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Dear Sir / Madam

On behalf of Winchmore Hill & Enfield Hockey Club, I am writing to object to draft policy DM BG10 in the Draft Enfield Local Plan, which allocates Firs Farm Wetlands (Site ID SA 59) as a site for burial and/or crematorium use.

We oppose this policy because as a local sports club, we see the physical and mental health benefits of people participating in sport every week. We have already taken part in earlier discussions with Enfield council about the development of a new community hub with changing facilities at Firs Farm that will help grow sports participation and contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of the local community. To lose the opportunity to further develop the site for the benefit of the living, whilst replacing it with a burial site or crematorium could not be more inappropriate.

Furthermore:

1. Firs Farm wetlands is a vitally important community resource, essential to the health and well-being of the local people in many ways.
2. The draft Policy directly contradicts Strategic Policy SP CL4 in the draft Local Plan. This identifies Firs Farm as facilitating and contributing towards developing sport and leisure facilities in Enfield as described above.
3. The proposal will significantly affect the local Site of Interest for Nature Conservation, and reduce the biodiversity and nature conservation interest of Firs Farm wetlands, contrary to several other policies in the draft Local Plan.
4. The proposal will reduce the effectiveness of the flood alleviation provided by Firs Farm wetlands, which Enfield Council has spent more than £1 million to provide.
5. The proposal will adversely affect the environment and local traffic, and this has not been properly considered in the Integrated Impact Assessment of the draft Local Plan.
6. The policy introduces uncertainty into the future use of Firs Farm wetlands that jeopardises funding for projects secured by local community groups (e.g. from Thames Water) that have been endorsed and supported by Enfield Council.

We therefore call on the Council to remove all reference to Firs Farm wetlands from Policy DM BG10.

Yours faithfully