

**Notice and Statement of Local Development Framework Core Strategy
Issues and Options Consultation; Invitation to make Representations
Under
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Town and Country Planning
(Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008**

PUBLIC CONSULTATION 30 JUNE UNTIL 29 SEPTEMBER 2008

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 25 of the above mentioned Regulations that London Borough of Barnet invites representations on the Local Development Framework, Core Strategy: Issues and Options Paper.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will be the spatial development plan for Barnet and will set out the Council's vision for a successful city-suburb over next 15 years. The Unitary Development Plan will be replaced by the LDF comprising a number of documents, including the Core Strategy that sets out the long term spatial vision for Barnet and the strategic policies to deliver the vision. This is the issues and options stage and is required to be publicised to engage with partners, stakeholders, local residents before the preparation of a preferred options report and submission to the Secretary of State.

The document is available for viewing during the consultation period at the following locations: on the Council's website : <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/ldf-core-strategy>, at Planning Housing and Regeneration reception, Ground Floor, Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, N11 1NP (Opening times Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm); at all local libraries during normal opening hours.

Representations about the Core Strategy issue and options must be submitted by one of the methods specified below so as to be received by the Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 29 September 2008.

You can have your say by responding to the Representation Form by emailing at: forward.planning@barnet.gov.uk or completing and returning your form by post to: Planning Policy and Housing Team, Planning, Housing and Regeneration Directorate, North London Business Park, Building 2, Oakleigh Road South, N11 1NP or fax on 0870 889 6818 F.A.O. Planning Policy Team. Further information is also available from team on 020 8359 4467/4763.

Following the period of formal consultation, the Council will consider valid representations and prepare a report summarising the main issues raised and how they can be addressed in the Core Strategy before next consultation on the preferred options.

1. Introduction

The purpose of Barnet's Local Development Framework Core Strategy

1.1.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the Unitary Development Plan (adopted May 2006) and provide the statutory development plan that guides future spatial development and environmental protection of the London Borough of Barnet. It will define Barnet as the place where growth and development should be located, where open space should be protected, and where quality suburbs enhanced.

1.1.2 The LDF will embody **spatial planning** – the practice of 'place shaping' to deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes and provide the overarching local policy framework for delivering sustainable development in Barnet. The LDF is described as a 'folder' of separate documents, the most important of which is the Core Strategy. This will contain the LDF 'vision' and the most fundamental, cross-cutting objectives that the local authority and its partners will seek to deliver through the LDF's policies.

1.1.3 Barnet's LDF will consist of:

- higher-level 'development plan documents' (DPDs) including the Core Strategy and a Site Allocation DPD identifying future sites for development. Barnet's LDF will also contain DPDs whose production is in advance of the Core Strategy. These are the area action plans for Mill Hill East and Colindale, and the North London Waste Plan. An essential DPD is the Proposals Map.
- second-level 'supplementary planning documents', a suite of documents which
 - i) provide more detailed guidance on determining planning applications, and
 - ii) focus on our approach to securing S.106 contributions from development.

The process of preparing Barnet's Core Strategy

1.1.4 This document sets out to provide the background context and policy that will influence the development of Barnet's Core Strategy. The issues that need to be considered are outlined and various options are suggested that could address these issues in alternative ways. It is these issues and options that will be the subject of public engagement along with others suggested as alternatives.

1.1.5 These 'Issues and Options' are based on sound evidence and provide realistic and meaningful choices for community engagement. The Options are not mutually exclusive and anyone can put forward alternative Options for the Council to consider. Once the Issues and Options are approved by the Council, there will be a period of at least six weeks for consultation and engagement. The Council will consider responses and make amendments before the Core Strategy is submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government for public examination. The independent Inspector's report will be binding on the Council.

1.1.6 In examining the Core Strategy the inspector will require evidence that the LDF can be delivered, by the Council directly or through our partners and stakeholders. Work is already under way for the Barnet Finance Plan and the major regeneration areas are the subject of Area Action Plans and master plans.

1.1.7 It is necessary to carry out sustainability appraisals in the course of preparing Local Development Framework (LDF) documents and this is an iterative process. We are also required to carry out an equalities impact assessment. These documents will be made available separately and must be submitted at each stage of the process.

1.1.8 In addition, there is a great deal of evidence that provides the background to the Core Strategy. This evidence will also be made available and if, in the course of engagement, other evidence is brought to light, it will also be shared.

2. Strategic Background

2.1.1 The Core Strategy of the LDF should reflect the spatial vision of Barnet as a successful city-suburb in a successful London which has been developed over the past 4 to 5 years. This spatial vision is shared by a variety of partners, stakeholders and the local community as highlighted in Barnet's Sustainable Community Strategy and delivered through the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Council has a prominent role in place-shaping and Barnet's spatial development priorities are defined in the innovative Three Strands Approach to planning, development and regeneration:

- **Strand 1.** Absolute protection of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other valued open space from inappropriate development.
- **Strand 2.** Enhancement and protection of Barnet's suburbs, town centres and historic areas.
- **Strand 3.** Growth that is sustainable so as to achieve successful regeneration and high quality development.

2.1.2 The Three Strands Approach contains the aspirations and vision for the borough and has developed from the Council's Unitary Development Plan that was adopted by the Council in May 2006. The adopted UDP identified three major national and international trends that influenced the management of development in the borough. These were:

- the growth of London as an exemplary sustainable global city
- structural economic change towards a knowledge economy in the UK, and
- the need for policy makers to resolve conflicts and issues within a rapidly changing urban environment.

2.1.3. The objectives of the UDP were to plan for sustainable development and enhance the quality of the natural and built environment; to sustain local communities and improve education and employment facilities; to maintain and improve Barnet's transport network system; and to promote the regeneration of the Brent Cross Cricklewood and West Hendon area.

2.1.4. The Council has taken on the role of championing successful city suburbs at the national level. This on-going project seeks to raise the profile of city-suburbs and work towards providing a vision and policy for action for those tasked with shaping suburbs, securing their role as successful, aspirational places within successful cities.

2.1.5 The challenge for Barnet is to plan for a growth in population from approximately 330,000 now to 377,000 by 2026 whilst protecting and enhancing the borough's attractiveness, intrinsic qualities and green spaces. This growth is to be sustainable, particularly in terms of maintaining a successful city suburb. One aspect of maintaining success is to ensure that the necessary social, environmental and economic infrastructure is provided in a timely fashion and the Council is in discussions with the government on an innovative financing plan using a combination of local and nationally generated revenue streams to raise and repay finance directly from either public or private sources.

2.1.6. The Core Strategy must have cognisance of this strategic background and be in conformity with government policy, the London Plan and the Mayor of London's other strategies. It must also accord with the Council's and our partners' strategies and programmes, and not conflict unnecessarily with the plans of neighbouring London boroughs and adjacent local authorities in Hertfordshire. The Core Strategy must also be shown to be viable and flexible so as to allow for future changes in circumstances, including different policy frameworks or changes to the local, regional or national economy.

2.1.7. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004), published in February 2008, provides the strategic spatial development framework for the capital. Whilst there is a newly elected Mayor of London the London Plan will remain in force until a review is undertaken in a period unlikely to be less than 2 years. Any interim strategic policy directions emerging from the new Mayor, prior to a full formal review, will be taken on board between this Issues and Options stage and the Preferred Options and Submissions stages over the next 12-18 months. This will ensure Barnet's LDF reflects the new direction of travel on the new Mayor's vision and his emerging strategic policy. The London Plan vision is to develop an exemplary sustainable world city, based on three interwoven themes:

- strong diverse long term economic growth;
- social inclusivity to give all Londoners the opportunity to share in London's future success; and
- fundamental improvements in London's environment and use of resources.

The London Plan sets out six objectives that are to be achieved in partnership with the Greater London Authority group, strategic partners and the boroughs. These objectives are:

- to accommodate London's growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces;
- to make London a healthier and better city for people to live in;
- to make London a more prosperous city with strong and diverse long term economic growth;
- to promote social inclusion and tackle deprivation and discrimination;
- to improve London's accessibility; and
- to make London an exemplary world city in mitigating and adapting to climate change and a more attractive, well-designed and green city.

2.1.8. The London Plan provides policies and targets that borough development plan documents must be in general conformity with. Housing policies are aimed at meeting the need to accommodate a population increase of around 1 million by 2026. Minimum housing targets are set for each borough, policies should make the best use of sites, and provide housing choice. Affordable housing should meet the strategic target of providing 50% overall, with an objective of 70% social housing and 30% intermediate housing. Boroughs should ensure that the needs of all communities are planned for so as to create safe neighbourhoods. The new Mayor has stated that this, particularly the 50% affordable housing target, will be reviewed. Barnet's Issues and Options report anticipates change in this area and suggests an innovative way forward and a number of options as this strategic policy direction emerges.

2.1.9. Policies on promoting economic growth in London include the special circumstances of the suburbs and the importance of the knowledge economy. The new Mayor has emphasised stronger future policy support for the suburbs of London and this is reflected in local terms, particularly with the Three Strands Approach and protection of back gardens from inappropriate development. Transport policies aim to improve the quality of London's transport, in conjunction with the Mayor's Transport Strategy and detailed in the Council's Local Implementation Plan. The London Plan contains an indication of the phasing of transport schemes, including improvements to A406 North Circular Road, the Northern and Piccadilly Lines. There are policies relating to reducing traffic with a specific aim of reducing growth in outer London by a third and zero growth in town centres from 2001 to 2011. These aims will be addressed through improving conditions for walking and cycling, improving public transport and controlling car parking.

2.1.10. The London Plan's strategy for town centres is to strengthen their role as locations for retail, leisure and cultural activities as well as business and housing. Boroughs are asked to consider ways of managing existing edge of or out of town centre provision and assess the need and capacity of development in town centres, taking the sequential approach.

2.1.11. The strategic growth areas designated in the London Plan include Opportunity Areas that typically will contain at least 5,000 jobs or 2,500 houses or a mixture of the two and Areas for Intensification that have considerable potential for residential, employment and other uses. Their growth depends on improved infrastructure, especially transport.

2.1.12. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) identifies the areas of Brent Cross Cricklewood and West Hendon, and Colindale as Opportunity Areas, and Mill Hill East as an Area for Intensification. By 2026 Colindale is identified as capable of delivering 10,000 new homes and 500 new jobs, Brent Cross/Cricklewood is capable of delivering 10,000 new homes and 20,000 new jobs and Mill Hill East delivering around 2,500 new homes and 500 new jobs.

2.1.13. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) also proposes a regional growth corridor following the transport route along the Thameslink, A5 and M1 from London to Luton and Bedford. Within this strategic corridor Barnet's major development sites are already identified and provides a significant element of Strand 1 – Growth.

2.1.14. Within the *London-Luton-Bedford co-ordination corridor* and the North London sub-region the council will work with the new Mayor, the North London Strategic Alliance and neighbouring regional and local authorities including the North West London Boroughs of Brent, Camden and Harrow to develop a strategic approach to the management of locations such as Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale and Mill Hill East with major growth potential.

2.1.15. Work has commenced on the masterplanning of the Opportunity Areas and Area of Intensification identified in the London Plan. A Development Framework for Brent Cross Cricklewood was adopted in April 2004. Area Action Plans for Colindale and Mill Hill East will set out comprehensive policies and proposals for their area including delivery of infrastructure. These development frameworks reflect Barnet's approach to delivering housing growth.

2.1.16. Government policy towards spatial planning is contained in Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development and is further amplified in other Planning Policy Statements. The Council must take account of government guidance, for example, the requirement to meet local and regional housing needs and if a local interpretations of national planning policy is proposed, this must be justified. The London Plan takes account of government guidance and policy and therefore these Statements are not repeated in this document but can be referred to on the Department of Communities and Local Government website.

2.1.17. The Council's Corporate Plan 2008/09 to 2011/12 contains five priorities:

- a bright future for children and young people;
- clean, green and safe;
- supporting the vulnerable;
- strong and healthy; and
- a successful city-suburb.

2.1.18. The Council's policies, programmes and strategies relate to its various functions including caring for the vulnerable, education and learning, transport, public safety, and different aspects of the environment. These are not repeated in this document but provide important markers in the development of the Core Strategy and form part of the evidence base.

2.1.19. The Local Strategic Partnership has revised the borough's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for the period 2008 to 2018. The four themes of the revised SCS inform the Core Strategy:

- Growing successfully
- Safer, stronger and cleaner Barnet
- Investing in children and young people
- Healthier Barnet (including older people)

3. A profile of Barnet

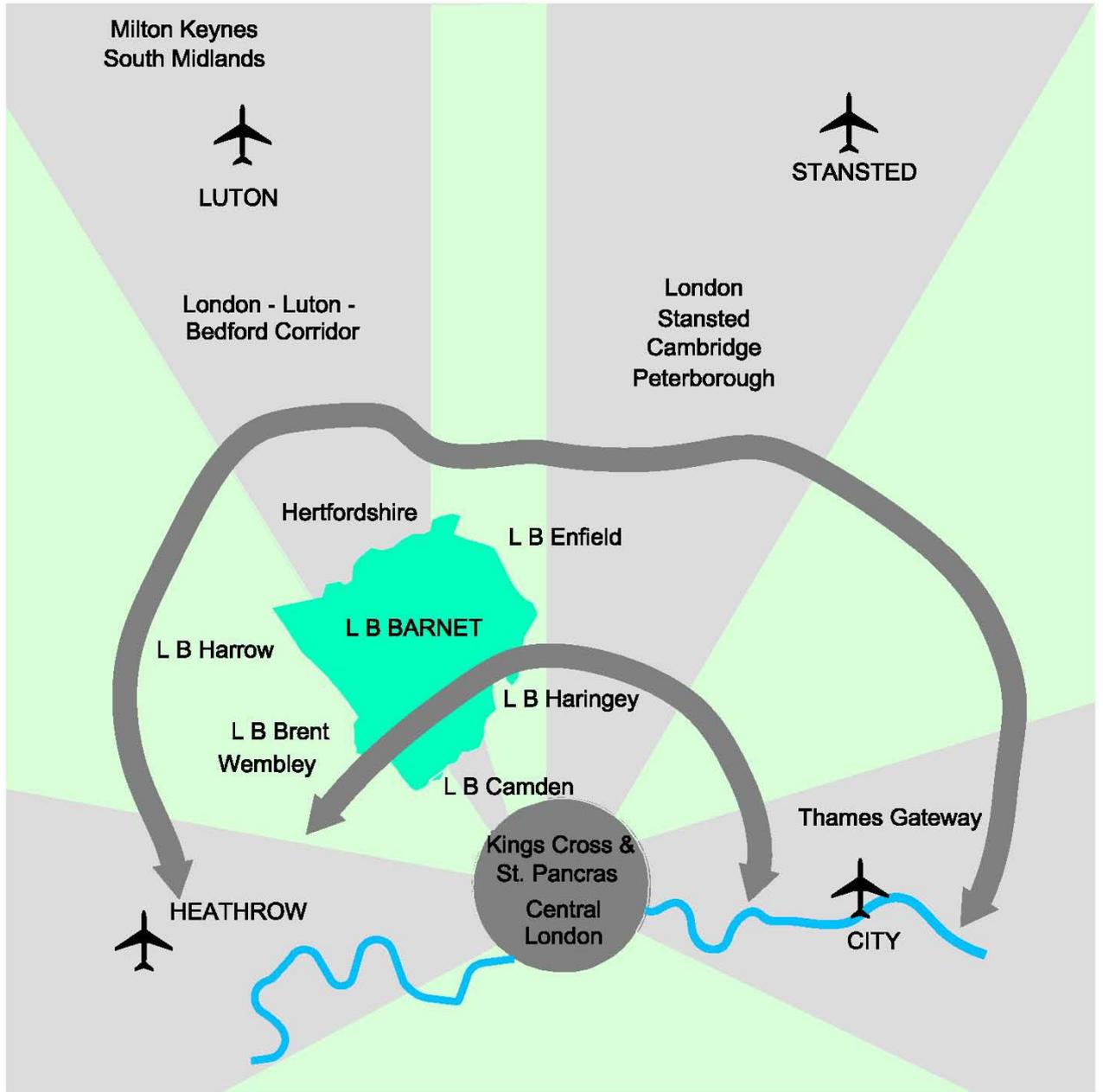
3.1.1. It is essential that the Core Strategy is based on our understanding of what the key drivers of change and development are for Barnet. There must be a sound evidence base that can stand up to challenge and cover all aspects of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the borough. A comprehensive scoping exercise has been carried out so as to locate relevant information and identify gaps. Existing sources of information have been used where possible but specific surveys have been commissioned, for example, the assessment of playing fields and open space. The key drivers of change are:

- economic prosperity, centred locally around the knowledge economy
- population growth, facilitated by high land value and a significant supply of brownfield land
- a high quality of environment overall, high quality Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other open spaces
- a good housing offer and high home ownership, especially for families with above average incomes.

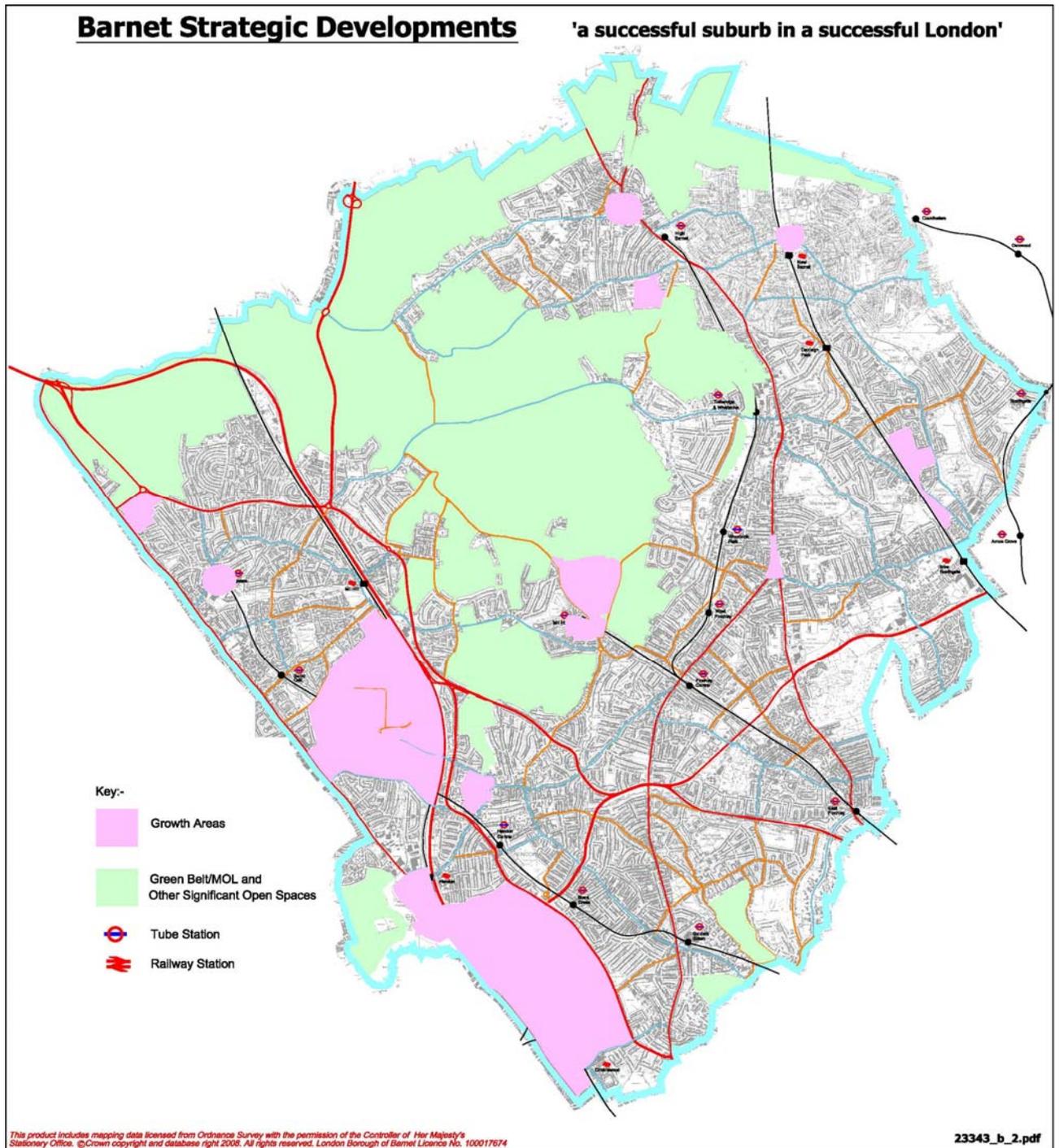
3.1.2. The challenges facing the borough in protecting and enhancing Barnet's suburbs, accommodating this growth and maintaining those positive drivers are:

- low affordability, particularly for first time buyers
- a diverse population in terms of meeting specific and changing needs
- numerous and diverse town centres
- low levels of crime but increasing concerns about perceptions of crime
- a youthful population but with increasing numbers of very elderly people
- high car ownership but also high public transport use
- poor orbital connectivity
- pockets of deprivation, particularly in the west of the borough and in post-war large council estates
- demand for and use of environmental resources and impacts on pollution and climate change.

3.1.3. Each of these characteristics and drivers of change has an impact or effect on the spatial development of the borough and on one or more of the Three Strands: Protect, Enhance, and Grow. In brief, the headline characteristics are listed below but further information is provided in each section on the challenges facing the borough (Chapter 6). An illustrative context for Barnet is provided by Map 1 while Map 2 highlights the growth areas in the borough.



Map 1: An illustrative context for Barnet



Map 1: The growth areas in the borough.

Barnet – the people

3.1.4. The biggest issues facing the borough over the next 10 to 15 years are growth and sustainability whilst maintaining attractiveness of the suburbs. According to the 2006 mid-year Office of National Statistics estimate, 328,600 people live in the borough. The ONS provides a population projection that forecasts the borough population reaching 367,400 by 2021, an increase of 12% over 15 years. This includes natural increase (births and deaths) and in-migration to Barnet but does not take into account the large growth in house building. The GLA, factoring in the house building growth, projects Barnet's population to reach 377,000

by 2026, an increase of 15% on present levels.

3.1.5. Barnet is typical of many outer London suburbs in having a high proportion of owner occupied housing, a strong private sector rented sector, and a smaller supply of social rented sector. The housing stock, which is predominantly an older stock of over 50 years in age, is also mainly in good condition and almost 62% of households live in houses or bungalows and 38% live in flats. People are much more likely than other neighbouring boroughs to have been resident in their home for at least ten years, although they are more likely to have moved into the borough in their last move. However, the affordability ratio is one of the highest in London and the UK.

3.1.6. Barnet's population is the twentieth most ethnically diverse area in England and the second most religiously diverse. It has one of the largest populations from a Chinese background and the largest Jewish community in the UK.

3.1.7. One of the characteristics of Barnet which makes it a successful city suburb is the high proportion of people working in the knowledge economy. Barnet's resident population is overall well qualified with 35% of the adult population having a university degree or equivalent – 4% higher than the London average and 15% higher than the England average.

3.1.8. People living in Barnet live on average nearly 2 years longer than the English average. The 2001 Census records that nearly 73% of Barnet's population described their health as good. Residents are healthier overall measured by mental illness, death rates from major causes, sickness benefit claimants and alcohol related hospital admissions. The borough is one of the safest places in London with comparatively low levels of crime.

3.1.9. Although the largest age group in the present population is between 25 and 44, the most rapidly growing age groups are those over 60, and in particular, over 85. There are people of all ages who are vulnerable and have special needs.

3.1.10. Barnet is a successful city suburb but, in common with other parts of outer London, contains pockets of deprivation, mainly in the western side of the borough. The latest government Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) ranks Barnet as the 128th most deprived local authority out of 354 in England and Wales.

Barnet – the place

3.1.11. One of the most significant characteristics of the borough is the large amount of open space, covering over one-third of the total and much of it is very high quality. This comprises the Metropolitan Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other open spaces including parks, allotments and playing fields. Strand 1 of the Three Strands Approach gives protection to the open space in the borough.

3.1.12. Barnet contains 20 town centres defined in Barnet's UDP and many more neighbourhood centres as well as the Brent Cross regional shopping centre. The amount of retail floorspace in the borough is one of the greatest in London, exceeded only by Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. Town centres vary in size and purpose but most of them are the hub of civic, retail, leisure and commercial activity and serve the needs of residents and those working in the borough. Brent Cross is planned to become a sustainable new Town Centre complementing the role of other town centres nearby.

3.1.13. The borough comprises a variety of townscapes, many attractive and reflecting the long history of settlements, influenced by topography and the pattern of transport routes, for example Chipping Barnet. Large parts of the borough are designated as Conservation Areas in order to reflect their special character and value. Much of the borough has been developed as low density suburbs, the average density is 36 persons per hectare, the 8th lowest in London (Enfield with 34 persons per hectare is the 6th lowest). Strand 2 of the Three Strands Approach provides for the enhancement of the borough's suburbs.

3.1.14. Barnet is characterised by high car ownership but also has high public transport usage. Many of Barnet's residents travel to work in central London and use the radial underground services of the Northern

and Piccadilly Lines but orbital routes are less well served by public transport and therefore people travelling within the borough or to adjoining areas need to rely on private transport.

3.1.15. Barnet is rich in green spaces and biodiversity containing 68 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, including 7 which are local nature reserves. The Brent Reservoir, which lies partly in the borough, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. There are many different habitats in the borough including woodlands, grasslands and hedgerows that are typical of rural England; in addition, the back gardens of suburban residential areas provide habitats for native birds, mammals, reptiles, insects and plants.

3.1.16. There are some real challenges for addressing environmental performance and climate change. Barnet has above the London average CO² emissions from domestic use and residents produce around 431 kg of waste each year. Water quality in streams and rivers has improved according to the Environment Agency but the demand for water is increasing. The whole borough has been declared an Air Quality Management Area with the highest levels of air pollution found close to the M1, A1, A5 and A41 corridors, the A406 corridor and in High Barnet.

4. Vision and objectives

4.1.1 The Barnet Local Development Framework Core Strategy must ensure a successful city suburb as the borough changes, develops and grows. The vision contained in the Sustainable Communities Strategy is as follows:

'It is 2018. Barnet is known nationally and internationally as a successful city suburb. Its new, inclusive and thriving neighbourhoods have made it one of the largest boroughs in London. Residents enjoy access to large green open spaces, clean streets, an excellent transport network and affordable, decent homes. It is a place where both young and old can enjoy fulfilling and healthy lives. There is consistently high educational attainment and new local employment opportunities. Crime and the fear of crime remains low and communities – established and recently formed – take pride in their area. Public services are of a consistently high standard and meet the needs of the diverse population they serve.

Barnet is a successful city suburb where people want to live and enjoy a high quality of life. We aim to continue to promote this vision by building on the known and relevant success factors. However, a truly successful suburb will be one where all residents have the opportunity to share in wider success. We therefore also need to tackle disadvantage by securing an improved quality of life for those experiencing multiple disadvantage'.

4.1.2 Barnet's Local Development Framework will comprise core objectives to drive forward this vision. In doing so they will be local in flavour, take account of the objectives of the London Plan as they relate to the borough, and reflect the government's sustainable communities agenda, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development and in the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2005.

4.1.3 Barnet's core objectives to deliver the LDF vision are derived partly from the Corporate Plan and partly from community engagement workshops. These have been endorsed by the LDF Members Steering Group and are as follows:

- **Timely and viable infrastructure:** to create the conditions to maintain and enhance a successful city-suburb and growth locations by delivering Barnet's physical and social infrastructure requirements to accommodate sustainable growth through the Barnet Financing Plan and other financial mechanisms, including the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- **Economic prosperity:** to ensure economic prosperity for London as a successful global city by managing the suburban environment valued by those working for the knowledge economy and locally by providing appropriate employment locations for investment, creating the conditions for all sections of the community including the disadvantaged to develop the skills required to access the labour market and gain financial independence.
- **High quality housing growth:** to manage increases in the supply of housing to ensure local and regional housing needs are met, regeneration of poor quality housing estates are delivered and provide access to affordable and decent new homes. This would seek to maximise the choice between tenure and types, including family housing, support people's aspirations for low cost home ownership and so successful mixed and balanced communities are created and opportunities for home ownership.
- **Movement:** to keep Barnet moving in a sustainable way which provides choice by encouraging the use of convenient and reliable transport, and reducing the need to travel by promoting home working and new technologies, whilst recognising that car ownership is important to many and ensuring it is appropriately planned for.

- **Strong and cohesive communities:** to create the conditions for communities to become confident and cohesive by providing facilities through which residents can play a part, diversity is valued and local pride is promoted.
- **Community Safety:** To create the conditions for a safer and more secure Barnet by designing out crime and reducing anti-social behaviour, particularly in known 'hotspots'.
- **Flourishing and vibrant town centres:** to protect, enhance and create the conditions for growth of a balanced and vibrant network of commercially successful and attractive suburban town centres by enabling a diverse range of shops and services to be provided in convenient and accessible locations, securing environmental improvements, town centre enhancements and successful regeneration.
- **Health and well-being:** to secure a healthier Barnet by addressing the environmental factors underpinning health and well-being with healthcare agencies and other partners to deliver a complete range of new and improved health and social care facilities.
- **Enhance the historic environment:** to respect and enrich Barnet's distinctive built heritage by protecting the historic environment and enhancing the high quality suburban character of townscapes and conservation areas.
- **A bright future for children and young people:** to extend and develop opportunities for children and young people to have a bright and healthy future by providing the highest quality educational, community and leisure facilities in inclusive and safe environments that can be shared by the wider community.
- **Environmentally responsible development that addresses climate change:** to minimise the impact of climate change by requiring high quality environmentally sensitive design and constructions in appropriate locations which meet economic and social sustainability objectives.
- **Supporting the vulnerable:** to promote opportunities for vulnerable people by maximising choice and promoting independence, and planning for appropriate facilities to meet their future needs.
- **Protection of cherished open spaces:** to improve access to, and enhance the quality of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other open spaces by providing clean, green and safe places for the enjoyment of people who live, visit and work in Barnet.
- **Natural environment:** to protect and enhance local biodiversity within both developed and undeveloped areas that allows sustainable development and growth alongside.
- **Sustainable waste and recycling:** to minimise waste and maximise re-use and recycling and promote an appropriate framework for integrated waste management.

5. Issues and options to address the core objectives

5.1.1 The following section sets out five key issues that embody the challenges and drivers of change discussed in Chapter 3. These are:

- Growing successfully
- Meeting housing aspirations
- Enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres
- Securing and delivering the necessary infrastructure for sustainable development
- Being environmentally sensitive and addressing climate change

5.1.2 The objectives to deliver the overall vision for the borough as **a successful city suburb**, set out in Chapter 4, provide different aspects of the key issues that are important to residents and stakeholders.

5.1.3 The key issues can be addressed in a number of ways so as to meet the objectives of the Core Strategy vision. These different options are described and will be the subject of consultation in July, August and September 2008.

Table 1. Challenges, opportunities, key issues and objectives

Challenges/Opportunities	Key issues	Objectives
A growing borough in London, a world city	Growing successfully	Economic prosperity
A high proportion of owner occupied housing, less social rented and the highest affordability ratio in London.	Growing successfully/meeting housing aspiration	Housing. Infrastructure. Economic prosperity. Supporting the vulnerable.
Twentieth most ethnically diverse area in England and the second most religiously diverse.	Growing successfully/meeting housing aspirations	Strong and cohesive. Economic prosperity. Supporting the vulnerable.
A successful city suburb and high proportion of people working in the knowledge economy.	Growing successfully/vital and viable town centres	Economic prosperity Town centres. Infrastructure.
A healthy and safe borough.	Securing infrastructure.	Health and well-being. Strong and cohesive. Infrastructure. Open spaces. Supporting the vulnerable. Community safety.
A youthful population but including older and vulnerable	Securing infrastructure/growing successfully/housing aspirations	Children and young people. Supporting the vulnerable.

people.		Strong and cohesive. Open spaces. Community safety. Infrastructure.
Pockets of deprivation, particularly in post-war poor quality council estates	Housing aspirations/growing successfully	Supporting the vulnerable. Community safety. Infrastructure. Regeneration and economic prosperity.
High car ownership but also has high public transport usage.	Growing successfully	Movement. Infrastructure.
A variety of townscapes including low density suburbs.	Meeting housing aspirations – growing successfully	Housing. Economic prosperity. Historic environment. Open spaces. Climate change.
20 town centres and many neighbourhood centres.	Vital and viable town centres	Town centres. Economic prosperity. Community safety. Infrastructure.
A large proportion of quality open spaces.	Environmentally sensitive/growing successfully	Open spaces. Climate change. Natural environment.
A range of valued biodiversity.	Environmentally sensitive	Natural environment. Climate change. Open spaces.
Environmental resources and climate change.	Environmentally sensitive	Waste. Infrastructure. Climate change. Natural environment.

5.2 Theme 1: Growing successfully.

5.2.1 Barnet is projected to continue to grow as a successful city suburb. London is a global city and Barnet contributes to its success because it is the home to a large number of people working in the knowledge economy who choose to live in the borough due to the high quality of life demonstrated through excellent schools attainment, attractive suburbs and open spaces, good health and well-being, low crime rates and diverse communities.

5.2.2 There are three dimensions to this theme:

- Ensuring the quality of life enjoyed in the city suburb is maintained and enhanced.
- Developing the business opportunities driven by the diverse and growing communities to deliver flourishing economic prosperity.
- Tackling disadvantage so that everyone in the borough can benefit from Barnet's economic success.

City suburb

5.2.3 Barnet is playing an active role in developing the suburban policy agenda. This is expected to strengthen with the new London Mayor and Barnet wishes to make an increasing contribution at the city-wide level. As the '**Voice of the Suburbs**', Barnet is a key player in researching and developing national, regional and local policy on successful city-suburbs and their key role in the wider city economy. This calls for greater national policy emphasis on suburbs so that they can, like Barnet, contribute to the economic success of city regions. The research recognises that success such as a high quality of life and above average wealth and jobs in the knowledge economy can bring problems such as the lack of affordable housing, road congestion and pressure of development. (Local Futures Group – The State of the Suburbs – an economic, social and environmental analysis of the English suburbs, 2007).

Business opportunities and economic prosperity

5.2.4 Barnet's future economic growth is projected to be increasingly in service-orientated employment and high level knowledge-based jobs with growing numbers of higher skilled workers in financial, business and professional services. The availability of commercial land and buildings together with investment in transport and housing which allows workers, suppliers and customers to access and be accessed by Barnet's businesses is crucial to economic growth. In order to fully integrate with London's growing financial and business service industry, and to strengthen its strategic and city-suburb role, Barnet will need to provide connections that are comparable and in some areas superior to rival non-central locations such as Croydon, Hammersmith and Stratford, as well as competing with non-metropolitan locations in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex.

5.2.5 Over the next 15 to 20 years a new economic hub at Brent Cross and Cricklewood will emerge as the *Gateway of North London*. The creation of over 20,000 new jobs and a new Metropolitan town centre will transform the sub regional economy of north London. The hub will be well connected by new and improved transport links to central London, including a new station on the Midlands Mainline route and Thameslink and form one of the critical nodes on the emerging London – Luton - Bedford growth corridor.

5.2.6 Barnet aims to be recognised as the home of a leading university with an international reputation. Middlesex University has ambitious relocation plans and is in the process of locating its main campus at Hendon with new state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities and resources centre alongside its existing buildings.

5.2.7 In addition to the existing and proposed town centre locations for business development, there are designated employment sites in the UDP and the London Plan. Barnet has one business park (the North London Business Park) and around 20 industrial estates, the latter being suitable for light industry, general industry and storage and distribution activities. Throughout London, and especially in North London, there is surplus employment land, although Barnet has fewer employment sites than other North London boroughs. The Mayor's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Industrial Capacity (March 2008) sets out a framework for planning, monitoring and managing this situation over the next 20 years. Barnet is classified as a borough that is suited to the same limited transfer of industrial sites to other uses. Potential sites for transfer could include redundant railway sidings and under-utilised industrial estates, particularly where such sites reap wider economic and sustainable development benefits.

5.2.8 It is vitally important to spatially plan for sites and facilities to accommodate waste management, transport facilities, logistics and warehousing. In order to meet London Plan apportionment targets, sites for waste management will be identified in the North London Waste Plan. In providing opportunities for other alternative uses surplus employment land is therefore a valuable asset. Environmental factors dictate that not all surplus employment land is suitable for residential use. Allowing mixed use development, including residential, as a replacement for employment use can improve the viability of a scheme. However, there are potential land-use conflicts and risks of new residents complaining about disturbance from noise and vibration from traffic or machinery. These problems may be overcome through spatial planning and the use of effective planning and environmental health controls.

5.2.9 The majority of employment in the borough is currently located in town centres, in office, retail and entertainment jobs. This aspect of promoting business opportunities in the borough is found in paragraphs 5.5.3. to 5.5.8.

Options

- Should existing employment sites be protected from changes of use and being converted or re-developed for residential development?

- Should we only allow the redevelopment of employment sites when mixed use development is proposed incorporating residential uses and replacement employment use?
- Should we allow the redevelopment of existing employment sites only if there is no proven need for other priority commercial uses, in particular, waste management, transport facilities or logistics/warehousing?

Improving the skills of local residents and ensuring economic prosperity

5.2.10. Although many of Barnet's residents are employed in highly skilled jobs that contribute to London's knowledge economy and have above average qualifications, it is important that there is a range of local jobs that suit different levels of skills and abilities. The types of service jobs found in Barnet can usually provide flexibility so that people can work part-time or from home. Our local strategic partners including the further and higher education institutions in Barnet (Barnet College and Middlesex University) play a key role in skills development and life-long learning and thereby help to enhance the prospects of students in developing the skills required for a growing borough in a successful city-suburb of London.

5.2.11. The London economy is likely to become more reliant on high levels of skills and knowledge-based competencies. It will attract people who migrate to the city from other parts of the UK, Europe and elsewhere. There are some skills mis-matches in many occupations including public sector jobs in health and education. There are also skills shortages in the construction, building and environment industries made more severe through the large building programmes at Kings Cross, White City, and the Olympics. Within Barnet there are some pockets particularly on the western side where residents have qualification and skills gaps. In a growing part of the Borough such residents may not benefit from the new development, regeneration and job opportunities being created, without improved access to skills and skills development.

Options

- Should the Council identify specific locations (in addition to existing ones) for further and higher education facilities in the borough working with providers and partners, including Middlesex University and Barnet College?
- Should the Council encourage the expansion of further and higher education institutions in order to expand the knowledge economy as the borough grows?
- Should the Council seek financial contributions for training from major development in order to overcome skill shortages in local service industries?

5.3 Theme 2. Delivering the infrastructure to accommodate growth and ensure sustainable development.

5.3.1 One of the key purposes of Barnet's Core Strategy is to ensure that the anticipated growth of the city-suburb can be achieved and remain successful whilst the necessary social, physical and environmental infrastructure is delivered. This will ensure that development is sustainable as well as maintaining and enhancing economic prosperity. This aim can only be achieved through aligning delivery of infrastructure through partnership working and agreeing strategic planning priorities. A key challenge is transport infrastructure provision to enable sustainable movement as the population expands.

5.3.2 There are three dimensions to this theme:

- Movement: Ensuring that people can move around the borough efficiently for journeys to work, leisure, education and shopping.
- Community Infrastructure: Ensuring that the social and community infrastructure (schools, hospitals and health facilities, and religious meeting places) are in place.

- Implementation of the LDF: Preparing a 'Core Strategy Implementation Framework' in order to plan, monitor and manage infrastructure requirements over the plan period, incorporating a range of funding mechanisms and future funding streams in addition to Section 106 contributions.

Balancing Barnet's changing travel needs

5.3.3. Barnet is well served by public transport for radial travel; it has high levels of car ownership and as a suburban location is reliant on the car for many necessary journeys. The borough also suffers from congested transport modes and roads in peak movement periods. Whilst residents may choose to commute by public transport, there is a strong desire to own a car for other trip purposes, particularly for outer suburban areas and orbital movements where alternative movement choices are limited. Low density suburbs can in some cases be commercially unattractive to public transport operators as demand is spread over a wide area, but there are plans to improve capacity particularly in those areas of the borough where growth and significant population expansion is planned, especially the west side of the borough on the A5 corridor.

5.3.4. Expected traffic movements in these growth areas have resulted in investment being pursued for access improvements to existing public transport interchanges. For example, within the Brent Cross Cricklewood and West Hendon regeneration area, Colindale and Mill Hill East tube stations and also highlighted is the need for improvements on the strategic road network, especially the A406 (North Circular Road).

5.3.5. A number of well served town centres are already public transport hubs and there are opportunities to increase the density of activity within these centres so that people will be able to access local services with a choice of transport means, as well as using a car. Planned development and enhancement programmes in town centres will provide opportunities to improve the public realm, public transport services, short-trip parking and accessibility; making town centres more attractive places to visit and sustainable locations for enhancement and new developments.

5.3.6. Progressively, more services are provided online and many businesses in Barnet are home based. Increasing use of information technology allows employees to work from home in more flexible working patterns and lifestyles. This pattern of work is likely to increase in the future and lead to a reduction in the need for 'commuter' types of travel. Patterns of movement may change as on-line shopping expands (particularly food and convenience) and a growth in 'leisure shopping' may impact on traffic. Traffic monitoring undertaken by the council around Brent Cross shows that the North Circular Road can be busier on a Sunday than it is mid-week. IT infrastructure and wireless technology can be enabled through the spatial planning system and new housing and commercial development so as to improve sustainability and quality of life.

5.3.7. Increasing travel demand without proportionate infrastructure investment leads to increased congestion and reduced reliability of transport services. Improvements to rail services in the borough in the medium term will have beneficial impacts but in the short term, including tube upgrades, Thameslink and bus enhancements, are unlikely to do more than address current problems with reliability and overcrowding. For road based travel, congestion is increasing throughout the day. Reducing car use can tackle congestion and is the option generally favoured across the capital over increasing the capacity of the road network, particularly in urban areas. In suburban areas this is more challenging, except in some town centres, as there are often fewer alternatives. The reallocation of road space from general traffic to specific modes is an alternative that has been widely adopted. Increased priority for public transport helps make it more attractive, but does so at the risk of further increasing congestion and traffic displacement elsewhere on the highway network. Therefore, whilst challenging options Barnet's particular highways and movement circumstances need to be sensitively considered so as not to alienate car users and other transport modes.

5.3.8. As some 60% of journeys in London's suburbs are made by private car, choice of transport remains a real quality of life factor. People in Barnet choose to own and use a car because it suits their needs. Although excessive car travel may have dis-benefits for society as a whole, at an individual level the flexibility, comfort

and reliability offer benefits which people are prepared to pay a considerable premium for. It is clear that very high quality alternative options need to be in place to get people to voluntarily alter car use – and without these options already in place, effective road user charging schemes are unlikely to gain support as a means of controlling road space in the borough.

5.3.9 The suburbs of London and Barnet in particular do not benefit from the levels in public transport investment of other parts of the Capital, such as the Olympic sites, Crossrail and Central London, despite the high growth target. A balanced and sustainable approach towards use of the car, public transport, walking and cycling should therefore be fully considered that is realistic and based on sound evidence.

Options

- Should the car, given its wider reliance and choice of movement qualities remain as an important movement mode in a growing and changing borough?
- Should we harness changes in the type of street car, for example, hybrid/electric vehicles, and car pooling, through Green Travel Plans?
- Should transport capacity in the borough be increased for example on orbital and east / west routes, or the ability to travel be restricted in ways that make non-public transport usage less attractive such as limited parking provision or should parking be increased in say town centres to help short-trip shoppers/users?
- Should major investment in roads be deployed or should some road space in the borough be reallocated for example to bus lanes in order to encourage more alternative modes of travel?
- In providing a choice of means of travel what alternative methods for sustainable movement should be promoted?
- Should traffic congestion be addressed through localised increases in road capacity?
- What more can be done to improve mobility in the borough?

Providing community services for sustainable communities

5.3.9. Barnet has a reputation for an excellent quality of life for most residents, with the majority of the population satisfied with the services provided by the Council. As the borough grows in the future it is essential that this quality of life is sustained and that community services continue to address needs rather than being diminished or undermined by the planned growth. Many services and facilities are provided by the Council's partners such as the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sector and residents often have choice in provision. It is, however, essential that the scale of provision is known so that funding for this community infrastructure is provided. The government's announcement of Housing Growth Area Funding support to Barnet as a growing 'Opportunity Borough' and the Community Infrastructure Levy will potentially assist future funding of infrastructure, together with traditional Section 106 funding and the Barnet Financing Plan.

5.3.10. Within the major regeneration areas the Council has researched the need for education and health facilities that will result from the growth in population, for example, new primary schools are proposed at Mill Hill East and Colindale AAP growth locations, and existing schools in Brent Cross/Cricklewood will be replaced to higher standards and larger capacity. The Council's Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme (PSCIP) will deliver a new generation of primary schools fit for the 21st century, funded through the sale of surplus land and Section 106 contributions.

5.3.11. The health of Barnet's population is generally better than the UK average but the public is concerned that there are too few GPs and that local hospitals do not provide sufficiently high standards of care. In particular, there is a need for acute health care to be upgraded or for new facilities at certain locations such as Brunswick Park, Finchley and Colindale. The Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT) is a local strategic partner and is developing a strategy for services to meet the needs of the borough within the context of NHS London's

health strategy: A Framework for Action.

5.3.12. Within health and social care the intention is to shift the focus away from intensive and institutionalised care such as residential care homes towards an earlier and better targeted allocation of services, preventing or delaying the onset of ill health and enabling well-being and engagement.

5.3.13. A major concern for the LSP and the Council is to encourage opportunities to maintain and improve the health of all residents. An important aspect of the quality of life of the city suburb is the contribution to healthier sustainable environments and neighbourhoods. Strands 1, 2 and 3 of the Three Strands Approach to planning, development and regeneration capture the interdependence of protecting open spaces for leisure and recreation uses, enhancing the best of the suburbs which present healthy and safe neighbourhoods, and growth that provides quality and sustainable regeneration. Well planned mixed use areas carefully design buildings, open spaces and neighbourhoods can “design out” crime and help to reduce the fear of crime. As the Borough grows, new neighbourhoods emerge and existing suburban and town centres change, sensitive planning of uses, activities, open spaces, etc can improve community safety. Greater collaboration with the Police and Community Safety Partnerships inputting to the spatial planning to these areas will enhance safer neighbourhoods. Spatial planning can address unhealthy lifestyles, such as obesity, through spatial solutions including the location of accessible parks, open spaces, leisure facilities and an attractive and safe public realm which encourages walking and cycling. In Barnet there are a number of facilities for leisure, sport and recreation, both indoor and outdoor. Many of these are private clubs and others are provided through Greenwich Leisure Ltd and cover a wide range of sports and recreation. Many people enjoy using parks, playing fields and other open spaces, such as allotments, for leisure and healthy exercise and the borough contains a high proportion of these areas compared with more densely developed parts of London. The Council is carrying out an appraisal of playing fields and open spaces so as to ascertain the need of open spaces for leisure and recreation.

5.3.14. There are a number of other community facilities, such as meeting rooms, relating to the diverse faith groups in the borough. For many groups it has proved difficult to maintain or extend existing buildings due to obsolescence, site constraints or the high value of land in the borough together with an inability to mitigate their impact on the local area. This has led to some people having to travel outside the borough to meet for worship and other religious related activities.

5.3.15. The spatial planning system can ensure inclusive and accessible suburbs for all generations in new developments. The LDF Core Strategy will seek to secure life time home standards and minimum contributions to wheelchair accessible housing and commercial buildings and special needs housing for a growing older population.

Options

- Should the Council encourage the joint use of new and existing community facilities? What uses can be sensitively located together?
- Should the Council protect existing community facilities as well as sport, leisure and recreation facilities, where fully utilised, from displacement by development, ensuring re-provision of facilities in those instances where development takes place?
- Should community facilities only be allowed in specific locations where they are accessible by public transport and where there are on-street parking constraints, such as town centres or growth areas?
- Should the Council plan spatially for healthier lifestyles and assist in tackling wider community issues around healthier neighbourhoods and counter growing obesity problems?
- Should the Core Strategy require a greater contribution towards special needs housing and life time homes to accommodate older and disabled residents.

The Core Strategy Implementation Framework

5.3.15 The Core Strategy Implementation Framework is being prepared based on the evidence contained in the document 'Investing in a First Class City Suburb – Barnet Economic Strategy' produced by PricewaterhouseCoopers in October 2007. This outlines the infrastructure requirements to meet the existing residents and businesses in Barnet and the growth projected to take place over the next 10 to 15 years.

5.4 Theme 3. Meeting housing aspirations.

5.4.1 There will be an increased need for housing in the borough so as to accommodate the rising number of households and rising aspirations of more to own their own homes. The Council wishes to help residents take a property and home journey from renting to home ownership through appropriate stages and recognises that housing affordability is a major challenge in Barnet.

5.4.2 There are three dimensions to this theme:

- Housing development will increase so as to meet the needs of a growing population
- Development must meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population and the aspiration for owner occupation and low cost home ownership
- Development to be of the highest standards of design and layout so as to create sustainable new communities.

The number and distribution of new housing development

5.4.3. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) published in February 2008, provides the strategic basis for housing policies in the Core Strategy. The allocation of housing in Barnet over the ten year period 2007/08 to 2017/18 is 20,550. Other policies relate to maximising the potential of sites, improving housing choice, including a strategic target of 50% affordable housing, and meeting special housing needs.

5.4.4 Government policy, the London Plan and Barnet's UDP policies support protection of the green belt and metropolitan open land from development except in exceptional circumstances. With over 3,156 ha of such land making up nearly 37% of the Borough's area the green belt and metropolitan open land represent one of the major challenges to new development in Barnet.

5.4.5. The Three Strands Approach to development, planning and regeneration provides the vision for sustainable development: protection of open spaces, enhancement of the suburbs, and targeted growth in designated areas. This strategy allows for growth in housing and employment to be accommodated within the existing built up area of the borough on 'brownfield' or previously developed land, and concentrates new development in the most accessible locations around public transport nodes and town centres where social and physical infrastructure is to be improved.

5.4.6. This broad approach can meet the sustainable design principles for a compact city in making the best use of development sites, respecting local character of the built and green environment, providing for a mix of uses, being safe, attractive and accessible to all users. It can also contribute to the adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change. Most importantly, the green belt and the one-third of the borough that comprises green open spaces, is protected from future urbanisation and development to ensure a high quality suburb.

5.4.7. The *London-Luton-Bedford coordination corridor* is a growth area of regional importance. Development has been identified in the western side of the borough at Brent Cross as well as Colindale and Mill Hill East as Barnet's strategic contribution to the corridor. Partnerships are developing with North West London boroughs (Brent, Camden and Harrow) and the GLA, with inter-regional co-ordination partnerships emerging in the future, to plan sustainable growth between London and the areas linked physically and economically along this corridor outside London.

5.4.8. The Council's partners have responsibilities for delivering housing, including Registered Social Landlords, Barnet Homes, private developers and land owners. The Council and its partners are also responsible for ensuring that the physical, environmental, social and community infrastructure required for both existing and growing communities is provided. The government's Planning Policy Statement 3 - Housing, advises that high quality housing should aim to create places that meet the needs of people, maintain and improve local character, and are accessible to open spaces, give choice to transport options and local facilities.

Options

- The Council, along with its partners is focusing major housing and economic growth on the west side of the borough in the strategically identified London – Luton – Bedford coordination corridor where regeneration potential and brownfield site availability is greatest. Is this a sustainable approach to planned growth or are there alternative locations where growth should go?
- Should the focus of enhancement and major infill housing development be within sustainable locations such as the town centres of Chipping Barnet, Edgware, Finchley Central, New Barnet, North Finchley and Whetstone, and major arterial corridors with good public transport accessibility? If not, what other locations should we consider for inclusion/exclusion?
- Should growth be allowed to take place across all parts of the borough or should the focus of housing growth and strategic development be targeted in order to protect the high quality suburbs?
- Should we only consider housing development when it is accessible or can be made accessible by a choice of means of transport?

Sustainable design principles

5.4.9. Barnet is a successful city suburb in a dynamic global city and in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment issues of sustainable design should be addressed.

5.4.10. Barnet has examples of first class conservation areas such as Hampstead Garden Suburb and Mill Hill and a rich range of fine historic buildings. There is the opportunity to seek the highest standards in new development. This should result in neighbourhoods that will continue to stand the tests of time even as Barnet continues to change and grow and pressure increases on the built and natural environment. The government's advisor on urban design, CABI, has prepared guidance, for example, 'Towards Excellence in Urban Design' and English Heritage's document, 'Suburbs and the Historic Environment' deals with suburban issues.

Options

- Should we, as part of Strand 2 of the Three Strands Approach, seek to 'enhance' the borough's high quality suburbs and historic areas further by protection from intensive development and infill?
- Should we expect different standards of design in different parts of the borough to reflect variations in the quality of local environments, or should good basic or high quality design be sought everywhere?
- Should we provide more detailed guidance to developers and residents on urban design throughout the borough or in specific targeted development locations?

Low density suburbs

5.4.11. The new Mayor of London has shown strong support for London's suburbs. Barnet and other quality suburbs are vital for London's success. The Issues and Options report anticipates a new direction and strengthening of strategic policy direction on suburbs recognising their unique role and contribution to the economy and quality of life of the Capital. However, most of Barnet's suburbs are not designated as conservation areas which benefit from statutory protection. Barnet's 18 conservation areas include Hampstead Garden Suburb and some other small enclaves of classic suburbs, and attractive former villages such as Mill

Hill, Monken Hadley and Totteridge. Planning applications are considered against the London Plan and a suite of UDP policies on the built environment, the latter which will be replaced by the LDF in due course. This suite of policies refer to the commitment of the Council to demand the highest standards of design in new buildings (including extensions and modifications to existing buildings) and spaces in order to maintain and improve the character of the borough. Planning applications within conservation areas and adjoining them will be refused if they fail to preserve or enhance their character or appearance.

5.4.12. There is increasing evidence and mounting concern, both locally within Barnet's lower density suburbs, and London generally that residential gardens are vulnerable to new developments, particularly housing developments and urban-type infill. This can incrementally erode the character and sustainability of the suburbs and reduce the supply of larger family housing plots. Such concerns are of national debate and particularly acute in high value attractive suburbs, like Barnet, where development pressure is intense. Where there is clearly identified brownfield opportunity sites and housing targets will be met there is an argument that garden in fill developments is unnecessary and harmful to suburbs.

Options

- Should we continue our existing approach to protecting and enhancing the suburbs and built environment, as outlined above?
- Should we be more specific about the character of the suburbs that are to be respected and enriched?
- Should the Core Strategy seek to resist loss of gardens in lower density suburbs where this erodes the character of areas and reduces the supply of large single housing plots, particularly when there is sufficiently identified brownfield sites allocated to meet the Borough's housing targets.
- Should we protect large properties as family houses with gardens to provide a sustainable mix of sizes and to preserve the character of an area and Barnet suburbs generally? Should we allow conversions into smaller units if this helps preserve the character of a former family house?
- Should we expect Design and Access Statements submitted with planning applications to set out how they have sought to respect and contribute to local character and distinctiveness and sustainability targets?
- Should we review design guidance for extensions to existing housing to reflect greater diversity and specific community and cultural needs of a changing population?

Meeting the housing needs of the diverse communities in Barnet

5.4.12 In order to create mixed and balanced communities we have to maximise housing choice providing a range of sizes and types of accommodation that can increase access to affordable and decent new homes. This includes homes for those who need large places to live including families; homes for smaller households such as single key workers or older and vulnerable people who may require accommodation in order to live independently.

5.4.13 Barnet's housing target of a minimum of 20,055 new 'homes' by 2016/17 amounts to less than 7% of the existing housing stock of 133,000 units. About 62% of the stock comprises houses (terraced, semi-detached or detached) and 38% are flats and maisonettes. Almost 60% have 3 or more bedrooms, and only a very small percentage contain only one bedroom. Housing tenure in Barnet is similar to other outer London boroughs, with 72% in owner occupation, but more housing rented privately rather than in the social rented sector compared with other outer London boroughs at 16% and 13% respectively.

5.4.14. Barnet's UDP sets out a dwelling mix policy which requires from major developments, a mix of unit sizes to meet housing need in the borough. A preferred mix for all new development is not specified although a mix for social and intermediate housing is set out in Barnet's Affordable Housing SPD (February 2007). The Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Housing (November 2005) suggests a London-wide

need for housing of different sizes and tenures. In the case of social rented housing the proposed mix is to be 42% 4 bedrooms or more, 39% 2 to 3 bedrooms and 19% 1 bedroom. Barnet, as part of the North London Housing sub-region is preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. On the basis of this evidence we will update the need and demand for housing in Barnet and set out the proportion of households that require market or affordable (social or intermediate) housing. Given the size and importance of the private rented sector the Council is also undertaking a borough-wide private housing stock condition and community occupancy survey to better understand its contribution to housing supply in the borough.

5.4.15. The housing needs of the borough should take into account a number of factors including the size of households, affordability and special needs. Although the largest types of households in Barnet are families that comprise 2 adults with 2 or more dependent children (25%), 22% are pensioners, 16% are single adults and 22% are 2 adults either with no children or with non-dependent children. We know from the household projections that Barnet's households are forecast to get smaller; the average household size will fall to 2.29 persons per household by 2016. The household size makeup is therefore very mixed. Add to this the variations in wealth, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental disability combined with the relative attractiveness of the borough for different types of households and a complex picture of future housing need emerges.

5.4.16. Barnet's Core Strategy has to address the demands for family accommodation at lower densities while meeting the demands for higher densities driven by the planned growth and regional housing targets in the London Plan and the need to protect the green belt and precious open spaces. As well as accommodating families development should provide shared or multi-generational usage, particularly for a growing older population, to ensure the delivery of truly mixed communities in lifetime neighbourhoods.

5.4.17. Specialised residential housing and care homes are generally well-provided for in Barnet to serve its local population needs. Increasingly, the Barnet Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Council's Adult Social Services have concerns of overprovision and associated costs for non-local need. The spatial planning system can ensure that specialist residential care developments should be based on clear evidence of local needs. Councils are required to make provision in the future for gypsies and travellers within their areas. In the meantime, the needs for gypsies and travellers will be considered in line with existing government guidance and UDP policy.

Options

- Should we set a preferred mix of dwelling sizes and types of housing for all tenures with a presumption to include a significant element of family housing unless the developer can demonstrate a demand for smaller homes that does not undermine suburban character or local distinctiveness? What weight should be given to meeting housing need?
- Should the Council seek a more appropriate mix of affordable housing tenures, particularly to support its housing strategy objective of encouraging people to progress through the housing journey from rented to full home ownership? Should the council adopt recent London Plan tenure mix of low cost home ownership, intermediate as well as rented?
- Given the higher density planned areas for growth in Colindale, Brent Cross/Cricklewood and Mill Hill East, should we prioritise new family-sized homes elsewhere in the borough, even if this reduces the overall number of units we can deliver for smaller households (but could increase the number of bed-spaces and residential floor space)?
- Should we expect smaller homes to be delivered throughout Barnet, or only in specific locations where there is higher density development around public transport locations or regeneration areas?
- Should we adopt a policy of relating housing targets to a minimum floor space requirement per unit to ensure high quality standards of internal space?

- Should the Core Strategy only support specialist residential care homes in those parts of the Borough where there is a clear demonstrable evidence of local need, supported by the local PCT and Council's Adult Social Services.

Affordable housing

5.4.18. Barnet's Housing Strategy (2003 to 2010) demonstrates that there is an unmet need for affordable housing in the borough and house prices are on average within the top third of London boroughs. The acute housing shortage has led to many households spending long periods in temporary housing, overcrowded conditions and bed and breakfast accommodation. High house prices partly reflect the attractiveness of Barnet's suburban environment but mean that many sections of the community are priced out of market housing. One of the implications is that people may leave Barnet so as to find cheaper locations, or choose to live in overcrowded conditions. Some may take on debts that they are unable to afford. There are therefore social, economic and equitable dimensions to the lack of affordable housing in Barnet (and London as a whole).

5.4.19. The current UDP policy states that, having regard to the Council's target that half the housing provision over the period to 2016 should be affordable; the Council will seek to negotiate the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing on sites of ten or more units (gross) or on 0.4 hectares in site area. This approach is supported by the London Plan policy that 50% of new housing development should be affordable. The new Mayor of London has indicated that the 50% target is too prescriptive and in many cases unviable. The Council has also expressed concerns about the 50% target and the impact of the ten unit threshold on the delivery of smaller housing schemes submitted just below the threshold. Initial data appears to indicate that a side-effect of this policy is of a significant decline in new development of 10 to 14 units and an increase in schemes of 9 units with no affordable housing, bringing into question the 'affordability' and 'viability' of a top-down prescriptive target and threshold policy.

5.4.20. In February 2007 the Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Affordable Housing in order to clearly set out our approach to affordable housing provision and provide detailed advice and implementation guidance to developers, including Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Council is keen to encourage a 'housing journey' for as many as possible so as to meet the aspirations of home ownership. Housing and planning policies and strategies can assist in providing greater flexibility between tenures, maximising housing choice on a lifelong pathway from social rented through intermediate and into owner occupation.

5.4.21. The London Plan is part of the statutory "Development Plan" and the Barnet LDF must be in general conformity with its key policies and objectives including affordable housing policy. However, there are local variations across London in terms of local housing needs and development issues and this includes Barnet where often the 50% at 10 units or more are not deliverable.

5.4.22. Evidence has clearly shown in Barnet since the adoption of the UDP in 2006 that the introduction of a 50% affordable housing target at 10 units or more has actually resulted in a real reduction in affordable housing and housing development in total on small to medium-sized residential sites, as a direct impact of London Plan Policy. In the last two years since the 50% policy took effect there have been very few residential developments of between 10-14 units and very few of 15 to 25 units (except 100% RSL publicly-funded developments) with affordable housing contributions coming forward. Subsequently there are minimum affordable housing contributions in this category. This is principally due to the effect that the 50% policy impacting at 10 units or more has on small to medium-sized sites in Barnet and that they become very marginal in viability terms or undeliverable for development, management, or site constraint reasons with different tenures. There is concern of inflexible top-down targets and a low trigger threshold resulting in developers submitting residential developments up to 9 units. One approach to address the viability constraints is to introduce a more flexible policy which in broad terms meets the London Plan target for the Borough overall, and is therefore in general conformity, but enables more smaller to medium-sized sites to

come forward for new and viable residential developments, thereby increasing overall housing supply and outputs.

Options

- Given the need to be in general conformity with the current London-wide target of 50% affordable housing on 10 units or more but taking into account an expected shift in Mayoral policy direction, should the Council consider retaining or changing its existing approach to affordable housing with a different threshold where it is required for new residential development to reflect local circumstances, need and viability of delivery?
- This could be achieved in three ways:
 - (1) Retain the existing UDP policy of 50% affordable housing on sites of 10 or more units, or
 - (2) Introduce a more flexible sliding scale with a lower contribution from smaller to medium sized sites (10 to 24 units) and the current 50% on larger sites (25 or more). A worked example of implementing a progressive contribution for a site of 50 units may only require 30% from the first 10 to 24 units (resulting in 6 affordable units) and 50% from the remaining 25 units (resulting in 12 units) a total of 18 units or 36%, or
 - (3) Should the 10 unit threshold be raised to 15 units where viability constraints reduce the deliverability of housing supply?
- Should we seek a greater contribution towards low cost home ownership and affordable housing that supports people and families through the housing journey towards full owner occupation?
- In what circumstances should we accept payment in lieu as opposed to on-site affordable housing in new residential development?
- Where viability is improved or greater public funding is available, should the Council seek to secure more contributions to affordable housing, particularly low cost housing?
- Should we seek mixed and balanced communities by delivering affordable housing in areas where that tenure is under-represented? Alternatively, should we focus on delivering affordable housing where it is most viable to do so and where a greater number of units can be achieved?

5.5 Theme 4. Planning for vitality and viability of a network of suburban town centres

5.5.1 Barnet's suburban town centres provide the economic, civic, retail, leisure and transport hubs in the borough and each has a special character.

5.5.2 There are three dimensions/objectives to this theme:

- Town centres are by their very make-up and geographical position sustainable locations for growth in jobs, housing retail and leisure floorspace.
- Town centres need to be well connected in movement terms so as to serve residents' needs and be accessible to workers and visitors.
- Town centres may need to change and develop as well as compete as growth takes place and Barnet becomes more diverse, and competition from out of centre and other nearby centre locations intensifies.

The role and function of suburban town centres in Barnet

5.5.3. Historically the core function of town centres in Barnet has been retail. The network of town centres is critical to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the borough. Brent Cross, the only regional shopping centre in London, provides the largest concentration of retail uses in the borough and is planned to become a metropolitan centre within the next 10 years. Edgware, a major centre, along with 14 district centres

and 5 local centres make up the town centre hierarchy in the borough. Two of the district centres, North Finchley and Chipping Barnet, are improving their offer of commercial and retail floorspace and may justify being re-classified as major town centres.

5.5.4. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) recognises the important contribution of town centres to the suburbs and local economies. The GLA is currently reviewing the town centre hierarchy in London so as to reflect changes in functions and catchment areas. Research for the GLA has demonstrated that resident – based consumer expenditure in the North London sub-region is anticipated to increase by over 45% between 2001 and 2016. Comparison goods (for example, fashion and clothing) expenditure is expected to double from £2.4bn to £4.8bn and convenience goods (for example, food) expenditure is expected to increase, but at a more modest rate of about 34% from £1.55bn to £2.1bn.

5.5.5. Barnet's Three Strand Approach to development, planning and regeneration promotes sustainable growth in town centres, particularly where there is capacity and high levels of accessibility by public transport. Brent Cross is London's only regional shopping centre and Barnet's largest shopping location, but it is not yet designated as a town centre in the London Plan. Plans are now in place, including specific development proposals to regenerate Brent Cross/Cricklewood. There is now an exciting opportunity to create a new "metropolitan" town centre for London and a sustainable mixed use centre for Barnet which underpins the wider regeneration and supports over 150,000 sq m of retail related development. Certain town centres, namely Edgware, North Finchley, Finchley Church End, Chipping Barnet and New Barnet have the potential for significant growth in retail floorspace, leisure activity, housing and offices, where viable, since major development opportunities have been identified. Other town centres have changed their functions from providing a range of comparison and convenience goods to become more dependent on leisure services and evening economy roles, (i.e. restaurants, cafes, bars and clubs) such as Golders Green and Whetstone. Some town centres retain the 'suburban' character or even a 'village' feel which is important to retain and enhance but such locations have limited capacity for major commercial growth, such as East Barnet or East Finchley.

5.5.6. Barnet recognises that the continued vibrancy and diversity of services offered in its town centres, neighbourhood centres and local parades of shops depends on access by all who want to use them. A balance must be found that encourages people to use local businesses in preference to out-of-town retail developments and this will be reflected in the provision of parking which encourages turnover whilst retaining facilities for loading and the disabled. Careful management is also required to protect our town centres from commuter parking by people travelling into Central London.

5.5.7. Having a variety of town centres with different functions provides diversity and choice for people living in and working in Barnet and also attracts people from elsewhere. Jobs in retail and other services make up more than half of all jobs in the borough. Town centres are not only the location of economic activity, but people working in Barnet also have access to services and facilities, thus increasing Barnet's attractiveness. The continuing vitality and viability and strengthening of Barnet's town centres economic position in London's town centre hierarchy is an important spatial and economic planning issue.

5.5.8 Suburban Barnet contains a large number of neighbourhood centres and local parades of shops. These shops fulfil a vital need for many residents without access to a car or who are reluctant to travel to larger centres. Neighbourhood centres can provide local services in sustainable locations, particularly for lower density suburbs, such as launderettes, hairdressers and cafes and these cater to different communities. These centres make a major contribution to the sustainability and cohesion of neighbourhoods. Shops in parades can provide opportunities for specialist services such as computer repairs or upholsterers and these can thrive because of lower overheads than in town centre locations.

Options

- With the planning policy framework in place and delivery plans at an advanced stage of development should the Council identify Brent Cross/Cricklewood as a new metropolitan town centre, providing it is mixed use and a sustainable centre?
- Where should we allow further shopping and commercial town centre related development to meet projected demand - within a limited number of the largest town centres, in any town centre, at one or more of the borough's existing out of centre retail parks - or should we allow retail expenditure to go outside the borough?
- Should we prioritise growth in retail expenditure to specific suburban town centres (Edgware, North Finchley, Finchley Church End, Chipping Barnet, New Barnet and Whetstone) where there are identified development opportunities?
- Should we seek to protect more 'local' neighbourhood centres and parades of shops in terms of their potential contribution to sustainable suburbs and shopping?
- Should we provide parking to support retail uses in town centres to better able to compete with other centres and particularly out of centre retail parks and shops?

Enabling change and enhancing in town centres

5.5.9 In order to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres, government guidance recommends that retail floorspace is concentrated within the core of commercial locations and that other town centre uses such as leisure, offices and community facilities are allowed on the fringe of the core. The reasoning is that people do not want to walk unnecessarily great distances with their shopping and it is therefore convenient to concentrate shops in the core area. Other town centre users, such as office workers, visitors seeking entertainment or residents using community facilities, are less likely to be constrained and can walk further from car parks or bus stops.

5.5.10. Some of Barnet's town centres are small enough for the whole area to be considered as suitable for a mix of retail and other uses whereas the larger towns are mainly linear and it could take half an hour to walk from one end to the other, for example, Finchley Church End or Chipping Barnet.

5.5.11. If planning policies are very restrictive with regard to allowing changes in use, for example, from retail to businesses, it can result in high vacancy rates and a decline in the vitality of the centre as workers' and visitors' disposable income supports town centre and retail activities. There will always be changes taking place in the network of town centres, particularly in a borough as large as Barnet with such a diversity of centres and anticipated growth. People's habits change, businesses flourish or decline at the national, city and local level, and certain factors such as the fear of crime fluctuate. Planning policies can make a difference to the health, economic future or otherwise of town centres.

5.5.12. Encouraging greater housing development within or on the edge of some of Barnet's town centres is an option that allows mixed uses such as flats above shops which add vibrancy and greater all round activity. This can provide attractive locations for people who want to live close to services, jobs and public transport, for example, older people, single people and couples. Town centre locations may not be suitable for the majority of families or for those who need access to their own car, as parking is likely to be restricted.

Options

- Should we restrict the loss of shopping uses in town centres, or only in the core of town centres, allowing more flexible approaches and changes of use at the edges of high streets and secondary locations?

- Should we allow a major expansion and concentration of shopping related development in the larger centres (Edgware, North Finchley, Finchley Church End, Chipping Barnet, New Barnet and Whetstone)?
- Should we allow substantial, mixed-use development in all town centres? Should we be flexible in allowing conversions or should we protect office and commercial uses from changes of use to residential?
- Should we allow more conversions of town centre offices in locations along high streets and main arterial routes to mixed uses including residential, for example, in Finchley Central and Whetstone, where there is significant vacant office accommodation?

Managing the evening and night-time and entertainment economy

5.5.13 Government guidance recommends that the Local Development Framework should contain policies which help to manage the evening and night-time economy in appropriate centres. These policies should encourage a range of complementary evening and night-time uses, including tourism, leisure and cultural facilities, which appeal to a wide range of ages and social groups. Policies should take into consideration the scale of leisure development the Council wants to encourage and its likely impact, including cumulative impact on the character and function of the centre, anti-social behaviour, crime and residential amenities.

5.5.14 Encouraging a mix of uses including residential in town centres means that there are likely to be people in the area at different times of the day and night making multi-purpose use of facilities such as car parks and local services and providing informal surveillance. However, it can also cause conflict if the uses are incompatible, such as night clubs in the vicinity of family housing. Changes in government legislation that allow for later and staggered closing times through licensing laws, and changes to the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order that distinguish between pubs, restaurants and hot food takeaways, introduce mechanisms to control some issues associated with the evening and night-time economy.

Options

- In recognition of licensing policies, should we limit the evening and night-time economy to a few town centres, for example, North Finchley, and if so, which centres, and what should be the criteria, for example, where they reach 'saturation zone' in terms of activities and undesirable impacts?
- Should we encourage more housing development in town centres to increase evening and night-time activities, and if so, should it be allowed only on the edge or also above other uses such as shops and commercial uses?
- Should some town centres be designated and be the focus of cultural development and leisure such as N12 North Finchley and Chipping Barnet?

5.6 Theme 5. Planning, development and growth to be environmentally sensitive.

5.6.1 Barnet's Environmental Policy – A Greener City-Suburb 2008/09 – 2011/12 provides local leadership in advocating the sensitive use of non-renewable resources and minimising local impacts of releasing carbon dioxide. Barnet's Core Strategy has a role in ensuring that planning, development and regeneration will be environmentally sensitive.

5.6.2. There are three dimensions to this theme:

- Choosing locations for development and change which have the least impact on environmental resources.
- Making the best use of Barnet's environmental resources, now and in the future.

- Ensuring that mitigation measures are in place where necessary.

5.6.3. Barnet is one of the fastest growing boroughs in London and is projected to continue to grow rapidly in terms of population and employment. This growth presents a number of opportunities in the context of a global city and a successful city-suburb, and challenges on how we can ensure that development is sustainable. Sustainable development has four elements – economic, social, environmental and equitable. The UK Government has adopted five guiding principles to achieve sustainable development. (Securing the Future - UK government's sustainable development strategy 2005). These are: living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly. For Barnet, our Sustainable Community Strategy will act as a means of building on the success as a successful city- suburb and generate the commitment to tackle climate change within the whole community to ensure that the very attraction of Barnet – its clean and green environment – is protected for current and future generations.

5.6.4. In June 2007 we published an innovative Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Sustainable Design and Construction clearly setting out the Council's local interpretation of sustainable development and the full extent of issues that it considers to be important to achieving sustainable design in a growing and changing city-suburb.

5.6.5. The London Plan positions London as an exemplary sustainable world city, based on strong economic growth. A city which is able to contain future housing needs within its boundaries and minimise London's impact on climate change through better use of energy, water and waste. The broad development strategy of the London Plan is therefore to make the best use of land and other finite resources; to ensure development is accessible by a choice of means of transport and takes account of available and planned infrastructure; ensures that physical constraints (such as flood risks) are taken into account; promotes mixed use development, the integration of open spaces and well designed neighbourhoods that are safe and improve the quality of life of residents and diverse communities.

5.6.6. Barnet's adopted UDP contains the guiding principle to plan for sustainable development. This principle is implemented through policies to conserve natural resources, avoid development that encroaches on floodplains, make the best use of brownfield sites, protect and enhance the high quality and character of the borough's built and open environment at an appropriate scale and encourage development in locations that reduce the need to travel.

Choosing sustainable locations for development

5.6.7. The Council's Three Strands Approach to planning, development and regeneration aims to make the best use of brownfield land and can be planned at higher densities, mainly in the western part of the borough, and in accessible town centres. These locations are either relatively well-served by public transport or will become better served as a result of planned regeneration and development. These locations will be developed with a mix of uses, encouraging the possibility of living and working in closer proximity, and will include the necessary social and community facilities nearby. These areas will therefore offer exemplary sustainable locations and furthermore, will be planned so as to include the highest standards of design and construction, including dealing with waste on site.

5.6.8. The Three Strands Approach also allows for the protection and enhancement of the borough's natural environment and biodiversity. Strand 1 **Protects** the Green Belt and other precious open spaces that contribute to Barnet's quality city suburbs. Strand 2 **Enhances** the traditional suburbs that are characterised by incidental open spaces, small parks, allotments, woodlands and watercourses as well as greenery provided by private gardens. Strand 3 allows planned **Growth** that will include enhanced access to open spaces, for example, Clitterhouse Fields and the Brent Reservoir. Planned development and regeneration could therefore increase the overall sustainability of the borough in terms of biodiversity through sensitive design and layout.

5.6.9. There are areas of the borough which lie within the floodplain of watercourses. These are often within

the green network of open spaces where their occasional flooding does not present a problem to human activity. The government recommends avoiding development in floodplains and local planning authorities must consult the Environment Agency on such proposals.

Options

- Should we expect development to provide evidence that the proposed location is sustainable or that it can be made so as a result of development, for example by improving access to public transport?
- Should we expect development to contribute to increased biodiversity as well as protecting existing habitats and species?

Climate change and living within environmental limits

5.6.10. An increasingly urgent aspect of sustainable development is climate change. Through the Core Strategy and Barnet's Environmental Policy we can take steps to reduce our impact and work collaboratively with partners towards the objective on climate change.

5.6.11. The Core Strategy can influence future development in the borough to make the fullest contribution to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change, in particular by minimising carbon dioxide, adopting sustainable design and construction measures and prioritising decentralised energy generation. There is also a role for the Core Strategy in tackling the existing building stock and pattern of development. 'Retrofitting' measures can tackle the 75% of carbon emissions generated by existing buildings.

5.6.12. Barnet's SPD on Sustainable Design and Construction sets out the Council's requirements for environmental design and construction management. The SPD sets out requirements on air, noise, water and habitat quality in order to achieve protection and enhancement of the environment. It also sets out requirements on energy, water, waste and materials in order to achieve the prudent use of natural resources. The SPD requirements are linked to existing national standards and guidance and will be subject to updating. The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) sets out the following targets for the long-term reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from a base date of 1990:

- 15% by 2010
- 20% by 2015
- 25% by 2020
- 30% by 2035

Options

- Should we continue our existing approach to sustainable design and construction, as outlined above in order to make Barnet one of London's most sustainable and environmentally responsible city-suburbs and borough?
- Should we consider climate change to be the overriding principle for new development in Barnet or should climate change be given equal weighting to other considerations, such as design considerations?
- Should the Core Strategy be primarily concerned with the mitigation of climate change or prioritise the need to adapt to future impacts?