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BARNET LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Examination (EXAM) documents and additional Statement of Common Ground(s) recently published in support of the Barnet Local Plan Examination in Public on the 22 March 2023.

We have previously made representations at the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages of the new Local Plan's preparation (responses dated 9 April 2020 and 9 August 2021, respectively).

In response to our comments and outstanding concerns at the Regulation 19 stage, we have agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) signed by the Environment Agency and London Borough of Barnet (LBB) and dated September 2022 (Examination document reference: EB_SoCG_07).

We have reviewed the newly published EXAM documents in consideration of our previous Regulation 19 response and in the context of our SoCG with LBB and the policies discussed in this document. In particular, we have reviewed the following documents:

- **EXAM 20** – Week 2 Actions List
- **EXAM 43** – Week 5 Actions List
- **EXAM 75** – LBB Note on Site Allocations (updated 170323)
- **EXAM 77** – LBB Note on Biodiversity
- **EXAM 85** – LBB Note on Water Management (Updated 130323)
- **EXAM 90** – LBB Note on Employment and Housing Land (updated 170323)

Please see our comments below, which have been written in response to the relevant draft Local Plan policies, in line with the format of our SoCG for ease of reference.

Policy GSS01 – Delivering Sustainable Growth

In our Regulation 19 representation, we expressed concerns about how LBB have applied the Sequential Test to the spatial strategy and site allocations in accordance with the NPPF.

In our SoCG (EB_SoCG_07), it was agreed that LBB would revise Policy GSS01 to explain the use of the Sequential Test to inform the Local Plan's spatial approach and we expect to see this change in the final Main Modifications.

In reference to the Week 2 Action List (EXAM 20) and LBB's Note on Water Management (EXAM 85), we note that LBB have provided justification on how the Local Plan will be in line with the NPPF and update PPG on Flood risk and coastal change, which includes application of the Sequential Test and Exception Test.

Policy ECC02A - Water Management

In our SoCG (EB_SoCG_07), we agreed a number of modifications to Policy ECC02A. We are pleased to see reference to these amendments by LBB in EXAM 85.

We support the strengthening of Policy ECC02A in the recognition of the updated NPPF and PPG. In particular, we are pleased to see the requirement of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for any sites within the flood extents of 1% AEP plus 70% climate change fluvial flood extent (see paragraph 1.b. and 1.m. in EXAM 85).

Additionally, we support the additional wording for flood defences and LBB's decision to increase the promotion of Natural Flood Management and SuDS (see paragraphs 1.e., 1.h., and 7 of EXAM 85).

Policy ECC06 - Biodiversity

In our SoCG (EB_SoCG_07), LBB agreed to revise Policy ECC06 and strengthen supporting text on Biodiversity Net Gain. We anticipate these amendments in the Main Modifications.

In reference to LBB's Note on Biodiversity (EXAM 77), we are pleased to see the inclusion of a requirement of at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Annex 1 – Schedule of Site Proposals

In our Regulation 19 representation and our SoCG (EB_SoCG_07), we expressed concerns with several proposed site allocations. For this reason, we have reviewed LBB's Note on Site Allocations (EXAM 75).

In reference to Site 5 – Edgware Hospital, we support LBB's decision to keep the development out of the functional floodplain (FZ3b) and to ensure that any forthcoming scheme must be accompanied by a detailed site-specific FRA that assesses flood risk from all sources and provides detailed mitigation and safe access and egress.

We have previously agreed in our SoCG that Site 6 - Watling Avenue car park and market, would be removed from the Local Plan due to significant concerns with the site being partially located within the functional floodplain (FZ3b). We are pleased to see that the proposed removal of the site has been confirmed and justified in EXAM 75.

We note the removal of Site 9 - Colindeep Lane, due to the site not being considered to be 'readily deliverable' nor developable' owing to physical and environmental constraints of the site'. We have previously expressed our concerns with this site on flood risk grounds and therefore are pleased to see the removal of this proposed site allocation.

We note the removal of Site 14 – Sainsbury's The Hyde, as a site allocation in the new Local Plan. We understand that this site has planning consent (19/4661/FUL) and will consult on future applications relating to development on this site under our statutory responsibilities.

Final comments

Thank you again for consulting us on the additional documents published in support of the Barnet Local Plan Examination in Public.

We trust that our comments and position on the new Local Plan remains clear, and we look forward to being consulted on any future consultations under the Plan's preparation process.

Should you have any questions or require further information regarding any of the points raised in this response, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Clements
Sustainable Places Planning Advisor

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