as a green buffer soaking up some of the pollution generated. Not only am I concerned that this green buffer will be removed exposing existing residents to more pollution, but those houses built on this land in even closer proximity to the motorway are going to be subject to incredibly high levels of air pollution.

Page 117 para K(x) of the Plan states that there should be an appropriate buffer built in to protect residents from the noise and air pollution of the M25, however I am unsure how this will be possible when there is also a provision for:

- Building 950 new homes - page 117 para K(i),
- Moving Ivy Chimneys Primary School to the new area – para K (iii) - on the grounds of greater air pollution for the pupils this is not appealing either,
- New neighbourhood centre including shops - para K (ii),
- New health centre - para K (iv),
- New road with bus lane - para K (v),
- New bridge over railway track for cars, pedestrians and cyclists – para K (vi),
- Replacement of the recreation ground - page 118 para K(xv).

It is a finite space and I do not see how it is possible for all of these provisions to be met in the space allocated, while also including enough of a buffer to the M25.

Policy DM 15 on Managing and Reducing Flood Risk

When acquiring our property, as part of our solicitor's searches we checked whether our home was in a flood risk area. A substantial part of EPP. R2 came up on our search as being high flood risk with a history of flooding. I am unsure of the soundness of building on this land. Even if the brook is routed away from its current course, the actual topography of the area dictates that it will still remain a flood plain?

Policy T 1 Sustainable transport

EPP.R1 and EPP.R2 are both at the foot of a steep hill and a 20/25 minute walk up to Epping Town centre, and as such, only a handful of residents in the area travel to the high street on foot. With 950 more households the impact on traffic in the area which is already strained will be

immense. Due to the location of EPP.R1 and EPP.R2, the vast majority of new residents will use their cars to reach the town centre, which will have the opposite effect to the sustainable transport choices which the development is intended to promote.

In addition EPP. R1 and EPP. R2 are at least within comfortable walking distance to Epping Underground Station, however I am unsure if the station will cope with this increase in volume. Epping Station doesn't just serve Epping and the immediate surrounding area, rather many more commuters travel in and park their cars in the area as underground travel costs are significantly less than those on over ground rail networks such as serve Harlow, for example.

As drafted, the Plan has failed in meeting its obligations to residents with regards to air pollution, quality housing (which isn't at risk of flooding) and access to, and promotion of, sustainable transport. The list of amenities which would be required to support the addition of 950 new households (to an area that is already extremely stretched in terms of road network and healthcare) is substantial and is unlikely to fit on to the site alongside these new dwellings. To take one example of the current strain on local facilities, I have to go to Loughton for the dentist as I was unable to register my sons and I in Epping, while doctors appointments have a 7 week lead time (outside of emergencies).

In conclusion, I note that the Plan must comply with applicable policy and meet the challenge of addressing the future needs of housing and employment alongside preserving the area's historic and built character. To achieve this, would it not be prudent to downscale the development for EPP. R1 and EPP. R2, meaning there is enough space to provide adequate air and noise pollution buffers and flood defence for new homes being built and current residents and actually have the space to be able to provide/maintain the concomitant amenities listed on pages 117 and 118?

If the housing shortfall needs to be met elsewhere, I would suggest that a potential solution is liaising with TFL and re-linking the central line to the decommissioned stations at North Weald and Ongar and increasing the development provision in those locations (without the physical restriction of the M25 which exists in EPP.R1 and EPP.R2). This would certainly comply with the sustainable transport needs policy, without jeopardising residents' health due to air pollution and indeed preserve the character of the area.

Yours faithfully

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Astra Davidson-Smith