



**Barnet Draft Local Plan (Reg 19)
Barnet Cycling Campaign response**

8th August 2021

Barnet Cycling Campaign is the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign ([LCC](#)). We represent the interests of cyclists living or working in the Borough of Barnet and aim to expand the opportunities for all to cycle safely in the borough.

The group has over 300 members in Barnet of all ages and abilities, including commuter, utility, sport and leisure cyclists. We encourage more active, healthy forms of travel and help to get people out on their bikes and riding on the roads in Barnet. We campaign to make streets in Barnet healthier, safer and an improved experience for all cyclists, walkers and public transport users.

Sincerely,

Charles Harvey, Ashley Grossman, Rachel Coleman, Jon Klaff, John Silvertown, Penny Lovatt, Peter Hale, Peter Ridehalgh, Charlotte French, Charles Jennings, Brian Atkinson, Jess Gold, John Mercer, Nick Starling, Tim Fearn
[Barnet Cycling Campaign](#)

Comments on Chapter 1 - Introduction	3
Comments on Ch.2 - Challenges and Opportunities.....	3
Comments on Ch.3 – Barnet’s Vision & Strategy	5
Comments on Ch. 4 - Growth and Spatial Strategy.....	5
Comments on Ch.5 – Housing	7
Comments on Ch. 6 - Character, Design & Heritage.....	7
Comments on Ch.7 - Town Centres	7
Comments on Ch.8 - Health and wellbeing.....	7
Comments on Ch.9 - Economy	8
Chapter 10 - Environment and Climate Change	8
Comments on Ch 11 - Transport & Communications.....	9
Chapter 12 Delivering the Local Plan.....	12

Comments on Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Local Plan should represent a significant opportunity to improve active travel in Barnet. We comment on the most relevant chapters and policies to show this needs to be prioritised.

We responded to the Reg 18 Local Plan in 2020 and this response retains those comments, where relevant. Since then, the borough published its Long Term transport strategy and we have all endured the pandemic, which will have unknown long term outcomes on the borough. Both of these influence our new comments.

Comments on Ch.2 - Challenges and Opportunities

The Local Plan refers to the impact of the Pandemic and identifies a clear benefit opportunity of the 15 Minute Neighbourhood. [2.1.4]. Prioritising sustainable Active Travel through walking is essential for this. However Cycling is omitted from the section which is curious as the leading '15 minute cities' in the world – Paris, Amsterdam, Copenhagen – all achieve this through enabling cycling.

The type of cycling that thrives in these cities is accessible to all ages and abilities. Sometimes, this is called "8-80 cycling" in reference to age, but it is also notable that these are also cities where women cycle more than men, school children cycle themselves to school, and people cycle well into old age. Mobility scooters tricycles and handcycles are a common sight on the paths too.

Why can't this apply to Barnet? It's not the hills and it's not the rain. Study after study has shown that the main impediment to mass-cycling is the lack of infrastructure to keep cyclists safe from motor vehicles. Of course, e-bikes offer significant benefit and it's worth remembering that e-bikes already outsell electric cars in the UKⁱ and are predicted to be half of all bike sales by 2025ⁱⁱ.

A 15-minute bike ride on safe, direct route would cover 2-5 miles, depending on age and ability which puts every citizen within reach of local parks, town centres and schools. It would mean quiet, zero-emission last-mile deliveries by cargo bikes rather than vans. A 15-minute borough would mean residents could stay active and healthy later in life, maintaining independence for longer.

Central to the 15-minute borough is the concept that more people can chose to walk or cycle to their local amenities rather than drive. This is 'modal shift' and it has already been achieved in many other London boroughs. It has revitalised local high streets, improved air quality and reduced noise pollution.

The Good Growth concept in the local plan should recognise that delivering a 15-minute city means fewer car journeys, especially unnecessary ones over short distances [which frees up previous road capacity for those with genuine needs].

This can be achieved through the local plan in several ways:

- Removing Car Dependency via the Planning Process [as hinted in the Good Grown concept [2.2.1]
- Using the IDP to deliver a network of safe cycling routes adhering to LTN1/20 guidelines for Cycle Infrastructure Design. This must include sufficient provision for secure cycle-storage at-destination and for residents without storage space in their homes.
- Low-cost measures such as traffic filtering, 20mph zones and pedestrian prioritisation to facilitate more walking and cycling. Based on the Healthy Streets Scorecard. Even basic measures such as pavement quality, continuous footways, high street clutter and pedestrian crossing timings can have a major impact on the experience of pedestrians. School streets and 20 mph limits improve safety and encourage parents and children to use active transport to school which has a major health and social benefit. The school run is 1/5th of rush hour traffic.
- Parking charges and road pricing to dissuade unnecessary journeys. It works in cities where it has been introduced including London, with the congestion charge. We need to make it clearer to people that if you drive your car unnecessarily you need to pay a bit more. 1/3rd of London car journeys are under 2km. Reducing this traffic would improve public transport speed.

Failure to deliver this will mean Barnet will grind to a halt. This is already happening as traffic exceeds pre-pandemic levels as people shy away from public transport as they lack viable alternatives.

This cannot be achieved without some honesty with people that it would mean fewer journeys by car – but this is a large part of the benefits and appeal. Despite some manufactured outcry from various critics, Low Traffic Neighbourhoodsⁱⁱⁱ (LTNs) have been shown to work and are popular with residents once correctly implemented.

Barnet already has several historic or de-facto LTNs where through traffic is restricted and no one ever proposes removing those. In fact, every Local Area Forum and most e-petitions to the council are for traffic calming, road safety and more parking restrictions. Residents are fed up with their roads being used by drivers as rat runs.

Comments on Ch.3 – Barnet’s Vision & Strategy

The vision statements need an additional paragraph referring to the benefits to health, wellbeing, local environments and climate change arising from the provision for active travel, which will be integral to sustainable development.

Concentrating the expected growth in Barnet’s population on key transport corridors and sustainable locations provides an essential and unmissable opportunity to provide for active travel, improving the character of Barnet’s town centres and the health and well-being of the population.

POLICY BSS01 Spatial Strategy for Barnet

We suggest that the Spatial Strategy for Barnet includes specific references and targets for active travel [Cycling and Walking] as a means to achieve the objectives laid out in B, C and D of the policy.

Comments on Ch. 4 - Growth and Spatial Strategy

Much of the proposed growth is in specific areas that will see higher density or along major thoroughfares - which is optimal for cycling. Provision of adequate local services, including nurseries, schools, healthcare, leisure and shops in line with changing demographics, are essential to minimise the need to travel long distances.

Policy GSS01 Delivering Sustainable Growth

The targets for growth are significant and cannot be delivered with traditional suburban car-centric transport and planning. Active travel, combined with public transport, is essential to achieving sustainable and ‘good’ growth

Policy GSS02 – Brent Cross Growth Area

We support the proposal to make walking and cycling the priority modes of transport in the Brent Cross town [4.12.3 This should be the default for all Growth Areas in the borough.

Policy GSS03 Brent Cross West Growth Area

We support the proposal for new and improved pedestrian and cycle routes to the new Brent Cross West. Safe cycling routes across the A5 and North Circular are vital to connect the borough.

POLICY GSS05 Edgware Growth Area

We support the policy to reduce congestion and improve the pedestrian experience. We recommend the policy includes commitments for safe cycle routes and cycle storage within the area to support that aim.

POLICY GSS06 Colindale Growth Area

We support the policy’s commitment to Healthy Streets, as should be the default for all parts of the Borough. We hope the mentioned Pedestrian and Cycle Routes are built to LTN1/20 standards rather than inappropriate shared paths.

POLICY GSS08 Barnet's District Town Centres

We welcome the inclusion [g, h] of Sustainable Travel and Active Travel in the policy for Barnet's town centres. We suggest that noise-reduction targets [c] consider the noise from through traffic, which has a major negative impact on town centre appeal.

We propose that the Borough uses its powers to allow conversion an unused retail unit in each town centre for secure cycle storage [similar to www.bike-drop.com/] which would be especially attractive to owners of E-bikes and large adaptive cycles and cargo bikes.

Policy GSS09 Existing and Major New Transport Infrastructure

We support development and regeneration close to major transport infrastructure if safe cycling and walking routes are provided in the locality. Provision for safe walking and cycling routes, and secure cycle storage, should be supported at all new and existing transport hubs named in the policy. [For example, there are a number of stations in the borough without a safe pedestrian crossing directly outside].

Policy GSS10 – Estate Infill

We welcome the mention of active travel but recommend the phrase 'promote' is replaced by 'enable' and includes commitment to the aforementioned guidelines [LTN 1/20. Healthy Streets]. The phrase 'appropriate level of parking' sounds worryingly open-ended.

Policy GSS11 Major Thoroughfares

An additional 3,350 new homes along Barnet's main road corridors will add to traffic congestion unless the alternatives are much better.

As mentioned in 4.26.3 and the policy, access to walking and cycling networks is vital and that means installing safe cycle tracks directly along these corridors, especially on strategic routes like the A5, A598 and the entire length of the A1000. We are engaging with the Council separately about the Experimental Lane on the A1000 and we absolutely support it being made permanent and improved.

Policy GSS12 Car Parks

The proviso that car parking spaces will be released 'if surplus to requirements or re-provided' will not deliver the sort of change needed to achieve other policies on active travel and climate change.

Policy GSS13 Strategic Parks and Recreation

We support the establishment of a Regional Park within the Brent Valley / Barnet Plateau area but ask for fuller details of what is proposed. We ask for good cycling facilities through the park. We support the idea of developing the Strategic parks at King George, Copthall and West Hendon with dedicated cycling routes within. There should also be safe cycling routes to these parks so that people can cycle to them as well.

Comments on Ch.5 – Housing

Policy HOU03 Residential Conversions

When converting existing dwellings to increase occupancy, consideration should be given to provision of adequate and affordable cycle storage both on site and with on-street cycle hangars.

Policy HOU04: Specialist Housing

Proposals for student accommodation should also demonstrate that they are easily accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, particularly between the accommodation and the educational establishment.

Comments on Ch. 6 - Character, Design & Heritage

Policy CDH02 Sustainable and Inclusive Design

We support the commitment to sustainable design and the BREEAM method.

Policy CDH03 Public Realm

We support the use of Healthy Streets Indicators but the policy needs to set minimum acceptance criteria for healthy streets scores. Barnet performed poorly in the recent Healthy Streets Scorecards^{iv} at 24th place. We want Barnet to be the leading Outer London borough for Healthy Streets.

Policy CDH07 Amenity Space and Landscaping

The Local Plan has no clear policy covering the widespread conversion of front gardens into driveways [outside of conservation areas]. We suggest this is required to avoid degrading the local character of all streets and the environmental damage caused by loss of drainage and biodiversity.

Comments on Ch.7 - Town Centres

Policy TOW01 Vibrant Town Centres

This policy fails to recognise that town centres are unattractive because they are dominated by polluting, noisy and dangerous traffic. In towns where traffic has been restricted, footfall has increased and trade has increased, as shown in this report^v and this video^{vi}.

Policy TOW02 Development Principles

As recommended above, we suggest converting some unused retail units for use as cycle hubs.

Comments on Ch.8 - Health and wellbeing

Policy CHW01 Community Infrastructure

The Indoor Sport and Recreation study identified a need for increased pay-and-play accessible water space, equivalent to 2 new swimming pools (6 lane x 25 m) by 2036. None of the four sites mentioned are in town centres or easily reached by sustainable transport and so they all have large car parks. Safe cycling routes and good public transport needs to be provided. In one of the largest London boroughs with inadequate swimming facilities, having to wait until 2036 for increased provision is unacceptable.

Policy CHW 02 – Promoting health and wellbeing

The council needs to commit that applying the healthy streets approach will mean it will lead on this by directing all possible funding towards healthy streets schemes across the borough and by adopting these policies in all planning decisions. (Comments on Active Travel Policy TRC01 below).

Policy CHW04 - Making Barnet a Safer Place

Accident rates have levelled off with about 100 people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in the Borough every year. This policy needs to include targets for 2035 towards achieving the aim of Vision Zero: no KSIs by 2041.

Comments on Ch.9 - Economy

Policy ECY03: Local Jobs, Skills and Training

This policy supports training in the construction industry. To support policy ECC01 (Mitigating Climate Change) this policy should include supporting jobs in the industries and infrastructure we need to tackle the climate crisis.

Chapter 10 - Environment and Climate Change

Policy ECC01 – Mitigating Climate Change

Climate emergency: The Paris Agreement placed a legally binding commitment on the UK to be carbon neutral by 2050. The Mayor and some neighbouring boroughs' current vision is now for a carbon neutral London by 2030^{vii}. Barnet also needs to declare a climate emergency and take proportionate and meaningful action to play its part in meeting the 2030 target of net zero for London. Carbon Dioxide emissions in Barnet stood at 3.3 tonnes per capita in 2016.

The planned boom in construction to increase the population by 15.3% will increase construction traffic and disruption. The increased population living in these developments require extra services and online shopping deliveries, even if they don't own a car themselves.

This policy **ECC01** needs to be strengthened to show how the Local Plan helps to meet the target of net zero carbon dioxide rather than simply 'minimising' the effect of development on climate change. Policies and plans need to explain how Barnet and its partners will support carbon reduction by:

- making existing homes energy efficient
- ensuring that Barnet has electric buses
- creating new green spaces and preserving current ones
- speeding up the installation of solar panels
- supporting a dense network of zero-carbon shared mobility by 2024.

Funding may be available from central government and The Mayor's Green New Deal for London.

Air and Noise Pollution. As the Local Plan states: Within Barnet, emissions from traffic have the most severe and pervasive impact on air quality and noise pollution. Noise and air pollution from traffic can be mitigated by reducing traffic volumes, by planning trees and vegetation as barriers.

ULEZ for Barnet: Over 20% of all carbon emissions in London come from road transport. A target date is needed for the ULEZ to cover the entire borough.

Enable cycling: To achieve a major shift to cycling, suitable for a zero-carbon Barnet, adopt strengthened policies for TRC01 – Sustainable and Active Travel.

Policy ECC02A Water Management Policy

The recent flash flooding in London has revealed the very real risks and dangers from intense rainfall which has been exacerbated by over development. We welcome the policy regarding sustainable draining for new developments, such as with verges and tree planting. We urge the council to create policies that protect and enhance existing greenspaces, such as front gardens and establish more green verges and tree planting along the kerbside.

Policy ECC04 –Barnet’s Parks and Open Spaces

This policy lacks commitment to make parks and open spaces accessible by cycle or for cycling within them. Cycle routes to parks and between parks need to be provided. Routes through parks and open spaces need upgrading with wider, hard surfaces for use by cycles and wheelchairs.

Comments on Ch 11 - Transport & Communications

In this chapter we provide comments on some of the reasoning as well as suggestions for the specific policies.

11.1.1 *Specific National and London Plan Policies to be taken into account* **ADD** - and acted upon.

We firmly agree with the statement from the London Plan below. This is the essence of what must be achieved to make a habitable city. Please make sure that active travel is always emphasised:

London Plan – 10.1.4. Rebalancing the transport system towards walking, cycling and public transport, including ensuring high quality interchanges, will require sustained investment including street environments to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive, and providing more, better quality public transport services to ensure that alternatives to the car are accessible, affordable and appealing.

Barnet Council will have to make a considerable step change in provision for active travel after decades of under investment. A street can move far more pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers per hour than it can people in cars. We have to recognise that it is ridiculous to prioritise the least efficient means of moving people and the most damaging form of movement. Parked cars and heavy traffic both have a huge impact on the efficiency and safety of active travel.

11.2.1 - We endorse this introductory statement and strongly support the investment in orbital links with priority given to active travel.

11.5.1 – Is there a specific target for cycling and walking within the 72% combined target for the borough? There should be.

11.6.2 - The topography of Barnet is not the reason that cycling is only 1% of trips. It is the lack of safe infrastructure, calm roads and secure storage.

When cycling policy has been referred to in Barnet Council reports over previous years, there has been a serious lack of commitment to provision that would encourage and facilitate safe cycling, apart from cycle training schemes and cycle parking.

11.7.1 Promoting Active Travel – off-road and on-road cycle routes will be required.

11.7.2 *Reducing discretionary car use, particularly for short car journeys will be key to improving air quality.* Air pollution is thought to have caused 64,000 deaths in the UK in 2015. Improving air quality near schools is vital but how does the council intend to improve air quality in general outside the NCR?

11.7.5 *The Council will seek to ensure that any new transport interchanges are designed* **ADD** - and improvements to existing interchanges made - *to help address personal safety issues and reflect Secured by Design.*

11.7.7 *It will also take positive action to prevent any pupil parking, promoting car sharing... ADD* and relaxing school uniform rules... It will play its part by providing safe cycle routes, providing 'school streets', Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 20 mph speed limits to enable more children to walk and cycle to school safely.

School Travel Plans need to consider suitable school uniforms. A blazer, collar and tie and long trousers are not ideal cycle clothing. At schools where the uniform is much more suitable for cycling (polo shirt, sweatshirt, black trousers or shorts or a skirt) the level of cycle use is high as a result.

11.8.3 *...and by comprehensively tackling the school run.* **ADD**, ensuring that school travel plans include ambitious targets for walking and cycling.

11.8.5 – Freight logistics via cargo bike for last-mile deliveries can make a significant contribution to the transport network and environment.

Policy TRC01 – Sustainable and Active Travel

The policy should clearly state the aim to **enable** as well as **promote**. Promotion can only succeed where sustainable transport modes are truly accessible to all residents. This would mean a commitment to deliver a safe and attractive walking and cycling Network.

The positive policies such as "*attractive and an accessible cycle links especially in development areas*" and "*good quality walking surfaces and off-road cycle routes*" and the adoption of the Healthy Streets approach are all welcome, these should not be confined to development areas.

These improvements will have a greater impact on modal shift if they are accompanied by further measures to make active travel safer, easier and cheaper than using the car.

1. Providing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in all residential areas by 2030, which prevent through traffic, but retain permeability for active travel (bus, walking & cycling).
2. Making 'School streets' the default arrangement, which close roads outside schools at the start and end of the school day.

3. Increasing parking charges for larger and more polluting vehicles and removing on street parking from key routes in the borough where it obstructs buses or the development of strategic cycling routes.
4. Ensuring that Barnet is "Smart Road User Charging ready" by 2024 as part of a London-wide scheme.
5. Supporting a dense network of shared mobility schemes by 2024.
6. Develop a programme to promote people to cycle their daily journeys, help them to get a bike, provide storage for it and teach them how to maintain it.
7. Develop programmes that discourage use of private vehicles, including PHVs, for journeys into, through or within Barnet.
8. Provide the infrastructure and traffic conditions that will make people feel it is safe and convenient to cycle:
 - Build 50% of the prioritised strategic cycling corridors (as identified in TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis) by 2024 and 100% by 2030.
 - Match other boroughs and TfL by moving to a general 20 mph speed limit.
9. Promote ownership and usage of E-bikes by committing to the installation of charging points within cycle storage areas and working with TFL to deploy e-bike hire within the Borough
10. Improvements to Pedestrian experience with pavement widening, continuous footways, more zebra crossings and improved timings for signalled pedestrian crossings]

Policy TRC02 – Transport Infrastructure

The plan recognises the need to invest in public transport lines and interchanges and we support investment in orbital and radial public transport. It is vague on plans for infrastructure that will enable people to use buses, walking and cycling to reach new train and underground stations.

Barnet needs to provide infrastructure for buses and to enable people to cycle safely around the borough.

1. Support more bus lanes and the introduction of bus gates in healthy streets neighbourhoods to make bus journeys more efficient than car journeys.
2. Develop area-wide healthy streets neighbourhoods (low traffic neighbourhoods) to cover the entire borough by 2030 - it is not sufficient to confine healthy streets to new developments and occasional public realm schemes.
3. Provide secure residential cycle parking [eg: cycle hangars] and cycle hubs. Planners should ensure that cycle parking is adequate and easily visible to public view to discourage theft and that secure "cycle hubs" are provided at large busy stations.
4. Secure cycle storage / stands should be provided near key bus stops to enable mode sharing. Cycling a short distance and then catching the bus/train to travel further is particularly useful for longer or hilly orbital journeys [eg Routes 251, 10, 307].
5. Improve Pedestrian routes to public transport hubs, such as by ensuring all stations have proper pedestrian crossings on their main approach roads [Totteridge & Whetstone, New Barnet and Brent Cross are examples of stations lacking that].

Policy TRC03 – Parking Management

This policy focuses on what’s allowed in new developments but needs to extend borough wide. It needs to support policies ECC01, TRC01 and TRC02 to discourage private car use and favour active travel. We support the policies listed

1. Restricting parking on bus routes to allow free passage for buses and cyclists.
2. Extending bus lanes on the wider main bus routes and making them operational 7 days a week.
3. Increasing parking charges for larger and more polluting vehicles in car parks, CPZs and on street.
4. Enforcing the ban on pavement parking.
5. The policy for electric charging points [f] should ensure that charging points do not take away any pavement space or create trip hazards. Barnet’s preference for lamppost charging is better than the large on-pavement chargers seen in other boroughs. Even better would be to put the chargers in the roadway or confine to off-street car parks.
6. Providing car club vehicle parking where appropriate [g]
7. Restricting the type of vehicles allowed to park in new developments to smaller and less polluting models or electric vehicles.
8. Assisting residents with personal travel planning and rewarding residents who give up car ownership, allowing Barnet to meet the residential parking standards given in the draft [London Plan](#)^{viii} (rather than the increased levels proposed in Table 23).

Policy TRC04 - Digital Communication and Connectivity

This policy needs to recognise the value of enabling working from home to reduce the overall need to commute, not only to travel outside peak periods.

Chapter 12 Delivering the Local Plan

The 2012 version of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan only had a few ‘critical’ and ‘necessary’ items on walking & cycling for 2011-16.

Type of infrastructure	‘critical’ & ‘necessary’
Transport	£12,200,000
Highways	£110,341,000
Parking	£600,000
Cycling & pedestrians	£328,000
Movement and connectivity total	£131,821,000

This was just 2.5% of the total cost on movement and connectivity, the majority of which was on highways. With ongoing delays to schemes in North Finchley and

Brent Cross, it would be useful to know how much has actually been spent since 2011 on walking and on cycling and what has been delivered.

Studies have consistently shown that investment enabling people to cycle^{ix} has a far higher benefit to cost ratio than investment in other transport modes – at least 5:1 and up to 20:1 or more /in some cases.

It is clear that a step change is possible to significantly increase the proportion spent on walking and cycling. This will be necessary to deliver the aims that are needed in Barnet's Local Plan.

References

ⁱ <https://cyclingindustry.news/a-sale-every-3-minutes-electric-bikes-outsell-electric-cars-in-uk-during-2020/>

ⁱⁱ <https://ebiketips.road.cc/content/news/bosch-reckons-half-of-all-bikes-sold-in-2025-will-be-electric-3199>

ⁱⁱⁱ A guide to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods <https://lcc.org.uk/pages/low-traffic-neighbourhoods>

^{iv} <https://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/>

^v Waltham Forest mini-Holland evidence: <https://wfcycling.wordpress.com/mini-holland/evidence/#LocalEconomy>

^{vi} Cycling in London and Holland: <https://youtu.be/zq28fU2AuMU>

^{vii} Enfield declares climate emergency: <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/news-and-events/council-declares-climate-emergency/>

^{viii} Residential parking in The London Plan: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/draft-new-london-plan/chapter-10-transport/policy-t61-residential-parking>

^{ix} Value of cycling report:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509587/value-of-cycling.pdf