



NEWSLETTER

LOCAL PLANS – AN UPDATE

The following represents our latest understanding. Specific information has been difficult to come by on the LPSV and St John's; councillors are staying tight-lipped on instructions from their leadership and/or the officers. We regret the lack of progress in these matters and feel the vacuum of information is disrespectful to the public.

♥ Epping Forest District Council Local Plan (LPSV)

A judicial review of the LPSV failed to convince the High Court to overturn the process. Essentially the complaint was that information about site selection had not been made available in time so the process was defective. Your Society drew attention to this in our response to the public consultation and we were among the few organisations allowed to make supplementary comments during the hiatus before the court hearing.

Your Committee is intrigued to know how councillors were able to form a judgement on the LPSV when they did not have the site selection papers (and other papers published on the EFDC website long after their vote).

♥ Epping Town Council Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

We have responded to the consultation on this draft plan. We made several suggestions for changes, improvements (as we saw it) and further research to back up proposals in the NP.

We recognise the limited role of the NP which is not allowed to be inconsistent with the LPSV.

♥ St John's Road site

Negotiations continue between the District Council and the Town Council, possibly also including the proposed developer. We are told the issues are "with the solicitors" and cannot be made public. We observe that solicitors carry out the instructions of their clients so if EFDC, ETC and the developers are agreed (as we were told over a year ago) it is surely up to the legal people to act accordingly.

We cannot help but suspect there is more to this delay than we have been told.

Meanwhile a substantial part of the centre of the town is dilapidated and key buildings are deteriorating through a lack of maintenance and security. We hope that insurance provisions for unoccupied buildings are being strictly observed.

OUR CAMPAIGNS



Members may have noticed the living wall at Marks and Spencer in the High Street had deteriorated. We were anxious about the possibility of inadequate maintenance when the planning application was made for this feature some years ago.

We are very pleased to report that, following a representation to M&S by our officers (thanks to Susan and Charlie), the wall has been repaired so we thank M&S for responding to our comments and their commitment to the High Street.

It appears their maintenance arrangements had let them down.

Although we all rush about without noticing much of our surroundings, it is important to nurture the good things around us.

EFDC plans knowingly for increase in traffic chaos

A transport report for Essex County Council by consultants Ringway Jacobs was submitted to EFDC on 11 December 2017. The following comments are based on <http://www.efdclocalplan.org/evidence-base/>

Traffic flows

The report studied existing flows and projects forward to 2033, with a range of scenarios:

1. Existing 2016/7 data
2. Do Minimum (make no changes) in which case Traffic levels would increase from current levels by 17%
3. Do Something (build all the Local Plan new houses, but no changes to infrastructure) and this would increase network flows significantly by 62%
4. As for 3 but encouraging more sustainable transport. We doubt the effectiveness of proposals to encourage walking and cycling but even if successful traffic would grow 49 % above current levels
5. As for 4 but with a package of highway improvement measures.



The models developed are claimed to exclude school traffic, so we can assume the baseline data in 1. above was measured on non-school days (which occupy about 12 weeks a year).

Extract from report conclusion (EppSoc emphasis added)

“results of the assessment work indicate that the forecast development would **increase traffic levels significantly** across the network. This would be expected given the quantum of employment land and housing proposed. The analysis demonstrates that the delivery of a combination of more ambitious sustainable transport and physical highway improvements could potentially mitigate the most significant impacts of the Local Plan. **Further work is needed** and the scale of mitigation required will be refined as part of ongoing assessments of the Submission Local Plan. The constrained present transport situation is therefore **expected to worsen** with the introduction of Local Plan growth even with the introduction of reasonable sustainable modal shift.”

Epping Junctions

The report shows that many junctions are currently approaching or already **exceed their theoretical capacity** (of 1.00) (EppSoc emphasis added).

- The most notable is the Wake Arms roundabout in the heart of the district, maximum recorded RFC* of **1.33** in the AM and **1.21** in the PM peaks.
- In scenario 2 this is predicted to reach **1.72**; with scenario 4 the RFC* rises to **2.1**

(* Ratio of Flow to Capacity)



Extract from report conclusion (EppSoc emphasis added)

“the majority of major junctions in the district (up to 24) exceed theoretical operational capacity in either peak period. A number of these junctions are expected to be exceeding, or at least approaching, RFCs of 2.0 during the peak hours and shows that **demand generally exceeds capacity** across the network leading to increased journey times, **little or no network resilience and driver stress**. The key links and corridors will worsen even with the addition of Do-Something Scenario 4 “