



14 Environmental Protection

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Environmental protection



INTRODUCTION

14.1 Enfield Borough has high environmental quality in most areas, which needs protecting, while certain areas would benefit from environmental improvements. Therefore, protecting the environment involves actions such as maintaining or improving air quality, and minimising or reducing nuisance affecting human senses, such as noise and odour. These measures serve to protect health and safeguard the quality of residential amenity.

14.2 Although legislation exists to control emissions from polluting activities, the planning system has a complementary role in directing the location of developments that may give rise to environmental protection problems. These challenges can manifest itself either directly from the development or indirectly such as through the potential traffic it generates.

14.3 This policy comprises two strands. Firstly, it ensures that new development proposals do not generate issues which unduly impact on the surrounding environment. Secondly, it ensures that these proposals are not the recipients of existing issues. Similarly, it is important that existing lawful uses do not become compromised by virtue of subsequent new development.

14.4 Environmental protection aligns with the objectives of the ELP, aiming to minimise impact of development on climate change and the environment while promoting environmental improvements. The Borough is committed to protecting existing environmental quality and, where possible reducing adverse effects on the local and natural environment resulting from changes in activities or new development.

Agent of change principle

14.5 The 'Agent of Change Principle' encapsulates the idea that a person or business introducing a new land use is responsible for managing the impact of that change. This principle is embedded in the London Plan particularly Policy D13. For developers proposing residential development, it is vital to consider potential significant adverse effects on future occupiers of that development from any nearby source(s) of noise, such as pre-existing entertainment venues. In the event of identifying such potential significant adverse effects, developers will need to factor in suitable mitigation measures into their planning applications to avoid any significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life for future occupiers.

14.6 The policy in this section of the plan applies to all forms of pollution including noise, vibration, light, odour, dust, as well as water and air pollution. Pollution can reduce the environmental quality of the Borough, amenity, and negatively affect human health and well-being. This policy aims to ensure that all forms of pollution are taken into consideration, controlled, and mitigated against as part of all developments.

STRATEGIC POLICY

ENV1 : LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

New developments should actively contribute to the health and wellbeing of both existing and future occupiers by effectively mitigating the adverse negative impacts of noise and other pollution generating nuisances on the environment and on the quality of life of residents. This should be achieved by applying the following principles:

2. Noise and vibration

- a. Developments that have the potential to generate noise must demonstrate that measures will be implemented to mitigate the impacts on surrounding occupiers; and
- b. If the development involves a noise sensitive use or has the potential to generate noise, a noise assessment will be required as part of the planning application.

3. Light pollution

- a. Proposals that include flood lighting or external lighting must incorporate measures to mitigate the potential impacts arising from such lighting. Additionally, where appropriate, details must be provided to demonstrate that the use of external lighting is appropriate for its intended purpose; and
- b. Proposals must be designed to minimise the adverse impacts of light pollution on adjacent occupiers as well as on natural habitats, biodiversity and the ecology of watercourses.

4. Water Pollution

- a. New development that have an adverse impact on water quality, which includes waterways, identified Source Protection Zones (SPZ) or Aquifers, resulting in an

unacceptable risk to the quality of the water catchment, groundwater or surface water will not be permitted; and

- b. Proposals should actively reduce the runoff of particulates and other forms of biological and chemical pollution into waterways through sustainable drainage techniques and pollution prevention methods, including the incorporation of oil interceptors.

5. Land contamination

- a. All development on land that is known or may be affected by contamination and/ or instability must be accompanied by a detailed assessment to identify any potential risks . This assessment should include risks to both human health and the environment, and measures must be taken to adequately address these risks effectively, ensuring the safety of the development.

6. Waste and Hazardous Installations

- a. Risk assessments will be required to ensure that appropriate safeguards are incorporated as part of the development of hazardous installations, and proposals for waste facilities, to adequately mitigate their impact on amenity, air quality, noise and other relevant environmental considerations by fully enclosing the facility.

1. Air Quality

- a. All major developments will need to demonstrate that they are at least “air quality neutral”;
- b. Air quality assessments will be required of all major developments and developments in the Air Quality Focus Areas as identified in the Enfield Air Quality Action Plan; and
- c. Development proposals should incorporate on-site measures aimed at improving air quality. In cases where on-site solutions can be demonstrated as impractical or inappropriate, off-site measures to improve local air quality may be considered, provided they demonstrate equivalent air quality benefits.

EXPLANATION

14.7 This policy is comprehensive in its scope, addressing all forms of pollution including noise, vibration, light, odour, dust, as well as water and air pollution. Pollution, in all its forms, has the potential to reduce the overall environmental quality of the Borough, disrupt the sense of amenity, and have adverse effects on the health and well-being of residents. Additionally, pollution can impact the local flora and fauna negatively. The primary objective of this policy is to ensure that all forms of pollution are thoroughly taken into account, effectively controlled and actively mitigated in the context of all developments.

14.8 The Environment Act 1995, Part IV, the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Part II, require local authorities in the UK to assess air quality in their area and designate air quality management areas (AQMA's) if improvements are necessary. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides detail how planning policy should interplay with local authority requirements, with specific emphasis on Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) and Clean Air Zones (paragraph 181). Specifically, planning policies should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives, whilst being consistent with the Local Air Quality Action Plan.

14.9 Air pollution levels in large parts of Enfield exceed the standards set by the European Union (EU) and World Health Organisation (WHO). DEFRA and the GLA have externally verified and accepted Enfield's air quality objectives. Existing concentrations of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (PM10) are of considerable concern and pose a significant threat to human health. Addressing air quality is a top environmental priority for Enfield, and the Council is committed to tackle poor air quality in an integrated way.

14.10 Development that aims to meet air quality neutral standards will be strongly supported, particularly in the case of larger scale developments, in line with the London Plan. Additionally, innovative design solutions, urban greening and other mitigation strategies will be actively encouraged to improve air quality in all developments. In accordance with the London Plan, air quality assessments will be required for major developments, developments associated with sensitive uses/receptors and where considerable demolition will occur.

14.11 Air quality assessments will also be required in instances where there will be a significant increase in vehicular traffic and the use of more polluting technologies, including the use of non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) in construction. These assessments aim to identify major sources of pollution, constraints placed on sites by poor air quality, suitable land uses for sites, and design strategies that could improve air quality. New development will be intelligently designed to minimise direct exposure to air pollution, and the plan will support on-site and off-site measures, provided they demonstrably contribute to achieving air quality improvements in line with the London Plan.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)

14.12 To ensure effectiveness, the policy takes an evidence-based approach to determining geographical scope. Planning decisions will be informed by Enfield's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) as designated by the London Plan. These AQMAs are areas which not only exceed air quality limits but are also locations with high human exposure to pollution. This approach is closely aligned with the principles outlined in Enfield's Air Quality Action Plan, ensuring a targeted and effective approach to addressing air quality concerns.

Noise and Vibration

- 14.13 Noise is an inherent part of our daily surroundings, contributing to the character of different places. Its absence marks places of tranquillity while its presence in areas with mixed activities contributes to their vibrancy. Nonetheless, excessive noise levels can adversely affect the health and wellbeing, productivity, and overall quality of life for all Enfield residents. Given the existing mix of land uses and activities, and the need to make the most sustainable use of land, there is the potential for conflict between developments sensitive to noise and those generating noise.
- 14.14 In line with the Sustainable Design and Construction SPG in the London Plan, developments should seek to minimise the adverse impacts of noise. It is not advisable to place noise sensitive developments or land uses in close proximity to major sources of noise, such as roads, railways, or certain industrial facilities, unless effective mitigation measures are used to reduce noise levels.
- 14.15 Persistent and intermittent noises such as those made by industrial activities, transport, construction and congregations of people can undermine quality of life. In cases where a proposed development has the

potential to negatively impact on a noise sensitive development or where there is a proposal for a new noise sensitive development near major sources of noise, the Council will require a noise impact assessment to investigate noise levels and determine the effectiveness of mitigation measures. When assessing proposals, the Council will have regard to relevant noise exposure standards and internal noise standards which apply to particular uses. Regard will be had to the Mayor's Ambient Noise Strategy as a reference source for understanding noise and identifying best practice.

Light pollution

- 14.16 Lighting can play a vital role in enhancing community safety, helping people find their way and allowing many commercial and recreational activities to be carried out in the evening. However, inappropriate or excessive lighting can cause great public nuisance and have a significant adverse effect on residential amenities or the character of the countryside. This policy seeks to prevent disruption caused by excessive brightness and light spillage while ensuring that other positive aspects associated with lighting, such as facilitating opportunity for evening activities and increasing the perception and feelings of safety and security, are realised.



Woodland Way

14.17 Other adverse impacts include use of unnecessary amounts of energy and in some cases detrimental impacts on road safety and wildlife. It can disrupt ecosystems of nocturnal species. It is essential to ensure that that lighting is only focused on its intended areas and does not spill over to affect its surroundings. Proposals involving floodlighting should consider Sport England’s lighting guidance and apply the standards and recommendations outlined in the Institute of Lighting Engineers Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light.

Water Pollution

14.18 Water is a precious resource and it is essential that new development seeks to be efficient in using water, wherever possible to reduce consumption. Water pollution can affect the supply of water for leisure, industrial and agricultural uses and have a harmful impact upon riverside habitats. Water pollution can come from multiple sources and poses a threat to the natural environment. Addressing water pollution requires a collaborative effort multi-agencies. Sources of water pollution are varied, including issues like mis-connected plumbing, sewage overflows and pollutants arising from roadways. The Council will work with the Environment Agency and Thames Water to ensure their technical expertise

is considered where new development proposals pose a risk to water quality and to restrict development which may threaten the quality of either ground or surface water. Improving water quality aligns with a number of crucial objectives:

- it increases the potential for recreational activities in Enfield’s water resources;
- it fosters a better quality environment for everyone and offers opportunities for enhancing biodiversity; and
- it contributes to maintaining a good quality supply of high-quality drinking water.

14.19 Where a Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment is required, developers will need to demonstrate there is no adverse ecological impact on the ability of the waterbody to meet its WFD objectives.

14.20 Groundwater is a significant contributor in supplying our drinking water and supporting wetland ecosystems and surface water flows as part of the wider water cycle. Within the Borough, there are a number of source protection zones and aquifers. These areas involve groundwater storage or sensitive areas of groundwater extraction where the risk to groundwater quality should be carefully considered. This policy seeks to protect these areas. Maps

showing the locations of Source Protection Zones in Enfield can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spzs>

14.21 Activities involving de-watering should be avoided in Source Protection Zones. Developments should aim to steer high risk developments away from SPZ1. This includes proposals that have the potential to release hazardous substances into the ground, involve effluent discharge, or physically disturb an aquifer, such as petrol filling stations located in SPZ1.

14.22 Developers should take into account the Environment Agency’s Approach to Groundwater Protection and Land Contamination Risk Management guidance (or any updated versions).

Contaminated land

14.23 Within the Borough, especially in the Lee Valley, there are significant concentrations of industrial activities and infrastructure. Contamination may arise from human activities, and there may also be natural sources of contamination. While modern pollution control measures aim to prevent new contamination and reduce the impact of existing activities, there is still the potential for contaminated land from previous land uses.

14.24 Where contaminated sites are identified through the planning system, developers will be required to carry out detailed site investigations. This process should include a risk assessment, remediation and management strategies that consider:

- the existing contamination status of the land in question through source-pathway-receptor pollutant linkages and how these linkages are represented in a conceptual model.
- Whether the development proposed will create new connections, such as new pathways by which existing contaminants might reach existing or potential receptors, and whether it will introduce new vulnerable receptors; and
- what actions are necessary to break these connections, prevent new ones, address any unacceptable risks, and enable the safe development and future use of the site and neighbouring land.

14.25 The remediation standards should ensure that the site is suitable for its proposed use and that all unacceptable risks to various receptors, such as living organisms, ecological systems including fauna and flora, property, landscape, amenity, controlled surface water and groundwater, have been effectively addressed.

Waste and hazardous installations

14.26 Due to the prevalence of the many industrial estates within Enfield, many sites have been used for activities which may have contaminated the soil in ways that could potentially harm individuals exposed to these contaminants. Hazardous installations comprise a wide range of sites involving chemical processes, fuel and chemical storage, and pipelines. It is important to carefully consider any risks associated with new hazardous installations and developments within the vicinity of existing installations as part of the planning process.

14.27 To ensure that appropriate safety measures are integrated into development, risk assessments will be required. The Council will also take the opportunity to review previously granted planning consents for hazardous installations to ensure they reflect current conditions and the site's physical capabilities.

14.28 If the level of contamination requires remediation to safeguard future users or occupiers of the site, neighbouring land, or protect any buildings or services from the hazards, planning permission may be granted subject to conditions specifying the necessary measures to be carried out. Developers will also be required to notify the Council

of any suspected contamination encountered during redevelopment. Where development is proposed on contaminated land, particular attention should be paid to the requirements of the Building Regulations where they apply.

14.29 When assessing new waste-related development, it is important to consider the strategic framework established by the North London Waste Plan and the provisions the plan contains regarding individual development proposals. Applicants should also be aware that new waste activities and installations will require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency.