

Examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)

Examination hearing sessions

Statement of North Hertfordshire District Council

Matter 18 – Healthy communities (Policies SP10 and HC1)

18.1 Is Policy SP10 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

1. The need for the plan to include a policy in support of Healthy Communities is justified by NPPF Paragraphs 69 and 70 which require planning policies to support the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services communities need and ensure that places are designed to be safe and accessible, providing opportunities for community members to meet. It has been the aim of the Council to integrate support for healthy communities into the whole of the plan but it was considered necessary, in light of the evidence base and for general consistency with national guidance, to also include a specific policy in support of healthy communities.
2. As set out in other statements to this examination, the strategic policies of the plan set out the Council's overarching aims and priorities for a given theme. This is then supported by the application of detailed policies and requirements in the remainder of the plan.
3. The findings of the evidence base documents shown in Table A support the need for a specific policy in support of the factors contributing to healthy communities as described by NPPF paragraphs 69 and 70:

NPPF Paragraph 69 and 70 Requirements	Supporting evidence base	Proposed Policies
Promote opportunities for meetings between members of the community. Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to	North Hertfordshire Retail Study Update (E1) Retail Background Paper (E2) North Hertfordshire Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report (OSC1) North Hertfordshire Indoor Sports Facilities Study Assessment Report (OSC2) North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan (NHE15)	Policy SP10: Healthy Communities Criterion B and Criterion F Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions.

NPPF Paragraph 69 and 70 Requirements	Supporting evidence base	Proposed Policies
enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments		
<p>Promote safe and accessible environments.</p> <p>Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.</p>	<p>North Hertfordshire Open Space Review and Standards (OSC4)</p> <p>A Green Space Management Strategy for North Hertfordshire (ORD2)</p>	<p>Policy SP10: Healthy Communities Criterion A, Criterion D and Criterion F</p> <p>Policy SP4: Town and Local Centres</p> <p>Policy HC1: Community facilities</p> <p>Policy ETC6: Local Centres</p> <p>Policy ETC7: Scattered local shops and services in towns and villages</p>
<p>Promote safe and accessible environments.</p> <p>Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community.</p>	Community Halls Strategy for North Hertfordshire (OSC3)	<p>Policy SP10: Healthy Communities Criterion A</p> <p>Policy HC1: Community facilities</p>
<p>Promote safe and accessible developments.</p> <p>Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Delivery Plan (T11)</p> <p>Meeting the Demand for School Places (Secondary) Summer 2016/17 (T113)</p>	<p>Policy SP10: Healthy Communities Criterion C and Criterion E</p> <p>Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions</p>

4. The individual aspects of SP10 are articulated by the development management policies in the plan as set out in Table A. Where new development is proposed, the

policy's effectiveness will be enhanced by the close working required with Hertfordshire County Council, the NHS Trust, the Clinical Commissioning Groups, Academy Trusts, landowners and other relevant providers to ensure delivery. The effectiveness of policy SP10 is further supported by Strategic Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions, which ensures delivery.

5. The Council considers that the policy demonstrates conformity with national policy, namely NPPF paragraphs 69 and 70.

Is Policy HC1 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

1. Yes. HC1 provides development management guidance for applications for the provision of new or loss of existing community facilities. Although the plan contains a range of site-specific criteria demanding the provision of additional infrastructure within planned housing schemes, it is anticipated that this will be supplemented by the provision of new, or enhancement of existing, facilities over the lifetime of the plan on sites which are not specifically allocated for additional development (e.g. the expansion of existing schools that help meet the education requirements of future development).
2. The policy is justified by NPPF Paragraphs 69, 70 and 74 and by the following documents of the evidence base: Infrastructure Delivery Plan (TI1); Meeting the Demand for School Places (Secondary) Summer 2016/17 (TI13); North Hertfordshire Indoor Sports Facilities Study Assessment Report (OSC2); and the Community Halls Strategy for North Hertfordshire (OSC3).
3. In order to ensure that the policy is fully consistent with the NPPF with regards to the redevelopment of sporting facilities the following change to the policy and supporting text is proposed:

Amendment to HC1: Community facilities

Proposals for the redevelopment of sporting facilities will be supported where the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss of the existing facilities.

The loss of community facilities will only be permitted where this is justified by:

The provision of replacement facilities, either on site as part of the development proposal or in an alternative appropriate location.

Showing that there is no local need for the facility or service and that any appropriate, alternative community use of the existing premises to meet local needs is not required; or

Demonstrating that the facility, or any reasonable replacement, is not, and will not be viable on that site.

Amendment to Paragraph 10.5

It is important that these facilities are situated within local communities so that they are accessible; help to reduce the need to travel and provide opportunities for people to participate in activities within their own community. One way that this can be achieved is through the shared use of facilities such as the dual use of school facilities for sport and other community uses in appropriate locations.

4. The policy is consistent with paragraphs 69, 70 and 74 of the NPPF.