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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 September 2020 at 6.00 pm

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Councillors : Susan Erbil (Chair), Achilleas Georgiou, Edward Smith, Lee David-Sanders, Hass Yusuf, Birsen Demirel, Elif Erbil and Margaret Greer (Vice-Chair)

Education Statutory Co-optees: 1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), Simon Goulden (other faiths/denominations representative), Tony Murphy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor Representative).

Enfield Youth Parliament Co-optees (2)
Support Officer – Andy Ellis

AGENDA – PART 1

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council are invited to identify any disclosable pecuniary, other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests relevant to the items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 AUGUST 2020 (Pages 1 - 6)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2020.

4. ANNUAL SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES 2020-21 (TO FOLLOW)

To prioritise and agree the draft OSC and Panel Work programmes for 2020/21

NOTE: The provisional call-in date of 21st October 2020 will now be used as an additional business meeting, to receive a petition relating to Low Traffic

Neighbourhood Schemes.

5. MERIDIAN WATER SCRUTINY WORKSTREAM REPORT (Pages 7 - 70)

To receive a report from the Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream 2019/20. A response to the report is also included from the Leader of the Council and Meridian Water Programme Director; together with points of accuracy to the report provided by the Programme Director.

Members are asked to note the report and responses; and, agree that its recommendations be monitored by the Regeneration and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel.

6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the dates of future meetings as follows:

Business Meetings

Wednesday 21 October 2020
Thursday 17 December 2020 (Budget Meeting)
Wednesday 17 February 2021
Thursday 1 April 2021

Provisional Call-in Meetings

Thursday 24 September 2020
Wednesday 25 November 2020
Wednesday 13 January 2021
Thursday 4 February 2021
Wednesday 3 March 2021
Thursday 25 March 2021
Tuesday 27 April 2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 30 JULY 2020

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Councillors Susan Erbil, Achilleas Georgiou, Edward Smith, Lee David-Sanders, Hass Yusuf, Birsen Demirel, Elif Erbil and Margaret Greer (Vice Chair)

ABSENT

STATUTORY CO-OPTEES: *1 vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), Mr Simon Goulden (other faiths/denominations representative), Mr Tony Murphy (Catholic diocese representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent Governor representative) - Italics Denotes absence*

OFFICERS: Ian Davis, Chief Executive Officer, Claire Johnson, Head of Governance, Scrutiny and Registration Services, Andy Ellis, Governance and Scrutiny Officer.

Also Attending: Councillor Nesil Caliskan (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Ian Barnes (Deputy Leader of the Council)

6
WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor Susan Erbil welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

7
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

8
CABINET PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council, Cllr Nesil Caliskan to out-line the Cabinet Priorities for the coming year.

The Leader emphasised that as we meet in the context of a global pandemic, Covid-19 must remain a focus in the Local Plan. The Leader also paid tribute to the many staff members in Enfield for their response to the current situation.
There remains a degree of instability as a result of unclear funding from Central Government, with a £40m loss in income and Council Tax.

Commissioned in late 2019, The Council Plan contains 3 main themes:

Good Homes in Well Connected Neighbourhoods – In addition to more council/social housing, the existing stock will be redeveloped, for example, the Joyce and Snells scheme. Housing will be increased on sites such as Alma Road and Meridian Water. The Council will look to support this growth with grants from Central Government and The Mayor of London.

Safe, Healthy and Confident Communities – The Council will consider the youth offer, post covid-19, reviewing courses and activities available. With a growing, older population, The Council will plan for both independent living and care homes.

An Economy that Works for Everyone – Skills academies will be established, providing training to a high-level. Grants are available from the GLA to support town centres and the plans for Enfield Town will be rolled out. In tackling inequality, the Government will be lobbied for more resources and powers. Working in partnership with the NHS, the Council are pressing for a primary care facility on the North Middlesex Hospital site.

Cllr Ian Barnes, Deputy Leader of the Council provided additional information on council priorities.

The Climate Change Task Force has developed the Enfield Climate Action Plan 2020, and now a section on Climate Change considerations must be included in all council reports. All council buildings will have renewable energy within the coming year. The Enfield Chase Restoration Project will see 100,000 trees planted, off-setting carbon levels. 2 low traffic neighbourhood schemes are in place with another 12 being developed. The Council will consider how to change staff behaviours relating to travel. There will be a 47% reduction in energy consumption with the introduction of new street lighting. There will be 250 electric charging points in the borough by 2025.A film studio is being developed in Enfield, with the possibility of another 3 in the future. Young people will be encouraged to join the film industry as a career.

Ian Davis, Chief Executive Officer, provided information relating to Enfield on a regional and local basis. Enfield has been involved in work at a pan-London level and it is noted how well the staff from Enfield have responded to London needs in addition to the needs of Enfield. Enfield are part of the London Transition Management Group, working along-side the NHS and other public sector bodies to manage the on-going crisis and recovery plans. Our Outbreak Control Plan has been developed and is one of 5 in the North Central London Sector (with Haringey, Barnet, Islington and Camden).

Locally, the budget continues to be an issue, as with all boroughs currently. Further clarity from Central Government is required in order to address losses in income and council tax relief.

In planning for returning to the office or continued working from home, The Council's primary care is maintaining staff safety. The Building the Change

Programme will lead on how our needs will be met. There are opportunities for savings, improving customer service and achieving a better work /life balance.

With the potential for a second wave of Covid-19, the Council are planning with colleagues at a national, regional and local level. The Council, in conjunction with the North Middlesex Hospital are looking at potential effects on the BAME community.

Economic recovery is being planned, particularly around town centres.

The Chair thanked Cllr Caliskan, Cllr Barnes and Ian Davis and acknowledged the amount of planning and work being undertaken, which will allow OSC to devise their work programme for the year.

Committee Members provided the following comments:

With the new structure for scrutiny now in place, each Panel must decide its own work programme and OSC must scrutinise the purpose of the Council priorities.

As a result of covid-19, staff are working at home and therefore virtual meetings are being held. This isn't satisfactory and there should be encouragement to return to face to face meetings and getting people back in the workplace which would in turn aid the economic recovery in town centres. The Leader of the Council reiterated that the safety of residents and staff will be a priority.

The work on developing a local film industry was praised.

There was a discussion relating to the provision of meat at Council events. It was clarified that only one menu had been altered and as 60% of greenhouse gasses are generated via meat production, Enfield residents would be encouraged to eat less meat.

9
MERIDIAN WATER SCRUTINY WORKSTREAM 2019/20 - REPORT

Cllr Achilleas Georgiou, Chair of the Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream, presented this item and confirmed that Cllr Susan Erbil had asked him to provide all members of OSC with a copy of the workstream report.

The Workstream was agreed by OSC last year. An initial site visit was undertaken and several scrutiny meetings with officers were held. Members of the Workstream spent a period of time considering the largest development project in Enfield, especially how it would affect the people of Edmonton.

Meridian Water is a very ambitious project, with 10,000 new homes and 6,000 new jobs. However, the project's destiny is determined by Central Government and GLA funding, for example the Housing Infrastructure Fund. It is important to establish how the people of Enfield and in particular that part of Edmonton will benefit?

At a previous OSC meeting, it was agreed to ask the new Regeneration and Economic Development Panel (Chaired by Cllr Greer) to take this work forward.
The Regeneration Panel would be provided with a copy of the Meridian Water Scrutiny Report and at the meeting of OSC on 15th September, there will be an item on the agenda relating to how the recommendations from the report will be monitored.

ACTION: ANDY ELLIS

It was re-iterated that the tracking of recommendations must be undertaken.

10
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

The Chair introduced this item and requested members to put forward suggestions for the coming year. It was acknowledged that some suggestions may be more appropriate on the work programme of any of the new scrutiny panels. OSC would need to consider more cross-cutting themes and areas not picked up by the individual scrutiny panels. The OSC meeting in December will be dedicated to the budget process.

The range of suggestions included the following:

- HR issues, staffing and sickness levels
- Procurement
- ICT and digital services – the customer experience
- Public Health – the covid-19 aftermath, budgets, care homes
- Complaints, MEQs and FOIs
- Building the Change, the Council's real estate
- Partnerships with businesses
- Updates from Panel Chairs
- Corporate Performance Dashboard
- Equality and Diversity
- Fly-tipping, especially in Eastern Enfield

The Chair stated that there may need to be a limit to the number of items considered at each meeting, in order to give suitable scrutiny to each topic. OSC can roll-over any items to next year if necessary and must be flexible in taking important, unplanned items, should they occur.

A draft Work Programme will be circulated for initial comments and amendments and brought to the next meeting of OSC on 15 September. In addition, the draft work programmes from each of the other Scrutiny Panels will be on the agenda.

Cllr Greer requested that all hard copies of papers were to be sent to her home address.

11
DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the dates of future meetings as follows:

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Thursday 1st April 2021

Provisional Call-in Meetings

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Wednesday 13th January 2021
Thursday 4th February 2021
Wednesday 3rd March 2021
Thursday 25th March 2021
Tuesday 27th April 2021

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Meridian Water

Scrutiny Workstream

Report, June 2020

COMMITTEE

Cllr Achilleas Georgiou (Chair)
Labour, Bowes Ward

Cllr Maria Alexandrou (Vice Chair)
Conservative, Winchmore Hill Ward

Cllr Daniel Anderson
Labour, Southgate Green Ward

Cllr Tolga Aramaz
Labour, Edmonton Green Ward

Cllr Anne Brown
Labour, Southgate Green Ward

Cllr Charith Gunawardena
Labour, Southgate Ward

Cllr Joanne Laban
Conservative, Highlands Ward

Cllr Doug Taylor
Labour, Ponders End Ward

Author: Cllr Charith Gunawardena

ENFIELD Council

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Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Achilleas Georgiou (Chair)
Labour, Bowes Ward

Cllr Maria Alexandrou (Vice Chair)
Conservative, Winchmore Hill Ward

Cllr Daniel Anderson
Labour, Southgate Green Ward

Cllr Tolga Aramaz
Labour, Edmonton Green Ward

Cllr Anne Brown
Labour, Southgate Green Ward

Cllr Charith Gunawardena
Labour, Southgate Ward

Cllr Joanne Laban
Conservative, Highlands Ward

Cllr Doug Taylor
Labour, Ponders End Ward

Foreword

Meridian Water has long been recognised as a development opportunity in Enfield. Successive council administrations for the last 20 years have sought to unlock the housing and job prospects that could be generated from this vast area of under-used and largely declining land. Developing a Meridian Water project and succeeding in its delivery would bring about benefits to people in Enfield – but specifically, to those living in Edmonton, with new homes, schools, open spaces, and high paid employment. Here was a chance to create a new community.

But achieving a Meridian Water community was always going to have challenges and the challenges were always going to change.

Enfield Council has not been, and still largely is not, the master of its own destiny in the development of Meridian Water. It has been constrained by land ownership, limited finances, national government borrowing requirements and debt levels, and London-wide planning policy constraints. The Greater London Authority (GLA) support brings its own constraints but also benefits and since 2018 there has been more GLA subsidy for affordable housing.

It took a far-sighted administration to begin to overcome the challenge of landownership by buying large plots of land in the area and to fund the building of a new train station. A change in GLA policy has enabled the Council to take a new path, as the master developer for Meridian Water.

The ambition, in creating this new community, has been to bring about 10,000 new homes and 6,000 new jobs. And while work has started on phase 1 of Meridian Water, currently, because of London wide policy, specifically on Strategic Industrial Land, a limit of 5,000 homes and 1,500 new jobs has been set.

The Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream was set up to do a deep-dive into the Council's work on what is Enfield's largest development – indeed, one of London's major regeneration projects. The success of this project will ultimately be determined by how it has met the needs of people in Enfield - addressing issues of housing and employment – and this has been the focus of the Workstream, while also looking at the Council's business plan and finance model for the project.

This document started out as an interim report of the Meridian Water Workstream. However, since then, the Council has announced its intention to change arrangements and the functioning of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will include the end of Workstreams. Hence, this is now the final report of the Meridian Water Workstream.

In the 2019/2020 municipal year, the Workstream members met with officers and visited the site. More meetings would have taken place but Covid-19 largely prevented this. This has meant that we have not been able to cover some areas with officers to gain more detailed information. However, members continued with their examination of the topic. This included the inspection of numerous publicly available documents, some of which have been the subject of various reports in newspapers and news sites.

Further scrutiny work still needs to be done on the scrutiny of Meridian Water, not least because of Covid-19 and how that may have impacted and led to changes in the delivery of this project.

Cllr Achilleas Georgiou
Chair, Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream

Executive Summary

The **key findings** by the Enfield Council's Scrutiny Workstream on its Meridian Water Regeneration programme (85 hectares, 10,000 homes, 6,000 jobs, £6 billion) are:

(a) CLARITY ON BENEFITS TO LOCAL PEOPLE

- INSIGHTS: Important decisions appear to have been made without validating some critical assumptions due to a sense of urgency in commencing development, possibly compromising the opportunity to effectively address local housing and employment needs.
- EVIDENCE FOR LOCAL BENEFICIARIES: Local people, residents of Edmonton, are key stakeholders for Meridian Water. Evidence is required to support claims that they will be the primary beneficiaries for housing, employment, and investment.
- EXTERNAL BENEFICIARIES: Private investors (including those from overseas) have been identified as beneficiaries of the scheme and as a result, a good proportion of the planned housing and jobs will be out of reach of many local people.

(b) FINANCIAL RISKS TO DEVELOPMENT AND COUNCIL

- RESILIENCE: Uncertainties surrounding the development, will impact upon the Council's finances and are a risk to its financial resilience.
- MACRO-ISSUES : The consequences of high levels of borrowing, increased Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) interest rate, uncertain house prices, Brexit, drop in meanwhile use revenue projections, continued funding cuts, inconsistent and widely varied population projections, market changes for developer partners and now the Covid-19 crisis are all long-term risks for the Council.
- SCENARIO PLANNING: Sensitivity testing on important scenarios, that could jeopardise the outcome of the project do not yet appear to have been undertaken within available financial models.
- IMPACT ON OTHER WARDS: Channelling a significant proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) towards Meridian Water could potentially compromise the needs of residents elsewhere across the Borough.

(c) AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING TO LOCAL RESIDENTS

- AFFORDABLE TO PURCHASE: Evidence should be provided that a significant proportion of Enfield households, particularly in Edmonton (including most key workers) will be able to purchase a home at Meridian Water.
- AFFORDABLE TO RENT: Evidence should be provided that more than a minority of Enfield households (including most key workers) would be able to afford the Private Rental Sector (PRS) rates at Meridian Water.
- UNSUSTAINABLE PRS INCREASES: Evidence is required to show that the number of unaffordable PRS homes at Meridian Water would not exacerbate the current housing situation which would inadvertently lead to increased usage of temporary accommodation.

- UNAFFORDABLE INTERMEDIATE HOUSING: Evidence is required to show that Intermediate "affordable" housing would be affordable to a large proportion of Enfield residents, currently renting.
- KEY RENTERS: London Affordable Rent levels, combined with the housing benefit cap excluding certain households from renting a home at Meridian Water, are out of reach for most households.

(d) LAND & PLANNING COMPROMISES ARE CONCERNING

- HOUSING MIX: There are concerns that there will be insufficient family sized homes.
- HIGHEST DENSITY: The development will be one of the most densely populated areas in the capital (nearly 4 times Enfield's existing average).
- INSUFFICIENT SPACES: There is concern about insufficient parkland, open space and sporting facilities in the development.
- STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL LAND (SIL) RE-DESIGNATION: The financial, planning and place-making consequences of not obtaining SIL re-designation need clarifying and would create concern as to whether 10,000 homes could be delivered.

(e) EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY NEEDS REWORKING

- CHANGING NEEDS: The Employment Strategy needs to properly account for the changing nature of work, especially office work, in the post Covid-19 economy.
- LOCAL EMPLOYMENT: There is evidential risk that the redevelopment may result in fewer jobs for local people.
- EMPLOYMENT VERSUS DENSITY TRADE-OFF: Evidence indicates that the preferred employment scenario is undeliverable without increasing housing density.
- ATTRACTIVENESS TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS: Unless there is a good quantity and quality of open spaces, together with good public transport there, is a risk that businesses and employers will be discouraged.

(f) PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRUST

- BALANCE CONFLICTING ROLES: Care is needed to ensure the Council balances the sometimes-conflicting roles of "developer" and "Council".
- PUBLIC TRUST IN PLANNING: Planning Panels were not held for Phases 1 or 2 of the development, whilst plans for Phase 2 were agreed without public engagement.
- CLEAR MESSAGING: The messaging has been inconsistent and this can help to undermine public confidence in the project.

Recommendations

1. To improve the evidence and knowledge base and consult on that evidence prior to determining action.
2. To use land to reflect local housing needs.
3. To explore short to long-term impact of delivery of smaller units.
4. To focus on creating a cohesive, stable and mixed community.
5. To deliver housing most local people can afford.
6. To show how the regeneration of Meridian Water will help address local housing challenges.
7. To clarify employment benefits.
8. To communicate meaningful benefits more clearly.
9. To improve opportunities for local engagement.
10. To set meaningful performance measures.
11. To clarify open space/ parkland strategy.
12. To note that further insight and evidence is required, especially post Covid-19 and proceed accordingly.
13. To complete the comprehensive review of the Council led option (Option 3).
14. To maintain team continuity.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Meridian Water Workstream was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide clarity on the project objectives of this multibillion pound regeneration programme, one of the largest in Europe, to consider and review the key risks facing Enfield Council in meeting those goals and to assess the robustness of the mitigation steps.

1.2. Meridian Water is located in the Lee Valley and is part of the London-Stanstead-Cambridge corridor. The project began in 2013 when the Council set out a masterplan for this 210-acre site seeing it as an investment opportunity that would eventually provide up to 5,000 homes and 3,000 jobs. The aspiration has since grown to 10,000 new homes. (1) It was intended that this new neighbourhood would itself align with surrounding neighbourhoods and communities. The masterplan set out a vision for what it saw was 'a vibrant mix of uses' that would 'create a distinctive place that people will call home; quiet residential streets and busy waterside apartments will form attractive places to live.' (2)

1.3. In 2016 Barratts was made the preferred developer for the entire site, but they withdrew in 2017 after failing to agree terms with the Council. After the discussions with the reserve bidder (Hong Kong-based Pacific Century Premium Developments - PCPD), an agreement could not be reached with them and they withdrew. In scenario planning the Council had considered what would happen if no bidder reached agreed terms and options included self development possibly using the GLA framework of companies for speed. Galliford Try was chosen to progress the first phase of 725 homes and phase 2, which is for a further 2,300 homes is currently out for tender. (3)

1.4. The Council is on record as stating that the reason to oppose a master developer was that it 'would not be a good deal for local people' and that 'there was a risk that the majority of homes built would be sold to overseas buyers', which was not something the Council was asked to sign up to.' (4)

1.5. As part of the development a new rail station (to replace Angel Road) has already been built funded mainly by Enfield Council and opened in June 2019. (5)

1.6. Given the sheer size and scale of this project and long-term consequences on the wellbeing of residents and on council finances, the Workstream were seeking reassurance that the development would address the current and longer-term needs of households with the greatest need in the borough.

1.7. The Workstream reviewed the Risk Register (Appendix 1) and agreed the review should cover

- The link between the development objectives and the financial model;
- Determine who are the homes for;
- Understand the kind of employment assumed in the model;
- Discern the rate of delivery;
- Review the sensitivity testing of the model (i.e. is the work done to date sufficient?)
- Consider the risk register

1.8. To date, since 8th January 2020, the Workstream has held 3 meetings, and members have visited the Meridian Water development site. However, due to the Covid-19 crisis, the Workstream's last meeting was online. Access to information has equally been limited. However, due to the importance of the Workstream, members have

continued their scrutiny activities reviewing all available documentation and public information.

1.9. Individual members of the Workstream have engaged with local residents and organisations to capture diverse points of view.

1.10. As we enter the new municipal year, the Workstream agreed that a publicly available report should be put together to summarise the key findings so far and to put forward some recommendations.

1.11. The meeting(s) were attended by - Officers: Sarah Cary (Executive Director, Place), Peter George (Director, Meridian Water), Simon Gardner (Socio- Economic Lead Meridian Water Team), Lisa Woo (Design and Planning Lead, Meridian Water), John Reid (Director, Meridian Water Delivery); Administrative officers: Claire Johnson (Head of Governance and Scrutiny), Susan O'Connell (Governance and Scrutiny Officer), Andy Ellis (Scrutiny & Improvement Officer); Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economic Development: Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Leader of the Council).

Strategic Context

Housing Crisis	In numbers today	Consequences
Temporary Housing	*3,500 households*	*Cost £66m/ yr (£8m Council)*
Overcrowding	*11% of households*	*Poor quality of life*
Affordability	*Median prices 12 * income*	*Most buyers not from Enfield*
Long waiting lists	*5,300 households*	*Up to 15 years*
Quality of homes	*Repairs, hygiene, safety*	*Mental & physical health risks*
Homelessness	*Many hundreds*	*Peoples wellbeing impacted*
Rent led debt [6]	*5,800 (spend > income)*	*No disposable income*

1.12. The regeneration of Meridian Water is a great and rare opportunity – it has the potential to make a huge contribution towards solving Enfield's housing crisis and be something of enormous benefit to future generations.

1.13. Enfield faces significant housing challenges. Already there are thousands of families living in temporary accommodation; of which more than 1 in 10 households are overcrowded; and many are living in unaffordable homes. Getting on the housing ladder is all but impossible for many, and the average waiting time for family-sized council housing is well over ten years.

1.14. The housing crisis has serious consequences. People are living with significant stress caused by unaffordable private rents and mortgage repayments and fear of eviction. Many families are living in unsuitable accommodation that impacts their wellbeing, or contributes to feelings of social exclusion, or hinders their social mobility.

1.15. The costs of Enfield's housing crisis to the Council and to the wider public purse are huge – the cost of temporary accommodation alone is £66 million per year.

1.16. The current plans for Meridian Water are, at least on the surface, rising to the challenge – for example, 43% of the homes across Phases 1 & 2 will be classified as affordable. However, how the technical definition of 'affordability' aligns with the actual 'affordability' level for residents is a matter of concern. It is therefore important to question the real benefits and ensure that the scheme can best meet the needs of Enfield's residents, particularly those most in need.

Planning Policy Context

1.17. LBE's Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025, Core Policy 5 states that:

"The Council will seek to ensure that new developments offer a range of housing sizes to meet housing need. Over the lifetime of the Core Strategy the Council will plan for the following borough-wide mix of housing: Market housing – 20% 1 and 2 bed flats (1-3 persons), 15% 2 bed houses (4 persons), 45% 3 bed houses , (5-6 persons), 20% 4+ bed houses (6+ persons). Social rented housing - 20% 1 bed and 2 bed units (1-3 persons), 20% 2 bed units (4 persons) 30% 3 bed units (5-6 persons), 30% 4+ bed units (6+ persons)."

1.18. Chapter 7 of LB Enfield's Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2016) provides guidance on preparing viability assessments with regards to affordable housing.

"In light of changes to the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) following the Court of Appeal decision on 11 May 2016 (referred to in paragraphs 1.2-1.4), Affordable Housing contributions will be sought from schemes of 11+ units (irrespective of the floorspace of the site)."

1.19. LBE's Development Management Document DPD (2014) Policy DM1 states (note: current market rents have increased significantly since 2014; proposed Meridian Water rents higher than market rents):

"Evidence shows that larger units at rent levels of 80% of market rent will be unaffordable to most families. For residents earning the median borough income, 78% of market rent for 2 bed units, 60% of market rent for 3 bed units and 49% of market rent for 4+ bed units would be affordable."

1.20. The Draft New London Plan sets more stringent requirements for affordable housing provision than the adopted Development Plan.

"The strategic target is for 50% of all new homes delivered across London to be affordable... public sector land delivering at least 50% affordable housing across its portfolio...".

1.21. The Mayor issued a Practice Note on the Threshold Approach to Affordable Housing on Public Land in July 2018, which clarified the definition of 'public sector land' in reference to the 50% affordable housing target set out in Policy H5 Delivering affordable housing.

1.22. LBE published the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update in 2015 indicating the preferred unit mix across housing tenures.
"Consider affordable rented housing property size targets of 50% one and two bedroom units to meet the needs of single, couple and small family households. 50% of social rented units should be three and four bedroom houses to address the needs of larger families."

1.23. The LPA position on the split between affordable rented and intermediate units is defined in LBE Core Policy 3 and LBE Strategic Housing Market Assessment:
"The Council will aim for a borough-wide affordable housing tenure mix ratio of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate provision."

2. Key Findings

2.1. CLARITY ON BENEFITS TO LOCAL PEOPLE

- **INSIGHTS**: Important decisions appear to have been made without validating some critical assumptions due to the urgency to commence the development, possibly compromising the opportunity to effectively address local housing and employment needs.
- **EVIDENCE FOR LOCAL BENEFICIARIES**: Local people, residents of Edmonton, are key stakeholders for Meridian Water. Evidence is required to support claims they will be the primary beneficiaries for housing, employment, and investment.
- **EXTERNAL BENEFICIARIES**: Private investors (including those from overseas) have been identified as beneficiaries from the scheme and as a result, a good proportion of the planned housing and jobs will be out of reach of many local people.

INSIGHTS

Important decisions appear to have been made without validating some critical assumptions due to the urgency to commence the development, possibly compromising the opportunity to effectively address local housing and employment needs.

2.1.1. A lack of up-to-date evidence means that Enfield's housing needs have not been clearly identified and documented. For example, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment has not been updated for five years, the Core Strategy was adopted ten years ago and the replacement Local Plan is at least two years from being adopted, whilst the Skills Strategy & Economic Development Strategy is still a work in progress.

2.1.2. There remains some serious knowledge gaps, for example we do not know:
- The number and size of affordable homes needed in Enfield to meet current demand (i.e. the backlog).
- The predicted number and type of additional affordable homes needed to meet new demand over the next 5-15 years.
- The household income distribution of key groups (e.g. the household income of those currently in the private rented sector or those living near Meridian Water).
- The ability for households, particularly those in the private rented sector, to meet the deposit requirements for the various ownership options.

2.1.3. The house sizes and tenure mix delivered at Meridian Water must be evidence based in order to:
- Best help households suffering from the consequences of unaffordable and unsuitable housing.
- Address the borough's housing crisis and the needs of the most vulnerable communities and people in our borough.
- Make the most effective use of the Council's investment and resources.
- Make the most effective use of the (scare) land available for building and reduce the need to build on green belt land.
- Successfully reduce costs elsewhere (e.g. temporary accommodation costs).
- Avoid increasing the local population without solving housing challenges.

EVIDENCE FOR LOCAL BENEFICIARIES

Local people, residents of Edmonton, are key stakeholders for Meridian Water. Evidence is required to support claims that they will be the primary beneficiaries of housing, employment, and investment.

2.1.4. **Housing needs:** The large proportion of households in the surrounding wards of Meridian Water live in rented accommodation (see Table 1); it is not clear how the development benefits these households, not least because insufficient evidence about their needs and income has come forward or been provided.

Table 1: Housing tenure by ward (2011 census) (1)

Enfield Ward name	Number of Household spaces	% Households Owned	% Households Social Rented	% Households Private Rented
Edmonton Green	6,899	32.0	43.1	24.9
Haselbury	5,813	51.2	19.5	29.3
Upper Edmonton	6,222	44.4	29.8	25.8
Lower Edmonton	6,086	46.7	27.4	25.9
Enfield Borough	122,421	58.8	17.6	23.6

2.1.5. The local "Demand versus Supply" analysis conducted showed that the largest undersupply was for homes priced below £350,000 (2). The lowest priced homes at Meridian Water would be £345,000 and most are far higher (3). On this basis, the flats proposed for Meridian Water will not address the local need across Enfield, let alone in Edmonton.

2.1.6. Median household incomes in the local area are between £26,000 and £30,000 (4), whereas the lowest priced open market flat at Meridian Water would require an income of £59,000 whilst a 25% stake in the lowest priced shared ownership flat would require an income of £44,000 (see Section 2.3). Furthermore, the majority of the homes at Meridian Water would be open market, so it is unclear how local people would be the main beneficiaries if they could not afford to live in the majority of the homes created.

2.1.7. The development is likely to benefit some existing homeowners living near the development due to the "regeneration effect" creating an uplift in local property values. However, the Workstream are concerned that homeowners do not represent the majority of local residents and that increased local house prices could further exacerbate the housing crisis, rather than help to solve it.

2.1.8. The evidence available demonstrates that:

- There are (at the time of writing) 3,410 households living in expensive and often unsuitable temporary accommodation (5), including 5,000 children at a cost of £66 million per year (6)
- There are over 5,200 households on council house waiting lists – with people having to wait more than 10 years for family sized homes (7)
- Two-thirds of renters in the private rental sector in Enfield claim some element of housing benefit (8)
- 11% of households are defined as overcrowded (9)

2.1.9. As things stand the Workstream required evidence that the current plans for Meridian Water will address these current issues.

2.1.10. Other evidence from published ward profiles shows that (Appendix A2.3):

- Upper Edmonton and Edmonton Green wards are among the 10% most deprived wards in England whilst Haselbury and Lower Edmonton among the 20% most deprived.
- Over 25% of households in these wards have an annual income of £15,000. The target house prices at Meridian Water are 30 times this figure.
- Over 65% of the residents in these four wards of working age have an education level of NVQ3 or below. As things stand most of the jobs at Meridian Water will be pitched well above this level making them out of reach for many Enfield residents.

2.1.11. **Minority Groups:** The benefits of the Meridian Water development must be recognised for disadvantaged minority groups in these wards (according to the last census, nearly a third the population of in the wards is Black African, Black Caribbean and other blacks) - currently it is not clear how this is achieved.

2.1.12. **Population projections:** Population projections for Enfield are unclear and appear to be inconsistent. Estimates for the next 10-20 years need to be fully understood in order to properly plan housing delivery, school places needed, medical needs, GP demands and so on.

2.1.13. **Employment:** As set out in Section 2.5 of this report, there is a risk that this development may reduce rather than increase employment for local people, especially in the short-term as lost jobs (for example, logistics, auto-repair) (10) would not be replaced for 10-20 years (even allowing for the potentially positive effects of meanwhile uses and building work).

2.1.14. **Investment:** The development will generate a surplus for the Council. The Workstream remain unclear as to what the estimated profits are likely to be for each phase of the project as well as overall. Likewise, the Workstream remain unclear as to how this money will be spent and when e.g. how much will be invested specifically in surrounding wards (as opposed to at the Meridian Water site), what on and when.

2.1.15. **Borough Impacts:** The Workstream is concerned about the impact of the investment on other parts of the borough. For instance, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments from across Enfield have largely been directed towards Meridian Water infrastructure (11).

EXTERNAL BENEFICIARIES

Private investors (including those from overseas) have been identified as beneficiaries from the scheme and as a result, a good proportion of the planned housing and jobs will be out of reach of many local people.

2.1.16. The Council's own Financial Viability Assessment identifies three groups of investors as target home buyers: UK Investors, Overseas Investors, and the "Bank of Mum and Dad". The Assessment states that investors will be important initial targets (12). These investors will benefit from the regeneration premium (i.e. capital appreciation) (12) and rental income. The Workstream noted that this targeting and the associated

benefits appeared to be more clearly set out in the Assessment than an explanation of how the development would (or would not) reflect Enfield's housing needs.

2.1.17. The same Assessment also sets out the profile of local households in the areas surrounding Meridian Water (see table 2) [13].

2.1.18. The demographic profile appears not to reflect the housing that would be delivered at Meridian Water; Those classified with the 'Urban Cohesion' category are unlikely to want to move whilst those classed as 'Municipal Challenge' cannot afford much of the housing proposed and; 'Rental Hubs' are unlikely to have the household income necessary to privately purchase or rent at Meridian Water [14]. Which raises the question, who are these homes actually for?

Table 2: Demographic profile of local households

Profile	%	Characteristics
Urban Cohesion	40%	Settled extended families and older people who live in multi-cultural city suburbs. Most have bought their own homes and have been settled in these neighbourhoods for many years, enjoying the sense of community they feel there.
Municipal Challenge	36%	Long-term social renters living in low-value multi-storey flats in urban locations, or small terraces on outlying estates. These are challenged neighbourhoods with limited employment options and correspondingly low household incomes
Rental Hubs	20%	Rental Hubs contains predominantly young, single people in their 20s and 30s who live in urban locations and rent their homes from private landlords while in the early stages of their careers or pursuing studies.

2.1.19. **Multiple property purchases:** Existing contractual provisions permit property investors to purchase up to two properties on council-owned land in Meridian Water. This will limit the number of homes available for local residents and help drive up house prices.

2.2. FINANCIAL RISKS TO DEVELOPMENT AND COUNCIL

- **RESILIENCE**: Uncertainties surrounding the development, will impact upon the Council's finances and are a risk to its financial resilience.
- **MACRO-ISSUES** : The consequences of high levels of borrowing, increased Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) interest rate, uncertain house prices, Brexit, drop in meanwhile use revenue projections, continued funding cuts, inconsistent and widely varied population projections, market changes for developer partners and now the Covid-19 crisis are all long-term risks for the Council.
- **SCENARIO PLANNING**: Sensitivity testing on important scenarios that could jeopardise the outcome of the project, do not appear to have been undertaken within available financial models.
- **IMPACT ON OTHER WARDS**: Channelling a significant proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) towards Meridian Water could potentially compromise the needs of residents elsewhere across the Borough.

RESILIENCE

2.2.1. **Increased Risks:** The Covid-19 crisis adds to the significant risks previously identified in the Audit Planning Report 2019 - "The Council will need to deliver its savings and achieve income targets to maintain financial sustainability in the medium term and there is a risk that these projections will not be met." (1) "Meridian Water and other regeneration projects represent significant investment by the Council and there is a significant risk that the public money being invested does not deliver value for money if the projects are not successfully managed." (2)

2.2.2. **SIL de-designation:** The SIL has not yet been de-designated on the site. The Mayor of London sets the amount of SIL required and Enfield must identify this land across the Borough (145,000 square metres). The impact of this on the financial viability of the development and as a consequence of the Council is unclear.

2.2.3. **Rate of development:** There is insufficient evidence to show that the proposed rate of development of 500 new homes per annum (3, 4), is practical or deliverable based on other similar schemes around the country. Without clear mitigation this opens the council to a financial risk. The average build rate for 2000+ developments is 161 pa (5).

MACRO-ISSUES

Impact on Expenses

2.2.4. **Servicing asset debt:** The Council's peak borrowing levels would reach £2 billion in the latter part of this decade with Meridian Water related borrowing levels contributing to over a quarter of that.

2.2.5. **Increased PWLB interest rate:** The Public Works Loan Board interest rate was increased by 1% in October 2019. Any such increases will have a serious detrimental impact on the level of the Council's debt payments.

2.2.6. **Brexit:** There remains considerable uncertainties around the impact on costs as a consequence of Brexit.

Impact on Revenue

2.2.7. **Meanwhile use:** Revenue is not a given and carries significant risks.

2.2.8. **Funding cuts:** The Council, like other councils across the country, have faced and will continue to face financial challenges due to potential reductions in central government funding

2.2.9. **Uncertain house prices:** The impact of the downturn in the current economic situation may impact on house prices and revenue streams expected from the development.

2.2.10. **Overseas investors:** Despite the Council's declared comments, as things stand, the development appears to be also dependent on sales to overseas investors.

2.2.11. **Mixed communities:** The development requires a clear separation of affordable and private units to maximise revenue compromising the objectives of creating mixed communities.

2.2.12. **Public land sell-off:** The development will lead to further sell-off of public land which is already in short supply and as a public asset needs to be secured for future generations. Research shows increased need for local authorities to sell assets to balance books and Enfield is not immune to this [(6).]

2.2.13. **Construction timescales:** There is a risk to the timing for delivery of particular tenure types by the Council and its partners due to market saturation.

2.2.14. **Market Saturation:** With Meridian One, regeneration projects such as Joyce & Snells, the local market becomes saturated with private sale housing, reducing values and adversely impacting financial viability.

Miscellaneous

2.2.15. **Covid-19:** There are major economic uncertainties surrounding the Covid-19 crisis that will impact the Council's budget, demand for housing, developers interests, delivery speed etc. Given the current climate the Workstream would like to understand the risks associated with a developer becoming insolvent.

2.2.16. **Population projections:** The Workstream have not seen revised projections assessing the consequences from Brexit (either with a deal or a no-deal outcome).

2.2.17. **Developers**: Changes to Developer partners risk appetite.

2.2.18. **Additional infrastructure costs:** The Council is engaging with Thames Water on the risk of increased demand on water supply and risk of water shortages. Work is still needed on reinforcing infrastructure provision; the development may need an extra water station and additional pipes.

2.2.19. **Meridian Water Station Costs:** Only verbal confirmation have been received that all is within budget and schedule.

SCENARIO PLANNING

2.2.20. Lambert Smith Hampton were commissioned to produce a bespoke Financial Model and LBE Finance and the Meridian Water Team have been reviewing on-going progress. Although the Financial Model can also be used to test different scenarios and sensitivities, it does not yet include vital aspects that would provide significant inputs to decision making, for example, the cost to Enfield finances of not addressing the housing and social crisis.

2.2.21. Large investment decisions have already been made without completing the development of the Social Value Model [(3).]

2.2.22. Financial model requires urgent updating to consider new scenarios being identified due to the Covid-19 crisis.

IMPACT ON OTHER WARDS

2.2.23. **CIL towards MW:** Although it has been a long standing policy of the Council to distribute all Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions towards Meridian Water and the Worksteam welcomes the reevaluation of that position, none the less the Workstream remains concerned that a high-level of CIL could still go towards Meridian Water to the detriment of the rest of the Borough. High reliance on these contributions may be perceived as influencing planning decisions related to undesirable developments across the borough in order to maximise CIL.

2.2.24. **Impact on other wards:** Channelling a significant proportion of the CIL towards Meridian Water could potentially compromise the needs of residents elsewhere across the Borough.

2.2.25. **Social costs:** Reduced funding of services and capital investments in all wards are likely to impact the wellbeing of residents not just in Edmonton but all across the borough.

2.3. AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING TO LOCAL RESIDENTS

- **AFFORDABLE TO PURCHASE:** Evidence should be provided that more than a minority of Enfield households (including most key workers) would be able to purchase a home at Meridian Water.
- **AFFORDABLE TO RENT:** Evidence should be provided that more than a minority of Enfield households (including most key workers) would be able to afford the Private Rental Sector (PRS) rates at Meridian Water.
- **UNSUSTAINABLE PRS INCREASES:** Evidence is required to show that the number of unaffordable PRS homes at Meridian Water would not exacerbate the current housing situation which would inadvertently lead to increased usage of temporary accommodation.
- **UNAFFORDABLE INTERMEDIATE HOUSING:** Evidence is required to show that Intermediate "affordable" housing would be affordable to a large proportion of Enfield residents, currently renting.
- **KEY RENTERS:** London Affordable Rent levels, combined with the housing benefit cap excluding certain households from renting a home at Meridian Water, are out of reach for most households.

2.3.1. The median household income in Enfield is £34,000. Appendix A2.2 lists the gross annual income of all existing households in Enfield. With the average house price in Meridian Water around £440,000, very few local residents (including most key workers) would find homes affordable to buy or rent there.

2.3.2. Intermediate sale prices at up to 80% market value are unaffordable to most local residents (see 2.3.16). With London Affordable Rents at 50% of market prices, less than 30% of Meridian Water homes would be affordable for Enfield working residents.

Table 1: Tenure type per development phase (< 30% London Affordable Rent; 0% Social Rent)

TYPE	TENURE	Phase 1	Phase 2	TOTAL UNITS	%
UNITS ->		725	2300		
Market Sale	Private	25%	40%	1101	36%
Market Rent	Private	25%*	20%	641	21%
Intermediate Sales	Private	25%	12%	480	16%
London Affordable Rent	PRP **		18%	391	13%
London Affordable Rent	Council	25%	10%	411	14%
Social Rent	Council	0%	0%	0	0%
		100%	**100%**	3025	

* The number of Units available for rent has not available.
** PRP - Private registered providers (e.g. Housing Associations)

AFFORDABLE TO PURCHASE

Evidence should be provided that more than a minority of Enfield households (including most key workers) would be able to purchase a home at Meridian Water.

2.3.3. Prices for "open market" homes will range from £345,000 to £605,000 (1). Indicative prices are on average 51% higher than the local second-hand market (see table 2).

Table 2: Indicate flat prices at Meridian Water vs. local second-hand market

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	Average
Meridian Water	£345,000	£450,000	£525,000	£440,000
Local prices *	£263,026	£300,832	£312,068	£291,975
Difference	+£81,974	+£149,168	+£212,932	+£148,025
% Increase	31%	50%	68%	51%

*1.5-mile radius (2)

2.3.4. Purchasing a flat at Meridian Water would require a large deposit and a high household income. For example, purchasing a 2-bed flat would require a deposit of £45,000 and an income of £76,000 per year (see table 3).

Table 3: Example income requirements to purchase a flat at Meridian Water

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	Average
Meridian Water	£345,000	£450,000	£525,000	£440,000
10% deposit	£34,500	£45,000	£52,500	£44,000
Monthly Repayment*	£1,472	£1,920	£3,044	£2,145
Income requirement **	£58,880	£76,800	£121,760	£85,813

* based on 25-year repayment mortgage
** based on mortgage repayments @30% of gross household income (i.e. standard metric for affordability)

2.3.5. The median household income in Enfield is £34,000 (3), so the homes would be unaffordable to the majority of local people, especially those without a large deposit (e.g. from the sale of a current home). Two-thirds of renters in the private rental sector in Enfield claim some element of housing benefit, so it is unlikely they will have the deposits or income required (4).

2.3.6. Council documents indicate that the initial target market for the homes will predominantly be investors (5). The Workstream questioned how local people would be the principle beneficiaries of the development if the homes were unaffordable to purchase and targeted at investors, especially overseas investors, but received unsatisfactory responses. The Workstream are aware of comments about restricting investor sales to two properties per buyer and would like further clarification of how this will work in practice (e.g. how will owners be restricted of reselling properties to investors).

AFFORDABLE TO RENT

Evidence should be provided that more than a minority of Enfield households (including most key workers - see Appendix 2.1) would be able to afford the Private Rental Sector (PRS) rates at Meridian Water.

2.3.7. The PRS has grown in Enfield [6] and has been linked to the rise in the need for expensive emergency temporary accommodation [7].

2.3.8. Around 20% of the homes at Meridian Water would be "Build to Rent" (BtR). Council documents suggest the BtR rates will be 19% higher than the average rates in Enfield (see table 4).

Table 4: Monthly rent comparison

	1-bed flat	2-bed flat	3-bed flat	Average
Meridian Water BtR rates*	£1,300	£1,600	£1,800	£1,567
Median PRS rates Enfield**	£1,049	£1,300	£1,595	£1,315
Difference	+£251	+£300	+£205	+£252
% difference	+24%	+23%	+13%	+19%

* as listed in the Phase 2 viability assessment (p18)
** as listed in the Housing Strategy

2.3.9. Renting a BtR flat at Meridian Water would require an annual household income of between £52,000 and £72,000. The average household income in Enfield is £34,000, so the BtR homes would be unaffordable to the majority of local residents (the average household income for existing renters is significantly lower than £34,000 - See Appendix A2.3).

Table 5: Monthly rent comparison

	1-bed flat	2-bed flat	3-bed flat	Average
Meridian Water*	£1,300	£1,600	£1,800	£1,567
Household Income requirement**	£52,000	£64,000	£72,000	£62,667

* as listed in the MW Phase 2 viability assessment (p18)
** affordability calculated as rent taking 30% of gross household income

2.3.10. Furthermore, as outlined earlier, if a target market for home buyers is investors, this would increase the proportion of flats at Meridian Water in the PRS.

2.3.11. Investors who purchase flats for rental purposes would need to charge premium PRS rates to reflect the high purchase price and a desire to achieve optimal returns. The Workstream thought this would not help local residents already struggling to afford rates in the PRS [9], especially the private renters in Enfield who already need to claim housing benefit [10] – which is a high proportion of renters in Enfield.

2.3.12. A residents' survey conducted by the Council in 2019 found that:

- 89% of residents agreed with the Council's strategy to provide "more genuinely affordable homes for local people" [11], - this received the highest ratings of the strategies tested.

- 93% agreed it is important for the principle that "homes should be affordable to Enfield residents" to guide the development of all future homes in Enfield [12]. This received the highest rating of the principles tested.

2.3.13. The Workstream thinks the level of affordable housing at Meridian Water on public land should closely reflect the ambition of local residents.

2.3.14. Plans suggest that around 60% of the homes will either be private purchase or private rental [13]. Given the affordability issues outlined above, the Workstream questioned whether this should be reduced in order to help ensure that local people are the principle beneficiaries of the development and to better reflect the consultation feedback from residents.

2.3.15. If there are a large number of unaffordable PRS homes at Meridian Water to Enfield residents, this may exacerbate the current housing situation, inadvertently lead to increased usage of temporary accommodation and therefore higher costs, unless control measures are put in place (e.g. rent controls and tenancy protection).

UNAFFORDABLE INTERMEDIATE HOUSING

Evidence is required to show that Intermediate "affordable" housing would be affordable to a large proportion of Enfield residents, currently renting.

2.3.16. To be eligible for shared ownership would require a household income of around £56k together with a £11k deposit (see table 6) - which does not reflect what the vast majority (95%) of people currently living in the rented sector in Enfield can afford (see Appendix A2.3).

Table 6: Affordability of shared ownership at Meridian Water

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	Average
Market Price	£345,000	£450,000	£525,000	£440,000
Share offered 25%	£86,250	£112,500	£131,250	£110,000
10% deposit	£8,625	£11,250	£13,125	£11,000
Mortgage amount	£77,625	£101,250	£118,125	£99,000
Mortgage repayment (pcm)	£368	£480	£560	£469
Rent (pcm)	£593	£773	£902	£756
Service charge (pcm)	£142	£186	£217	£182
Total spend (pcm)	£1,103	£1,439	£1,679	£1,407
Minimum annual household income required	£44,131	£57,563	£67,156	£56,283

* 3% 25-year repayment mortgage
** Rent based on 2.75%
*** service charge is estimate based on Nexus Enfield price list
**** assumes no loans and credit card debt – calculated as 30% of gross income

2.3.17. Intermediate rents, at 80% open market rents, are unaffordable to a vast majority of Enfield residents including key workers (see Appendix A2.5). The estimated number of households that could benefit from this level of rent has not yet been quantified.

KEY RENTERS

London Affordable Rent levels, combined with the housing benefit cap excluding certain households from renting a home at Meridian Water, are out of reach for most households.

2.3.18. The Workstream recognised that London Affordable Rent (LAR) homes will be affordable to the majority of households. However, the Workstream questioned whether there might be households that would not be eligible for LAR housing due to benefit cap rules. The Workstream felt that a number of Social Rent properties should be provided to reflect this.

2.3.19. For example parents with children in school who can get a part-time job for 5-10 hours a week but cannot work enough hours a week to escape the benefit cap (i.e. 16+ hours) because of childcare commitments. With Social Rent a parent can work enough hours (5-10) to reduce their benefit entitlement so they are not affected by the benefit cap.

2.3.20. The Workstream felt this required further investigation by the Council e.g. to identify the number of families in temporary accommodation and on the council house waiting list whose situation meant that they would not be eligible for London Affordable Rent due to issues linked to the benefit cap.

2.3.21. Given the issues set out above, the Workstream question if a minimum percentage of homes on Meridian Water be sold/ rented to people from nearby wards.

2.4. LAND & PLANNING COMPROMISES ARE CONCERNING

- **HOUSING MIX:** There are concerns about the number of family sized homes being delivered..
- **HIGHEST DENSITY:** The development will be one of the most densely populated areas in the capital (nearly 4 times Enfield's existing average).
- **INSUFFICIENT SPACES:** There is concern about insufficient parkland, open space and sporting facilities in the development.
- **STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL LAND (SIL) RE-DESIGNATION:** The financial, planning and place-making consequences of not obtaining SIL re-designation need clarifying and are a concern if 10,000 homes can be delivered.

HOUSING MIX

There are concerns about the number of family sized homes being delivered.

2.4.1. Family sized homes are urgently needed to reduce the level of overcrowding (>11% of all households) experienced by Enfield residents. With 53% of 3+ bed affordable homes being under-occupied there is a need to optimise the supply of suitable types of family homes. The proposed housing mix for Meridian phases 1 and 2 does not clearly demonstrate how the housing mix is optimised to meet this need.

2.4.2. **Core policy**: A comparison of local housing need, as reflected in Core Policy 5 (1), with the housing mix proposed for Meridian Water Phase 2 (2), indicates a shortfall in the under delivery of 3+ bedroom homes (see table 1).

Table 1: Housing Mix Proposed vs Policy Requirement

Phase 2	Total	LAR	Intermediate *	Open Market
Total number of homes	**2,300**	644	276	1380
3+-bed homes required by CP5	**1,414**	386 (60%)	131 (63%)	897 (65%)
3+-bed homes delivered	**690**	193 (30%)	83 (30%)	414 (30%)
Shortfall of 3-bed+ homes	**-724**	**-193**	**-48**	**-483**

*CP5 does not break out Intermediate targets, so a mid-point between LAR (London Affordable Rent) and OM is used

2.4.3. The Workstream noted that:

- The Officers' Report for Phase 1 said that 4% of private units and 41% of affordable units will be 3+ bedrooms - lower than is required by CP5 (3).
- The 2014 Development Management Document (DMD) supports CP5 (DMD 3) and also states that larger developments should meet the targets set by CP5 (4).
- The DMD also states that where targets for family-sized homes are not met on larger sites then evidence will be required to demonstrate why these cannot be met (5). The Workstream would like to see this evidence for Phase 1 and 2.

- The draft Local Plan 2018-2036, which is still to be adopted, states that "Enfield's draft Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015) identifies a specific need in the borough for 50% of affordable rented and market housing respectively to be homes with at least three bedrooms suitable for families. This figure is supported further by Enfield's Local Housing Register which indicates a demand of 47.3% for family sized homes for affordable and social rented housing" (6).
- The Phase 2 Viability Assessment allowed for 50% of LAR homes to be 3+ bedrooms (7), yet the application appears to have reduced this to 30% (8). The proportion of family sized intermediate units proposed is 30% despite the SHMA saying that only 15% of intermediate units should be 3+ bedrooms (9). The Workstream would like to understand reasoning behind these changes.
- There are 2,663 families with children living in temporary accommodation (10), which indicates the shortage of affordable family housing and demonstrates the consequences of under supply.
- 45% of homeless households in Enfield are classified as black/black British; 18% of households in Enfield are Black/Black British. The proportion of homeless households in Enfield classified as Black/Black British has almost doubled in 10 years from 25% to 45%, whereas greater London as a whole saw a much smaller increase from 22%-27% (10.1)
- There are over 5,300 households on council housing waiting lists (11). Wait times for 3+ bed properties are over 10-12 years due to under supply (12).
- 11% of households are defined as overcrowded, which equates to around 14,000 households (13).
- Research for the London Assembly shows that just one new 6-bedroom home can help take more than 36 people out of overcrowding because of the chain effect. Currently this cannot happen because the 1 and 2 bed homes being proposed do not create a chain and are too small for the vast majority of overcrowded households (14).
- The under delivery of 3+ bed homes may increase pressure to develop land in other less suitable areas and possibly the green belt land.
- The Workstream felt this was of particular concern given plans for other existing private landowners to build homes at the site, whereby the Council would have less control over the housing mix and tenure of these homes.

2.4.4. **Community cohesion**: A lack of family housing means growing families may need to move away from Meridian Water – which may not be ideal for community cohesion. The family housing that is being provided in Phase 1 is heavily skewed towards the social sector, whilst the large majority of private units will be smaller and targeted at younger (e.g. "young professionals"). This could work against the creation of a balanced/ mixed community. The development needs to deliver more family housing and this needs to be balanced across all tenures.

2.4.5. **Loneliness**: The Workstream are aware of the increasing concerns about the negative impacts of loneliness on health and social care, which have been further heightened by experiences of lockdown. In this context, the Workstream questioned whether it was appropriate or desirable for the scheme to be dominated by 1 bed units.

2.4.6. **Building pressures across the borough**: Enfield needs a large number of family-sized properties but the current plans for Meridian Water do not show how enough of these can be delivered. This means:

- In the short term (next 1-10 years): A very large number of family homes will need to be built elsewhere in the borough e.g. on green belt land; the Workstream questions whether this may open the debate to building on green belt land.
- In the medium/long term (next 10-20 years): The need for family-sized homes in the borough will massively and disproportionately increase due to the future housing needs of the people moving into the studio/1/2 bed flats at Meridian Water – putting further pressure for development elsewhere in the borough.

2.4.7. **Fewer homes**: The Workstream recognised the aim of making the most efficient use of land [(6)], however, given local housing need and the scarcity of land suitable for development, the Workstream felt this aim could be achieved by delivering more 3+-bed housing, even if this resulted in fewer units overall. The Workstream noted that the Meridian Water Scenario Testing analysis conducted by Karakusevic Carson, stated that "**there may be value, in all sense of the word, in a development that realizes slightly fewer homes**" [(7)].

Key questions:

- To what extent is the under delivery of 3+ bedroom homes linked to project phasing e.g. will a far higher proportion of the units in later phases be 3+ bedroom homes?
- If the required family units (i.e. 3+ bedrooms) are not delivered at Meridian Water, then where will these be delivered, when and by who?
- If the development is not delivering 3+ bedroom units, then is this creating a potential problem for the future (e.g. when a proportion of the young professionals living at Meridian Water need more bedrooms/family housing)?
- Would having more larger units create a more stable community and contribute to social cohesion and a greater sense of belonging?

HIGHEST DENSITY

Taken as a whole, the development would be one of the most densely populated area in the entire capital (and nearly 4 times Enfield average).

2.4.8. The Workstream has raised questions about the population density currently proposed and remains concerned. Meridian Water will be 3-5 times more densely populated than neighbouring wards or indeed other town areas of Enfield (see table 2).

Table 2: Population Density by Ward

Ward Name	Population	Hectares	Population per hectare (density)	Density ratio to MW
Meridian Water	26,406	85	310.66	NA
Bowes	15,169	148.5	102.15	3.04
Haselbury	17,542	179.7	97.62	3.18
Palmers Green	16,470	194.1	84.85	3.66
Lower Edmonton	17,606	217.5	80.95	3.84
Upper Edmonton	21,212	265.1	80.02	3.88
Town	15,988	223.3	71.60	4.34
Turkey Street	15,518	225.7	68.75	4.52
Edmonton Green	19,200	312.9	61.36	5.06
Southgate Green	15,862	261.7	60.61	5.13
Southgate	16,246	269.1	60.37	5.15

2.4.9. Meridian Water will be one of the most densely populated area in London, even when compared to central London areas (see table 3).

Table 3: Population density compared to 624 wards in London (most dense based of this methodology)

Borough	Ward Name	Population	Hectares	Population per hectare
Enfield	Meridian Water	26,406	85	310.66
Westminster	Church Street	13,253	44.4	298.49
Westminster	Harrow Road	13,741	49.5	277.60
Westminster	Lancaster Gate	15,166	63	240.73
Westminster	Queen's Park	13,914	58.3	238.66
Newham	Green Street East	17,576	74.3	236.55
Kens. & Chelsea	Earl's Court	10,503	45.9	228.82
Westminster	Bayswater	11,660	51.8	225.10
Tower Hamlets	Whitechapel	20,393	91.8	222.15
Hackney	Hoxton	18,426	83.9	219.62

2.4.10. The Workstream questioned whether the Meridian Water could support such high density and noted that other areas with similar densities have superior infrastructure (e.g. public transport, parks etc.), cultural benefits (e.g. access to theatre, cinema, museums etc.) and employment opportunities. The Workstream is aware that there are many good examples of high-density housing (e.g. central London mansion blocks), and are not opposed to pockets of high density, however the Workstream did question whether such high population density would be appropriate over 85 hectares in outer London. The Workstream would like to see examples of where this has worked well elsewhere in London.

2.4.11. The Meridian Water Scenario Testing report noted that the housing and population density proposed is unusually high for a development of this scale [17] and that building 10,000 homes requires significant compromises; notably that the scale and massing needed would result in frequent failure to meet daylight or amenity light standards [18] and that only 8,000 homes could be delivered within a policy compliant framework [19].

2.4.12. The Workstream noted that the Meridian Water Scenario Testing had suggested average building heights of between 6 and 8 storeys to maximise development, whilst maintaining adequate amenity [20], but that the plans for Phase 2 allows for average heights of between 8 and 10 storeys [21]. The Workstream were concerned that this was at odds with the scenario testing, which specifically said that scenarios with 9 or more average number of storeys were considered to fail in terms of daylight and air circulation [22].

2.4.13. Furthermore, the scenario testing allowed for a maximum building height of 20 storeys [23] but plans for Phase 2 allow for up to 22 storeys [24]. The Workstream was concerned that the phased nature of the development meant that the overall impact on the final development (e.g. in terms of density, daylight hours, amenity space etc.) does not appear to have been fully considered within the plans.

INSUFFICIENT SPACES

There is concern about insufficient parkland, open space and sporting facilities in the development.

2.4.14. Successful high-density housing requires well-managed large public open spaces located within 10 to 15 minutes' walk (roughly 800 meters). These opens spaces need to be safe and inviting (e.g. not windswept, noisy or polluted), in order to provide people with an adequate sense of "escape" [25] and express high levels of dissatisfaction with the open space available [26].

2.4.15. By way of context, all the wards surrounding Meridian Water already have a deficit of parkland and open space [27].

2.4.16. In light of the high population density proposed, and local deficits of parkland and open space, the Workstream has raised questions about the amount and quality of the parkland and open space being delivered at Meridian Water.

2.4.17. LBE Open Space and Sports Assessment update (2011) suggests 2.37 Ha/1000 residents as a target for parklands and open space [19]. However, in order to meet this requirement Meridian Water would need 62.5 Ha of parkland and public open

space, but as things stand just around around 8 Ha is being proposed, which is well short [29].

2.4.18. Most of the open space created will be at Edmonton Marshes, within the Lee Valley Regional Park. The Workstream questioned whether this space would be "open and inviting" and provide the sense of "escape" needed.

2.4.19. The Workstream's outstanding concerns are: (1) the open space is in the shadow of the North Circular Road, so is likely to be noisy and polluted; (2) the proximity of the incinerator raises concerns by some about odour and pollution; (3) the large electricity pylons that cross the site do not add to the sites "tranquillity" and; (4) the open space is liable to flooding and may become frequently unusable.

2.4.20. Officers have said that residents of Meridian Water will be no more than one-minute walking distance from green space and that the open space is adequate as there are plans to open up access to other open areas outside the site itself. The Workstream would like further information about this approach e.g. exactly where are these green and open spaces, how big are they, how far are these areas from different part of the development, to what extent are these open spaces already used by other people, who is responsible for maintaining these spaces, are these spaces usable in the evening, will there be any impact on biodiversity, are these areas suitable for ball games and for children to play and so on. The Workstream would like to understand how much amenity space is provided on roofs and of plans to ensure these spaces are safe, inviting well maintained and easily accessible for all people (recent reports suggest underuse of shared roof spaces and gardens).

2.4.21. The Workstream has two further concerns: (1) Sport England said the Phase 2 application delivered insufficient sports facilities [30] – the Workstream was concerned about this in light of issues regarding space and parkland outlined above and issues of obesity in the borough. The Workstream like further information about the sports facilities that would be provided on the site itself (football/ rugby/ cricket pitches, skate parks, tennis/basketball courts, bike hire, outdoor gyms and so on); (2) The Workstream noted that much of the open space being provided would be pathways next to waterways and reservoirs, and questions what work had been conducted regarding public safety (especially of children).

STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL LAND (SIL) RE-DESIGNATION

The financial, planning and place-making consequences of not obtaining SIL re-designation need clarifying and are a concern if 10,000 homes can be delivered.

2.4.22. The current direction of travel and messaging from the Council assumes that the areas of SIL would be re-designated in the future. The Workstream would like to better understand the impacts and risks of the SIL not being re-designated. For example: will the homes already built be in close proximity to industrial units and how will this impact the residents already living at Meridian Water? If the land is not re-designated will this impact access to or provision of open spaces? What would be the impact on the scheme's financial viability and what risks are there to the Council?

2.4.23. Enfield Council has conceded to the Mayor's request for SIL designation and adopted the Edmonton Leeside Area Action Plan (ELAAP) on 29 January 2020 by limiting the number of homes on the development to 5,000, contrary to the stated aims of 10,000 new homes.

2.5. EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY NEEDS REWORKING

- **CHANGING NEEDS:** The Employment Strategy needs to properly account for the changing nature of work, especially office work, in the post Covid-19 economy.
- **LOCAL EMPLOYMENT:** There is evidential risk that the redevelopment may result in fewer jobs for local people.
- **EMPLOYMENT VERSUS DENSITY TRADE-OFF:** Evidence indicates that the preferred employment scenario is undeliverable without increasing housing density.
- **ATTRACTIVENESS TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS:** Unless there is a good quantity and quality of open spaces, together with good public transport there is a risk that businesses and employers will be discouraged.

CHANGING NEEDS

The Employment Strategy needs to properly account for the changing nature of work, especially office work, in the post Covid-19 economy.

2.5.1. The Workstream recognises that the impact of Covid-19 on changing patterns of work has understandably not yet been fully understood, and the Council is reliant on an employment strategy devised prior to the pandemic. The Workstream requires to know how and when it will be revised.

2.5.2. The Workstream requires clarity that the Employment Strategy has fully accounted for the changing nature of work, especially office work (e.g. more people working from home - requiring home working solutions - and employers reducing office space requirement), especially in the post Covid-19 economy. This needs more thought from both a housing and employment space perspective (e.g. what are daylight/ sunlight and space requirements for people regularly working form home, or mixing home-working with childcare?).

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

There is evidential risk that the redevelopment may result in fewer jobs for local people.

2.5.3. There are currently 2,600 people employed at Meridian Water (1); 1,500 of these jobs will be lost as a result of the redevelopment (2).

2.5.4. The Employment Strategy sets an ambitious target of creating 6,000 new permanent jobs at Meridian Water, with a minimum of 1,500 jobs coming from local labour (3). This means the potential job gains for local people are closely aligned with the actual job losses (3a).

2.5.5. Furthermore, the site would not be big enough to accommodate 6,000 jobs, even if 100% of the SIL is released (4); a reduction in the overall number of jobs may result in fewer than 1,500 jobs for local people (i.e. job losses may actually outweigh gains).

2.5.6. A number of the “new” jobs would come from businesses relocating within Enfield. The impact of this on the “new” jobs’ targets and on other areas in Enfield should be set-out in the next iteration of the Employment Strategy. With the Skills Strategy or Economic Developments Strategy documents still being developed precisely how local people would benefit from the development remains unclear.

2.5.7. With this in mind, the Workstream would like to see a higher proportion of the new jobs guaranteed to come for Enfield if not directly Edmonton residents. This will help ensure that local people are the main beneficiaries of the regeneration and do not lose out.

2.5.8. The Workstream is also concerned that the existing jobs will be lost relatively soon but would not be replaced for 10-20 years. Further analysis is urgently required to help understand the impact of the loss of existing employment opportunities to Enfield residents in the short term (e.g. over the next 0-10 years), so that any negative impact could be understood and mitigated.

EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

Evidence indicates that the preferred employment scenario is undeliverable without increasing housing density.

2.5.9. Due to restrictions of space, the preferred employment option to create new 6,000 jobs cannot be delivered without increasing housing density [(5)]. The Workstream questioned the feasibility of this, as the housing density is already remarkably high. A new Employment Strategy may be required that does not factor in further increases to housing density, even if this means creating fewer jobs.

ATTRACTIVENESS TO PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS

Unless there is a good quantity and quality of open spaces, together with good public transport there is a risk that businesses and employers will be discouraged.

The Workstream recognises the growth potential of the knowledge economy and is broadly supportive of the ambition to attract knowledge sector companies and institutions to Meridian Water. Meridian Water could be well situated to benefit from its position in the Cambridge/ London/Oxford 'Golden Triangle' and in particular the rail links to the Innovation District at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and Tech City could be significant. However, the Workstream has expressed the following concerns:

2.5.10. **Lack of an anchor institution:** Knowledge districts across the globe are mostly centred around existing anchor institutions such as universities – The Workstream would like further information regarding the anchor institution at Meridian Water (e.g. which are being targeted and how are the target organisations needs being assessed?).

2.5.11. **Park life**: The Employment Strategy says that the development's park life and easy access to nature would be a key differentiating factor to attract prospective employers [(6)]. However, the Workstream has noted that the amount of open space being created is very low, and its proximity to the North Circular Road and the Edmonton incinerator casts some doubt as to whether this space would be particularly attractive to prospective employers who value a park life setting for their workforce. The Workstream is aware that the open space offered by other schemes that target life science companies, and that have park setting as a differentiating factor, have far more parkland than Meridian Water e.g. the Eddington neighbourhood, created by the University of Cambridge, that has 50 Ha of open space parkland. The Workstream felt it would be prudent for future iterations of the Employment Strategy to take account of these site characteristics and consider whether the open spaces would truly be a key differentiating factor.

2.5.12. **Public transport:** The Workstream recognises the work done to plan and deliver Meridian Water Station - a project started several years ago. It also notes once the development is complete the public transport accessibility level (PTAL[7]) for Meridian Water would be 2-3 [8]; which it regards as low. By comparison, the PTAL rating for the example office used in the Evidence Base for Employment Land report was 6b (i.e. the best rating possible) [9]. PTAL ratings for Enfield Town and Southgate are 4-6a [10]. The Workstream questioned what is the evidence that the public transport provision at Meridian Water would be adequate for the types of prospective employers the Employment Strategy is aiming to target (e.g. life science companies and higher education institutions)?

2.5.13. **Car parking:** Compliance with the draft New London Plan would mean the car parking provision for employees would be approximately 68 car parking spaces [11] for 3,650 office staff [12], although this needs to be confirmed by the transport team. The Workstream questions if this level of car parking proposed is adequate to attract the types of prospective employers the Employment Strategy is aiming for, especially given the sites low PTAL rating for the site.

2.5.14. **Lack of information about the housing needs of these targets:** The Workstream thought it would be helpful to consider in more detail the housing needs of employees of target organisations to help ensure that the housing and tenures being delivered at Meridian Water reflect the needs, life stages and incomes of target employees in the knowledge economy. The Workstream noted that a recent report shows that “many of the jobs generated in the Knowledge Quarter in recent years are ‘low pay’ in character” [13].

2.5.15. **Night time Economy:** The Workstream would like to see further details about the night time economy offer and how this will be supported and managed. For example, what are the plans for theatres, cinemas, music venues as well as bars, restaurants and cafes. The Workstream would also like to know how these will be managed in a dense residential area.

2.6. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRUST

- **BALANCE CONFLICTING ROLES:** Care is needed to ensure the Council balances the sometimes-conflicting roles of "developer" and "council".
- **PUBLIC TRUST IN PLANNING:** Planning Panels were not held for Phases 1 or 2 of the development, whilst plans for Phase 2 were agreed without public engagement.
- **CLEAR MESSAGING:** The messaging has been inconsistent and this can help to undermine public confidence in the project.

BALANCE CONFLICTING ROLES

Care is needed to ensure the Council balances the sometimes-conflicting roles of "developer" and "council".

2.6.1. The roles of "a developer" and of "the council" are well established. The private developer seeks to make a profit within a particular business ethos, whilst the council represents the needs of local people, and manages the developer's proposals consistently with its policies (e.g. that they meet Development Plan requirements). These different roles contribute towards a system of checks and balances and accountability.

The Council has taken on the role of "master developer" for the Meridian Water development, which raises important questions about perceived conflicts of interest and impartiality of decision making.

2.6.2. In its role as developer, the Council will need to emphasise and promote the developments benefits to help maximise its return on investment. This requires the Council to "manage the message" through marketing and communications. However, the need to be "on message" may lead to the perception that some issues are being downplayed or are unchallenged.

2.6.3. Given the scale of the Meridian Water development and the potential financial risks involved, the Council should consider setting clear guidelines to establish how it will balance its two, sometimes seen as conflicting roles.

2.6.4. The Council will need to be mindful of its objectives as a developer - however this may inadvertently encourage a rise in house prices and rents, which could exacerbate the current housing situation.

2.6.5. The preferred rate to delivery as "the developer" is different than from "the council" point of view. For a developer a slower of rate of development may be preferable to maximise its investment whilst the Council has the responsibility to urgently resolve the local housing crisis.

PUBLIC TRUST IN PLANNING:

Planning Panels were not held for Phases 1 or 2 of the development and plans for Phase 2 were agreed being without public engagement.

2.6.6. The Workstream questioned why Planning Panels had not been held for Phases 1 and 2 of the development and felt these would have been a good opportunity to engage with the public and to demonstrate transparency.

2.6.7. The Workstream are concerned about the media reports [1, 2, 3, 4] regarding the Planning Committee meeting for Phase 2, which was held without the public being able to attend despite the application being the largest the Council has ever made.

CLEAR MESSAGING

The messaging has sometimes appeared contradictory and therefore inconsistent and this has helped to undermine public confidence in the project.

2.6.8. The Workstream noted that some of the messaging about the scheme has been inconsistent, and unclear which has at times been seen as contradictory, and are concerned that this may hinder public confidence in the Council. For example, the project originally included a University Technical College, theatre and cinema, but this does not seem to feature within the current plans. Similarly, the Council has previously suggested that none of the units will be sold to overseas investors, but nonetheless this now appears to be part of the planning for Phase 2. Likewise, the Council has highlighted the challenges already faced by the PRS, together with the high usage of temporary accommodation, and yet, as things stands this development will substantially increase PRS housing.

2.6.9. Though the messaging has continually stressed that Enfield residents will be key beneficiaries, clarity on how this will be achieved is required, especially given affordability and employment issues outlined above.

3. Recommendations

The Workstream were supportive of the following proposals:

	Key Insights	Recommendation
1	Local needs are not as clear as they can be and knowledge gaps exist due to lack of up to date evidence.	**TO IMPROVE THE EVIDENCE AND KNOWLEDGE BASE AND CONSULT ON THAT EVIDENCE PRIOR TO DETERMINING ACTION:** • While the Council has held some sessions with residents in terms of their wider needs in Edmonton further work should establish these. • Identify specific and measurable local requirements (e.g. housing mix, outside space) and characteristics (e.g. incomes of relevant groups), as well as local employment, community needs (e.g. places of worship and community centres) and aspirations. • Establish needs likely to be met elsewhere by private developers and which gaps Meridian Water needs to fill. • Gather further evidence to assess demand for student accommodation at Meridian Water and Hotel.
2	Use of land at Meridian Water to reflect local need.	**TO USE LAND TO REFLECT LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS:** • Ensure the housing delivered closely reflects local needs and wants e.g. increase the proportion of 3+ bedroom family houses to achieve the most efficient, needs based, land use.
3	Impact of delivering smaller units	**TO EXPLORE SHORT TO LONG-TERM IMPACT OF DELIVERY OF SMALLER UNITS:** • Fully investigate impacts of not delivering housing needed (e.g. over emphasising smaller units). • Will family housing need to be built elsewhere in the short term to compensate? • Will the increase in smaller units create a greater need for family housing in 15-20 years? • Further evidence regarding mental health impact on living in 1 & 2 bed high rise towers (e.g. on isolation and loneliness and also on those living in the shadow of such towers).
4	A greater proportion of family housing would help to create a more stable and mixed community.	**TO FOCUS ON CREATING A COHESIVE, STABLE AND MIXED COMMUNITY:** • Adhere to family housing targets, ensure a quantum of the homes can be modified and redefined over time as people's needs change, thus helping people to stay in the area and build community bonds. • Do not over emphasise family housing in the social sector as this could risk polarising communities.

5	Affordability of local people to live at Meridian Water.	**TO DELIVER HOUSING MOST LOCAL PEOPLE CAN AFFORD:** • Property prices and rents must be more closely aligned with the relevant local household income levels of specific groups (e.g. renters, first-time buyers, key workers and so on).
6	Enfield has specific housing challenges - clarity is required on how Meridian Water would help address these.	**TO SHOW HOW THE REGENERATION OF MERIDIAN WATER WILL HELP ADDRESS LOCAL HOUSING CHALLENGES**: • Clearly set out how the development will reduce the need for temporary accommodation – especially amongst BAME groups – as well as reduce overcrowding and waiting lists.
7	The impact of the regeneration on local employment is unclear.	**TO CLARIFY LOCAL EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS:** • The Employment Strategy must show how local employment will be improved in the short term e.g. how job losses will be avoided, replaced and managed in the short term.
8	The benefits for local people are ambiguous.	**TO COMMUNICATE MEANINGFUL BENEFITS MORE CLEARLY:** • The direct benefits of the scheme (e.g. reductions in overcrowding) and the indirect benefits (e.g. improved access to sports facilities, parks, future asset income for the council etc.) for specific groups of local residents should be more clearly identified and articulated.
9	Effective engagement with local stakeholders on the project.	**TO IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL ENGAGEMENT:** • Meaningful engagement is key and community engagement with the scheme should be encouraged, particularly as specific and overall plans for Meridian Water change. • Local people want to know what the scheme means for them and share their opinions. Recognising that some sessions have been held with residents, further opportunities could have been taken with planning panels and enabling a cross-section of residents, business owners, employers, community group leaders and landowners to speak at Planning Committee.
10	It is not clear how or when the development's performance/success will be measured or reported.	**TO SET MEANINGFUL PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** • Set SMART targets that reflect local needs (e.g. housing mix/type, affordability, reductions in temporary accommodation, reduced local unemployment, improved social cohesion and health and wellbeing benefits). • Be wary of focussing on the number of overall units as greater overall efficiency, value and long-term benefit may be achieved by delivering fewer units.

11	The quantity and quality of open spaces, parkland, sports facilities and play areas being delivered is important but is not clear.	**TO CLARIFY OPEN SPACE/PARKLAND STRATEGY:** • Clearly set-out the current open space, parkland, play areas in the local area and the number of people these currently serve. • Set out the additional open space that will be created at Meridian Water and the numbers of additional people these will serve. • Clarify whether the scheme improves or reduces the ratio of open space/parkland to people. Provide clearer reporting on the quality of open spaces.
12	Key evidence is required from the Employment Strategy, especially post Covid-19.	**TO FURTHER INSIGHT AND EVIDENCE IS REQUIRED, ESPECIALLY POST COVID-19**: • Clarify viability for increasing housing density to deliver 6,000 jobs. Review impacts on other areas e.g. on shopping areas in Edmonton. • More detail is required about the appeal of Meridian Water for target employers and of the ability of these organisations to deliver (e.g. pay scales and whether full-time or contract/project based). • The housing needs of employees of target companies should be considered. More attention should be given to the impact of local job losses and how losses will be mitigated and managed.
13	The Council-led scheme for Phase 2 is the preferred option and could deliver significant benefits.	**TO COMPLETE THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL-LED OPTION (OPTION 3):** • The Council-led option should be reviewed in light of the long-term benefits to local residents, as well as whether it could help speed up occupation rates. • The review should explore how borrowing risks could be balanced by the housing assets, which could be sold to meet financial pressures if needed. • The Council-led option should be clearly set against project objectives e.g. that local people will be the primary beneficiaries, creating long term value and less investor centric.
14	This is a complex project requiring significant resources and detailed knowledge – team continuity is likely to be important to its successful delivery & scrutiny.	**TO MAINTAIN TEAM CONTINUITY:** • Senior officers and councillors should work to ensure that the core team is maintained, given that the Workstreams are being closed and the Workstream's work is completed.

4. Future Work

The Workstream's work should continue into the next municipal year and contribute to overcoming the following challenges:

4.1. Providing input into the next iteration of the Local Plan to help ensure alignment between the Local Plan and the ambitions and objectives of the Meridian Water regeneration.

4.2. Providing input into a revised Meridian Water Masterplan.

4.3. Providing updates to the Workstream analysis and reports, as more evidence becomes available e.g. after the publication of the Annual Monitoring Report.

4.4. Providing input for evidence and analysis needed from forthcoming research exercises e.g. setting out what information is required from the next SHMA.

4.5. Gaining clarity and demonstrating the clear link between development objectives and financial model.

4.6. Helping to quantify how the Meridian Water development will resolve the local housing issues by reducing temporary accommodation, overcrowding, waiting lists and rough sleeping.

4.7. Assessing specific challenges e.g. rate of delivery

4.8. Reviewing data from sensitivity tests completed with financial models that also include the costs of not addressing the social issues faced by Enfield residents.

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Section 1: Introduction

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Appendix

APPENDIX 1: Risk Register

Risk Codes & Titles.

Council objectives
- 58 Local people to be principle beneficiaries/ 14 Communities/ 59 Lifting Edmonton ward out of 10% most deprived/ 44 Local Plan/ 15 Employment strategy/ 62 Target of 6000 new quality permanent jobs/ 57 New facilities to include restaurants, schools, community facilities, parks, health/ 56 Delivery of 10,000 mixed tenure homes/ 61 Highest environmental sustainability/ 60 Legacy to be proud of in 50 years / 09 Developer procurement - overseas buyers

Budget & Income
- 13 Financial / 25 Income target/ 53 Revenue Income/ 49 MW works phase 1 project budget/ 10 MW station cost/ 47 Brexit/ 63 Service Asset Debt/ / 11 Developer procurement - fail to sign deal for phase 1/ 18 Warranties

Land & Planning
- 20 Land assembly/ 28 Ground conditions Meridian 2/ 08 Land owner planning consent/ 07 Design/ 55 Design & Placemaking principles not upheld

Scrutiny
- 03 Member involvement/ 65 Political priorities/ 02 Governance
-

Housing Infrastructure Fund
- 26 HIF works / 27 Scope/ 38 Site impediments/ 06 Planning programme

Meanwhile uses
- 40 Meanwhile master plan/ 37 Tear drop meanwhile use

Operations & Delivery
- 04 IT Infrastructure/ 12 Estate Management/ 34 Estate management - public realm at MW station/ 66 Council support team capacity/ 32 Contract register/ 16 Resource (people)/ 29 Communications/ 01 Reputational damage/ 35 Resource - public realm ground floor strategy/ 21 Rail/ 41 4 kph/ 30 Rail frequency condition MW2/ 23 Low profile - station/ 39 Challenge to Meridian 2 procurement/ 19 General/ 64 Utilities capacity/ 67 Energetik

Third party
- 46 Construction of new PRS & diversion of LP MP main/ 17 PRS relocation - acquire land/ 43 Private Land owners do not develop their land/ / 48 Meridian works, Building bloqs goes into administration/ 51 Aytan access road obligations/ 52 Dwyer option agreement/ 33 Vibration Group/ 05 GLA

APPENDIX 2: Enfield Key Insights

A2.1 Key worker salaries

The average annual salary of key workers is £27,000. This is nearly 20 times the target house prices at Meridian Water.

	Average Annual Salary
Orderly Salary London	£18,125.70
Primary School Teaching Assistant Salary Greater London	£19,532.34
Night Care Assistant Salary Greater London	£19,962.81
Home Care Assistant Salary Greater London	£20,617.54
Nursing Home Nurse Salary Greater London	£20,883.48
Ambulance Drivers and Attendants, Except Emergency Medica	£20,910.64
Learning Disabilities Assistant Salary Greater London	£21,395.86
Security Guard Salary London	£21,586.67
Nursery Teacher	£21,772.98
Childcare Worker Salary London	£22,158.11
Childcare Worker Salary London	£22,158.11
Post person	£22,289.23
Shop Assistant Salary London	£22,294.35
Maintenance and Repair Worker Salary Greater London	£25,492.31
Delivery Driver Salary Greater London	£26,014.17
Refuse Driver Salary Greater London	£26,171.41
Bus Driver Salary London	£27,258.45
Supermarket Manager Salary	£28,463.45
Police Officer Salary London	£28,879.16
Firefighter Salary Greater London	£30,905.71
Paramedic Salary London	£33,006.37
Maths Teacher Salary Greater London	£35,823.13
Plumber Salary London	£36,469.39
Community Housing Officer Salary Greater London	£36,647.23
Registered Nurse Salary Greater London	£36,887.37
Drama Teacher Salary Greater London	£38,681.02
Midwife	£45,108.06
Average	£27,018.34

Source: https://www.checkasalary.co.uk

A2.2 Gross Annual Income of all Existing Households in Enfield

Nearly 85% of all households in Enfield would NOT be able to afford a home on sale at Meridian Water with an average price of £440,000.

Since 58% of all Enfield households are already owner occupiers, of those who are not, over 95% households would NOT be able to afford a home on sale at Meridian Water. This applies to homes at intermediate affordable prices as well.

Annual income	All Existing Households	
	%	Cum %
Under £10,000	28.3	28.3
£10,000 - £20,000	22.0	50.3
£20,001 - £30,000	11.4	61.7
£30,001 - £40,000	9.3	71.0
£40,001 - £50,000	7.3	78.3
£50,001 - £60,000	6.6	84.9
£60,001 - £80,000	6.2	91.1
£80,001 - £100,000	4.5	95.6
£100,001 - £125,000	1.2	96.8
£125,001 - £150,000	1.2	98.0
Above £150,000	2.0	100.0

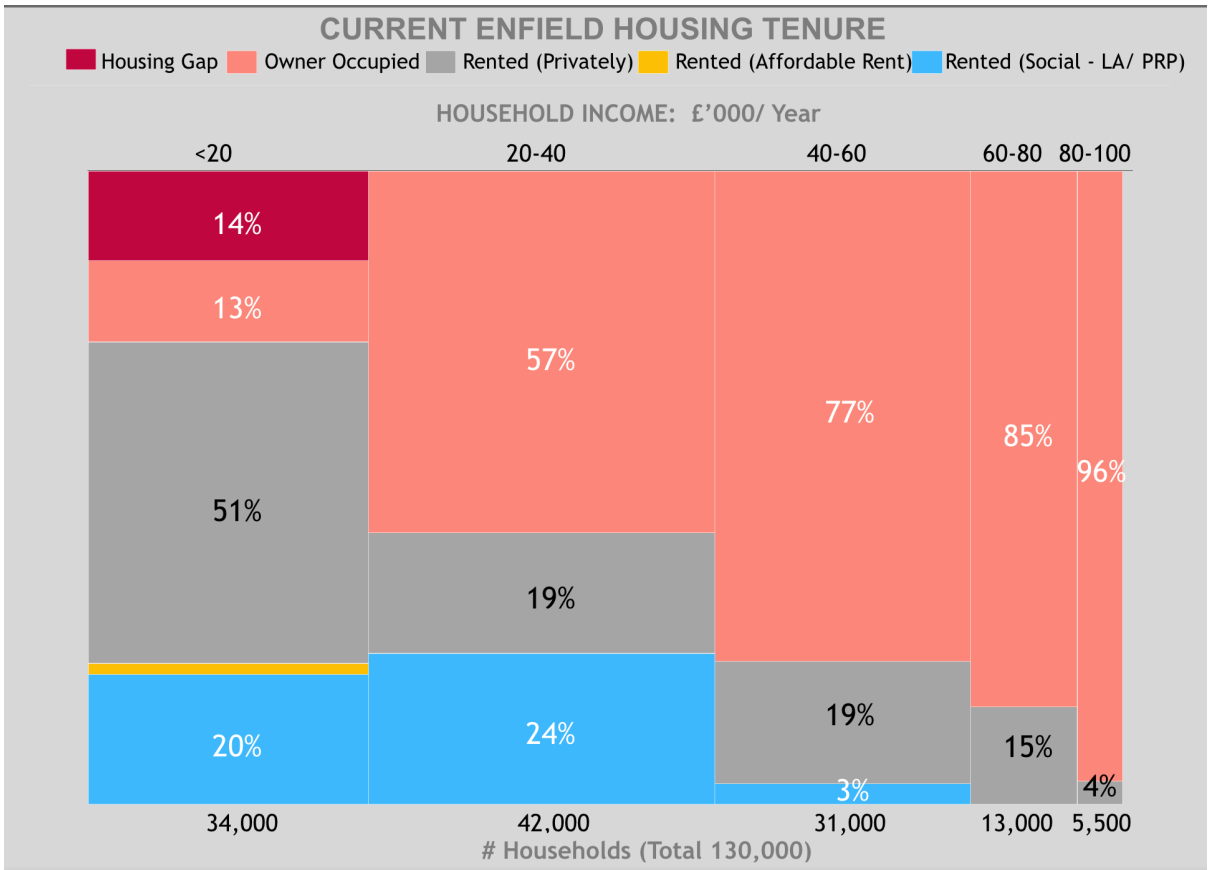
Source: Enfield Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015), Page 69 (Annual Incomes excluding benefits / allowances)

A2.3 Enfield Housing Tenures

40% of Meridian homes in phases 1 & 2 are for sale at market prices. For example, purchasing a 2-bed flat (average price £450,000) would require a deposit of £45,000 and an income of £76,000 per year.

58% of Enfield households are owner occupiers. Only few of these households are likely to downsize or upsize to a new home in Meridian Water which will be a building site for nearly 20 years. The development therefore needs to cater for those currently in rented accommodation.

New homes for private sale are required primarily to house those currently living in either public or private rented accommodation. However, due to high house prices at Meridian Water these new dwellings are beyond reach of 95% of households who currently live in rented accommodation.



* Source: Estimated from Enfield Strategic Market Assessment 2015, Enfield Profiles & London Data source

A2.4 Adjacent Wards Profiles

Upper Edmonton and Edmonton Green wards are among the 10% most deprived wards in England. Haselbury and Lower Edmonton among the 20% most deprived.

Over 25% of households in these wards have an annual income below £15,000. This is 30 times below the target house prices at Meridian Water whilst over 65% of the residents of working age have an education level of NVQ3 or below. 40% of the jobs at Meridian Water are unsuitable for these residents.

With nearly a third of population in these wards belonging to the economically disadvantaged Black (African, Caribbean & other) ethnic group, the benefits from the development for them and other minority groups is marginal given the scale of the investment.

	Upper Edmonton	Edmonton Green	Haselbury	Lower Edmonton	ENFIELD	MERIDIAN
POPULATION	19879	19264	17449	18083	333,869	26,000
Black * (ethnic group)	31.3%	34.6%	27.5%	34.2%	17.9%	
HOUSING						
Private Rented	25.8%	24.9%	29.3%	25.5%	23.6%	20.0% ***
Council	20.1%	23.3%	14.8%	14.3%	11.4%	10.0%
PRP **/ Shared owenership	9.7%	19.8%	4.7%	13.1%	6.2%	30.0%
INCOME						
Households <£15k/ year	23.8%	31.9%	19.4%	24.8%	16.4%	
On benefit - Working age	17.2%	22.2%	17.3%	19.4%	15.1%	
HOUSE PRICE						
Median	£370,000	£280,000	£348,000	£347,000	£400,000	£440,000
EDUCATION						
No Qualifications	28.3%	30.5	27.2%	28.5%	23.0%	
<= NVQ3	36.1%	37.5	38.6%	39.1%	37.1%	
>= NVQ4	21.5%	19.5	21.4%	20.0%	28.7%	

** Council's standard ethnic group classification (Somali, Other Black African, Black Caribbean, Other Black) - https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/borough-and-wards-profiles/*
*** PRP - Private Registered Providers*
**** Market Rent*

A2.5 Unaffordable Intermediate Rents.

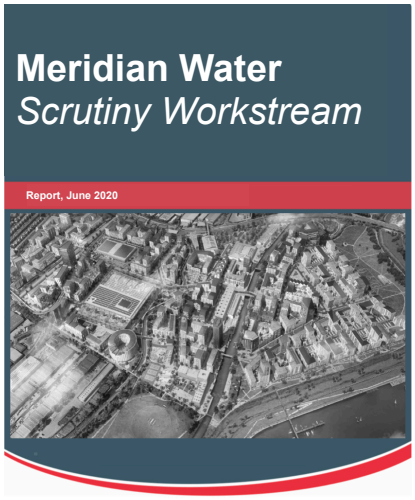
Neither Intermediate nor Private Rental Sector rents at Meridian Water would be affordable to many key workers. Affordable has been defined as 40% of net income – higher than the 33% of net recommend by some housing groups.

Case 1: One key worker (police officer), no kids, earns **£32,000 per year** (gross). A 1-bed house on an **intermediate rent** would be 46% of their net income. A 1-bed house in the Private Rented Sector at Meridian Water would be 56% of their net income (net income includes benefits)

Case 2: One key worker (paramedic), one 10-year old child, earns **£33,000 per year** (gross). A 2-bed house on an **intermediate rent** would be 41% of their net income. A 2-bed house in the Private Rented Sector at Meridian Water would be 51% of their net income (net income includes benefits)

Case 3: Two key workers (bus driver and supermarket manager), with three kids, jointly earn **£55,721 per year** (gross). A 4-bed house on an **intermediate rent** would be 48% of their net income. A 1-bed house in the Private Rented Sector at Meridian Water would be 51% of their net income (net income includes benefits)

Source: https://www.entitledto.co.uk



Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream
Report, June 2020

ENFIELD
Council

Meridian Water Scrutiny Report

Response from Cllr Nesil Caliskan, Leader of the Council and Peter George, Programme Director, Meridian Water.

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ENFIELD Council

8th September 2020

Councillor Nesil Caliskan - Leader of the Council
Enfield Council, Civic Centre, Silver Street, EN1 3XY
Cllr.Nesil.Caliskan@enfield.gov.uk

Dear Scrutiny Panel Members,

We are writing to acknowledge your preparation of the Meridian Water Scrutiny Workstream Report. The report contains some good suggestions which will be used to inform the next stages of the project. However, the report also contains some inaccuracies and misunderstandings that we can clarify in order to present the most accurate public record in relation to the Meridian Water programme.

We have attached an appendix to this letter that sets out some corrections and clarifications set against the report as prepared by yourselves that we think can help you gain a definitive understanding of the current status of the Meridian Water programme.

Meridian Water is a unique major regeneration programme in London, being designed around and for local people. Enfield Council is committed to ensuring that local people will be the principle beneficiaries of the growth generated by the project. 'Local' is defined as the neighbourhood of Edmonton which in turn is defined in terms of the three Edmonton wards: Upper Edmonton, Edmonton Green and Lower Edmonton. We also anticipate that the scale and reach of Meridian Water will also have a beneficial impact on our residents in the wider borough, as a catalyst for local sustainable employment and training opportunities as well providing enhanced infrastructure that can increase connectivity to London.

Role of the Council as Master Developer

In July 2018 the new administration at Enfield Council took the bold decision to assume the role of the master developer. The Council assuming the role of master developer on a major regeneration project of the scale of Meridian Water is unprecedented in the UK and our approach has won praise from industry and other local authorities. The rationale for the approach is driven by the values of the Council – we believe that a strong public sector is a force for good.

The Scrutiny Report makes reference to Meridian Water being for private investors and overseas buyers. If the report was written three years ago before the current administration of the Council took the decision to take control of the Meridian Water site, then the assertions in the report and subsequent recommendations may have been fitting. We recognise that under the earlier plan for the site, we could not guarantee that by entering into a single contract with a single private sector partner that affordable homes and social infrastructure could be secured for the people of Edmonton.

However, with the Council now in control of the project as master developer since July 2018 and the direction taken since, the reality is that the risk associated with private investors and overseas buyers has been significantly diminished. With the Council now acting as master developer, we can ensure that private homes will instead be sold to first buyers and UK nationals, and we can do far more to ensure that local people are the priority for the new jobs created on the site. We can also do more to ensure that essential social infrastructure (such as schools, health, nurseries) is provided as part of the regeneration of the site to ensure its long-term sustainability.

This means that the points in the report that state the Meridian Water is designed for private

investors and overseas buyers are simply not true and out of date.

Housing Affordability

The Meridian Water project is seeking to achieve 10,000 new homes over the next 25 years. The housing offer will cater to a diverse range of needs – there will be affordable housing for key workers, for those in priority housing need including people who need wheelchair accessible housing, those who require extra care, for people who want to rent privately in quality accommodation on longer term tenancies, and for those who would like to buy into the area. These principles are reinforced in the Council's recently published Housing and Growth Strategy.

It is the affordable housing that will have the greatest benefit for the people of Edmonton. Planning policy seeks 40% affordable housing. We have deliberately ensured that the first two sites achieve higher levels of affordable housing than required under planning policy – the first site achieves 50% affordable housing and the second site achieves 100%. The Council is actively discussing with the Greater London Authority (GLA) and government how they can support us with increased levels of grant to achieve 50% affordable housing across the whole of Meridian Water.

There are two types of affordable housing that are funded by the GLA – intermediate which can include rented or part ownership, and affordable rented. The report makes incorrect statements regarding the affordability of both these types of affordable housing for local people which are covered by housing benefits. Furthermore, without GLA grant this housing would not be affordable to deliver.

There are different housing offers which are classified as intermediate affordable housing, and these types of homes are typically targeted at key workers as illustrated by the affordability case studies in the Housing and Growth Strategy.

Enfield Council regards the private housing in the Meridian Water project a financial necessity as it cross-subsidises the cost of the affordable housing and the social infrastructure: the schools, health centres, nurseries, leisure, parks etc. Income from private housing also allows the Council's historic investment in Meridian Water to be recovered.

The report states that Meridian Water should achieve higher levels of affordable housing to meet Borough wide housing need. We support this aspiration which is why we are lobbying for increased grant funding for the affordable housing programme.

The Council strongly believes that the way to address the tragic levels of geographic inequality within Enfield is to create diverse, mixed income communities. That is why the Council is taking an active role not just as master developer on Meridian Water but also our borough wide 3,500 council house building programme. To achieve this there needs to be a mix of housing at Meridian Water as well as affordable housing in the parts of the Borough where there is currently a serious undersupply.

Employment

The report references the Employment Strategy that was approved by Cabinet on 11th March 2020. That Employment Strategy sets out Enfield Council's approach to employment at Meridian Water for the next 25 years. It is the Council's ambition that Meridian Water will deliver 6,000 new high-quality jobs. The strategy also sets out the objective for 1,000 jobs through meanwhile employment uses, and 1,000 jobs through construction. Additionally, the strategy sets out how we intend to ensure local businesses benefit from the construction supply chain.

Jobs for Local People

The three pillars of job creation at Meridian Water are: *Construction*, *Meanwhile* uses and the *Permanent* jobs in the new commercial space. The construction phase predicts 1,000 construction jobs annually, of which no less than 25% or 250 will go to local people.

The Meanwhile employment uses are predicted to create 1,000 jobs and the expectation is that no less than 25% of the roles - 250 jobs, will go to local people, and circa 50% Enfield or adjacent boroughs.

The development of the new permanent commercial space will see the creation of 6,000 jobs and it is anticipated that between 25-50% of these jobs will go to Enfield residents, or 1,500 to 3,000 local jobs.

Overall therefore there is potential for circa 3,500 jobs to benefit local people; set against the 1,500 residents in Edmonton claiming Job Seekers Allowance Meridian Water can make a major impact on local levels of employment and consequentially raise levels of prosperity in Edmonton.

Training for Local People

The demographic profile of the Upper Edmonton Ward shows a high percentage of the workforce have no or low qualifications, with 30.6% of the population in the Edmonton Leeside Area Action Plan (ELAAP) study area over the age of 16 having no qualifications. This is significantly above the average for the borough of 23%. Jobs are currently concentrated in three key sectors: wholesale & retail, manufacturing and logistics, which together account for over 60% of employment. These figures emphasise the need for us to provide a more diverse employment offer to local people using our three pillars of *Construction*, *Meanwhile* and *Permanent* Employment opportunities supported by training avenues to get local people into better paid and sustainable employment.

The Meridian Water project will be integral to developing and implementing a Council wide approach to skills and employment. As part of the development of Meridian 1 we are working with Vistry to ensure there is a new skills academy on site that target's local people and provides them with training to obtain quality jobs in the construction industry.

We have used both the contract with Vistry and the S106 agreement to ensure that 25% local labour is used on site - this level is considered best practice in the industry.

For those residents who require additional support to enter / re-enter the job market there will be opportunities to obtain fundamental skills such as English language, numeracy and literacy. Pre-construction training through short courses will be offered, combined with the provision of practical work placements prior to jobs being advertised, and guaranteeing those trainee's an interview for those jobs, optimising the uptake by local residents.

It is a strategic move on behalf of the Council to frontload skills academies at the onset of Meridian Water to train up local people so that they can access the quality jobs on offer. We are working on plans for a second skills academy in a different industry which we hope to announce later this year.

Business opportunities for local companies

By promoting social value in our procurements and through the planning process we aim to optimise support to local business through the use of local companies. This objective is enshrined in the Employment Strategy: enabling local Enfield employers to supply Meridian Water, starting with its construction, with no less than 10% of all investment benefiting local companies. This equates to approximately £360 Million of contracts going to local business through the development process.

Local businesses will also have opportunities to relocate or setup business at Meridian Water. The Council can enable this to happen because we have taken the bold decision to retain ownership of all commercial premises on the ground floor of the residential blocks.

Meridian Water as a Place to Work

Meridian Water will be an attractive place, able to attract new and emerging businesses. The prime location of the site in the Upper Lea Valley for both business and leisure, enhanced through hugely improved rail and bus transport connectivity and state of the art digital infrastructure will enable the sustainability of Meridian Water as a place to work and enjoy.

Commercial Spaces will be provided in a range of different formats of space, in high quality and energy efficient buildings, with generous ceiling heights, and flexible layouts. The commercial property developed will offer a continuum of spaces. This will include shared office space to small studios, as well as larger units for denser commercial space. The continuum will enable small emerging companies to expand or contact, with flexible leases that respond to the dynamism of smaller companies and the economy.

Impact of COVID on Employment

The Employment Strategy spans a 25-year period and will be regularly reviewed and updated throughout the lifeline of the project. In direct response to COVID and possible changes to working patterns, the Council will suggest that the newly formed Regeneration and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel has a workstream specifically looking at the impact of COVID on employment work patterns, residential designs and open space requirements.

Job numbers

The report states inaccurately that there are currently 2,600 people employed at Meridian Water and that 1,500 of these jobs will be lost as a result of the redevelopment. These figures were derived from the 2016 ELAAP which states that the development will create a starting deficit of 1,500 jobs. A large portion of the displacement calculated happened through the clearance of the Stonehill Estate by the previous landowner. The Meridian Water project will aim to create 6,000 new high-quality jobs, and this has been a key feature of the project that has helped us secure the support of the GLA and government as set out in relevant Council reports.

The Committee report states, with little evidence, that the site is not big enough to accommodate 6,000 jobs. The Meridian Water masterplanning work clearly demonstrates that Meridian Water can accommodate 10,000 homes, 6,000 jobs and 30% green open space. The Council's ability to produce credible masterplanning work has been key to securing the additional funding we have acquired recently from regional and national government.

Land and planning

Housing Density

In the context of a national housing crisis optimising the density of all new developments is a strategic matter for Enfield, London and the UK. Many areas in London are historic environments that responded to the population growth and needs of the city in the past. The new developments in London must now respond to the new GLA housing targets with appropriate density arrived through a design-led approach, taking account of the site context and infrastructure capacity.

The report suggests that the density proposed at Meridian Water will make it amongst the densest in London – this is not correct. The density levels at Meridian Water will be comparable with other

Zone 2-4 developments but significantly less dense than the type of development you see in Zone 1 which benefits from far stronger public transport.

Green Open Space

The buildings and spaces in the emerging Meridian Water masterplan are reconfigured to allow for highly accessible and quality greenspaces approximately 2 minutes walking distances from all households. This benchmarks us strongly against similar projects that have delivered change of this scale and nature. The Meridian Water masterplan demonstrates that 30% open space is achievable and the landscape will be high quality and high performance in order to meet the wider sustainably objectives.

Financial related risk for Enfield Council

The primary driver for Meridian Water has never been about generating a profit to the Council. The financing of Meridian Water is driven by a need to recover the Council's investment in the project, manage financial risks to the Council, and to generate an ongoing revenue stream that can finance council services given the pressures created by huge cuts to local government funding.

The baseline financial model has been developed by the Council's commercial and financial advisors and signed off by the Executive Director of Resources, prior to being approved by Cabinet in October 2019.

Various metrics are calculated from the financial model to monitor the financial health of the scheme and assess whether the Council is able to recoup its investment at the end of the project. The average interest rate which the Council pays on its borrowing is 3.5% and the forecast internal rate of return (IRR) is 4.63%. Therefore, these metrics should be considered as broadly reflecting a break-even position for the Council. The minimal positive return is viewed as contingency against the many risks inherent in a scheme of this size and complexity; however, by acting as the master developer the Council is better placed to manage financial risks of the project than we were before.

We hope that this covering letter and detailed appendix can give you suitable assurance that the risks of a few years ago now have robust controls attached and that our new direction gives us the best chance possible to make Meridian Water really work for local people.

We are really proud of what we have achieved to date at Meridian Water: delivering the brand new Meridian Water train station, securing £156m grant from government to deliver infrastructure, appointing Vistry to deliver 950 new homes, securing planning permission for the first 3,000 homes, purchasing over two thirds of the developable land, delivering the Drumsheds culture venue and a drive-in cinema, and commencing work on Europe's largest open workspace in partnership with Edmonton company Building BloQs. We are however even more excited about what the future holds and we have proven that by leading Meridian Water as the master developer we can deliver upon the priorities of local people.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Nesil Caliskan
Leader of the Council

Peter George
Meridian Water Programme Director

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Meridian Water Scrutiny Report Response: Points of Accuracy

The Meridian Water Scrutiny report contains a number of factual inaccuracies and some of the assertations made are not based upon evidence, this document therefore corrects the errors and provides clarity where statements are misleading.

Forward:

A change in GLA policy has enabled the Council to take a new path, as the master developer for Meridian Water

It was not to do with GLA policy but rather a decision on the part of the administration.

And while work has started on phase 1 of Meridian Water, currently, because of London wide policy, specifically on Strategic Industrial Land, a limit of 5,000 homes and 1,500 new jobs has been set.

The ELAAP states that this is the number of homes and jobs that will have been delivered by the end of the 12 year ELAAP period which does not cover the 25 year duration of the project.

Executive Summary:

Private investors (including those from overseas) have been identified as beneficiaries of the scheme and as a result, a good proportion of the planned housing and jobs will be out of reach of many local people

Private investors (whether UK or overseas) are not identified by the Council as beneficiaries of the scheme.

Uncertainties surrounding the development, will impact upon the Council's finances and are a risk to its financial resilience

The Meridian Water financial model approved by Cabinet demonstrates that the project delivers a positive return on investment for the Council – so the overall impact will be positive.

Sensitivity testing on important scenarios, that could jeopardise the outcome of the project do not yet appear to have been undertaken within available financial models.

Sensitivity testing designed and approved by the Finance Team has been carried out and presented to Cabinet.

London Affordable Rent (LAR) levels, combined with the housing benefit cap excluding certain households from renting a home at Meridian Water, are out of reach for most households.

Our analysis indicates that LAR levels are below housing benefit caps for all unit sizes therefore will be affordable to those eligible for social housing.

There is evidential risk that the redevelopment may result in fewer jobs for local people

The Employment Strategy clearly targets an increase in jobs with local people the principal target.

Planning Panels were not held for Phases 1 or 2 of the development, whilst plans for Phase 2 were agreed without public engagement

We carried out public consultation in relation to both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 planning applications. Events were held in a nearby community centre and were well attended by local people and councillors.

Introduction :

End 1.3 - phase 2, which is for a further 2,300 homes is currently out for tender

This is not correct. Meridian Two, which will provide 270 homes at 100% affordable, has been out to tender and we are finalising contractual terms. The rest of Phase 2 will be tendered in sub-phases over the next few years

Section 2 :

2.1.1. A lack of up-to-date evidence means that Enfield's housing needs have not been clearly identified and documented. For example, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment has not been updated for five years….

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment is currently being finalised and is being used to inform masterplanning at Meridian Water.

2.1.2. There remains some serious knowledge gaps, for example we do not know:

• The number and size of affordable homes needed in Enfield to meet current demand (i.e. the backlog).

• The predicted number and type of additional affordable homes needed to meet new demand over the next 5-15 years.

• The household income distribution of key groups (e.g. the household income of those currently in the private rented sector or those living near Meridian Water).

• The ability for households, particularly those in the private rented sector, to meet the deposit requirements for the various ownership options.

This is all addressed within the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

2.1.10.Other evidence from published ward profiles shows that (Appendix A2.3):

• Upper Edmonton and Edmonton Green wards are among the 10% most deprived wards in England whilst Haselbury and Lower Edmonton among the 20% most deprived.

• Over 25% of households in these wards have an annual income of £15,000. The target house prices at Meridian Water are 30 times this figure.

London Affordable Rented homes and London Living Rented homes will be affordable for those on low incomes. There will be over 3,000 of these homes at Meridian Water.

• Over 65% of the residents in these four wards of working age have an education level of NVQ3 or below. As things stand most of the jobs at Meridian Water will be pitched well above this level making them out of reach for many Enfield residents

There will be a range of job levels offered at Meridian Water. However, the Council does want Meridian Water to provide jobs that pay higher salaries to support people out of deprivation. Training programmes will be offered on site to provide local people with new skills, as well as off-site working with schools and colleges.

2.1.12.Population projections: Population projections for Enfield are unclear and appear to be inconsistent. Estimates for the next 10-20 years need to be fully understood in order to properly plan housing delivery, school places needed, medical needs, GP demands and so on

Planning for schools, GPs etc in Meridian Water should be based on the population growth anticipated at Meridian Water and Edmonton – the scheme cannot accommodate health and education requirements due to population growth across the Borough, that must be provided locally within each Ward.

2.1.19. Multiple property purchases: Existing contractual provisions permit property investors to purchase up to two properties on council-owned land in Meridian Water. This will limit the number of homes available for local residents and help drive up house prices

The limit of 2 purchases per person will reduce the amount of buy to let landlords purchasing at Meridian Water not increase it, hence it will increase the amount of homes available for local owner occupier residents.

2.2.5. Increased PWLB interest rate: The Public Works Loan Board interest rate was increased by 1% in October 2019. Any such increases will have a serious detrimental impact on the level of the Council's debt payments

There are other sources of funding available to the Council at interest rates which are cheaper than PWLB. The Finance Team are producing a funding strategy taking this into account. This is not a Meridian Water specific issue, although the interest rates assumed in the Meridian Water financial model prudently exceed the current PWLB rates to ensure the risk is minimised

2.2.7. Meanwhile use: Revenue is not a given and carries significant risks

Long term meanwhile leases are being granted therefore the risks are reducing.

2.2.9. Uncertain house prices: The impact of the downturn in the current economic situation may impact on house prices and revenue streams expected from the development

The financial model takes a prudent approach to house price inflation and reflects the fact that the market is cyclical and is sometimes in recession, sometimes in boom. Whilst the current situation may be indicating house price inflation will be low or neutral, the longer-term expectations remain as they always were.

2.2.10.Overseas investors: Despite the Council's declared comments, as things stand, the development appears to be also dependent on sales to overseas investors

Sales of individual properties to overseas investors is not acceptable at Meridian Water and was one of the main reasons why the current administration decided not to appoint a single developer for the whole of Meridian Water.

2.2.11. Mixed communities: The development requires a clear separation of affordable and private units to maximise revenue compromising the objectives of creating mixed communities

The development does not require and will not allow a clear separation of affordable and private homes. The scheme will be designed to create mixed and diverse, tenure blind communities.

2.2.12. Public land sell-off: The development will lead to further sell-off of public land which is already in short supply and as a public asset needs to be secured for future generations. Research shows increased need for local authorities to sell assets to balance books and Enfield is not immune to this

None of the Meridian Water land was owned by the Council until the Council begun buying land to unlock new homes and jobs. The land will be leased to partners, we will not be selling off all the freeholds.

2.2.13. Construction timescales: There is a risk to the timing for delivery of particular tenure types by the Council and its partners due to market saturation

The masterplan, phasing plan and financial model have all taken prudent market absorption rates into account when establishing the timescales for delivery. Mixing tenures between market sales, market rents and affordable units is designed to alleviate conflict whilst allowing continued delivery.

2.2.19. Meridian Water Station Costs: Only verbal confirmation have been received that all is within budget and schedule

The Meridian Water station was delivered by the Council on time and on budget in June 2019.

2.2.23 …..High reliance on these contributions may be perceived as influencing planning decisions related to undesirable developments across the borough in order to maximise CIL

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected across the Borough is no longer just invested in Meridian Water. The Meridian Water financial model is not reliant on CIL contributions.

2.3.6. Council documents indicate that the initial target market for the homes will predominantly be investors…..

None of the individual market sale homes will be targeted at investors.

2.3.13. The Workstream thinks the level of affordable housing at Meridian Water on public land should closely reflect the ambition of local residents

The level of London Affordable Rented homes being delivered at Meridian Water is well in excess of the number of people in Edmonton on the social housing waiting list.

2.3.17. Intermediate rents, at 80% open market rents, are unaffordable to a vast majority of Enfield residents including key workers (see Appendix A2.5). The estimated number of households that could benefit from this level of rent has not yet been quantified

Intermediate rents at 80% of open market rents are not being offered at Meridian Water.

2.4.3 ….The Workstream felt this was of particular concern given plans for other existing private landowners to build homes at the site, whereby the Council would have less control over the housing mix and tenure of these homes

The Council will have control through the planning system requiring 3rd party landowners to adhere to planning policy.

2.4.5. Loneliness: The Workstream are aware of the increasing concerns about the negative impacts of loneliness on health and social care, which have been further heightened by experiences of lockdown. In this context, the Workstream questioned whether it was appropriate or desirable for the scheme to be dominated by 1 bed units

Meridian Water is targeting 30% 1-bed homes leaving 70% of the units being larger. Furthermore 1-bed homes are generally occupied by two people. Community cohesion and addressing loneliness is a top priority; residential blocks can achieve these aims by including shared amenity facilities. For example, the Build to Rent and co-living blocks delivered in the early stages of Meridian Water will all include shared amenities.

2.4.8. The Workstream has raised questions about the population density currently proposed and remains concerned. Meridian Water will be 3-5 times more densely populated than neighbouring wards or indeed other town areas of Enfield (see table 2)

The neighbouring wards although urban in nature in some areas, achieve low public transport accessibility ratings and lower levels of accessible quality green space. The ambition for Meridian Water is a higher density environment with significant improvements in transport, accessible and quality greenspaces and strong socio-economic infrastructure foundations for opportunities and growth.

2.4.17.LBE Open Space and Sports Assessment update (2011) suggests 2.37 Ha/1000 residents as a target for parklands and open space (19). However, in order to meet this requirement Meridian Water would need 62.5 Ha of parkland and public open space, but as things stand just around around 8 Ha is being proposed, which is well short

30% of Meridian Water will be provided as green open space which is considered best practice for a major development in London.

2.4.23. Enfield Council has conceded to the Mayor’s request for SIL designation and adopted the Edmonton Leeside Area Action Plan (ELAAP) on 29 January 2020 by limiting the number of homes on the development to 5,000, contrary to the stated aims of 10,000 new homes

The ELAAP, which originated under previous administration, only covers the first 12 years of development, during which time 5,000 homes are expected to be delivered, the balance will be delivered over the remainder of the Meridian Water programme.