

11 Rural Enfield

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INTRODUCTION

11.1 The ELP supports the delivery of more homes that meets local needs, thereby enhancing the variety and affordability of available housing options. Additionally, the plan supports greater diversity in Enfield's rural areas, recognising that greater sustainability and resilience can be achieved through encouraging a broader base of activities compared to what has traditionally been accessible in rural areas.



View across rural enfield to central London

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

RE1 : CHARACTER OF THE GREEN BELT AND OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

1. Development adjoining to or within close proximity to the Green Belt as shown on the Policies Map will only be permitted where:
 - a. it does not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the landscape and openness of the Green Belt;
 - b. there is a clear distinction between the Green Belt and the edge of the urban area;
 - c. views and vistas from the Green Belt into urban areas and vice versa, especially at important access points, are uninterrupted and maintained;
 - d. it establishes and/or extends the Borough's network of greenways and green corridors, retains features of landscape value and incorporates tree planting along transport routes, where possible;
 - e. it complements and improves the quality of existing open space uses and landscaping; and
 - f. it enhances the blue and green infrastructure network through better connectivity and the creation of new publicly accessible open spaces, whilst also conserving their natural and historic value; and
 - g. it reinforces and better reveals the character, appearance and significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets and the historic landscape.
2. Development adjoining the Green Belt and open countryside will be expected to:
 - a. incorporate measures to improve the character of the Green Belt and landscape through environmental improvements such as tree-planting and earth moulding, and consider the removal or replacement of visually intrusive elements, such as buildings, structures, hard standings, walls, fences or advertisements, where feasible;
 - b. retain existing features of landscape and townscape value;
 - c. contribute towards the principles of good place-making set out in **policy SS2**;
 - d. respond to the wider development opportunities, movement and environmental enhancements within the London National Park City designation (**PL8**), where feasible;
 - e. conserve and not detract from the open character of Green Belt and surrounding landscape; and
 - f. reinforce and better reveal the character, appearance and significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets and the historic landscape.

EXPLANATION

- 11.2 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the character of the landscape within or close proximity to the Green Belt. Enfield has an array of attractive landscapes close to its urban edge. However, “urban fringe”, which serves as the interface between the rural character of the Green Belt and the urban area is very mixed. This policy will ensure that a clear distinction between the character of the Green Belt and the urban area is maintained and where possible will work to strengthen this distinction
- 11.3 To offset the impact of new development around the Green Belt and enhance the quality and amenity value of the landscape, compensatory measures will be used at the urban-rural fringes. These measures may include the creation of new woodland areas and the introduction of active travel routes into existing open spaces.



Hilly Fields Park bandstand

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

RE2: IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND GREEN CORRIDORS

1. New development will be expected to protect, maintain and improve the Borough's network of walking and cycling routes to meet the needs of all users. Priority will be given to:
 - a. creating interconnected routes with extensions to open spaces along the river corridors, including the Lee Navigation, New River Path and Green Loop;
 - b. creating interconnected routes with spurs to open spaces along the length of the river corridors, including the Lee Navigation, New River Path and Green Loop;
 - c. providing or enhancing way-finding across the network, including the installation of clear signage and gates/stiles to improve legibility of arrival routes and designated points, such as heritage trails and discovery walks;
 - d. extending connections and the right of access into the open countryside, including improved links to important viewing locations, such as the London Loop and Lee Valley Walk, to facilitate the creation of a major green corridor from the Lee Valley Regional Park to Enfield Chase (see policy PL8); and
 - e. Preserving and enhancing the character of historic routes and vistas.
2. Development located within a five-minute walk or within a 400 metre radius from a strategic green link, as shown on the Policies Map, must seamlessly integrate with the wider footpath and cycle network.
3. Development will only be supported where it protects and, where possible, enhances the strategic link route for cyclists, equestrians and pedestrians, while ensuring no adverse impact on the green grid network.

EXPLANATION

- 11.4 Enfield has an extensive network of walking and cycling routes, ranging from long distance trails such as the London Loop, New River Path and Lee Navigation towpath, as well as a number of urban circular routes and local country paths. Future challenges include increasing activity levels such as walking, cycling and horse riding, improving links from deprived areas to open spaces like the Lee Valley and reducing physical severance. Public rights of way and footpaths are listed on the Definitive Map⁶².
- 11.5 The Council has a legal duty to keep the Definitive Map updated and to protect the public's use of rights of way in the Borough. This involves working with landowners, those who maintain the public rights of way and voluntary groups to ensure that footpaths remain clear and properly maintained, achieved through actions such as the removal of vegetation, provision of signage and maintenance of gates and stiles, thereby ensuring accessibility to all.
- 11.6 This policy seeks to provide an integrated network of convenient and well-maintained routes, offering good access to the open countryside and visitor attractions, while accommodating the needs of various user groups, including equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists, people with visual or mobility impairments, and those with pushchairs. It also aims to ensure that new developments facilitate access to open space and nature, especially along strategic links.

⁶² <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/roads-and-transport/public-rights-of-way/>

STRATEGIC POLICY

RE3: SUPPORTING THE RURAL ECONOMY

Support will be given to proposals in suitable locations which seek to improve the balance of jobs within the rural areas and diversify the rural economy. The following provisions apply:

1. Appropriate and proportionate expansion of existing employment sites in order to support the retention and growth of local employers will be supported, subject to an assessment that demonstrates no adverse residual impacts on neighbouring uses and the environment.
2. Business start-ups, home working, small scale employment and the development and expansion of small business in residential and rural areas will generally be supported, subject to an assessment that demonstrates no residual adverse impacts on neighbouring uses and the environment.
3. Proposals should explore opportunities to improve internet connectivity for rural communities where appropriate.
4. Support will be given to the reuse of suitable buildings for employment uses.
5. The creation of new, or extensions to existing, garden centres or farm shops in the open countryside will only be permitted if the proposed development is ancillary to, and on the site of, an existing horticultural business or existing farming operation.
6. Development will be supported which meets the essential needs of agriculture or forestry interests.
7. The loss of tourist or leisure development will only be permitted where there is no proven demand for the facility.
8. Camping, caravan, chalet or similar facilities that respond to an identified local need will be supported, provided the proposal is compatible with the existing road network, and has no adverse environmental impact.
9. Development proposals should:
 - a. demonstrate safe access to the existing highway network;
 - b. avoid a significant increase in the number of trips requiring the private car and facilitate the use of sustainable transport, including walking and cycling, where appropriate. Sustainable Travel Plans will be required to demonstrate how the traffic impacts of the development have been considered and mitigated;
 - c. demonstrate how a positive relationship with existing buildings has been achieved, including scale, design, massing and orientation; and
 - d. avoid incongruous or isolated new buildings. If there are unused existing buildings within the site, applicants are required to demonstrate why these cannot be used for the uses proposed before new buildings will be considered.

EXPLANATION

- 11.7 To promote economic growth and diversification in the rural areas of the Borough, it is important to make land available for business use. It is recognised that some economic activities do not have a land requirement, for example where small businesses can be established from home, and permitted development rights also enable some home working use. However, to support the growth and prosperity of the rural economy, a positive strategic framework is needed to bolster sustainable rural development.
- 11.8 This policy provides some flexibility to enable carefully selected development outside settlements where it can be demonstrated that this could be achieved sustainably. This consideration should take into account the provisions of the NPPF and the need to effectively manage potential traffic and environmental impacts.



Forty Hall Farm

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

RE4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION AND RURAL EMPLOYMENT

1. Proposals involving a change of use or diversification of farms from solely agriculture to ecological, business, tourism or sport and recreational uses will be supported where the proposed use:
 - a. would not harm the openness and character of the Green Belt in terms of scale, location and design;
 - b. does not unacceptably impact upon surrounding amenities or cause an unacceptable level of noise, light, air or water pollution;
 - c. provides adequate landscaping and screening to minimise any potential visual impact;
 - d. does not have any detrimental impact on nature conservation, wildlife habitats, designated and non-designated heritage assets (including their setting)
 - e. does not generate a significant number of additional vehicle trips; and
 - f. contributes to regeneration and achieving the strategic policy priorities of this plan such as initiatives relating to landscape restoration, culture and tourism etc.
2. Proposals which promote sustainable agriculture and public participation in food growing, especially those which contribute to education, training and the development of local supply chains, will be supported.
3. For equine-related development, adequate arrangements should be made for the management of grazing areas. Hard-surfaced areas should be kept to a minimum.

EXPLANATION

- 11.9 Farm diversification into non-agricultural uses is vital to the continuing viability of many farm enterprises. The Council will actively support well-planned diversification initiatives that align with sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the viability of the agricultural enterprise.
- 11.10 Proposed diversification schemes must avoid unnecessary buildings that would be detrimental to the Green Belt setting. Additionally, these proposals should have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Green Belt policies set out in this plan and the London Plan.
- 11.11 Horse riding is a popular recreational activity and a number of sites in the Borough are used for horse keeping and breeding. The policy seeks to manage potentially negative impacts, as the paraphernalia associated with horse keeping can be inappropriate if they detract from the openness of the Green Belt.