

Dear Enfield Council

Response to the Draft Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important consultation.

I am writing to object to the following Policies: SP PL10, pages 80-87, and Figure 3.11; Policy SP PL9, pages 77-80 and Concept Plan Figure 3.10; Policy SA45: Land Between Camlet Way and Crescent Way, Hadley Wood, page 364; Policy SA54, page 374; Policy SA62 page 372; and Policy SA62 page 383 and SP CL4 pages 277-279 – all of which propose the dedesignation of Green Belt for housing and other purposes.

All these sites are part of historic Enfield Chase, which played an important role in the development of Enfield. The remaining parts of the Chase are unique in the southeast and a rare and valuable landscape asset. The loss of these sites would cause permanent harm not only to the Green Belt, but also to the very character of the borough. Vicarage Farm is crossed by the Merryhills Way footpath, much-used by Enfield residents and others for exercise and relaxation and the physical and mental health attributes of the footpath would be destroyed by development. The farmland could be put back into productive use growing local food for local people. Crews Hill is equally important to the borough and should not be destroyed. Its garden centres and other businesses provide employment and a resource for people from Enfield and beyond. Instead of losing Crews Hill for housing, its horticultural activities should be encouraged and enhanced so that it can once again be a hub for food and plant production.

While I support housing development and support the ambition to meet Enfield's housing needs, I strongly object to the proposal to release Green Belt for housing or other purposes. I believe that there are alternatives available to meet housing targets and that the Green Belt is a precious resource that should be protected and preserved for future generations. It is too valuable to lose for all the many environmental, ecological, economic, public health and other reasons that have been identified, especially during the recent pandemic. The Council has a duty of care for the Green Belt, in accordance with the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], and any intentions to release parts of it should be taken out of the local plan.

* Vicarage Farm in particular is home to a great number of animals who will lose their habitat to development if the area is released from Green Belt (please see over)

The comments provided in this response to the consultation are my own views.

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A large number of pheasants live in the open farmland¹⁶⁷⁴ and will lose their habitat.

In addition, many different birds will also be lost, some of which are already rare (see RSPB).

We regularly see, for example, buzzards, kestrels, hawk (possibly goshawk), Great Spotted Woodpeckers, European Green Woodpeckers, and of course more common garden birds such as robins, blue tits, goldfinches, starlings, long-tailed tits, coal tits, blackbirds, jays and many more.

As well as the birds, the area is home to foxes, and muntjacs.

The Vicarage Farm area is a green, peaceful haven in an already busy part of Enfield. It is a place enjoyed by local residents, particularly throughout the Covid pandemic and during lockdowns.

The release of Green Belt land contradicts paragraphs 137 and 140 of the NPPF (2021) in particular (Chapter 13).

There are no "exceptional circumstances" that justify the release of these Green Belt areas in Enfield.

It also contradicts Chapter 15 of the NPPF, as the release of this land will not and cannot "conserve and enhance the natural environment". On the contrary, it will result in the destruction of the natural environment, together with the wildlife habitats & biodiversity within.