

Haringey Liberal Democrat response to Site Allocation document (2015)

General Comments:

We are concerned that this document proposes allowing buildings of between 10 and 15 storeys plus in many residential areas. We do not think this vision of high-rise housing across so many parts of what is in many ways an outer-London borough is right or acceptable to local people.

Haringey Liberal Democrats believe that more homes need to be built in the borough. However that home need to include a mix of different types of housing, including family homes and affordable homes, built to lifetime standards, not just dense high-rise buildings.

The council needs to give more thought not just to the number of homes delivered, but their size and quality, and the impact on their surrounding area. On a number of these sites the housing proposed is overly dense and tall and that not enough has been done to ensure community facilities (such as playgrounds, doctor surgeries, schools and nurseries) will be provided for the expanded communities.

Use of Metropolitan Open Land:

There are 5 sites in the allocation which include Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), this type of land is usually parkland or important green space and we believe these areas should be protected.

Some of the site allocations include plans for development on MOL:

- Hornsey Water Treatment Works
- Broadwater Farm site (SA63)
- Rowan's Bowling Alley

We are concerned that the special nature of Metropolitan Open Land is not being respected. The need for open public space, sport areas, parks and green spaces increases with development.

It is not enough to say that MOL will be replaced with open or green spaces when there are no guarantees these spaces will be open to the public in the same way MOL is. The council should be making every effort to avoid development on MOL.

Hornsey Water Treatment Works:

On the water treatment works (7,000m² MOL) site the council has said they believe it would be right have housing.

We are concerned that any new housing on this site would put a strain on stretched local resources. Developing the site for housing will mean that many more people will be living in Hornsey in the future if this site is developed as well as the Hornsey Depot site which recently got planning permission.

The report also mentions that there could be problems with flooding and drainage in this area. Some of the New River Village flats have recently had problems with damp and poor drainage. We are concerned this could happen to new homes built on the water treatment site. We do not believe these issues have been fully addressed. Such a development would clearly have a large impact on people living on roads such as Cross Lane and on the New River Village.

We are also concerned that housing on this site would be very close to Alexandra Park, any built structures would have substantial impacts on the landscape of the Park and views from the South Terrace.

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The proposals also do not respect the status of the site as MOL. We note that there is potential for re-use of the existing filter beds as wildlife habitat, with controlled water levels and planting with wetland plants. Along with the benefits to biodiversity, would be educational opportunities and hands-on experience for volunteers and employment-related training.

Finsbury Park:

On the Rowans site the council has said they believe it would be right to replace the bowling alley with housing and retail buildings. The report also says that having buildings of up to 15 storeys in height in that part of Finsbury Park would be acceptable.

We are concerned that the council is willing to allow such tall buildings to be constructed in Finsbury Park and allow the loss of a local institution, Rowans Bowling Alley. Many residents view Rowans as a local amenity and would mourn its loss. If Rowans does close then the any new development should include substantial leisure use to encourage people to come to the area, and provide activities for young people.

We are concerned that buildings of 15 storeys would dominate the local park and nearby low-rise Victorian buildings, and would have negative impact on the area. We are also concerned that there does not seem to be any commitment to extra community facilities such as doctor surgeries in this document for all these new people. The impact on Finsbury Park Station needs to be considered. The station already suffers from overcrowding.

We are also concerned that the allocation includes Metropolitan Open Land (circa 5600 sq. m) and believe that MOL should not be included in the allocation and should not be developed.

Planning briefs for buildings in this area need to respect the park. We would recommend that any new building includes measures such as significant 'built-in' greening of the building and private balcony spaces in residential units.

The Broadwater Farm site (SA63)

This site includes 66,000sq.m of MOL (part of Lordship Recreation Ground).

We are not satisfied that the council has done enough to ensure there will not be loss of MOL. We believe any development of the MOL should be avoided.

Highgate:

We support the Highgate Bowl Action Group and Highgate Neighbourhood Forum submissions and hope that the Council will take their detailed responses on board.

Pinkham Way (SA 54):

We are concerned that using the site for waste purpose has not been ruled out despite the protests of many residents and the site's important ecological nature.

We also note that the preferred use, employment, is by the council's own admission difficult on this site.

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We believe the council should strongly commit to not using the site for any employment, industrial or waste purpose and to protect the ecological importance of this site.

Any development must be compatible with the protection of the SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation).

Lynton Road (SA 51):

We support local residents in their petition against the site allocation proposals for SA 51: Lynton Road.

In particular we object to the following:

- The proposed height of 5 stories is too high for the area and would have a detrimental effect on the surrounding conservation area.
- Developing this industrial plot for residential housing will mean the loss of space for valuable small business units.
- The loss of a valued green space that provides amenity for local residents and in particular those living at The Grove.

St Ann's and the Arena site:

On the Arena site the council are saying there should be the same number of shops and new homes. They have also said the buildings could be up to 8 storeys high in this area. We believe that buildings of this height are not acceptable in this area and that more housing would be difficult to accommodate. We noted that the proposals include the loss of one of the few green spaces in this area, the community garden on the bridge. This is very worrying and we hope the council will look at this again.

On the St Ann's Hospital site the Labour-run Council are saying that a mixture of homes and community facilities would be acceptable. We welcome the proposals for community facilities but are concerned that little details have been provided about the nature of these facilities. We are also concerned about the loss of beds at St Ann's.

Wood Green:

Large parts of Wood Green are included in this document which sets out what the council believes the land should be used for. In particular, the area around Station Road, the Library, Mall, bus garage and the area around the chocolate Factory are all included in the plans.

The Lib Dems are concerned that the council wants to see much more housing in Wood Green from the proposals put forward in this document. In particular, the area around station road has been identified as somewhere that could take dense developments of 10 storeys.

We are worried that all of this new housing on top of the Haringey Heartlands will put a great strain on local communities resources such as doctors surgeries and playgrounds.

We believe that small and less dense development in this area would be better and that more efforts must be made to include more community facilities in any development.

We also believe that more efforts must be made to create and retain open spaces. Buildings themselves should provide also green spaces, not just at ground but as part of terraces and building greening.

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Tottenham regeneration area:

We believe that more must be done to engage residents in the regeneration proposals and to ensure that the regeneration of the area is done for the community that is there and not to them. Efforts must be made to ensure people living in Tottenham benefits from the regeneration and are not forced out by high rents and house prices. Likewise for local businesses and traders.

We are also concerned that not enough is being done to ensure facilities are in place to ensure local services can cope with more residents. It is particularly worrying that the lack of GP services available in areas of Tottenham has not been tackled and the site allocation policy does not provide enough reassurance that solving this problem is a priority.

Employment and retail spaces should be retained and added to appropriately so that local businesses and traders have spaces suitable for a wide range of needs. The design of buildings and new residential areas should encourage residents to spend time and money in the local area.

The future townscape must be presented to local people in a variety of forms, so that there can be meaningful consultation and dialogue. It is highly questionable whether the plethora of policy and strategy documents currently available from the council's website are known to more than a small proportion of Tottenham residents.