

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET
LDF CORE STRATEGY AND
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

**Examination in Public – London Borough of Barnet’s Response
Hearing Matter 6: Quality of Green Belt (GB) and Metropolitan
Open Land (MOL)**

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1. Has there been a satisfactory evidence base (including a survey) to inform the development of GB/MOL policy in the CS? Are the GB and MOL boundaries appropriate?

CS1 – Barnet’s Place Shaping Strategy sets out the Three Strands Approach which aims to protect open space including Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land. We consider that the boundaries of Green Belt and MOL are appropriate and are safeguarded by our Three Strands Approach.

Matter 8(3) addressed measures to protect Green Belt / MOL.

Our strategy for growth is to target brownfield locations and regeneration areas in order to ensure that there is less pressure on Green Belt / MOL and the lower density suburbs.

PPS 12 - Local Spatial Planning ([NAT044](#)) states at para 4.37 that 'evidence gathered should be proportionate to the job being undertaken by the plan'. A review of the boundaries would be contrary to our place shaping strategy of balancing consolidated growth with protection and enhancement.

Our CS policy approach is in line with PPG2 ([NAT033](#)) and the London Plan ([CDO72](#)).

PPG2 advises (para 2.6) that Green Belt boundaries including detailed boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances.

The London Plan at Policy 7.16 Green Belt strongly supports the current extent of London’s Green Belt, its extension in appropriate circumstances and its protection from inappropriate development.

At Policy 7.17 in the London Plan there is strong support for the current extent of MOL, its extension in appropriate circumstances and its protection from development having an adverse impact on the openness of MOL.

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Given our priority to address our housing needs through the use of previously developed land we have therefore not carried out a survey of Green Belt / MOL boundaries.

Barnet contains a significant amount of Green Belt. This land was excluded from the analysis of the PPG 17 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Assessment (CD048). Although the PPG17 Assessment did not assess its contribution to public open space it highlighted the value of Green Belt and MOL to the overall natural green spaces of Barnet. The PPG17 Assessment recognised that with significant areas of open land designated as Green Belt / MOL there is potential to improve footpaths across the existing Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land as an alternative to providing new open spaces. Improved access across the Green Belt can provide links into other parts of the open space network.

The PPG17 Assessment recommended that the CS should make reference to the importance of maintaining a coherent network of open space and its importance to the spatial structure of Barnet, including public and private areas of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land as well as the open spaces assessed in the PPG17 Assessment, giving particular reference to strategic links which fall within Barnet, such as the Dollis Valley Green Walk and the Capital Ring.

At CS para 12.3.6 we highlight the importance of these two strategic walking routes for improving access to open space. Improvements of footpaths/cycle routes will be prominent in the two Green Grid Area Frameworks being developed for Lea Valley and Finchley Ridge, Brent Valley and Barnet Plateau.

We commissioned work on a Characterisation Study (CD054) to gain a detailed understanding of Barnet’s character. The work commissioned by Natural England in their London Regional Landscape Framework (REG022) combines elements of Landscape Character Assessment & Historic Landscape Characterisation. The two characterisation studies help improve our qualitative understanding of Barnet’s urban and natural distinctiveness and the relationships between them.

CS para 10.3.1 sets out the two distinctive landscape character types in Barnet – Barnet Plateau and Finchley Ridge. The two landscape types form the identities of the two Green Grid Area Frameworks. At CS para 10.3.2 we highlight the importance of

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reconnecting the natural and built environments through green infrastructure.

Progress with the two Green Grid Areas is highlighted in the Mayor of London’s draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: The All London Green Grid ([REG022a](#)). This sets out further detail on the existing links and connections and the strategic opportunities for improving the creation of new green infrastructure and the links between them. Barnet’s Green Infrastructure SPD will compliment this and set out an approach to the creation, protection and management of networks of green infrastructure in the borough. Such a network will contribute to sense of place allowing for greater appreciation of valuable landscapes and cultural heritage.