

## **WALTHAM FOREST LOCAL PLAN**

### **John Gilbert's RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S NEW/UPDATED DOCUMENTS OF SEPTEMBER 2022**

**Reference 1254453**

#### **PROPOSED HOUSING SITES IN WALTHAM FOREST – NORTHERN AREA**

I am a member of Waltham Forest Civic Society. I am submitting comments in my personal capacity on some sites which the Council is currently proposing under Part 1 of the draft Local Plan as sites for development (parts of “strategic locations”/locations for buildings of 10+ storeys/”allocations” for new housing). The sites on which I comment have been visited by me recently.

My observations are intended to assist in relation to the Inspectors' Matters Issues and Questions:

- Questions 3.1 (c ) (whether it is reasonable to rely on the housing allocations in Part 2 of the draft Local Plan (“LP2”), given the planning objections to development of the scale and height proposed) and 2.4 (whether the scale and distribution of housing growth is justified).
- In the case of particular sites listed by the Inspectors, also Question 3.1(e)
- As regards my comments on effects on Epping Forest / the Lea Valley, the effects on Epping Forest also address Question 1.7 (the methodology of the SANGS strategy, as regards the number of visitors to Epping Forest to be expected from the developments proposed) and the effects on the Lea Valley will also be relevant to Question 1.8 (whether the quality of the proposed SANGs has been robustly assessed).
- As regards my comments on effects on the skyline (including the skyline as seen from Epping Forest land and from the Lea Valley) also to Question 6.3 (whether the proposed locations for tall buildings are appropriate).

Where I identify sites by two “SA” numbers (the second in brackets), the first number is intended to be the Council's current number (as given in the spreadsheet, LPE31) and the second the number in the most recent draft of LP2.

John Gilbert

**SA 53 (SA52). Motorpoint, Sewardstone Road.** 313 units proposed on a site of 2.88 ha. (166 per ha.) This has been reduced from 385 in LP2. This density could only be achieved by blocks at least 10 storeys high. The site is close to two major roads, so that air pollution would be a problem.

EFFECT ON SKYLINE The nearest part of Epping Forest is about 500 metres away. From the open part of the forest at and around National Grid ref. TQ381949 10 storey blocks would be visible. They would also be visible from the Lea Valley at and around TQ373950.

**SA54 (SA53). Lea Valley Motor Company.** 15 units proposed on a site of 0.15 ha. This could only be achieved by a block at least 4 storeys high. The site is next to the very busy Lea Valley Road near its junction with Sewardstone Road, Air pollution would be a problem. The nearest part of Epping Forest is about 500 metres away.

**SA55 (SA58). 60-74 Sewardstone Road.** 40 units proposed on a site of 0.16 ha. (250 per ha.) The new list shows 'Granted (New application)' but no record can be found in the Planning Committee minutes from April 2019 to date. The site has been cleared. The site is at the junction of two major roads so that air pollution would be a problem.

EFFECT ON SKYLINE: This density could only be achieved by blocks at least 10 storeys high. The nearest part of Epping Forest is about 400 metres away. From the open part of the forest at and around National Grid ref. TQ381949 10 storey blocks would be visible. They would also be visible from the Lea Valley at and around TQ373950.

**SA56 (SA55). Budgens and Gresham Works, 2 Station Road.** The 'Budgens' is now an Amazon shop. 15 units proposed on a site of 0.14 ha. (107 per ha.) HERITAGE: The site is in Chingford Green Conservation Area, only a few feet from the green and 150 metres from the 19<sup>th</sup> century parish church.

**SA58 (SA56). Chingford Library and Assembly Hall.** 30 units proposed on a site of 0.32 ha. (93.7 per ha.) Given the (presumed) need to replace the public library and hall, a structure of at least six storeys would be needed.

HERITAGE: The site is in Chingford Green Conservation Area, only a few feet from the green and 130 metres from the 19<sup>th</sup> century parish church. It is next to Carbis Cottage (Listed Grade II).

**SA59 (SA57). North City Motors [i.e. North City Mitsubishi], 174-80 Station Road.** 30 units proposed on a site of 0.15 ha. (200 per ha.)

HERITAGE: A structure of at least six storeys would be needed, in an area where the large majority are three storeys or less. Probably this site would be part of the proposed Station Road Conservation Area and it is only about 50 metres from Epping Forest.

EFFECTS ON THE SKYLINE: A six storey structure would be very visible from the nearby open forest land.

**SA60 (SA58). Royal Epping Forest Golf Club.** A building of one and two storeys sited at the junction of Station Road and Bury Road.

45 units proposed on a site of 0.19 ha. (237 per ha.)

HERITAGE: A structure of at least eight storeys would be needed in an area where all are three storeys or less. Probably this site would be part of the proposed Station Road Conservation Area.

EFFECTS ON THE SKYLINE: It is only a few metres from Epping Forest. A structure of this height would be totally inappropriate next to the open land of the forest. Views of the forest from Chingford Station would be blocked.

**SA62 (SA59). 472-510 Larkshall Road and James Yard.** 145 units proposed on a site of 0.66 ha. (220 per ha.)

HERITAGE: In March 2022 an application, involving blocks of up to seven storeys, for Nos 480-510 was rejected because it was out of keeping with the Highams Park District Centre. Most buildings in the area are of two or three storeys.

**SA63 (SA60). Shell Garage, Highams Park [470 Larkshall Road].** 10 units proposed on a site of 0.12 ha. A structure of at least five storeys would be needed.

HERITAGE: This would be out of keeping with the Highams Park District Centre, where most buildings are of two or three storeys.

**SA64 (SA61). Larkwood Leisure Centre, nursery and land to rear.** A site occupied by the leisure centre, a Nuffield Health facility, a day nursery, a supermarket, a pub and a large car parking area. Total area 4.05 ha. The Council's target is 310 dwellings. Assuming 60% of the site would be developed for housing, this would involve a density of 128 units per ha.

EFFECTS ON THE SKYLINE: This would involve structures of at least eight storeys. This would spoil views from Larkswood, a public open space most of which is ancient woodland, situated immediately to the south and east.

**SA65 (SA62). Pear Tree House, Gordon Road.** A small site (ca. 0.3 ha.) on which stands Peartree [sic] House, a two-storey structure. 33 units are planned. The density would be ca. 110 units per ha.

EFFECTS ON THE SKYLINE: This would involve a structure of at least six storeys. The site is within 150 metres of open Epping Forest land and would be clearly visible from it. However, there is an existing six storey block of flats, Hadleigh House, in the parallel Crescent Road which is only a few yards from the forest.

**Emerging: Whitehouse Farm.** 21 units proposed on a small site (ca. 1-2 ha.?) adjacent to an unmade road (linked to the northern part of Hawksworth, off Kings Head Hill) and Epping Forest.

EFFECTS ON THE SKYLINE: A multi-storey block would be necessary, which would spoil views from open forest land at and around National Grid ref. TQ381949. The nine storey Enterprise House adjoins Hawksworth, but its site is lower than the proposed site and does not adjoin the Forest.

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