

Epping Forest Forum

Mr. Paul Morris

Issues relating to the soundness of the Epping Forest District local plan

Issue 2

I feel that the whole consultation process was not well presented, not easily accessible and relied heavily on local communities providing and paying for venues to request consultation of which in Loughton specifically there were unanimous opposition towards certain aspects which were completely ignored. In Waltham Abbey the councillor representing the LDP shouted at local people very rudely and other speakers had to apologise for his behaviour. That is not consultation when the representative of the council shouts at residents because they don't agree with him.

The website was not easy to navigate and the EFDC website in general is constantly having convenient technical glitches.

Even though this plan is not yet officially adopted it is being sited as a reason to start or pass developments.

Back in 2012 at the outset of compiling consultations and information for the local plan there were consultations that were meant to have been sent out district wide. I did not receive one and neither did many other people and all complaints were ignored. As usual the community visioning reports and links from those consultations are not working the consultation was not district wide at all.

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/home/file-store/category/109-community-visioning>

Issue 5

With regards to habitats such as Epping Forest all the surrounding boroughs are classing Epping Forest as part of their open space provisioning. Epping Forest is privately-owned land by the City of London that has a parliamentary act that affords people the right to have certain access to the land. There is no obligation by the City of London to have the land accessible in the manner of popular opinion to be open for provisions such as that required and used as a provision. Epping Forest does not have to provide car parks, access points, transport or any facilities at all and the Forest is under extreme pressure already with over 5 million visitors a year into certain points in the district. With no transport network, no ability to provide it without detriment to the forest and no legal rights by the council to instruct any work on forest land and with all neighbouring boroughs also using the same open space as part of their open space allocation it necessarily follows that the forest can not be used as an allocation for open space within a development plan without serious detriment to the forest itself which is protected. There is the perfectly legal right for any commoner in the district to

start grazing cattle as they used to and is starting again. These rights supersede public access and are protected. The wild deer in the forest are protected by parliamentary act as an ornament to be preserved and by increasing pressure on the forest by development, traffic and encouraging further use this act will be breeched. Has due diligence been paid to the implications of the restricted access rights to the forest the detriment of development in its boundaries and its parliamentary protection to certain species and rights of grazing?

Issue 5

With regards to services provisions the whole submission is theoretical. It is not based on hard facts and empirical evidence. The district is served by various sewerage plants and water supplies and is geographically split up. Areas such as Loughton are theoretically landlocked, bordered by Epping Forest and the river Roding and the M11 motorway and nature reserves.

Access for increased infrastructure is by no means guaranteed and neither deliverable. The Debden estate was built as a post war housing crisis development. Most local builders have been aware for years that the council or Thames water have been able to provide accurate maps for services and neither do they know if sewers are combined or split use between rain and waste water. The incoming water mains are currently inadequate and need major upgrading of which many parts fall through forest land. Sewerage works for Loughton direct towards Luxborough Lane works which feed into East London all of which are also being used by other boroughs and are being increasingly put under load. No amount of political will, pretend estimates, promises of potential upgrades will enable sewerage or water to be pushed through small pipes once they have reached their maximum capacity. To allow development to continue without major upgrades first is negligent to the environment and to communities that will suffer the impact. Just because it may be written in reports that it may work doesn't mean it will and there are no hard guarantees that the potential demand needs can be met. This development plan ignores that and sadly relies on hope and theory.

In general this plan has been made without the support of many local residents as Epping Forest has consistently failed to deliver proper cohesive developments and a visit to the more recent developments quickly shows that an ad hoc fill in development strategy serves to create a worse environment for all rather than having a proper innovative development plan that delivers employment and housing for the current districts needs such as real affordable housing rather than a token gesture that changes during development.

This plan is not a local development plan for the benefit of the community and district as a whole, rather it is a developer's plan that was marketed to us as, and I quote as "the only option or the secretary of state will do one for us"

That is not a suitable consolation basis and strategy to rush together such a poor performing plan as this, had the council got it together and not left it until the last minute we could have a plan that works for the whole district, innovative, deliverable and beneficial to all.

