

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE:**  
**Council- 11<sup>th</sup> November**  
**2015**

**REPORT OF:**  
 Director of Finance,  
 Resources & Customer  
 Services

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| <b>Agenda – Part: 1</b>                                      | <b>Item: 7</b>   |
| <b>Subject:</b>  | <b>Petition –<br/>Protection of Green Belt land<br/>and wildlife at Enfield Road</b> |
| <b>Wards:</b>  | <b>Highlands</b>   |
| <b>Members consulted: Cllr Taylor, Leader of<br/>Council</b> |  |

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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides detail on a petition received calling on the Council to protect the green belt land and wildlife at Enfield Road.
- 1.2 Under the Council's Petition scheme if more than 3,124 valid signatures are received it will be debated at Full Council. This petition has 3,462 signatures.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Council is asked to receive the petition from the Lead Petitioners, and in accordance with the Councils Petition scheme, allow consideration of the views expressed in the petition.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council's Petition Scheme details that compliant petitions submitted to the Council must include:
  - A clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the Council to take;

- The name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition;
- Petitions should identify the petition organiser.

3.2 The Council's Petition Scheme enables Petitions with 3,124 signatures (1% of the assessed population from the 2011 census as published by the Office of National Statistics) to be debated at Full Council.

#### **4. PETITION**

4.1 A petition from Enfield Road Watch Action Group to protect the green belt land at Enfield Road was received on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2015. The Petition statement and covering supporting letter are attached as Appendix A and B.

4.2 Both an e-petition and paper petition have been submitted with 3,462 signatures. These signatures have been checked for duplicates and incomplete information and there are sufficient numbers to trigger a full Council debate.

4.3 The covering supporting letter states that Enfield Road Watch Action group object to any development on the Green Belt land on Enfield Road and look to those in power within the council to refuse any future planning permission.

#### **5. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

##### **5.1 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations in this report.

##### **5.2 Legal Implications**

5.2.1 The recommendation set out within this report is within the Council's powers and duties.

5.2.2 The statutory duty to have a petition scheme was repealed under the Localism Act 2011. Upon abolition of this duty the Council resolved that its existing Petition scheme would remain in force in the interests of promoting democracy.

5.2.3 The Council has power under section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals generally may do, provided it is not prohibited by legislation and subject to Public Law principles. There is no express prohibition, restriction or limitation contained in a statute against use of the power in this way. In addition, section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives a local authority power to do

anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

5.2.4 The Council's Petitions Scheme provides that a petition can be referred to full Council for debate with 3,124 signatures, being at least 1% of the assessed population figure from the 2011 census as published by the Office of National Statistics. The Council should decide how to respond to the petition by taking the action the petition requests, not taking the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or commissioning further investigation into the matter.

5.2.5 There is an existing legal framework for the consideration of planning applications by the Local Planning Authority.

### **5.3 Property Implications**

There are no property implications relating to the petition.

## **6 KEY RISKS**

Members of the Council note that the council petition scheme allows a debate at Full Council following the requisite number of signatures.

## **7. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

### **7.1 Fairness for All, Growth and Sustainability, Strong Communities**

The Council's Petitions Scheme ensures that the public are able to register their opinions on issues of importance to them.

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

Corporate advice has been sought in regard to equalities, and an agreement has been reached that an equalities impact assessment is not relevant or proportionate for the consideration of the Petition to Protect the Green Belt Land and the wildlife at Enfield Road at this stage.

## **9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Performance Management Implications

## **10. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Public Health implications from debating this petition.

### **Background Papers:**

None

Appendix A

Petitioning Enfield Local Authority

# **PROTECT the Green Belt Land and the wildlife at Enfield Road**

## **GREEN BELT LAND AND WILDLIFE UNDER THREAT**

Fairview New Homes are proposing to build on Green Belt land on Enfield Road (EN2 7HX).

For many years this land has been used for grazing horses and is the habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including hedgehogs, bats, muntjac deer, pheasants, owls, woodpeckers and many species of birds. It also contains beautiful specimens of ancient oak trees and hedgerows.

### **THIS IS ALL NOW UNDER THREAT.**

Local residents, The Enfield Society, The Western Enfield Residents Association, Campaign for Rural England, The London Green Belt Council, Local Ward Councillors believe that Enfield should retain its Green Belt land and the wildlife that live there. Any threats by developers should be fought by local people and those that care about the natural environment.

This land is Green Belt and an Area of Special Character as detailed and confirmed by Enfield Council. Forming part of the Merryhills Brook Valley extending down to Boxer's Lake and its Green Chain link, it performs an important function extending the Green Belt up to the urban edge and creating a separation between Slades Hill (World's End) and Oakwood. This forms an important and valuable connection passing through the Green Belt.

Enfield Road Watch, an action group committee has been formed to oversee things on behalf of residents and the wider community concerned about this proposal, along with the other Societies and Associations mentioned

For more information please visit our website  
at:<http://www.spanglefish.com/enfieldroadwatch>

Email us at: [enfieldroadwatch@googlemail.com](mailto:enfieldroadwatch@googlemail.com)

Follow us on Facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/enfieldroadwatch>

Thank you for your support and together we can make a difference.

Enfield RoadWatch Action Group

## Appendix B

### **For the attention of:**

**Cllr Doug Taylor      Leader of the Council, LB Enfield**  
**Cllr Terry Neville      Leader of the Opposition, LB Enfield**  
**Cllr Daniel Anderson      Cabinet member for Environment, LB Enfield**  
**All Councillors, LB Enfield**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Enfield RoadWatch is an Action Group made up of local residents who are committed to protecting the Green Belt land South of Enfield Road on behalf of residents and the wider community and to safeguard it for our future generations. We are submitting this petition to Full Council at the London Borough of Enfield to demonstrate the overwhelming number of objections to any development on this, or other, Green Belt land. Following the launch of the petition, over 3,600 people within seven weeks have signed and more are still coming forward.

### **Why are residents so opposed?**

The field in question was awarded Green Belt status in Enfield's 1947 Development Plan. It is also an Area of Special Character as detailed and confirmed by Enfield Council as recently as November, 2014. Forming part of the Merryhills Brook Valley extending down to Boxer's Lake and its Green Chain link, it performs an important function extending the Green Belt up to the urban edge and also prevents ribbon development between Oakwood and Enfield, avoiding neighboring towns merging into one another. Development on this field forms no part of the local plan and should be forcefully resisted as destructive of the character of Western Enfield.

For many years this land has been used for grazing horses and is the habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including hedgehogs, bats, muntjac deer, pheasants, owls, woodpeckers and many other species of birds. It also contains beautiful specimens of ancient hedgerows and oak trees which all have protection orders.

### **This is all now under threat.**

Local residents, The Enfield Society, The Western Enfield Residents Association, Federation of Enfield Residents & Allied Associations, Campaign for Rural England, The London Green Belt Council, Friends of Trent Country Park, Trent Park Conservation Committee and Local Ward Councillors believe that Enfield should retain its Green Belt land and the wildlife that lives there.

### **What's being currently planned?**

Fairview Homes have an option to purchase the land from the Diocese of London and the current proposal shows the development of 300+ dwellings subject to planning permission approval, when plans are formally submitted. In order to leverage the 'very special circumstances' clause, which is the only way planning permission might be granted on the Green Belt, Fairview's development would include an eight-form entry secondary school and four-form entry sixth form college,

catering to 1500 students. Finchley-based Church of England secondary, Wren Academy, has been chosen by Fairview as their school provider. The most recent school places report shows no evidence of a need for these school places in this area and therefore no 'very special circumstances' exist. The proposed development would also cause additional traffic congestion on the already very busy main route into Enfield and would place a further strain on other infrastructure resources.

Any regard for a development like this on Green Belt land works against Enfield's Core Strategy, Development Management Document and Local Plan.

### **The Future**

Enfield's future generations and current residents rely on the green belt for the environment and to control and combat omissions. If the current Administration breach Green Belt regulations, by granting planning permission to develop this Green Belt land, a precedent will be set and result in a consequential loss of all of Enfield's Green Belt. This would demonstrate irresponsible stewardship and a lack of strategic thinking to recycle brownfield sites.

Enfield RoadWatch representing 3,600+ signatories (and rapidly growing) object to any development on the Green Belt land on Enfield Road and look to those in power within the Council to refuse any future planning permission for the sake of Enfield's history and future.

**Ian D'Souza**  
**Enfield RoadWatch**