

EPHING TOWN COUNCIL

EPF/2120/25: Land North of Stewards Green Road and East of the Orchards, Epping

Request for a full environmental impact assessment

Epping Town Council were extremely concerned when they were made aware of a 'Screening Option' application at this site. Local knowledge plays a vital role in the planning process and that local knowledge has triggered considerable public objection.

Epping Town Council held an ExtraOrdinary public Council meeting to raise awareness of this Screening Option and the volume of attendees and the strength of their objections should not be underestimated or overlooked.

Epping Town Council support the views of the Epping Society and Stewards Green Fields Action Group, which further underpin the strength of local feeling.

This proposal would constitute major development on Green Belt land which is not in Epping Forest District Council's Local Plan.

Epping Town Council would strongly urge Epping Forest District Council to request a Full Environmental Impact Assessment for this site for a number of reasons:

- 1) It is the only process that will properly examine all likely effects of a major development such as that suggested for this site;
- 2) The sheer size and scale of this development which would have a major effect on the character of this Green Belt land. This is a large scale development which should trigger a full Environmental Impact Assessment under the EIA Regulations 2017;
- 3) Local knowledge on key elements such as the potential for flooding, traffic flow, infrastructure, habitats and road subsidence;
- 4) This is an area of extremely high ecological value with vast and diverse habitats which require full, detailed and proper consideration before they are irreversibly damaged. It is also an important buffer to Epping Forest;
- 5) The impact on neighbouring Epping Forest's Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is protected in law;
- 6) The cumulative effect of development on this site, alongside nearby existing and proposed developments in terms of damage to the Green Belt, the SAC and air quality, effects on traffic, flooding, subsidence, overburdened drainage and already overburdened infrastructure. Cumulative growth can't be underestimated; this was the point of Epping Forest District Council's Local Plan; to protect sites like this one that are not in the adopted Local Plan
- 7) Limited assessment may lead to irreversible problems later that can't be rectified later such as major flooding, subsidence and the destruction of habitats.

Epping Town Council would therefore respectfully urge Epping Forest District Council to request a full Environmental Impact Assessment for this site for the reasons

identified. Failure to do so would set a damaging precedent which could completely destroy the character of the area and town and undermine the structure of the Local Plan and the planning process.

A full Environmental Impact Assessment would enable a proper survey and assessment of all the relevant and interrelated factors such as environmental, ecological, transport and considerable weight given to the overall cumulative effects.

Epping Town Council question why development here would even be considered acceptable as it is Green Belt Land, not in the Local Plan and by default, surely in breach of adopted Planning Policy. Such proposed irreversible damage to the Green Belt, character of the area, environment, ecology, Epping Forest and air quality, requires a Full Environmental Impact Assessment at the very least.

Beverley Rumsey, Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Epping Town Council
5th November 2025