

Councils condemn infrastructure gap

By Christina Papas

274 words

7 September 2007

Planning

4

English

(c) Planning, a Haymarket publication, for more information visit [www.planningresource.co.uk](#) or email hpg@haymarketgroup.com

Suburbs are suffering from a major lack of infrastructure funding even though they are key drivers for city-regional economies, council leaders complained this week.

A report led by the London Borough of Barnet argues that money is being ploughed into regenerating town centres while suburbs such as Barnet, Trafford and Solihull are left with pockets of deprivation. It calls for suburbs to be given more priority and a change in the belief that they have a one-way dependency on their urban centres.

Barnet leader **Mike Freer** said London suburbs house 40 per cent of the capital's professional workforce and have the highest level of business start-ups. 'The government has ignored the fact that infrastructure makes up a successful city suburb and this is affecting the UK's economy,' he added.

Freer told Planning that schemes including the 7,000 homes planned for Brent Cross and Cricklewood, due to be submitted in the next few months, could be in jeopardy. He argued that the borough needs around pounds 750 million for infrastructure.

'If we do not invest then those new homes will not be built. There is no point doing it unless people can get on a fast link train into the City. If they cannot then why would they live in Barnet?' asked Freer.

The report precedes Barnet's launch of proposals next week for how to acquire infrastructure funding. It will allow developers to choose from a menu of schemes throughout the borough.

Successful City Suburbs is available at PlanningResource.co.uk/doc.

Document PLANWE0020070907e39700025