

BOROUGH PLAN BACKGROUND PAPER: Retaining community facilities

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

2015

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this technical paper is to draw together the key datasets/information that have been used in developing the retaining community facilities policy. The technical paper provides the detail behind the development of the policy and is used to justify the elements included within the policy.

2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the fundamental planning requirements that need to be considered through the planning process. Table 1: NPPF Conformity, highlights the key points relating to this topic from the NPPF and how the policy or the Borough Plan as a whole, is meeting this requirement.
- 2.2 The extracts from the NPPF demonstrate the breath of information relating to this topic at the national level. The proposed policy seeks to take forward the most appropriate elements, whilst seeking to create unnecessary repetition. The proposed policy includes some criteria to consider as part of determining a planning application where development would threaten the loss of a community facility.
- 2.3 A number of the requirements set out within the NPPF relate to planning appropriate infrastructure, this is not specifically dealt with as part of this policy, but rather is a fundamental element of the Borough Plan as a whole. However, the infrastructure policy identifies how infrastructure will be delivered as part of the development of the Borough Plan.

NPPF Requirement	NPPF sub-requirement	Relationship with policy
Core Planning Principle: take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.		This policy seeks to ensure existing facilities are not detrimentally impacted as part of any new development proposals. The provision of new facilities will primarily be delivered through the IDP and Policy 'Ensuring the Delivery of Infrastructure Provision'.
Paragraph 23:	allocate a range of suitable sites to meet	The provision of new facilities will primarily

NPPF Requirement	NPPF sub-requirement	Relationship with policy
<p>Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:</p>	<p>the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres. It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability. Local planning authorities should therefore undertake an assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites;</p>	<p>be delivered through the IDP and Policy 'Ensuring the Delivery of Infrastructure Provision'.</p>
<p>Paragraph 28: Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:</p>	<p>promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.</p>	<p>The majority of the Borough is urban in nature. However, this will be applicable across the Borough as it seeks to ensure existing facilities are not impacted upon as part of any new development proposals.</p>

NPPF Requirement	NPPF sub-requirement	Relationship with policy
<p>Paragraph 42:</p> <p>Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.</p>		<p>This aspect of the NPPF will be delivered through the IDP, Policy - telecommunications and Policy 'Ensuring the Delivery of Infrastructure Provision'.</p>
<p>Paragraph 70:</p> <p>To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:</p>	<p>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 enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments</p>	<p>This policy seeks to ensure existing facilities are not detrimentally impacted and that adequate facilities are available locally. However, this policy is a small part of the wider provision that the Borough Plan seeks to retain and deliver. The provision of new facilities will primarily be delivered through the IDP and Policy 'Ensuring the Delivery of Infrastructure Provision' as well as other policies in the Borough Plan such as Policy - sport and recreation.</p>
	<p>guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to</p>	<p>This policy seeks to ensure existing facilities are not detrimentally impacted and that adequate facilities are available locally. However, this</p>

NPPF Requirement	NPPF sub-requirement	Relationship with policy
	meet its day-to-day needs;	policy is a small part of the wider community infrastructure provision that the Borough Plan seeks to retain and deliver.
	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; and	The policy primarily aims to retain community facilities where they are needed. Any development will need to conform to all of the Borough Plan policies.
	ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.	This is delivered through strategic housing site selection background paper and the associated policy.
<p>Paragraph 73:</p> <p>Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits</p>		<p>This is delivered through Policy Health and Policy -sport and recreation. However, this policy will also seek to protect against the loss of such places where the criteria in the policy cannot be met.</p>

NPPF Requirement	NPPF sub-requirement	Relationship with policy
<p>or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.</p>		
<p>Paragraph 156: Local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:</p>	<p>the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities</p>	<p>This policy seeks to ensure existing facilities are not detrimentally impacted against and that adequate facilities are available locally. This policy is a small element of the wider infrastructure provision that the Borough Plan seeks to retain and deliver. The provision of new facilities will primarily be delivered through the IDP and Policy 'Ensuring the Delivery of Infrastructure Provision' as well as other policies in the Borough Plan such as Policy x - sport and recreation.</p>

Table 1: NPPF Conformity

3 PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

3.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) does not focus specifically on community facilities as a standalone area of guidance, but it does set out guidance points within areas such as 'rural housing', 'open space, sports and recreation', 'health and wellbeing' and 'local plans'. As these areas have been covered within other policies and background

papers it is not necessary to repeat this guidance within this paper. Although, it is important to note that the information within the guidance has still been considered through the development of this policy and the wider Borough Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4 ISSUES AND OPTIONS

4.1 The policy seeks to take forward the following key issues that were identified in the Issues and Options document

Issue TC5

Scattered across the Borough are a number of district centres (e.g. at Bulkington, and Horeston Grange) and local centres (e.g. Heath Road, Bedworth and St Nicolas Park Drive, Nuneaton) offering comparison and convenience shopping and community facilities. The quality, popularity and variety of provision offered however varies greatly.

Issue LR1

While Riversley Park and the Miners Welfare Park serve the whole Borough, other recreation grounds are unevenly distributed with most concentrated in the north around Barpool and neighbouring areas. There is sufficient outdoor sports provision in the Borough to meet existing need but it is under utilised. Etone Sports centre has the only artificial sports pitch in the Borough.

Issue LR2

There is a good green corridor network running through the middle of the Borough linked to the Coventry Canal. Others include the Nuneaton Ashby disused railway. There are however no corridors in Bulkington or the south west of the Borough which reduces biodiversity and opportunities for leisure activities in this area.

Issue LR3

Access to some of the Borough's leisure facilities is restricted for people without a car. Public transport to Bermuda Park for instance is limited and there are no public footpaths along the A444.

Issue S4

Community cohesion within the Borough needs to be improved. People's satisfaction with their local area is the lowest in Warwickshire and only 56% feel they belong to their neighbourhood.

5 PREFERRED OPTIONS

5.1 There was not a community facilities policy within the Preferred Options, therefore, there are no policy related comments. However, there were a number of comments which related to the provision of community facilities. The following summarises some of the points that were raised during the consultation:

- Our allotment areas are very important to the community and must be protected at all costs.
- Facilities for day-to-day retail, catering, sport and recreation should be enhanced, and availability extended to the local community
- Facilities for day-to-day retail, catering, sport and recreation should be enhanced, and availability extended to the local community
- What impact would the proposals have on allotments currently situated on Atholl Crescent and where would the new allotments be situated ?
- Whilst the Borough Plan considers the overarching concepts of health and green infrastructure, it does not include a specific policy on opportunities for sport and recreation or set out criteria for where existing open space, sport and recreation buildings and land could be built on, in line with NPPF paragraphs 73-74.
- Where is the provision of public houses and sports facilities within walking distance of Weddington.
- The Sports, Leisure and Recreation subcategory needs to be expanded to include: horse riding, off-road cycling, off-road rambling.
- Development must be as good as it can be, i.e. density of new housing may need to be less - space is really important; with excellent community facilities, e.g.. including (or nearby) green spaces for BMX, biking and skateboarding (as it is currently a long trek to Miners Welfare Park); ensure new schools have lots of community space, both inside and outdoors.
- The local centre shops are struggling to cope with an increasing number of customers. This is mainly due to the size of the

shop, having sufficient staff, having sufficient car parking available, keeping prices down to a level that customers can afford, high business rates and rents.

- The amount of land available to improve existing services and facilities is limited. Shops are unable to expand due to lack of space. If local centre shops have to pay higher rates or rents than those in the town centre, then they will pass these charges on to customers. If these charges force local centre shops to charge higher prices than town centre shops, customers will naturally avoid these shops and use the ones in the town centre.
- I note that no plans are included for community facilities. Where are the scout huts/community halls/social venues, never mind medical and shopping facilities? These are plans for a sterile, soulless housing mistake. This is compounded by the greater housing density suggested in the new submission.
- Growth should be directed to key towns and villages with established sustainability credentials, ensuring the creation of sustainable communities that have good access to a range of jobs, housing, community facilities and key services and infrastructure.

6 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The Policy seeks to restrict the redevelopment of community facilities for alternative uses by setting out the criteria for when such development is appropriate. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that there is no qualitative or quality loss of facilities from any development proposal and thus the Policy will result in a significant positive effect on ensuring easy and equitable access to existing community facilities including sports/recreational facilities. The Policy represents an indirect effect on enhancing Town Centre areas, addressing poverty and health inequalities together with biodiversity, landscape and soil resources.
- 6.2 The Policy will have no direct relationship on a number of environmental, economic and social factors.

7 EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

- 7.1 The Council has recently commissioned a sports, recreation and community facilities study to inform this policy and others areas of the Borough Plan. The study will provide an assessment of sports, recreation and community facilities needs across the Borough and an assessment of the quality and use of existing provision. For the purposes of this study, the following will be assessed:

- Sports Halls including halls with a capacity of less than four halls court badminton sized including schools and community halls
- Non pitch facilities assessment which include analysis of:
 - Multi Use Games Areas
 - Outdoor Tennis courts
 - Bowling Greens/Rinks
 - Indoor Cricket facilities
 - Indoor Gymnastic facilities
 - Boxing facilities
 - Mixed Martial Arts facilities
 - Community Halls/ Centres/ Hubs

8 DELIVERY MECHNAISMS

8.1 The delivery mechanisms for the policy are as follows:

- Actively work with Warwickshire County Council in assessing impact of community facility losses.
- Work with partners on the Infrastructure Planning and Delivery group in identifying any community facility requirements and identify in the IDP.
- Work with Community and Voluntary Action Groups