

Dear Will McKee,

Thank you for involving LB Barnet in the above. We do believe that it is timely for a review to be undertaken of the maximum parking standards approach, particularly given the concerns of central government over the current policy in London. These concerns are closely aligned with Barnet's own current opinion, that too little parking in developments can result in overspill parking which then forces local authorities to introduce unpopular and potentially damaging parking restrictions. At Barnet's Local Plan EIP in December 2011 we promoted maximum standards in policy DM17 that permitted a greater level of parking to be provided for new 1 and 2-bed properties than in the London Plan. The Inspector found in favour of our evidence based approach (detail available on request). Officers also appeared at the Further Alterations to the London Plan EIP last September to reiterate our position. We do not necessarily agree with the Inspector's report that the Mayor's approach was flexible and strikes the right balance as we believe that is not the case when considering an outer London borough like Barnet (there was apparently no consideration of our verbal submission in the inspector's report). The London Plan provides a degree of flexibility within a framework but we think it too limited, hence our own, more flexible approach.

The council usually seeks car parking provision towards the maximum level permissible in our Development Management Policy (DM17 available on our website), unless the applicant provides robust evidence for a lower level of provision or there are more dominant material considerations, such as separate parking standards in an approved AAP. We do take a measured approach though that considers key factors such as the PTAL, presence (or not) of a CPZ, whether in a town centre, car ownership levels locally etc. It should also be noted that we have had developer's expressing concerns about a lack of parking in recent years, and insisting that they want to provide the maximum amount of parking possible within our standards. We have sought to facilitate this where circumstances permit.

Barnet feels strongly that we should have the flexibility to set our own standards that we believe are right for varying characteristics of the borough. We also consider that residents should have the right to own a car if they so wish, albeit we have issues about car usage and are working hard to address this. We certainly know that we need adequate parking within new developments so as to help avoid the proliferation of CPZs. In general terms many Barnet residents work in central London and commute using public transport, but seek to use their cars for journeys in evenings and at weekends. However, travel patterns are complex and the diverse nature of Barnet and lack of effective orbital public transport connections means that car usage is inevitably high and congestion occurs at peak travel times. One outcome from this review that would be welcome is an acknowledgement from TfL of the differing policy position between the Mayor and Barnet on this matter in the hope that TfL better respects our Local Plan car parking policy in the future.

Finally, in terms of the key questions in your letter, we offer the following comments:

- Are there car parking overspill issues (in particular circumstances)? And, if so, how might these best be addressed?

Overspill issues have been identified in many locations in Barnet associated with a lack of car parking provision in flatted developments of varying size, and could be addressed by a number of measures, including on-street parking controls, better public transport, improvements for walking and cycling etc but would be most effectively addressed through more appropriate car parking provision, so that each development mitigates its own impact. This might, depending on the particular site include providing more parking than standards currently permit, or it might for larger sites involve agreeing a more flexible car parking management plan for the site, where residents buy a 'right to park' rather than a dedicated space. Such as scheme appears to working well at Beaufort Park in

Colindale. More provision for visitor parking (not currently explicitly provided for in LB Barnet standards) might be a solution for particular sites. Otherwise the council is forced to resort to introducing on-street parking controls and charges, which are typically unpopular.

- How do maximum residential parking standards affect parking levels, car ownership and car use?

Maximum standards clearly constrain parking levels with developments, but not necessarily car ownership if nearby on-street parking is available. We do not believe that there is a definite link between parking provision and car usage in general, as many people who own a car do not use it every day. The exception is low or no car development where car use is obviously constrained, but we have very little of that type of development in Barnet.

- How far do parking levels affect issues such as density and acceptability of development/its impacts?

Parking on site can result in a lot of car 'clutter' unless the design is carefully undertaken. Basement and podium level parking can help to improve the appearance of a development, and we encourage developers to utilise the lie of the land on any sites which undulate so that parking can be provided out of sight, but with minimum excavation being required.

- How does the outer London context differ - can we define a "typology" of parking requirements for different places, and what factors affect this?

As mentioned above travel patterns in outer London are diverse and public transport tends to provide a variable level of orbital services. Transport services and facilities need to be provided for all travellers, so that there is genuine travel choice. Parking standards across Barnet meet our Local Plan standard and this considers the key factors (also mentioned above), which need to be considered on a site-by-site basis.

- With or without a change to standards, what advice could be provided to improve residential parking implementation?

We think that a wider range of residential parking standards should be in the London Plan, but regardless of this perhaps a new piece of guidance that includes several best practice examples from outer London might be helpful.

Yours sincerely

For, and on behalf of, Cath Shaw, Commissioning Director – Growth & Development

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