

## **Enfield Council Introduction to Edmonton Leaside AAP**

On behalf of Enfield Council, I should like to welcome all participants to this Independent Examination and take this opportunity to explain the scope, purpose and background of the Area Action Plan.

My name is Peter George and I am Director of Meridian Water and also hold responsibility for Strategic Plan Making at Enfield Council. I will ask my team to introduce themselves at the end of this statement.

### **Background to the Plan**

The Council embarked on a 'Place Shaping' agenda back in 2006/07 (confirmed by the adopted Core Strategy) and this focused and prioritised work in the areas of Enfield that are most disadvantaged.

Area Action Plans have been progressed to support these. Edmonton Leaside AAP represents the final Action Plan of the Core Strategy and will support the regeneration of place shaping priority area at Meridian Water. Further detailed guidance will come forward through the Council's current preparation of a new Meridian Water masterplan, as well as Enfield New Local Plan.

Following the adoption of Enfield's Core Strategy, the process of preparing the Edmonton Leaside AAP began in 2011. An officer steering group to guide the project at key stages was established and since then, this has continually involved officers from a range of relevant Council services, as well as particularly close cooperation of the Strategic Planning and Meridian Water Regeneration Teams.

The AAP is intended to provide a strategic level planning framework for the borough's south eastern Lee Valley corridor known locally as Edmonton Leaside, in London's most disadvantaged & deprived areas. In particular, the Edmonton Leaside AAP provides spatial and policy guidance for the transformation of Meridian Water, one, if not the most significant brownfield regeneration opportunities in North London. And certainly for Enfield, the most significant landmark brownfield projects the Council has ever put forward and at least a decade in the planning.

Meridian Water is set to deliver thousands of new homes and jobs through new sustainable communities and neighbourhoods as promoted by the London Plan. The Council know will not come without challenge, compromise and determination.

## **The aims of the AAP in delivering future development & its relationship with the Core Strategy, Emerging Local Plan and Masterplan SPD**

Core Strategy Policy 1: 'Strategic Growth Areas' identifies Edmonton Leaside (previously Central Leaside) as an area of focused growth and housing led regeneration.

Core Strategy Policy 2: 'Housing supply and location of new homes' sets out the indicative housing growth targets and the projected supply of new homes within the Plan area.

Since then, the evidence underpinning the Council's emerging new Local Plan, as well as the new draft London Plan and national guidance, have proposed much higher housing numbers for the borough of Enfield, required to address identified need.

When the new draft London Plan is adopted, our annual housing target will increase from approximately 800 to about 1,800 dwellings per annum and in line with the government's new standardised methodology, our objectively assessed 10-year housing need has gone up by almost 40%, in comparison with our previous local assessment of need, to well over 3,000 dwellings per annum.

At the same time, the new draft London Plan designates Enfield as a borough to retain and provide strategic industrial land as well as protecting all greenbelt land. Enfield currently accommodates over 400 ha of strategic industrial land and 30% of the borough is covered by greenbelt designations. Delivery of targets to meet local needs are therefore increasingly challenging to meet, with such limitations on the supply of land.

Furthermore, the council also needs to address a number of other competing challenges. This AAP is without doubt the Council's most ambitious; because it has to be. The ELAAP is a regeneration area planning framework which has, at its heart, a diverse community of residents, businesses and neighbourhoods, that have lived and worked in this deprived part of the Borough for years.

Put simply, for the Council there is no other option but to optimise every opportunity the brownfield regeneration Meridian Water represents.

ELAAP and Meridian Water are about much more than one project. They are the key to delivering a number of crucial strategic objectives of the council:

- Delivering thousands of homes at different tenures, in line with our incredibly challenging housing trajectory, especially our need for affordable housing;
- Helping to move more local people out of temporary accommodation, in a borough which has one of the largest number of people in temporary accommodation in the country; through the extensive delivery of Council led

affordable housing. This is especially crucial at a time when the Council is losing 200 dwellings per year through the governments' Right To Buy scheme and is spending £30 million per annum on temporary accommodation;

- Delivering thousands of much needed jobs in an area that has been historically dominated by low jobs densities and wages that are significantly below the borough and London average;
- Lifting the wards in question out of the top 10% most deprived wards, by giving more local people opportunities to escape poverty and deprivation, through better access to employment and training as well as a better living environment and improved transport links;
- Improving the future lives of local children in this historically isolated area, by providing them with better education and opportunities access to aspirational careers on their doorstep;
- Tackling serious physical challenges of the land in terms of access to and quality of local environment; Amongst others, Meridian Water will see the delivery of the biggest new park in London in a century, strong new links to the Lee Valley Regional Park, and infrastructure to help decrease car use support low carbon energy; These will be significant improvements in an area with historically high car reliance, extensive air quality problems, a hostile environment for walking and cycling, issues with severance and a high concentration of polluting uses;
- And finally: Helping the council towards greater self-sufficiency, to free up more money for desperately needed front line services, in a time of ever greater austerity and lack of funds from national government; This is supported through the council acquiring ownership of significant revenue producing assets in the area;

The council and all of the people who are currently living in this area of intense deprivation, are dependent on the success of ELAAP and Meridian Water to deliver on these crucial objectives. The ELAAP has therefore chosen to be ambitious and proactive in seeking transformational change in this area, rather than allowing these ambitions to be watered down and agreeing to protect the status quo.

The AAP is addressing all of these conflicting priorities, including the requirements of national and London Plan policy, to the best of its abilities. The Council therefore believes that in the round, ELAAP is in general conformity with the London Plan and national policy.

While it is acknowledged that the issue over SIL release remains contentious and a challenging one for the Plan to address, every effort has been explored to look at finding a balance between competing policy objectives.

## **Background to Meridian Water & update on current status of the project**

The Council have been highly proactive in ensuring that the jobs and homes planned for in the ELAAP are deliverable. This is particularly demonstrated by the Council's large scale acquisitions of land at Meridian Water, where now about 65% of land is in Council ownership within the red line.

The Council have also, in the same spirit, decided to end their relationship with their previous lead developer and will coordinate delivery of Meridian Water itself. This is to ensure that Meridian Water truly delivers the type and amount of homes and jobs local people need.

The Council's three pillars underpinning place- making of Meridian Water are:

- **Parklife on your doorstep / the greenest development in London**
- **Your place to make and create / London's new home for production**
- **Mixing uses – animating streets / London's preeminent non-residential ground floor use development**

The first three phases of Meridian Water also clearly demonstrate the Council's commitment to prioritising provision of infrastructure, housing, especially affordable housing and employment. Phase 1 of Meridian Water, which is now permitted and under way, will deliver a new station, Phase 2 is a 100% affordable housing development, and phase 3 is the new Meridian Water employment hub.

The Council is further progressing towards securing additional infrastructure funding through its Housing Infrastructure Fund bid, backed by the Mayor, which it will submit in early 2019.

New permissions in the area, other than for the Meridian Water station as mentioned above, have included the Development Consent Order granted to the North London Waste Authority for the North London Heat and Power Project at Edmonton Ecopark and permissions for the Stonehill and Triangle sites, which were permitted in line with adopted Core Strategy policy.

## **Any other recent developments or changes since submission of the AAP**

Since the ELAAP was submitted for Examination, the Council has continued to actively and positively engage with surrounding boroughs, for example through the North London Waste Plan, to strategically plan for addressing future waste processing needs. This is particularly significant as the majority of waste operations in North London are located in and around the ELAAP area. I feel it important to stress the Council fully acknowledges and continues to support the strategic role our industrial land reservoir provides for London.

### **Soundness**

In line the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Submitted Plan (including the Schedule of Minor Changes) has been:

**Positively prepared** – proactively focused and based on meeting the borough’s housing, employment and infrastructure needs in a sustainable, plan led way;

**Justified** – the plan is a high level strategic policy document with evidence which is proportionate to this purpose and which has evolved over a number of years; ELAAP is informed and supported by an extensive background of evidence work; scenario testing; on-going internal and external consultation and two formal stages of consultation in accordance with Regulations 18 and 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulation 2012).

**Effective** – the plan’s deliverability is strongly supported by the Council’s hands-on approach to land acquisitions, housing delivery, engagement with new local employers, and front-loading provision of infrastructure; and

**Consistent with national policy** – in line with the NPPF and the London Plan, the plan enables delivery of development with a strong focus on environmental, economic and social sustainability, in an area that has historically suffered from significant environmental, economic and social disadvantage and deprivation.

The Council have also worked tirelessly to engage with all the key stakeholders in the attempt to come to agreements about difficult or conflicting priorities and have signed statements of common ground to this effect. In light of the level of incredibly challenging transformational change that is proposed, it is very positive that the majority of representations are generally supportive of the Plan’s principles objectives and 20-year vision.

The Council therefore particularly regret that the GLA, after numerous discussions, has chosen not to sign the Statement of Common Ground drafted by the Council with their input, and has chosen not to put forward an alternative statement. However, the Council remains committed to the area's productive industrial heritage and welcomes the fact that the Mayor has stated that he is very supportive of the general aims and objectives and delivery of Meridian Water, except for the extent of SIL release. This is also reflected in the Mayor's very welcome support of the project through the HIF bid and the work that TfL is doing on the transport potential for the area. The Council appreciate the importance of SIL but believe that it is more important to deliver homes and a greater number and variety of better paid jobs for local people, integrated fully into the local area through a mix of uses, than to protect a restrictive type of employment land which services only one economic sector, at all costs.

The Council believes it has submitted a sound Development Plan Document which meets all the statutory requirements in its preparation. It believes that the submitted AAP proposes the most appropriate policies for Edmonton Leaside and will deliver what it sets out to achieve, consistent with the Councils adopted spatial vision and objectives, the London Plan and national guidance.

Over the next few days, you will hear from a number of representors who are reasonably seeking to protect their organisational interests and to defend their organisation's desire to keep things as they are. The Council appreciates their situation and will of course continue to try to the best of its abilities to mitigate any adverse impacts that ELAAP and Meridian Water will have on them. However, the Council believes it is right in defending a strategy that is bold and ambitious for change, that will above all be for the wider benefit of all local people living in one of the most deprived areas of London, rather than aimed at protecting the privilege of individual organisations to continue as before.

## **Closing**

The Council's contributions to the hearing matters, will periodically interchange between lead officers. In closing, I would like to briefly ask the Council's team to introduce themselves.