

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 & NPPF

Examination in Public by SoS for HCLG

Regulation Application by Epping Forest District Council

For a

New District Local Plan from 2011-2033

Matter 15 Places, Issue 2, Policy P7 Chigwell

reference: 19RES0756

Proof of Evidence of Mr Mark Youngman FIHE

On behalf of Residents of Limes Farm

(April 2019)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. I am a qualified Civil Engineer, providing strategic transport, highways and infrastructure engineering advice for public and private sector development projects. I have been a Fellow of the Institution of Highway Engineers (FIHE) since 1997 and currently sit upon Full Council of the IHE, chairing their Development Management Steering Group. I have also been a Member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) for twelve years. I have over 27 years' experience of working for Highway Authorities, spent predominantly in the public sector. I am currently a Group Manager and Head of Profession for Highways Development Management with a county council. I also have experience in the private sector, including over two years for Maddocks, Lusher & Matthews (MLM) Consultant Engineers dealing with development related matters in Suffolk and Essex.
- 1.2. I am representing many residents of Limes Farm on highway and transportation matters, several of whom provided a response to the consultations on the draft district plan, and Neighbourhood Plan. Locally it is considered that EFDC Officers and Members have not adequately consulted, cooperated and considered the problems pointed out in people's responses.
- 1.3. I am familiar with the site and the surrounding area in connection with giving evidence at the Examination. My wife has lived on Limes Avenue for fourteen years, and I have lived on Limes Avenue for over seven years.

2. ROLE OF HIGHWAY AUTHORITY

- 2.1. ECC is the Highway Authority for all roads in Chigwell, except for motorways and trunk roads, like the M11, where Highways England is responsible for the management and maintenance. Only metres away from the single vehicular access to Limes Farm, part of Fencepiece Road is

the responsibility of the London Borough of Redbridge as Highway Authority.

- 2.2. The role of the Highway Authority, is a statutory consultee, is to assess the transport implications in terms of policy, capacity, safety, sustainability and demonstrable severe harm and make appropriate recommendations to the planning authorities.

3. SCOPE OF THE PROOF OF EVIDENCE

- 3.1. This Proof of Evidence is prepared in objection to Epping Forest District Council's proposals as the Planning Authority to grant Limes Farm as a committed site for additional dwellings on land at Chigwell. This statement will set-out that insufficient investigation, modelling and viability testing has been carried out, as well as a lack of cooperation with neighbours, and hence a lack of an objection from Redbridge Borough should not be assumed to mean the neighbouring authority support this unsustainable growth just beyond their boundary. Especially when some of their residents rely on the green space as well for health and quality of life.

4. TRANSPORT POLICIES

- 4.1. Transport planning policy can be summarised into three distinct areas of consideration, National, County, and Local Plan. A summary of the key points in transport planning policy in these areas are provided below.

National Planning Policy

- 4.2. National Policy in relation to the transport planning of developments is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 27th March 2012 and updated on 24th July 2018 and 19th February 2019. Section 9, and Paragraphs 102-111 (formerly 29-36) deal specifically with transport planning and promoting sustainable transport.

- 4.3. Paragraph 108 of the NPPF emphasises the need to ensure that “safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users”. Paragraph 110 emphasises the need to locate developments for efficient delivery of goods and supplies, it also identifies the need to minimise conflicts between traffic and the more vulnerable road users. To provide over 100 new additional dwellings upon Limes Farm whilst complying with these requirements appears to be an unsound proposal through one access point.

Local Transport Planning Policy

- 4.4. Essex’s transport policies are set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2031 that contains an overall vision and policies relating to transport in the County. Policies 2 and 9 of Essex’s LTP are particularly relevant.

- 4.5. Fencepiece Road is defined as a ‘Main Distributor’ and Manor Road is defined as a ‘Secondary Distributor’ and hence Essex’s following Development Management policies are relevant:

General Policy DM1

Policy DM2 Strategic Routes/Main Distributors

Policy DM3 Secondary Distributors states

Policy DM5 Secondary or Multiple Vehicular Accesses

- 4.6. In summary, the Highway Authority’s existing policies would restrict the ability for any additional accesses onto the B173 Manor Road or the A123 Fencepiece Road, and therefore any growth in housing numbers.

5. SITE & SURROUNDING

- 5.1. As plan consultations progressed, EFDC proposes knocking down more of our homes upon Limes Farm for regeneration. I would like to register the

strongest objection I have ever had against a council proposal. My wife bought a house on Limes Farm, we have invested a lot of time and savings into this property with the intention of living out our days here. It is a strong community with all facilities at hand but the one thing that uplifts residents and contributes to Health Policies is the ability of our children and grandchildren to get outside and use the Public Open Spaces we have, as well as the large number of dog walkers and worshippers walking to the synagogue which leads to fitter adults. Intensification upon Limes Farm and the resultant loss of green spaces flies in the face of policies on health and wellbeing and the NPPF, and is sure to lead to a 'toy town' development like next door in Hughes Road and a less fit community being a burden on the NHS.

- 5.2. This contains a large open green space that the draft neighbourhood plan sought to protect:
 - i. Local objection to the Draft Local Plan to include this site was extremely high, and there is no reference to the high number of objections within the Community Feedback section;
 - ii. In Appendix B, the site has been classified as Urban Brownfield (and qualitatively assessed as 100% brownfield). Urban Open Space would evidently be more accurate.
- 5.3. If this site is taken forward, there will be a loss of open green space at Limes Farm that is significant to the local community, yet the SSM has classified this as Urban Brownfield (100%).
- 5.4. Local residents do not feel adequately consulted, some of us found out about the current consultation very late, after the 2017 Christmas holidays, and were not invited to local exhibitions. As well as consultation and a duty to cooperate being a need for legal compliance, I do not believe that many of the plans were lawful as they were dated "December 2017" but many of the plans use Ordnance Survey data and "EFDC

Licence No:100018534 2016" Copyright was a year out of date. If this makes the document unlawful then surely it should have been withdrawn and reissued starting the consultation period again?

6. ACCESSIBILITY

- 6.1. The existing Limes Farm access from Fencepiece Road will provide the vehicular access to the proposed development site. No additional access points or improvements are proposed to ensure the site is sustainable in transport terms. Approximately 130m north of Limes Avenue junction with Fencepiece Road is a busy signalised crossroads between an 'A' Class road and 'B' Class road. Vehicles often queue back from these signals, making it difficult to get out of Limes Farm.
- 6.2. There are currently no cycleways into or out of Limes Farm.
- 6.3. Cycle parking in most of the main settlements is of limited quality and largely underutilised. At the LUL stations cycle parking is limited, and where it is provided it is often reaching capacity. Chigwell and Grange Hill stations on the 'Fairlop Loop' do not make provision for any cycle parking.

7. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1. I submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request (Ref No.FS-Case-25405511) to EFDC to release all correspondence, surveys and reports regarding the growth on Limes Farm. EFDC's response of January 2019 said *"The Council holds no correspondence, surveys or reports in relation to Limes Farm, other than that which is already available on its website. Some further information will be available when the updated appendices to the site selection report are published at the end of February 2018;*
Limes Farm was assessed during the 2016 site selection process (the supporting information is available on the Council's website) and was proposed for a larger number of homes that in the Submission Version

Local Plan. The stage two assessment of the Limes Farm site can be viewed on the website at:

<http://www.efdclocalplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/A-B1.4.2-Extract-for-Chigwell-p17-66-of-full-Appendix-EB801Gii.pdf>

The Council does not intend to bring forward the work for the Limes Farm masterplan until towards the end of the plan period and no work has therefore been commenced at this stage." This indicates little thought and cooperation with neighbours has taken place.

- 7.2. As significantly more dwellings are proposed from one point of highway access due to Lord Stradbroke's covenants banning access onto Manor Road, I refer to the relevant standards within the 'Essex Design Guide'. Pages 119-120 of this guidance demand that up to 700 dwellings are served from a single point of vehicular access, so 1,362 (calculated in Appendix A) + over 100 dwellings proposed is likely to have a severe impact and therefore be unsound according to current standards and the NPPF. I have looked for the proposed intensification to be proved sound within Essex Highways' Highway Assessment, but alas it does not consider 'Limes Farm' and the traffic impacts far enough south upon the A123 Fencepiece Road and the surrounding network, but they acknowledge in Paragraphs 1.3.1 & 1.3.2 that "further consideration should also be given to 'cross boundary' impacts with the neighbouring Harlow District to the north", and "the 'cross boundary' impacts with neighbouring Broxbourne District... will also need to be considered as part of any future work to support the final Local Plan submission", but Redbridge is not mentioned? If this further work was not completed then it does not sound like EFDC was ready to submit a sound Plan.

- 7.3. 'Manual for Streets' is a recognised National Highway Standard and states:- "6.7.3 The Association of Chief Fire Officers has... clarified... as follows: the length of cul-de-sacs or the number of dwellings have been used by local authorities as criteria for limiting the size of a development

served by a single access route. Authorities have often argued that the larger the site, the more likely it is that a single access could be blocked for whatever reason. Since the introduction of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, all regions have had to produce an Integrated Management Plan setting out response time targets... These targets depend on the time required to get fire appliances to a particular area, together with the ease of movement within it... parked cars can have a significant influence on response times. Developments should have adequate provision for parking to reduce its impact on response times.”

- 7.4. More dwellings is bound to mean more vehicles parking. We do not have enough land dedicated for parking now, and with an aging population, the risk of an emergency response vehicle getting held up accessing the development will increase, as residents experienced when the water main was being replaced near the only road in and out. At least when this happens at the moment there is a back-up of an Air Ambulance being able to use our beloved green space as shown in my photograph below, but if EFDC takes this away, response times could increase, especially for the police from Brentwood, and the local GPs and schools will not be able to cope with the additional residents. We already get referred to Loughton as there is not enough doctor capacity this side of the M11.



- 7.5. Prior to 'Manual for Streets', 'Design Bulletin 32' advised that an access road of 5.5m wide could serve up to 300 dwellings.
- 7.6. According to the following website, the A123 Fencepiece Road had a Daily Traffic Flow of 15,645 during June 2013, of which 6,693 vehicles (43%) were speeding. This is obviously not acceptable and not advisable to ask more traffic to Give Way onto this road or wait to right-turn from it.
<http://data.redbridge.gov.uk/View/vehicles-and-roads/automatic-traffic-counter-permanent-statistics>
- 7.7. Further north the A123 carried 20,038 vehicles per day in 2014 according to this Government website: -
<https://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts/cp/Essex>
- 7.8. According to the Environment Agency, Limes Farm is within Nitrate Vulnerable Zone ref.S441, and has risks from surface water flooding as shown in Appendix C, which makes it inappropriate for further development with higher densities of housing and impermeable surfaces.
- 7.9. If we consider just over the border to the south, Redbridge realise in their Local Plan that it has an Open Space Deficiency, which will be made worse by EFDC if it chooses to develop some valuable open space. See an extract of their Plan in Appendix D.
- 7.10. On 31 December 2003, the whole borough of Redbridge became an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), largely as a result of road traffic according to their website. On 4th February 2008 it has become part of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ).
- 7.11. Essex's Policy DM16 Air Quality states

“The Highway Authority will assist the Local Planning Authority in the protection of areas that have been designated as unacceptable in terms of air quality by having a general presumption against the provision of development that would cause a negative impact to existing designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) through increased traffic or congestion, unless appropriate mitigation measures are provided by the developer.”

There can be no argument that additional trips to and from Fencepiece Road will lead to more emissions in the AQMA and therefore impact upon it.

8. TRANSPORT IMPACT

- 8.1. Evidence that EFDC consulted the London Borough of Redbridge/TfL about traffic impacts upon the A123 Fencepiece Road, where EFDC propose a single point of access, and their further network, is difficult to find. EH Highway Assessment does not consider ‘Limes Farm’ in enough detail to show the development of over 100 dwellings is acceptable and sustainable.
- 8.2. A comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA) is needed to consider the impact of the proposed development on the free and safe flow of all highway users.
- 8.3. The access to the site and the conditions of the local highway network should be considered such that the traffic impacts likely to be generated are tested for significant adverse impacts on:
 - i. Highway safety;
 - ii. The effective operation of the highway network;
 - iii. Amenity;
 - iv. Human health; &
 - v. the historic and natural environment.
- 8.4. For the capacity assessment, industry standard software PICADY (version 5) for priority junctions should be used. The above programme determines the operation of each approach arm to the junction in terms of Ratio Flow to Capacity – (RFC) and queue lengths.

9. HIGHWAY SAFETY

- 9.1. As well as being a very congested junction in the peak hours, you can see in Appendix B the Limes Avenue T-junction with Fencepiece Road is already a 'Blackspot' with 2 Serious Injury Accidents and 4 slight Injury Accidents within a 5 year period. To stress this junction and the junction with Manor Road with more traffic would be very unwise.

10. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- 10.1. The potential increase in traffic is likely to have a noticeable detrimental impact on safety and road congestion upon the Limes Avenue exit, the A123 & B173 roads. The lack of a cycleway network and parking at stations, and the constraints preventing this infrastructure being provided easily under S278 Conditions or S106 means that residents' options are limited to working in the city and catching the tube, or using the motor car.
- 10.2. The nearest congestion mitigation measure listed is at the Wakes Arms Roundabout, Waltham Abbey, which will be of little use to the residents of Limes Farm and the neighbouring roads.
- 10.3. In short, EFDC has not adequately evidenced that over 100 additional dwellings bringing to total to 1,362 off the single point of access is deliverable, viable, and will not cause severe impact or harm to the environment or health.

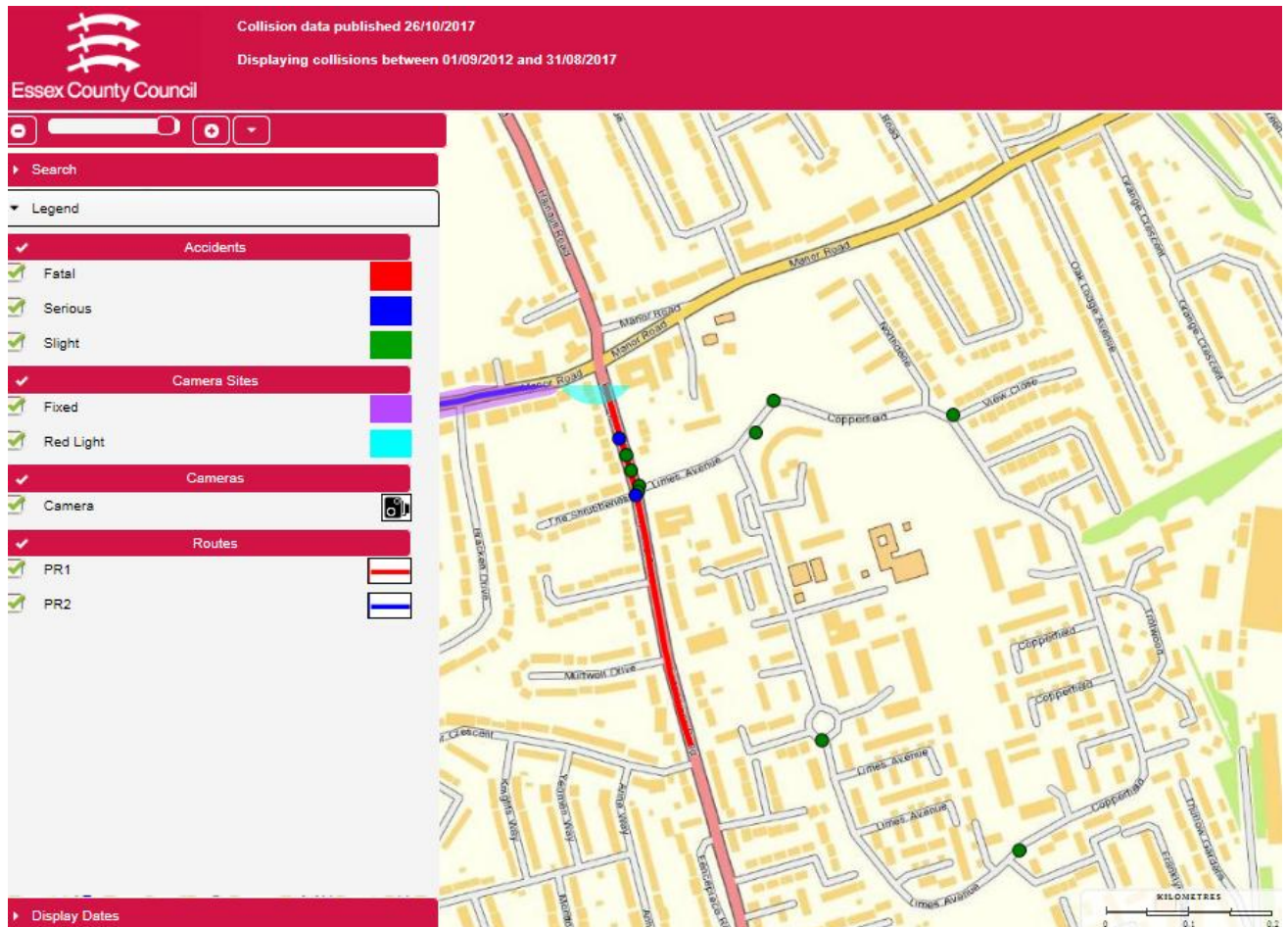
APPENDIX A

The number of dwellings served off the 1 vehicular access for Limes Farm is calculated as follows: -

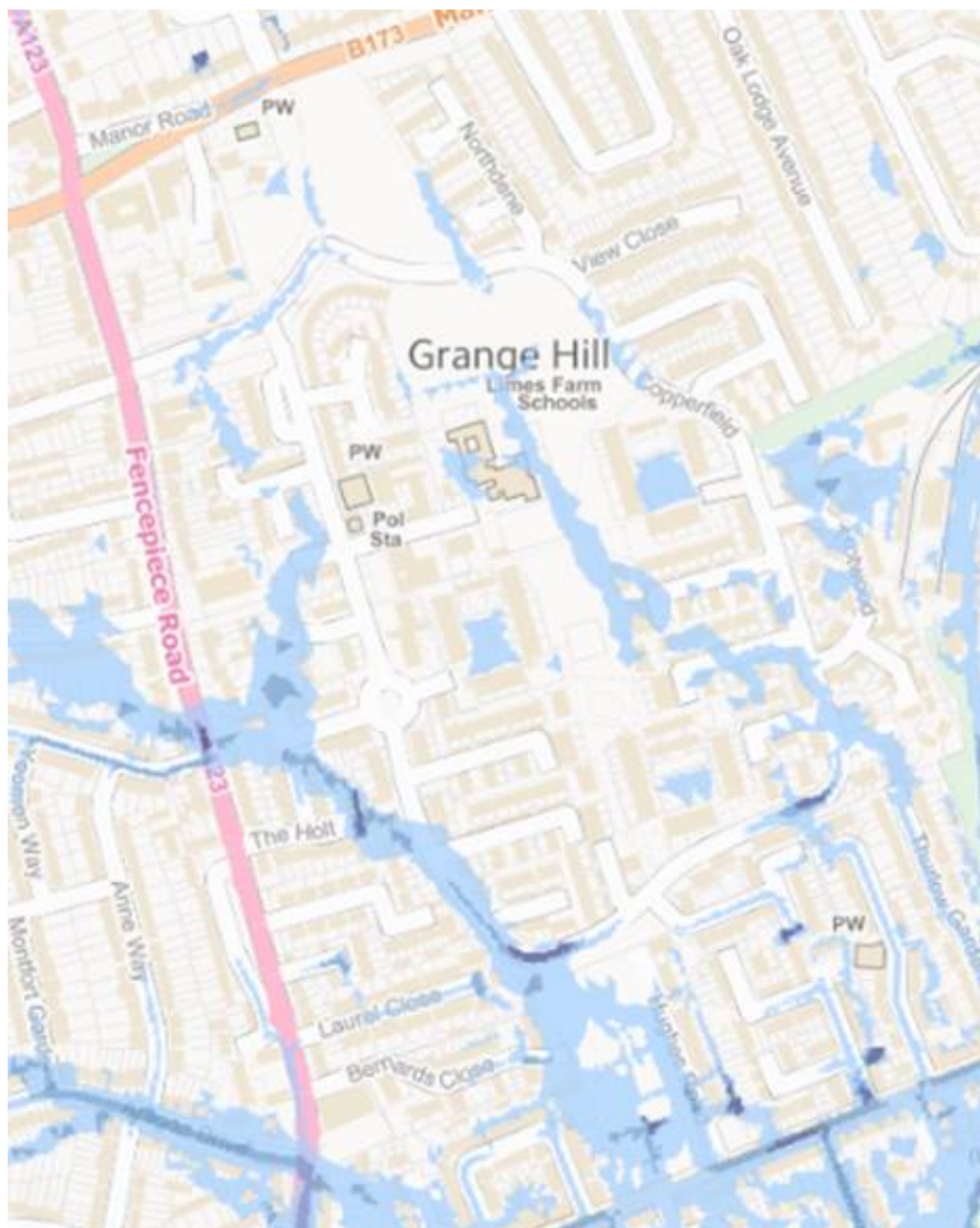
- 383 Limes Avenue, highest number is 634 so not all the odd numbers are used;
- 422 Copperfield, highest number is 731 so not all the even numbers are used;
- 172 Trotwood, but not all the odd numbers are used;
- 21 Cobdens (Limes Avenue) IG7 5NT, 21 flats;
- 24 Keats Close IG7 5NU;
- 8 Orange Grove IG7 5LH;
- 24 Westmede, 1-13 + 11 odds = 24 dwellings;
- 69 Amanda Close;
- 14 South Dale IG7 5NN;
- 6 Elmswood IG7 5JQ, 6 terraced houses;
- 63 High Meadows, 1-51 + 12 odds = 63 dwellings;
- 42 View Close IG7 5JU, 1-41 + No.43 = 42 dwellings;
- 56 North Dene, 1-47 + 9 odds = 56 dwellings;
- 30 Regency Close IG7 5NY;
- 16 Clayside IG7 5LN;
- 12 The Brambles IG7 5LW.

1,362 in total

APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C



APPENDIX D

FIGURE 24: Areas of Open Space Deficiency

