CHAPTER 24: GREEN + BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE



INTRODUCTION

24.01 Green and blue infrastructure refers to the network of green and blue spaces and natural features in the borough. It includes our parks and playing fields, street trees, private gardens, green roofs, rivers, streams, and sustainable drainage systems.

24.02 Haringey is home to a wealth of green and blue infrastructure. The east of the borough contains part of the unique Lee Valley Regional Park, the borough has large public parks at Alexandra Palace and Finsbury Park as well as a network of smaller, local parks across the borough, and the Moselle Brook originates in Muswell Hill and Highgate flowing onwards through Tottenham and towards the Lea Valley.

24.03 Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural environment and paragraph 192 sets out a range of ways in which biodiversity and geodiversity should be protected and enhanced.

24.04 Green and blue infrastructure provides a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for our communities, our natural environment, and the climate. It provides spaces for physical activity, healthy food growing, contemplation, and de-stressing, while reducing urban heat risk, noise pollution, flooding and poor air quality. In addition, it provides opportunities for our communities to socialise, play and hold events and pleasant routes to move through our borough, all of which serve to enrich our culture and sense of belonging.

24.05 The protection and enhancement of our blue and green infrastructure is key to mitigating and adapting to a changing climate and ensuring that our communities become more resilient in the future. Trees and vegetation play a key role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and blue and green infrastructure help the borough cope with more extreme weather events.

24.06 As the impact of climate change on weather and habitats becomes more pronounced, we are increasingly needing to explore ways to manage extreme hot weather as well as heavier rainfall and more frequent storms.

24.07 The evapotranspiration-based cooling benefits of green and blue space in cities is critical to maintaining comfortable air temperatures in our warming climate. Vegetation and trees also provide much needed external shading, protecting people from harm during heat waves. Vegetation can also play an important part in sheltering people from strong winds by reducing the wind tunnel effect in urban environments. Sustainable drainage systems can allow rainwater to be absorbed by the ground rather than flowing into the sewer network and thereby reduce risks of surface water flooding.

24.08 Local authorities in England have a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of policy and decision making, and restoration of river corridor wildlife and habitats also forms part of this responsibility.

24.09 The UK is consistently ranked in the 10% of worst-rated countries in the world for the extent to which its ecosystems have retained their natural animals and plants (biodiversity intactness) , so local authorities have a duty to prioritise nature

recovery and environmental net gain in their local plans in order to help restore the natural environment that has been lost so that we can protect the resilience and longevity of our planet.

24.10 Green and blue infrastructure can also deliver economic benefits by creating high-quality environments and places that attract visitors and investment that support the local economy.

24.11 It is essential that all people in our community, no matter where they live, have access to the significant benefits that green and blue infrastructure can provide.

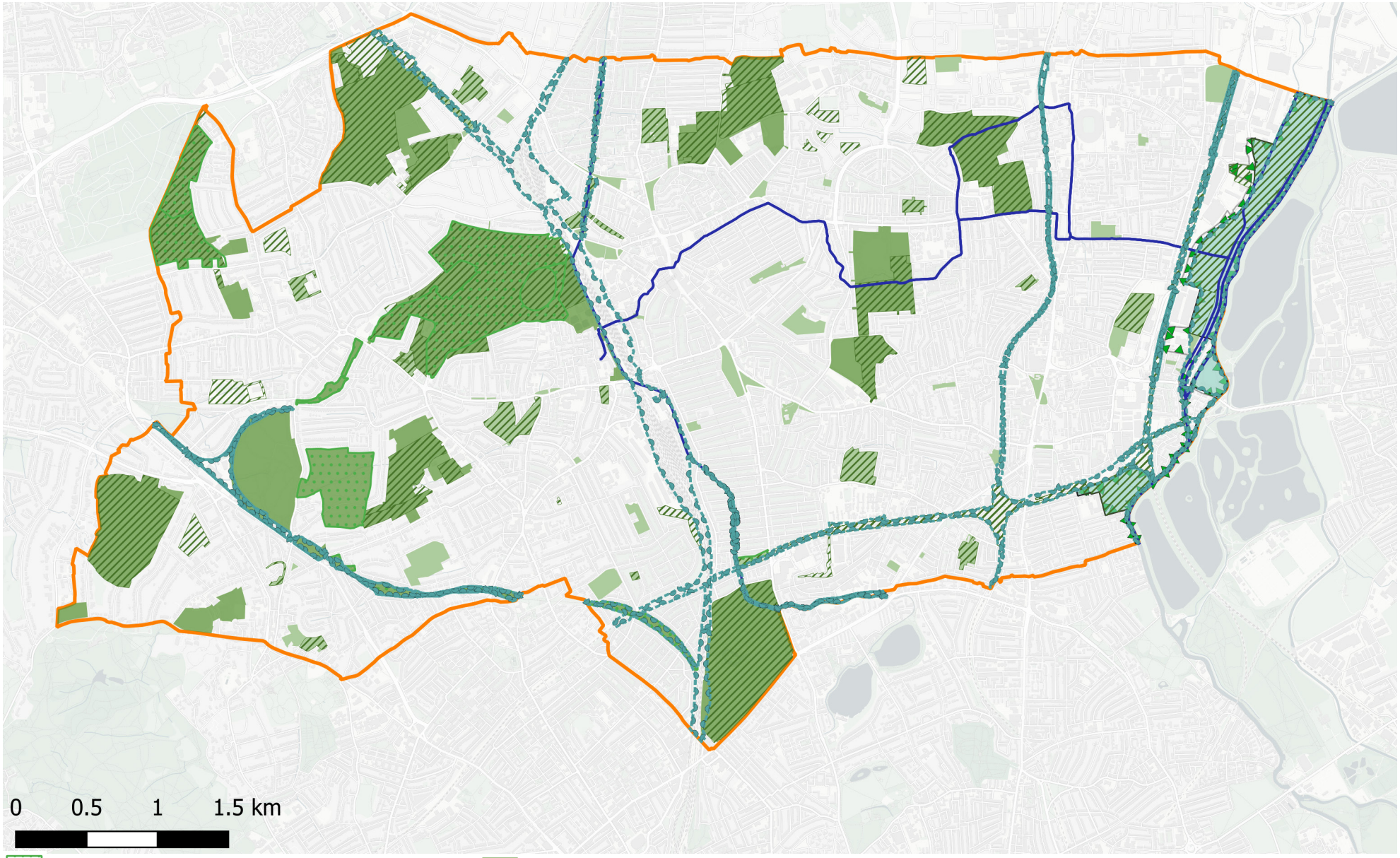


FIGURE 209 | Map of Blue and Green Infrastructure

Policy G1: Green and Blue Infrastructure

A. The Council seeks to protect, enhance and increase provision of green and blue infrastructure, including addressing deficiencies of such infrastructure where identified. This will be achieved through:

(2) protecting Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land from inappropriate development, in accordance with Policy G2
(3) protecting designated open space and securing new open space and recreational space from developments in accordance with Policy G3
(4) requiring development proposals to integrate green infrastructure and provide for urban greening in line with Policy G4
(5) protecting and enhancing the borough's biodiversity, including designated and undesignated sites, and delivering biodiversity net gain in accordance with policy G5
(6) protecting, maintaining and enhancing Haringey's trees and urban forest consistent with Policy G6
(7) supporting the provision of community food growing sites as part of new development and as a meanwhile use on vacant or under-utilised sites in accordance with Policy G7
(8) protecting and enhancing the borough's watercourses in accordance with Policy G8

Green & Blue Infrastructure Principles

B. Proposals must be designed and delivered in accordance with the following Green & Blue Infrastructure Principles and will be supported where they are demonstrated to do so:

(1) Consider opportunities to protect, enhance and increase provision of green and blue infrastructure from the earliest stage of the planning and design process
(2) Respond positively to existing green and blue infrastructure and provide new green and blue infrastructure which maximises benefits for local communities, enhances local character and contributes to a sense of place
(3) Promote access to, and strengthen the network of, green and blue infrastructure in the borough and across London, reducing inequalities in the ability for people to experience and enjoy such spaces
(4) Enhance the benefits that nature provides to our communities, the environment and our climate, seeking to maximise environmental net gain, and supporting nature to thrive and recover
(5) Deliver benefits for current future generations by ensuring green and blue infrastructure supports resiliency and adaptation to a changing climate and also that such infrastructure is resilient itself and that it will be efficiently managed and maintained.
(6) Optimise the multi-functionality of green and blue spaces in a way which supports nature but also provides for the needs and aspirations of the borough's communities.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Plans

C. Major developments must be supported by a Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan (which may be part of a Design and Access Statement) setting out how the development has been designed to put into practice the Green & Blue Infrastructure Principles and adheres to policies in this chapter. The Green & Blue Infrastructure Plan must set out how the infrastructure delivered within (or associated with) major new developments will be managed, maintained, and monitored for an appropriate period.

24.12 This policy contributes to the Haringey Placemaking objectives as follows:

A FAIR PLACE

Help reduce the causes and effects of climate change, and support communities to adapt to a changing climate

A HEALTHY & SAFE PLACE

Enhance and increase provision of green and blue infrastructure to support the health and wellbeing of communities

A SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT PLACE

Enhance and increase provision of green and blue infrastructure to support the health and wellbeing of communities

Supporting Text

Protecting, enhancing and increasing green and blue infrastructure

24.13 The starting point for achieving the aspirations of the Local Plan is to protect existing green and blue infrastructure in the borough. This is made up of a mosaic of different assets ranging from Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and the Lee Valley Regional Park which contains European designated sites and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Fully delivering on the Council's aspirations will require significant enhancement of existing green and blue infrastructure as well as provision of new infrastructure. New development provides a key opportunity to help facilitate and deliver this.

24.14 Unfortunately, not all people or parts of Haringey have access to equivalent blue and green infrastructure and spaces and therefore to the benefits that nature provides. For example, there are clear differences in access to green spaces and tree canopy cover which are both much more limited in the east of the borough versus the west.

24.15 Even when people may live close to a green space, concerns over physical access, safety, or a feeling that the park doesn't cater to their needs might mean that they don't access the space or benefit from it. We need to consider how green and blue infrastructure can serve people of different ages, gender, abilities and backgrounds.

24.16 Development proposals should seek to deliver and/or support green and blue infrastructure that addresses inequalities and allows us all to benefit more from a healthy natural environment

24.17 To maximise the benefits of green and blue infrastructure, consideration should be given to this as early as possible in the design and development process, in advance of other built infrastructure, like transport and communications.

24.18 The Council will expect site appraisals and early pre-application discussions to include issues, opportunities and a high-level strategy for green and blue infrastructure.

Promoting access to a network of green and blue spaces

24.19 Existing blue and green infrastructure in Haringey is made up of a network of spaces and infrastructure types. Some of these are larger and some smaller and some are connected and some are isolated. It is important that new development promotes access to green and blue infrastructure through delivery of new infrastructure as well supporting the fullest possible integration of the network, considering not just linkages within the borough but also across the wider capital.

Respond positively to existing green and blue infrastructure

24.20 Our green and blue spaces contribute in a major way to sense of place, helping people to connect with their local environment. Development proposals should take account of local design codes, character studies, and Conservation Area Appraisals & Management Plans, public feedback and stakeholder engagement to understand how green and blue infrastructure can be designed to enhance existing positive characteristics and address negative characteristics.

Enhance the benefits of nature

24.21 Ecosystem services are the benefits society gets from the natural environment. These include the food we grow, the shade trees provide, the clean air we breathe, the water we drink, soils we grow food in, and the positive effect nature has on our mental and physical health.

24.22 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan includes a policy of "embedding an 'environment net gain' principle for development, including housing and infrastructure".

24.23 Environmental net gain is an approach to development that leaves both biodiversity and the environment in a measurably better state than prior to development. This includes protecting existing habitats, improving water and air quality, flood protection and ensuring that lost or degraded environmental features are compensated for by restoring or creating environmental features that are of greater value to wildlife and people.

24.24 Biodiversity net gain is a narrower measure that refers only to habitats. It is both a legislative requirement and supported through the National Planning Policy Framework. The London Plan contains policy tools to help achieve wider environmental net gain: biodiversity net gain and the urban greening factor.

Support increased resiliency

24.25 Green and blue infrastructure can help to make places more resilient and adaptive to climate change, as well as help us meet our net zero carbon emissions ambitions. Development proposals should be strategic in how benefits are maximised. For example, it is not just about planting a tree to increase notional tree canopy cover. The location, type, supporting infrastructure, and long-term maintenance of a tree must all be considered to ensure that it survives and delivers the benefits we seek.

24.26 Our green and blue infrastructure has a higher chance of maximising benefits over the long term if local people and stakeholders are engaged in its design, delivery and management. Collaboration and co-design can help build trust, encourage more people to use the spaces positively, and to care for the infrastructure that is build.

Multi-functionality of green & blue space

24.27 In places like Haringey where there is a scarcity of land it is particularly important to ensure that our green and blue infrastructure works hard to deliver a range of functions and benefits for people and the environment.

Policy G2: Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land

A. Proposals within the Green Belt will be supported where this is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development and proposals which constitute this will not be approved except in very special circumstances.

B. Metropolitan Open Land will be protected from inappropriate development consistent with the London Plan and having regard to the role of Metropolitan Open Land as London's critical strategic open space network. Proposals on Metropolitan Open Land will be supported where this is in accordance with the London Plan and does not compromise the function of Metropolitan Open Land as described in the London Plan.

C. Development involving the reconfiguration of existing buildings and structures on Metropolitan Open Land will only be supported where it is part of a comprehensive scheme that:

(1) Results in no net loss of open space
(2) Does not have a greater impact on openness than the existing development
(3) Enhances either capacity, quality, range of uses or accessibility of the space with a focus on addressing any existing deficiencies.

Supporting Text

24.28 The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belt and the National Planning Policy Framework provides clear policies to protect the essential characteristics of Green Belts which are their openness and their permanence. Haringey only contains a small amount of Green Belt as part of a larger expanse of Green Belt within the Lee Valley. Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, Green Belt in Haringey will be protected from inappropriate development and proposals which constitute this will not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Framework does however provide for various exceptions where development in the Green Belt is not inappropriate. Notably, this includes development of homes, commercial and other development on 'grey belt' land, subject to specific criteria.

24.29 In Summer 2025, the GLA began conducting a London-wide Green Belt Review which will include consideration of Green Belt land in Haringey and make recommendations regarding its future designation, including whether any of it meets the definition of 'grey belt' as defined in the NPPF.

24.30 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) comprises strategic open land within London's urban area. The London Plan 2021 therefore affords MOL significant protection from inappropriate development affording it the same status and protection of protection as Green Belt. Having regard to changes to national Green Belt policy in the NPPF which may mean that the next London Plan takes a different approach to MOL, it is important to note the general justification for protecting MOL to a high extent, particularly its role as London's critical strategic open space network. The Council will protect MOL in line with the wider policy intent.

24.31 In Haringey, MOL provides some of the Borough's most important open land, helping to provide structure and distinguishment to the built-up area as well as making a valuable contribution to the London-wide green infrastructure network. This includes part of the Lee Valley regional park, and significant public open spaces such as Alexandra Palace park and Highgate Wood and Queen's Wood. MOL plays a key role in delivering many wider green infrastructure benefits such as combatting flooding and mitigating the urban heat island effect. As such, the Council must give these spaces a high level of protection.

24.32 The borough has two golf courses which fall within MOL. Under the London Plan 2021 golf courses in MOL are afforded the same protection as any other land use within MOL, although it is noted this could be subject to review as part of the next London Plan.

Policy G3: Open Space and Recreation

Protection of Open Space

A. Designated open space will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.

B. Proposals involving the loss of designated open space will not be permitted unless development:

(1) provides essential ancillary facilities (e.g. changing rooms, play equipment, outdoor gyms, pedestrian and cycle links, public toilets, cafes) that will enhance the function, use, accessibility and enjoyment of the existing open space; or
(2) provides new outdoor uses, the recreational and sporting benefits of which would outweigh the harm resulting from its loss;
(3) is temporary in nature and the open space will be restored back to its original purpose
(4) re-provides replacement open space (as part of the wider development site or within a suitable alternative location within the catchment area) of equivalent or better-quality provision which is accessible to the public

C. Development involving the reconfiguration of existing buildings and structures on designated open space will only be supported where it is part of a comprehensive scheme that:

(1) results in no net loss of open space;
(2) enhances either capacity, quality or accessibility of the space with a focus on addressing any existing deficiencies.

D. All proposals for development on designated open space will be expected to:

(1) contribute to the objectives of the Council's Parks and Greenspaces Strategy
(2) be informed by engagement with open space users, local residents and Friends of Park groups where appropriate
(3) be appropriate in scale and relate positively to the character and value (historic, recreational or functionality) of the land
(4) have no adverse impacts on the environmental value and function of the open space.
(5) increase access to the space where possible, particularly through green corridors

Provision of new Open Space

E. Major residential development will be expected to provide new functional and accessible open space or landscaped areas on-site in line with the recommended provision standards in Haringey's Open Space and Biodiversity Study (2013) of 1.64 hectares per 1,000 residents based on the GLA's Population Yield Calculator. Where this is in an area identified as being deficient in access to open space, the new open space should be publicly accessible.

F. Where it is demonstrated that a new development cannot provide useable open space (or publicly accessible open space in areas of deficiency) or the quantity proposed is insufficient for the size of the development, financial contributions in lieu will be required for the enhancement of nearby open space in accordance with priorities set out in the Council's Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.

Recreation

G. New indoor sports and recreation facilities should be prioritised on brownfield land and will only be considered appropriate on designated open space where it is demonstrated there are no appropriate alternatives.

H. The provision of small pocket parks, functional amenity space including SUDs, play space and recreational facilities will be

supported within new developments.

I. The provision of water fountains, children's paddling pools and cooling facilities will be supported.

Supporting Text

Protection and Reconfiguration of Open Space

24.33 Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation are highlighted as an important aspect of healthy communities in the NPPF, and development should deliver a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

24.34 Additional population will be accommodated through the promotion of more compact urban development on existing brownfield land. This, however, should not lead to a reduction in amenity and places greater priority on the need to protect and maintain a well-distributed, well-connected and accessible supply of open space. For this reason, open space does not fall within the NPPF definition of 'brownfield / previously-developed sites'.

24.35 To promote healthy communities, open space provision must be high quality and usable to provide space for leisure and relaxation. This is important in areas where there are identified deficiencies in access to open spaces. Research has shown that parks are valuable for social interaction and people with access to quality open space are often physically and psychologically healthier. In addition to the inherent benefits of open space, development can contribute to the provision of a variety of sports, leisure and physical activity facilities for residents to address health and wellbeing priorities and deficiencies in the borough.

24.36 The NPPF states that existing open space, sport and recreation facilities should not be built on unless clearly surplus to requirements, or where the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, or where the need for and benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss.

24.37 Haringey's Open Space and Biodiversity Study (2013) shows that there is a significant quantitative shortfall in accessible open space to meet the needs of the Borough's population, and for this reason Policy G3 establishes a presumption against any net loss of open space.

24.38 The reconfiguration of existing buildings and structures on open space can be an effective approach to enhance capacity, quality or accessibility of the land and address deficiencies. The Council will therefore give consideration to proposals that provide demonstrable improvements in the functional value, accessibility to and public use of open space through its reconfiguration. Proposals will need to be shown to form part of a deliverable, comprehensive development scheme where open space requirements have been positively considered.

24.39 Ancillary facilities can positively contribute to the value of green and open spaces, enhancing the potential for public use and enjoyment of those spaces, particularly where they support social and community infrastructure that meets local need. Insensitive design and siting of facilities can detract from the character of open space, adversely impact on the environmental functions it performs and place limitations on the range of uses possible on open space. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that any proposals for ancillary facilities are appropriate to their location, having regard to the Haringey Character Study (2022).

24.40 Open spaces are also important in addressing climate change and contributing to air quality improvements in heavily urbanised areas, and the numerous benefits that open spaces provide to communities must be protected from increased urbanisation.

Any proposals within open space should therefore be ancillary to the open space use and respect its setting and visual appearance.

Provision of Open Space

24.41 Haringey's Open Space and Biodiversity Study (2013) provides an assessment of the quantity, quality and value of the open space and SINCs in the Borough. An updated SINC study was undertaken in 2023. It provides evidence to support the above policy and includes locally derived standards for the provision of open space in the Borough. These standards form the basis for redressing the quantitative and qualitative deficiencies through the planning process.

24.42 Haringey is a densely populated London borough. The population density varies considerably throughout the borough, with the most densely populated areas being located through the centre and east of the borough. The east-west differences within Haringey become even more apparent when considering deprivation. The whole of the eastern part of the borough falls within the 40% most deprived areas of the country, with the majority within the 20% most deprived.

24.43 Taking into account individual domains with the indices of multiple deprivation, notably social and private housing in poor condition and air quality the importance of access to good quality open space becomes even greater. This is because if air quality is poor, open space can act as a buffer against road derived air pollution, providing much needed 'breathing spaces' to absorb air pollution. Therefore, increasing the amount of open space and access to it in these areas is important to address these social and environmental impacts.

24.44 Local open spaces are also integral to the Borough's environmental well-being. They support habitats and biodiversity, help mitigate air, light and noise pollution, counter the urban heat island effect and provide visual relief in the landscape. Open spaces are also hugely important in flood risk and drainage management.

Policy G4: Urban Greening

Urban Greening Factor

A. All development proposals should integrate green infrastructure and provide for urban greening. Green infrastructure should be considered at an early stage of the design process and be incorporated as part of an integrated design approach.

B. Major development proposals are required to conduct an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) assessment in accordance with the methodology set out in the London Plan and achieve an UGF of a minimum of 0.4 where the development is predominantly residential and a minimum of 0.3 where the development is predominantly commercial.

C. All other developments are required to include urban greening elements, although no UGF calculation has to be submitted. Applicants will be required to provide the following information:

(1) appropriate information which provides sufficient detail on the type(s) of green infrastructure proposed;
(2) justification indicating why the type(s) of green infrastructure have been proposed for the development;
(3) appropriate information on how the urban greening elements will be maintained and managed over the lifetime of the development.

D. Any new urban greening element should be locally appropriate and focus on tackling the climate emergency and/or help avoid or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on biodiversity by providing greening that complements the site's existing wildlife value and that will achieve an overall gain in biodiversity.

E. Management of green spaces and assets, including living roofs and walls, must be secured to ensure that they can be maintained to fulfil their function for the expected life of the development.

F. Roof loading must be able to support the weight of living roofs plus other equipment such as solar and hear pumps. The Council supports biodiverse living roofs which are substrate-based and plug planted and seeded with wildflowers. Sedum blanket roofs are not supported as they do not offer biodiversity benefits.

G. Where it has been demonstrated that best efforts have been undertaken to meet the UGF but it is unfeasible to be met on site, off-site contributions to local greening initiatives including pocket parks will be sought.

Supporting Text

24.46 London Plan Policy G5 requires all major developments to include urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design. The policy requires the use of an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to evaluate the quantity and quality of urban greening provided by a development proposal. The Mayor of London's UGF calculator should be used alongside the Mayor's UGF Guidance document in establishing the appropriate mix and amount of greening to be achieved on a site.

24.47 Urban greening covers a wide range of options including, but not limited to, street trees, living roofs, living walls, and rain gardens. It can help to meet other policy requirements and provide a range of benefits including amenity space, enhanced biodiversity, addressing the urban heat island effect, sustainable drainage and amenity.

24.48 Urban greening can also make important contributions to

addressing deficiencies in open space, helping to improve social and environmental outcomes for people living in these areas.

24.49 Examples of how an urban greening scheme could demonstrate that it is locally appropriate include, but are not limited to:

- Providing green routes that promote active travel where current opportunities are limited;
- Delivering a SUDS scheme which reduces surface water run-off where there are particular issues of surface water drainage or flooding;
- Taking design cues from local habitat types or the Local Nature Recovery Plan or Biodiversity Action Plan
- Delivering publicly accessible open space to reduce local deficiencies; or
- Providing other types of accessible greening where a reduction in deficiency in access to public open space cannot be achieved.

24.50 The GLA's London Plan Guidance on Urban Greening Factor should be used to guide the achievement and calculation of the required UGF, with those surface cover types that contribute to other Local Plan policy objectives such as Biodiversity Net Gain prioritised. Haringey's Biodiversity Action Plan can assist in identifying priority typologies of green cover.

24.51 Where protected species or priority habitats or species are found on a development site, a priority for any new urban greening should be to help avoid or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on these as well as to provide locally relevant greening that complements the site's existing wildlife value and will achieve an overall gain in biodiversity.

24.52 Living roofs as defined by the GLA to include green roofs, roof terraces and roof gardens. There are two main types of living roof:

(1) Intensive: often referred to as 'roof gardens', with lush vegetation and deep substrate that are often accessible for recreational use.

(2) Extensive: lower maintenance with shallower substrate with good potential to accommodate biodiversity gains.

24.53 Biodiverse living roofs (sometimes referred to as 'brown roofs') are extensive roofs which are designed to improve biodiversity by providing habitats and diversity of plant species. Seeds and plants are introduced into the substrate at the time of construction, rather than left to self-vegetate from windblown and bird lime seed dispersal.

24.54 The Council expects biodiverse living roofs should have a minimum substrate depth of 150mm, include features for fauna and not require irrigation long-term (temporary irrigation provided after installation is appropriate). The Council discourages use of high carbon content soil substrate and growing mats and sedum. A suitably qualified ecologist should witness and sign-off completion of installed biodiverse roofs to confirm compliance with the design.

24.55 The Council supports the use of living walls as another way to improve the urban greening factor of development proposals. Living walls (sometimes referred to as 'vertical greening') can improve urban cooling through shading and evapo-transpiration, as well as contributing to biodiversity net gain. Proposals for living walls must ensure that regulations regarding fire safety of building facades and safe access for maintenance are adhered to, and should follow best practice guidance, such as Biotecture's External Cladding: Living Walls and Fire Safety Best Practice Guide (2022).

24.56 Offsite contributions will be based on delivering the required proportion of the factor requirement that is missing using the

GLA Urban Grening Factor Calculator. The cost of provision will be based on the proportionate cost of delivering, implementing and maintaining the surface cover that could theoretically be achieved on site to meet the full UGF over a period of 30 years. The Council will then deliver this urban greening in open spaces, streets or parks within 400 metres of the development site to deliver priorities in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan and the London Local Nature Recovery Plan.

Policy G5: Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain

Protection of Biodiversity and Designated Sites

A. The Council will protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity. This includes sites designated for their biodiversity and nature conservation value as well as undesignated sites with value.

B. Proposals must enhance and not adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) any land or area within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Ecological Corridors, Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protected Areas, and Ramsar sites.

C. Proposals should support the delivery of the London Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan, protecting and conserving priority species and habitats including where these sit outside the nature conservation network of designated sites. Provision should explore projects that contribute to priorities in Haringey's Biodiversity Action Plan and the emerging London Local Nature Recovery Strategy, or to improve nearby SINCs or Local Nature Reserves where possible.

D. Proposals should protect existing valuable ecological features of the development site or those adjacent to it. Proposals that would result in loss, reduction in area or significant harm to the nature conservation or biodiversity value of a site or land adjacent to it will be refused unless adequate mitigation or compensatory measures of equivalent or better biodiversity value are included. Compensation will only be permitted after the London Plan's mitigation hierarchy set out in London Plan Policy G6 has been exhausted.

E. Protection of biodiversity must be appropriately demonstrated via an ecological assessment prepared by a suitably qualified person.

Biodiversity Net Gain

F. Development proposals should deliver robust and measurable net gains for biodiversity by incorporating and/or creating new habitats or biodiversity features, such as expansion and improvement of habitats, green and blue links or habitat restoration, incorporation of green roofs and walls, tree planting as well as micro-habitat features such as bird (with a priority for swifts) and bat bricks and boxes, hedgehog gates or wildlife ponds.

G. For schemes which are subject to statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements, applicants must submit a BNG Plan setting out how a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity value will be achieved in line with the latest available version of the Natural England BNG Metric.

H. On-site biodiversity net gain must be prioritised with on-site gains suitably integrated with existing nearby wildlife habitats and features

I. Off site delivery will only be supported where there is no possibility of on-site gains being achieved, or where off site

gains can be delivered within Haringey on sites designated for their biodiversity and nature conservation value or otherwise identified by the council as appropriate for biodiversity gain.

J. Applicants must submit a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan setting out how gains will be secured for a minimum of 30 years. The Council will require developers to pay a biodiversity net gain monitoring contribution to fund statutory monitoring of the proposed gain.

Supporting Text

24.58 The aim of this policy is to protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity. This includes biodiversity in, and adjacent to, the borough's designated sites as well as other non-designated existing habitats and features of biodiversity value. It seeks to ensure that nature conservation is fully considered as part of the site selection, design and development process.

24.59 There are various designated nature conservation sites located within the borough including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Ecological Corridors. These are provided various levels of protection under the London Plan and legislation including Wildlife and Countryside Act 1991 and National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Whilst no internationally designated sites are located within the Borough, there are several within a 10km radius of its boundary and therefore merit consideration in relation to development proposals.

24.60 Epping Forest is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, and a portion is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Epping Forest SAC lies within Epping Forest District Council, the London Borough of Waltham Forest and the London Borough of Redbridge administrative areas. SACs are internationally important areas given special protection under the EU's Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) which is transposed into UK law by the Conservation and Habitats of Species Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations). New residential developments can result in an increase in the number of visitors to Epping Forest impacting upon the SAC. New residential developments within a 6.2km recreational 'Zone of Influence' may therefore be required to contribute financial planning obligations for Strategic Access Management Measures (SAMMs) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) to mitigate the harmful impacts by visitors to Epping Forest SAC.

24.61 Ecological assessments required in support of applications should detail the habitat(s) (type and size) and species present currently on site, alongside data on the proposed size and type of open space and 'living building' features which should be shared with the Council and Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL).

24.62 London Plan Policy G6 gives effect to the London wide Biodiversity Action Plan and seeks to ensure that boroughs and other stakeholders take a proactive approach to the protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity including seeking a net gain in biodiversity. The Environment Act 2021 makes this mandatory in new development, and so this Policy expands on how this can be achieved at a local level. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development which leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before the development occurred. BNG should be considered from the site selection stage through to the final design. Following completion of the development the habitat delivery will need to be managed for 30 years.

24.63 BNG measurements should be calculated using Natural England's BNG metric to establish the nature of the harm to

biodiversity and the quality of the new green benefits arising from development.

24.64 The BNG Plan should include:

- A statement outlining how the proposed development is intending to achieve BNG, and where and how this will be done.
- How the Mitigation Hierarchy and Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has been followed.
- How the Biodiversity Metric Principles and Good Practice Principles are being adhered to.
- Consideration of whether the proposals for on-site habitat creation or enhancement are appropriate and feasible, taking into account how the site will be used.
- Evidence such as soil sampling, should be included to support any delivery of habitats with a distinctiveness score of high or above.
- The provision of sufficient information to support the allocation of habitat type and condition score for both baseline habitats and any proposed habitat enhancement or creation.
- Baseline and proposed post-development plan.
- Brief statement of how strategic significance has been applied.
- A statement to support the document has been prepared by a professional ecologist with suitable qualifications and experience and be in accordance with the British Standard BS8683 'Process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain: specification'.

24.65 Applicants should provide supporting Geographical Information System (GIS) files of both the baseline map and post-intervention (development proposals) map. The GIS files must be correctly georeferenced, and in a format that holds all relevant data.

24.66 The provision of compensation to address residual biodiversity impacts will not be permitted unless the steps of the mitigation hierarchy (enhance, avoid or minimise, restore, compensate, and offset habitat loss) set out in the London Plan have been followed and all opportunities to avoid and then minimise negative impacts have been pursued.

Policy G6: Trees

A. Proposals should protect, maintain and enhance Haringey's urban forest comprising trees and woodlands, as well as shrubs, hedgerows and other vegetation of significance.

B. New development should accommodate as many new high-quality trees as possible and, where appropriate, new streets should be tree-lined in accordance with the NPPF. New trees should be of a suitable species for the location, generally be native, and accord with recommendations in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan and Parks and Greenspaces Strategy.

C. To minimise impacts on existing trees, hedges, shrubs and other significant vegetation, both on site and on adjoining land, all developments with potential to impact these should consider such issues from the earliest stage of development design and be informed by an arboricultural study by a suitably qualified professional.

D. The Council will generally resist the loss of trees within proposals and will particularly resist the loss of significant existing trees, including:

(1) Those designated with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
(2) Those which contribute to the heritage significance of Conservation Areas
(3) Those with high and moderate amenity value and those which have scope for screening other properties/features
(4) Veteran, ancient, and notable trees
(5) Those with high potential for carbon dioxide capture

E. Development proposals, including extensions and outbuildings, will only be supported where they:

(1) Retain significant existing trees
(2) Retain as many other trees as possible and, where practicable, provide an appropriate replacement for any tree that is felled or where this is not possible provide a compensatory financial contribution for the provision for off-site green infrastructure in line with the monetary value of the trees to be felled to be calculated in accordance with the 'Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees' (CAVAT);
(3) Would not give rise to any threat, immediate or long term, to the continued well-being of significant existing trees and any other trees that would be retained
(4) Positively integrate retained trees as part of well-considered, sustainable soft landscaping
(5) Demonstrate that retained trees can be robustly protected from construction impacts and site works, in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction – Recommendations).
(6) Are constructed in accordance with the recommendations set out in NHBC Standards - Building near trees, to ensure against future root damage from existing trees.
(7) Maximise new tree-planting as part of development with an appropriate commitment to implement.

F. Only where clear, justifiable and compelling evidence is provided to justify their loss, significant existing trees may be removed. In these instances, development proposals will be required to:

(1) Deliver a net increase in the amenity and canopy cover to help meet the Borough's target of 30% increase in cover, habitat and environmental services provided by trees on the site including through the planting of significant mature trees within the proposed scheme; or
(2) Where an increase cannot be secured on site, the full Capital

Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT) value of any trees lost should be calculated and an appropriate mitigating financial contribution paid to the Council which will be redirected towards local green infrastructure provision.

Supporting Text

24.68 The abundance of trees and woodland in Haringey is a great asset for the borough and has significant benefits for biodiversity, heath mitigation, air quality and urban greening. It is essential therefore that new development should protect, maintain and enhance this urban forest, as well as shrubs, hedgerows and other vegetation of significance

24.69 The Council has set a strategic target in its Tree and Woodland Plan (2023) of planting at least 10,000 new trees by 2030 including achieving a minimum of 30% canopy cover across all Council wards. New development in Haringey will be required to contribute to this and should maximise opportunities for new trees.

24.70 Tree planting should be recognised from the outset as an integral part of any development scheme and should be purposefully designed to complement the proposed features of the development, and those existing features intended for retention.

24.71 Where trees are located within a development site, the appropriate arboricultural information should be obtained and applied to demonstrate that layouts have been informed by the use of such survey and tree constraints mapping information. NHBC Standards 4.2 - Building near trees, gives guidance on avoiding damage.

24.72 Planting should be in a co-ordinated way that maximises the green infrastructure network, wherever possible. Such an approach aligns with London Plan policies G1 – Green Infrastructure and G5 – Urban Greening.

Policy G7: Food Growing

A. The provision of community food growing sites will be supported as part of new development and as a meanwhile use on vacant or under-utilised sites which are proposed for future development.

B. Proposals for residential development will be expected to include measures that increase or promote food production. This includes growing spaces such as roof gardens, allotments and community orchards.

C. New food growing spaces should be accessible to everyone and integrated with other supporting services (e.g. water supply and irrigation, storage of equipment and composting), where possible. Such spaces should also have no detrimental impact on the character, appearance, amenity and security of the surrounding area.

D. Existing allotments will be safeguarded from new development. Proposals that would involve the loss of allotments will be refused unless replacement allotment space of the same size and quality is re-provided within walking distance.

Supporting Text

24.73 Community food growing sites deliver multiple physical and mental wellbeing benefits to residents including the production of healthy, fresh food, greater exposure to natural environments and wildlife physical activity and social connections.

24.74 Haringey currently has 27 allotment sites but these are at capacity and have long waiting lists. The Council will supports new community food growing opportunities as part of new development and encourages imaginative approaches to provision, subject to technical and practical considerations.

24.75 Provision within new development could take the form of dedicated food growing areas as well as within communal planting schemes, such as fruiting trees, shrubs and bushes. Where sites are constrained or tightly defined, developments should utilise rooftops, walls, atriums, courtyards or balconies as growing spaces and innovative solutions, where possible. The use of edible plants could also be considered as part of the landscaping of new developments, rather than the use of ornamental trees and shrubs.

24.76 Growing spaces should ideally be south facing and with adequate protection planned (e.g., from exposure to strong winds particularly on balconies and roof terraces) into any growing space to allow crops to thrive. Soil in urban settings may need to be checked for contamination and quality. Any site must be made safe for its existing use. Management and maintenance arrangements must be in place and consideration given to whether on-going management of the growing areas by a caretaker or external contractor will be required

Policy G8: Watercourses

A. Proposals adjacent to watercourses or over culverted watercourses must contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the borough's Blue Ribbon Network, including Pymmes Brook, Moselle Brook, Stonebridge Brook, the River Lee and its tributaries. To achieve this, development will be required to:

(1) Avoid the net loss or covering of watercourses
(2) Avoid adversely affecting natural functioning of watercourses
(3) Avoid the deterioration of water quality of watercourses
(4) Incorporate suitable setbacks to provide an adequate undeveloped buffer zone around watercourses, typically 8 meters from a main river and 5 meters from an ordinary watercourse, or at an appropriate width as otherwise agreed by the Council and the Environment Agency
(5) Maximise opportunities to reduce fluvial flood risk and strengthen climate resilience
(6) Where appropriate, secure ecological and biodiversity enhancements to open sections of watercourses
(7) Robustly investigate opportunities to re-open culverted sections of watercourses supported by site-specific assessments of technical potential and financial viability and in consultation with key stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and Haringey Rivers Forum
(8) Where appropriate, restore culverted sections of watercourses to improve water quality, provide natural urban cooling, improve the amenity of waterways and reduce flood risk, in line with the London River Action Plan
(9) Where appropriate, be supported by evidence to demonstrate how watercourse infrastructure will adequately function for the lifetime of the development, and if necessary, make provision for repairs, improvements or replacements.
(10) Demonstrate how the objectives of the Thames River Basin Management Plan and London River Restoration Action Plan have been taken into account.

Supporting text

24.77 The term watercourse applies to both main rivers and ordinary watercourses. Main rivers are all watercourses shown on the statutory main river maps held by the Environment Agency and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Ordinary watercourses are all other watercourses.

24.78 Watercourses in Haringey form part of the network of rivers and streams within the London basin. They are an important resource that offer amenity, support biodiversity and play a critical role in sustainable flood management (such as by reducing the speed of water run-off and providing capacity for flood storage).

24.79 New development needs to be set back from watercourses and flood defences in order to provide an appropriate buffer zone to ensure the natural functioning of watercourses. Buffer zones offer many benefits including for flood resilience and biodiversity. Adequate space is also needed to allow for access and maintenance of flood defences. Buffer zones should be left free of any permanent structures and carefully integrated with new developments so as to maximise their amenity value.

24.80 Haringey lies in the Lower Lee River catchment and the River Lee has historically suffered from poor water quality. Further, the River Lee, Pymmes Brook and Moselle Brook are currently classified as having 'moderate' ecological status and steps are needed to enable them to reach 'good' status.

24.81 The improvement of waterbodies to 'good' ecological status or potential, and not allowing any deterioration in the status of waterbodies, are key requirements of the Water Framework Directive. This policy is set in the context of the Directive and will

ensure that new development supports its objectives.

24.82 Many watercourses have been significantly altered from their original state thus compromising these key functions. This is owing to a legacy of urban development in which watercourses were redirected away from sites or piped into culverted sections below ground. The Council aims to stop this practice of culverting and reverse such unsustainable alterations by requiring proposals for site redevelopment to fully exploit opportunities to restore and enhance the natural functioning of watercourses (a practice often referred to as 'deculverting', or 'daylighting'). This approach aligns with the Blue Ribbon Network objectives of the London Plan and with Environmental Agency advice. The Council will extend these policy principles to all watercourses in Haringey.

24.83 Sites with existing culverts will be expected to robustly investigate opportunities to re-open culverted sections of watercourses supported by site-specific assessments of technical potential and financial viability and in consultation with key stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and Haringey Rivers Forum. Where the implementation of measures to restore sections of the watercourse is not considered possible, clear and robust justification must be provided. There are opportunities for deculverting in various parts of the borough, in particular the Moselle Brook and Stonebridge Brook which are both heavily modified waterbodies and largely in culvert.

24.84 The Thames Basin River Management Plan aims to prevent the deterioration and improve the quality of London's waterways. The plan's objectives and actions for watercourses in Haringey should be considered for all new proposals where relevant. In addition, the River Restoration Action Plan sets out details on local opportunities to restore sections of the River Lee. It is updated regularly and applicants should refer to the Action Plan accordingly.