

Examination in Public of Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033

Hearing Statement relating to:

MATTER 15: Places

Submitted by:

Dr John Warren – Chair: Theydon Bois Action Group

Policy P8 Theydon Bois

Theydon Bois Action Group objects to the loss of any Green Belt land around our village.

Regarding **site THYB.R1** Land at the end of Forest Drive; we note that this triangular field in the Green Belt has three clear and distinct boundaries:-

- (1) At the Western side, backing on to the gardens of existing houses in Dukes Avenue, the historic public footpath which forms part of the City of London's Oak Trail, along with the hedgerow and its landmark oak trees.
- (2) The natural Northern field boundary of the watercourse, which would further benefit from the additional planting of native species along with the retention of existing trees.
- (3) The Eastern boundary of the field is defined by the railway line and its embankment which have been in existence since 1865. This has been recognised as the definitive, defensible and permanent linear, Green Belt boundary at the settlement edge to the East of the village in accord with Paragraph 85, bullet point 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012—**“define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.”** This crucial policy is carried forward with the exact same wording in the 2018 NPPF at paragraph 139 bullet point (f). Any breaching of the railway line and its embankment to the East, would have opened up the potential for further and future development across a large stretch of

Green Belt land, with the next permanent and defensible boundary being the historic, protected Coopersale Lane and the M11 and M25 motorways. In this respect, we recognise the soundness of EFDC's decision not to accept sites to the East of the railway line for development and we would ask that paragraph 85 of the 2012 NPPF be included with the reasons for refusal as cited in Appendix B to the Site Selection Report, EB805-March 2018, Arup.

Limitations of Central Line Underground service:-

It is common local knowledge that the Central Line is already running at capacity during peak rush hour periods. Trains from Epping are often full by the time they reach Debden and Loughton. Return journeys from London present the same problems in the evening. Transport for London (TfL) has, until recently, stated at every EFDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee they have attended, that the tube service cannot really be improved due to signalling etc.

However, they have now changed their tune and present skewed statistics which show *overall* levels of tube passenger loading based on a daily period, rather than the morning and evening commute periods, in an attempt to "massage" the true situation. TfL now have a vested interest in not admitting the capacity problems at peak periods, as they wish to put profitable housing development on all their car parks in the District, which will likely generate even more passengers on the Central Line. TfL have said that the Central Line will not stand in the way of "Growth" in the District but local people know that this is not the case. TfL have also said that the opening of the Elizabeth Line (Cross Rail) with its connection at Stratford will reduce capacity problems on the Central Line. That may be the case in central London, Bank to Oxford Street etc. but it will not reduce congestion between Epping and Stratford and in Epping Forest District.

Dr John Warren

Chair, Theydon Bois Action Group

24th April 2019

