

A successful city-suburb: towards the Barnet local development framework

Consultation: 30 June – 29 September 2008



Where should we build new homes for a growing population?

How should we manage increasing demand for travel?

What sorts of places do we want our town centres and suburbs to be?

Over the next few months Barnet Council will be considering issues such as these as we prepare a spatial development plan for the borough.

Background

The Barnet Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is over two years old and much has already changed in the borough. Barnet is growing whilst the housing market is facing uncertain times. We need to plan for the long term with a new spatial development plan.

Barnet will be a successful city-suburb that contributes to the success of London as a global city

The plan will be formed of several documents which together constitute the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF) for Barnet. Over-arching planning and development policies will be contained in a document called the 'Core Strategy'.

This will be supported by a range of other documents which will provide information on site allocations for development, plans for particular areas and guidance to help determine planning applications. The LDF will replace the UDP for Barnet by 2010.

This leaflet summarises what we have identified as the major issues for spatial planning in Barnet and options to address them. These are based on our Three Strands Approach to planning, development and regeneration and is supported by those attending public workshops held during Autumn 2007. Barnet will be a successful city-suburb that contributes to the success of London as a global city and is a place with a high quality of life where people want to live. A major challenge is to plan for growth in population whilst protecting and enhancing the borough's attractiveness, green spaces and suburban character. Furthermore there are external influences. For example it, must be in conformity with government policy and Mayor of London's policies.

Issues and options

We are currently consulting on a broad range of issues and options and we want to hear your views. By having your say now you can influence the policies that will guide the planning and development of Barnet over the next 10 – 15 years.

Should we allow the redevelopment of employment and vacant town centre office sites for other uses, such as housing?

How should we ensure there are adequate facilities for further and higher education facilities in Barnet?

Issue 1 – Economy

Business opportunities

Barnet is a relatively prosperous borough. To maintain and expand this, we need to ensure that there is enough land for businesses, jobs and infrastructure to support the local economy. There is currently a surplus of land and buildings in the borough designated for these types of uses.

Skills

A high proportion of Barnet's residents work in highly-skilled finance, business and professional jobs. However, there are some skills shortages in service industries (such as health and education) and construction. There are also pockets of deprivation, particularly in the west of Barnet, where people are less qualified and less able to take advantage of new job opportunities.



Issue 2 – Infrastructure to support the planned growth



Transport

A major challenge for Barnet is to provide effective transport infrastructure for a growing population. The borough has good public transport connections into central London but is less well served for journeys within the suburbs and east west journeys. Car ownership is high but many roads suffer from congestion. Money is being invested in public transport, but much of this will only address current problems of overcrowding and unreliability, at least in the short term. For many journeys especially those away from town centres, the car will remain more convenient.

Community services

As Barnet grows it is important that there are enough facilities (e.g. schools, hospitals, leisure centres and meeting places) to meet the needs of a growing population. It is also important that people are able to live in attractive and safe neighbourhoods with easy access to parks and open spaces.

How should the council facilitates transport infrastructure for a growing population? (e.g. increase road capacity, restrict car use, provide better public transport)?

How should we ensure that there are enough community facilities in new development?

Issue 3 – Housing and suburbs



Housing location

The 'London Plan' (the statutory development plan for London) states that Barnet must provide at least 20,000 new homes in the next ten years. We propose to focus major housing and economic development at sites to the west of the borough, at Brent Cross, Colindale and Mill Hill East, with other homes being provided at accessible locations around town centres and public transport interchanges. We want to protect the green belt and other open space including gardens by ensuring that all new development is on previously developed ('brownfield') land.

Housing density and design

Maintaining the quality of the built environment and character of the suburbs are important issues for Barnet. Low density suburbs are under pressure from development.

Housing needs

Barnet has a diverse population that requires different types of housing, from smaller homes for single people to large family houses. A rising number of people want to own their own homes and the availability of affordable housing is a significant issue. A major challenge is to address needs for family accommodation whilst meeting demands for higher density development, choice of affordable homes that is driven by a growing and diverse population, targets for new housing and our wish to protect green spaces.

Where should new homes be built in Barnet?

What should the council do to protect suburban character?

How should we ensure the correct mix of housing in Barnet? How should we increase the number of affordable homes?

Where should we plan for shopping/commercial/housing development? (e.g. in large and other town centres, retail parks)?

Should we protect shops and affordable retail units from larger and out of town centre development?

Issue 4 – Town centres

Barnet's suburban town centres provide shops, leisure facilities, community services, transport connections and employment. They vary from major shopping centres like Brent Cross and Edgware to smaller centres like Golders Green, East Barnet and local parades of shops. We need to decide what sorts of uses are appropriate in different town centres and where new development should be focussed. We also have to think about how to maintain the vitality and viability of our town centres, the level of protection for shops from changes of use and encourage local businesses.



How should we ensure development is sustainable? How should climate change influence planning?

Issue 5 – Environment

Barnet has an attractive environment which is rich in green spaces and biodiversity but which also faces significant challenges. Air quality is poor around major traffic routes and the demand for natural resources such as water is increasing. The effects of climate change will become increasingly important particularly for growing areas like Barnet. Planning can address environmental issues by carefully managing the way that buildings are designed and constructed and the location of development. For example, development can avoid green spaces or focus on locations that are easily accessible by public transport.



Have your say

For more detailed information, please look at the full 'Core Strategy Issues and Options' document. It is available on our website www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-consultations. Paper copies can be viewed at any of the libraries in Barnet and the council's planning reception at NLBP, addressed below.

Your views will help us and we will be consulting on these options at a later date.

We want to hear what you think:

- have we correctly identified the major issues for spatial planning and future development in Barnet?
- what do you think are the best options for addressing these issues?

Please send us your comments by email or by post to the address below. The deadline for responses is 5pm, 29 September 2008.

This document is available in different languages upon request.

If you require a copy, please contact the Planning, Housing and Regeneration Directorate on 020 8359 4467 or write to the address opposite.

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