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NEWS

'Save our Green Belt'

By Michael Bowden

A campaign group is determined to protect Enfield's Green Belt land amidst the new home-building drive.

Members of Enfield RoadWatch are citing a new Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) report reveals London's housing needs can be met without releasing Green Belt land.

According to the report, problems in meeting the demand for housing have been caused by slow build rates and a lack of funding, not a lack of land.

'Space to Build: why we don't need to build on green spaces to solve the housing crisis' references the use of suitable wasted space in London as a viable alternative.

This includes the redevelopment of existing single storey buildings into 'mid-rise' developments as well as reclaiming road space and disused garages.

In the report it is claimed that estate regeneration could deliver up to 360,000 homes; car parks could provide space for 75,000 homes; disused garages could provide space for 16,000 homes; bringing empty homes back into use can deliver 5,000 home; and, reclaiming roads and roundabouts could provide space for 10,000 homes.

Alice Roberts, of CPRE, London, states: "Londoners may be



Campaigners out in force

surprised to know that permissions have in fact already been granted for 260,000 homes in the capital.

"At the current build rate of 25,000 new homes per year, that will keep us going for 10 years.

"With all the other opportunities identified in this report, which don't involve a return to high-rise development, we have enough space to be building for 40 years."

Carol Fisk, vice chairman of Enfield RoadWatch believes the 'Space to Build' report shows the unnecessary use of Green Belt land and demonstrates the use potential use of brown field sites and other options available

She said: "How many of us notice the numerous disused garages that just sit idle for years, encouraging fly tipping and other

activities, whereas with good design and planning these could provide the space for 1000s of homes.

"The ideas in the report are fully supported by the Mayor of London and can be readily applied in Enfield.

"It was excellent to recently read in the Independent that Enfield Council is working in partnership with Neillcott Construction to build 13 homes on five disused garage sites in Enfield.

"Initiatives like this are a clear example of following the National Planning Policy Framework, developing brown field first and a win:win for everyone.

"Airspace is another often unused commodity and according to the CPRE report could provide at least 500, 000 homes.

"Despite Government policies and Ministerial statements, commitments to protect the Green Belt are not always honoured and the number of threats and risks continue to escalate at an alarming rate.

"We were also pleased to see the draft Enfield Town Master Plan suggesting some of these alternatives and hope more will be incorporated in the revised Local Plan, without loss of Green Belt."

Visit <http://www.cprelondon.org.uk/news/item/2361-space-for-a-million-new-homes-and-more-in-london-without-building-on-greenfields>.

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