

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

**Examination in Public – London Borough of Barnet’s Final Statement
on Car Parking Standards**

During the EIP the council was asked to consider a review of its car parking standards and reach agreement with Transport for London on Barnet’s car parking evidence.

Turning to the subject of the car parking standards in DM17, and specifically the table in section 5 of DM026, as amended following very recent liaison with TfL, the Council makes the following final comments. Barnet’s maintains its fundamental disagreement with TfL’s interpretation of the London Plan, and therefore with their opinion on the table. As the Inspector will see from reviewing the latest paper it is clear when comparing the numbers of cars surveyed in the third column with that estimated by the Council in the sixth column that for 5 of the 6 sites the provision would be inadequate and lead to on-street impacts to a greater or lesser extent. Barnet contends most strongly that it has adopted a pragmatic, logical and robust approach in interpreting the standards in London Plan policy 6.13 in deriving the estimates in the sixth column, and consequently considers the TfL approach and numbers in the seventh column flawed.

We strongly contend that one of the key issues for the Inspector here is what is likely to happen in practice if the London Plan, as opposed to the parking standards in DM17, were applied to Barnet. On the one hand the Inspector may decide that the maximum parking provision permissible under the London Plan policy should be as determined by TfL. On the other hand he may decide to give weight to the text in the footer below London plan table 6.2, which the Council considers it has done in a very reasonable and realistic way, in which case he should reject TfL’s Statement and find in favour of Barnet. In doing so we would strongly urge the inspector to consider the Council’s evidence carefully. In particular Barnet believes that if the Inspector directs the Council to adopt the London Plan standards, and the Council subsequently tries to apply the standards towards the level advocated by TfL then there is a very significant risk that the Council would lose an appeal hearing or public inquiry because the text in the footer below table 6.2 clearly states “All developments in areas of good public transport accessibility should aim for significantly less than 1 space per unit”, and that is clearly a material consideration that any Inspector would be obliged to consider.

Notwithstanding the above, at two of the flatted developments surveyed by the Council it is clear from the evidence that adoption of the London Plan standards, even at the “TfL theoretical maximum”, would result in overspill parking, whereas application of Barnet car parking standard policy to date has effectively managed the situation. Whilst the Council has worked closely and collaboratively with TfL in agreeing residential parking standards that largely meet the previous London Plan for all our Regeneration areas, we contend

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that the fundamental issue here is with respect to relatively small non-referable developments. The Council deals with hundreds of applications each year and Barnet is perhaps unique in having relatively few CPZs, so a significant proportion of schemes are proposed in streets where there are only limited, if any, parking controls. This includes locations around stations and town centres, even including parts of Cricklewood in the far south of the borough. Such developments are too small for measures such as a car club to be economic, and as already explained in our evidence, a CPZ would be impractical, unpopular and damaging to the community and the streetscene. It should therefore be clear to the Inspector that there will be adverse impacts on street if DM17 is not adopted.

Moreover, it must be remembered that the standards in DM17 are maximums, and the Council always treats each application on its merits having due regard to all aspects of our policy. There are for example plenty of examples of minimal levels of parking, and even car free development in appropriate locations in the borough. The broader standards in DM17 for 1, and particularly 2, bed flats do however allow Barnet flexibility to vary the parking provision. This includes accounting for the exceptionally diverse nature of the borough. A substantial proportion of Barnet is rural, or ‘rurban fringe’ in nature, indistinguishable from adjacent Hertsmere, and away from the radial train lines cross borough orbital journeys are not straightforward as there are only a few roads that cross the ‘green wedge’. The other key consideration is the public transport accessibility level (PTAL), as much of the borough has a poor PTAL (1A, 1B, 2), and even locations, such as Chipping or High Barnet, with apparently good (4) or very good (5) PTAL are not in practice anywhere near as accessible from all points of the compass as PTALs indicates they should theoretically be.

In conclusion, Barnet believes it has produced sufficient evidence to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that for non-referable one and/or two bed flatted developments in a significant part of the borough there is a robust case for the Council to adopt the DM17 parking standards in preference to those set out in Policy 6.13 of the London Plan. This conclusion is also supported, at least in part, on the Council’s firm opinion that the ‘TfL theoretical maximums’ are not only unrealistic but misleading as they could never be applied to a significant swathe of the borough.