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# **Barnet Draft Local Plan (Reg 19) 2021 to 2036**

June 2021

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- to establish Area Frameworks as the basis for identification, creation and management of new green spaces as part of:
- i. Lea Valley and Finchley Ridge Green Grid Area; and
  - ii. Brent Valley and Barnet Plateau Green Grid Area.
- d). The Watling Chase Forest Plan will be taken into account when assessing development proposals in the area covered by Watling Chase Community Forest helping it become a readily accessible 'green lung' for Barnet's residents.
- e). In areas that have been assessed by the Barnet Parks and Open Spaces Strategy as being of low quality and low value the Council will consider limited development on open spaces. The Council will require any proposal that involves the loss of low quality and low value open space to robustly demonstrate that the following criteria can be satisfied:
- i. the development proposal is a small scale ancillary use which supports the improved use of the open space; and
  - ii. that opportunities to improve the quality and value of the existing space have been explored and subject to viability assessment; cannot be delivered to enhance the quality and value of the existing space; or Equivalent or better quality open space provision will be delivered.
  - iii. Any permissible exception will also need to ensure that it does not create or exacerbate any existing public open space deficiency and has no significant impact on biodiversity.

#### 10.25 Green Belt / Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

- 10.25.1 The Barnet Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land Study shows that the majority of Barnet's Green Belt performs well and that all existing areas meet one or more of the purposes of Green Belt set out in the NPPF. The vast majority of the MOL is considered to be open and maintaining and protecting the functions, green links and other features it contains. Although, there are buildings within the MOL these support the use of the MOL as open space and do not impact on the openness to such a degree to warrant any land being removed from the MOL.
- 10.25.2 One of the purposes of the Barnet Green Belt Study was to identify mapping irregularities with regard to land designated as Green Belt / MOL. This helps create strong defensible boundaries and ensures consistency with the NPPF and the London Plan. Minor adjustments have been made to Green Belt and MOL boundaries where inconsistencies and errors have been identified. The majority of these are mapping errors where the boundary did not match existing property or road boundaries. These adjustments are shown in the Changes to the Policies Map document.
- 10.25.3 Through continued positive management of Barnet's Green Belt and MOL the Council is working to ensure improvements to its overall quality and accessibility.

10.25.4 This aspiration of improvement and accessibility can be achieved through appropriate development in Green Belt or MOL (as supported by the NPPF and the London Plan. Development adjacent to areas of Green Belt/MOL needs to comply with Policy ECC05 and should respect the character of its surroundings and the visual amenity of these areas. When assessing the likely impact on the openness of the Green Belt the Council will have regard to the visual impact of a development, its duration and prospects for remediation as well as the degree of activity such as traffic that is likely to be generated.

#### **Policy ECC05 - Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land**

##### **a) Green Belt**

- i. Any proposals for development in Green Belt will be considered in accordance with NPPF paras 133 to 147.
- ii. Development adjacent to Green Belt should not have a significant detrimental effect on the openness of the Green Belt and respect the character of its surroundings.

##### **b: Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)**

- i. In accordance with London Plan Policy G3, Metropolitan Open Land is to be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with national planning policy tests that apply to the Green Belt.

#### **10.26 Biodiversity**

- 10.26.1 Barnet has a wide range of different habitats that have been recognised as Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINCs) including
- Woodland
  - Grassland/Acid Grassland/ Pastures and Meadows
  - Streams, lakes and ponds
  - Wetlands and Bogs;
  - Ancient Hedgerows and Trees; and
  - Veteran Trees
- 10.26.2 The Welsh Harp (Brent Reservoir) is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as it is an important refuge and breeding site for waterfowl and other birds.