

Policy C6: Community, Cultural, Health, Sports and Leisure Facilities

Introduction

9.78 The Local Plan seeks to provide and promote a range of quality community and leisure facilities in easily accessible locations for residents, workers and visitors to enhance quality of life and address key issues set out in Box 23. Such facilities include:

- Education: nursery, primary and secondary schools, higher education; and specialist vocational training;
- Health: hospitals, GPs and health centres, clinics and specialist practices;
- Care facilities;
- Sport and leisure centres and other indoor facilities;
- Cultural facilities: museums, libraries, theatres and cinemas;
- Children's facilities and youth clubs;
- Community halls;
- Public Houses; and
- Places of worship.

Box 23: Summary of key issues relating to community uses

- Community facilities will need to meet the needs of all the community with particular attention to young people and an increasingly ageing population with implications for the provision and location of services such as health and care facilities;
- Provision of good education facilities to increase local attainment and skills to improve opportunities for future employment;
- Provision of good and accessible health and leisure facilities to help alleviate health deprivation issues;
- Less public funding available requiring alternative arrangements to be made in some cases;
- Need to increase participation in leisure and cultural activities to improve physical and mental wellbeing;
- Ensure community facilities are located within or adjacent to centres as much as possible.

POLICY C6: COMMUNITY, CULTURAL, HEALTH, SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES

- 1. The Council will support the development of new community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities³⁰⁶ including those proposed within the Regeneration Areas and other proposed sites.**
- 2. Proposals for community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities not allocated in this Local Plan which are considered to be a main town centre use will need to accord with the latest Government guidance (see also Policy C2).**
- 3. Planning permission will be granted for community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities provided that:**
 - a) they have good pedestrian and cycle access;**
 - b) there is good access to public transport services, particularly for facilities serving the whole Borough;**
 - c) they are well-designed; and**
 - d) they have the potential to be used as a multi-use facility.**
- 4. New residential development proposals will need to contribute towards providing high quality and accessible community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities including:**
 - a) the provision of appropriate on-site facilities in relation to the scale and type of development for which a need has been identified; and/or**
 - b) the use of Developer Contributions where appropriate. In relation to Primary Care provision in the Borough, it may be necessary to secure contributions in accordance with the latest Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB methodology.**
- 5. Planning permission will not be granted for development which would result in the loss of the existing community, cultural, health, sports³⁰⁷ and leisure facilities unless it can be demonstrated that:**
 - a) an assessment has been carried out which clearly shows the site is surplus to requirements for that particular purpose; or**
 - b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; and**
 - c) it can be demonstrated that there are no other viable**

³⁰⁶ For the purposes of this policy community, cultural and built leisure facilities relate to those types of facilities or similar listed in paragraph 9.80 rather than facilities such as local shops. Cemeteries are dealt with separately by Policy LE2.

³⁰⁷ This policy relates to buildings used for sports rather than sports pitches and other open spaces which are dealt with under Policy LE1.

community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities for the premises or site and there have been reasonable attempts to sell and/or let them for these purposes.

6. Planning permission will not be granted for non-leisure uses at the Gosport Leisure Park (as shown on the Policies Map).

EXPLANATION OF POLICY C6

New community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities (Points 1 and 2 of Policy C6)

- 9.79 Proposals for new facilities as part of mixed-use development proposals are set out within the Regeneration Areas and allocation policies of the Local Plan and shown on the Policies Map.
- 9.80 Proposals for community facilities that are not allocated in the Local Plan which are defined by national planning guidance as main town centre uses including significant leisure and cultural facilities will need to accord with the latest national guidance including for example, the sequential test and impact test (see also Policy C2).
- 9.81 Where possible, to support town centres, community facilities should be located within or close to existing centres. However the Council acknowledges some facilities will have particular spatial requirements and alternative locations may need to be considered.

Development criteria (Point 3 of Policy C6)

- 9.82 It is important that new modern facilities are situated in locations which are easily accessible for pedestrians and cyclists and that Borough-wide facilities are well served by public transport. Buildings should be well-designed, accessible for all members of the local community and incorporate a flexible design approach to allow for multiple uses wherever possible.

Provision of community facilities in connection with new residential development (Point 4 of Policy C6)

- 9.83 It is important new residential development contributes towards improving the quality of and accessibility of community facilities including education, health and leisure to meet the needs of its occupants and the wider local community. In most instances contributions towards community facilities will be sought through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 9.84 However, in the case of large developments (over 100 dwellings) where it may be necessary to provide community buildings, or land on-site or close by to serve the new community, this will be secured through the use of

Section 106 Agreements in accordance with the latest national guidance. The Council will consider other site requirements and constraints when negotiating such provision. The Council will enter into a Community Use Agreement where this will assist in securing additional community use, for example, securing community use of a sports facility on an education site out of school hours. The Council will have regard to evidence in the Infrastructure Assessment Report and Infrastructure Funding Statement (which incorporates the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) as well as the latest consultation with the relevant providers to inform infrastructure requirements.

- 9.85 In terms of provision of new health facilities in the Borough, discussions with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB) have indicated that Gosport is considered to be well-served having the shortest walking distances between sites across the Borough (as an example of accessible services) and so the Borough is not considered to be a priority for additional investment by the NHS in new build facilities in comparison to other parts of the ICB area. However new development will place increasing demands on the existing health infrastructure and the ICB have identified significant shortcomings with quality of this provision. Priority for managing the NHS's Estate generally focuses on the following sequential approach for investment priorities:
- Occupying void spaces³⁰⁸;
 - Maximising opportunities within the existing estate; and
 - New build.
- 9.86 It is recognised there may be funding issues and the different ownership/leasing arrangements within the estate rather than lack of physical infrastructure provision per se and the ICB identified a key issue in Gosport relates to recruitment/retention of health care professionals particularly GPs.
- 9.87 There are a number of different models of ownership/leasing arrangements for GP practices operating in Gosport:
- Practices owned by the GP partners (one partner or multiples);
 - Third party developer/landlords; and
 - NHS Property landlord.
- 9.88 The individual practice's ownership/lease arrangements can affect how their services and buildings operate, which in turn can impact on the delivery and type of clinical care services and decisions regarding whether the individual practice might expand or contract patient services. In addition existing GP surgeries may not lend themselves to modern clinical practices and require

³⁰⁸ The NHS Property Services have a national Vacant Space Handback Scheme established in 2017. The website says reducing vacant space and allowing such space to be repurposed, re-let or disposed of or redeveloped. Further information about the scheme is available on the NHS Property Services website: www.property.nhs.uk/occupier-hub/vacant-space-handback-scheme/

improvements in order to support multi-disciplinary teams of health care professionals providing a wide-range of services across the whole primary care network.

- 9.89 The ICB have identified a number of costed improvements required to local health infrastructure. Whilst recognising these requirements, large parts of Gosport have significant viability challenges as set out in the WPVA. The Council will therefore seek to secure a contribution towards improvements to primary care facilities on a case by case basis, where viability allows.
- 9.90 The ICB have recently introduced across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight an approach for calculating developer contributions for health infrastructure and they are seeking developer contributions in respect of planning applications for residential development over 20 dwellings. Where developer contributions are sought for health infrastructure provision, the Council will have regard to the methodology used by the ICB to secure developer contributions towards improved or new health infrastructure provision. The approach for securing contributions is set out in the ICB's document called: *Health Contributions for GP Provision – Technical Note for Developers*.

Protecting existing community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities (Point 5 of Policy C6)

- 9.91 The larger community, cultural, health, sports and leisure facilities protected by this policy are shown on the Policies Map. However it is important to note that this policy also applies to smaller sites not shown on the Policies Map as well as those that are developed post adoption of the Local Plan.
- 9.92 The Council has published a Built Facilities Assessment. The findings show there is a need to protect indoor sports facilities and there may be a need for additional provision for indoor facilities and these should ideally be co-located with existing facilities such as Gosport Leisure Park and educational and training facilities. Therefore the Council will normally resist any proposal that would result in a loss of existing community, cultural, health, sports³⁰⁹ and leisure facilities.
- 9.93 Proposals for a change of use or redevelopment of existing facilities will only be considered where the Council is satisfied that the tests outlined in Point 5 are met. Firstly it will be necessary for the developer to demonstrate that the site is no longer required for its existing or recent function. Reasons could include that there is no longer a local demand or that satisfactory provision exists elsewhere in the locality, evidence to support this will be required.
- 9.94 In addition to meeting either of the two tests in Policy C6 (Point 5a-b) it will be necessary to demonstrate that there are no viable community, cultural, health, sports and leisure uses for the buildings or the site for which there are a local need (Point 5c). In the case of a building used for sports it will be

³⁰⁹ This policy relates to buildings used for sport rather than sports pitches and other open spaces which are dealt with by Policy LE1.

necessary to investigate all alternative sports uses prior to consideration of the building for a community, cultural, health or leisure use.

- 9.95 If the developer is proposing an alternative change of use or redevelopment, the applicant must demonstrate that an appropriate marketing exercise of at least 6 months has been undertaken to try and secure a community, cultural, health, sports or leisure use. It is acknowledged that in some cases it may be more appropriate to consider a longer marketing period, for example, if the site is of particular importance or is a complex site. There may also be circumstances where a shorter marketing period may be acceptable if sufficient justification is provided. The Council will require the following information:
- the details of the marketing including advertising methods which are proportionate to the nature of the premises;
 - details of the prices that the properties have been marketed at and whether this represents a competitive local market rate; and
 - details of any interest received.
- 9.96 It will also be appropriate in many cases to engage with the local community to ascertain whether there is any local demand for a community use of the building and/or site. Consideration will be given to the location and type of facility and the community it serves and whether there are other such facilities in the area. It will also be necessary to consider the provisions of the Localism Act which makes provisions for assets of community value whereby local community groups are given time to develop a bid and raise the funds to buy an asset when it comes onto the open market.

Gosport Leisure Park (Point 6 of Policy C6)

- 9.97 Gosport Leisure Park, which opened in 2012, includes a major public leisure centre with associated outdoor play and sports facilities. A hotel, pub/restaurant and café have also been built at the site. The site also includes the well-established ice rink. The site has been a successful facility and as stated in Policy A4 there may be further opportunities for additional leisure facilities on the remaining portion of the complex. This policy aims to protect the existing mix of uses on the site from non-leisure uses and thereby ensuring a suitable mix of leisure uses is retained on the site in an accessible location within the Borough.