

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING (LOCAL CHALLENGES)

Open space, sport and recreation facilities

Built leisure facilities

Built health facilities

Health impact assessments



*Oadby and Wigston  
Borough Council  
Leicestershire*

## **Open space, sport and recreation facilities**

### What the government says:

- 4.1 Open space, sports and recreation underpin peoples' quality of life, with well designed and implemented planning policy, being fundamental in delivering the broader Government objectives of, supporting urban regeneration and rural renewal; promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion; health and well-being; and, promoting more sustainable local communities.
- 4.2 In August 2020, the Government's 'Planning for the Future' consultation White Paper set out that *'planning should be a powerful tool for creating visions of how places can be, engaging communities in that process and fostering high quality development: not just beautiful buildings, but the gardens, parks and other green spaces in between, as well as the facilities which are essential for building a real sense of community. It should generate net gains for the quality of our built and natural environments'*.
- 4.3 The NPPF sets out that *'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: ... c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling'*.
- 4.4 The NPPF also states that *'access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision'*.
- 4.5 In light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the heightened value that people have placed upon publicly accessible open spaces and places, the NPPF also recognises the role that public rights of way, heritage assets and Local Green Spaces can play in enhancing the network of facilities in the area. The NPPF defines open space as *'all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity'*.

### What the Council says:

- 4.6 Locally based open space requirements have been developed by the Council and have been very successful in maintaining (and increasing) the levels of open space within the Borough. With this success it is felt that it would not be appropriate to deviate from the current requirements, however through close discussion with Sport England, the requirement and provision of the Outdoor Sport Space typology will continue to be achieved through the Council's latest Playing Pitch Strategy rather than through the use of the Council's quantity requirement approach.
- 4.7 Proposals for new residential development should contribute to the provision and / or enhancement of open space in areas where there is a deficiency in provision, or poor quality of open spaces. This provision could be either on or off-site depending on the scale and nature of development and the level and quality of existing facilities in the local area. On-site provision of open space should provide at least the requirements as set out below, whereas off-site contributions towards open space provision should be consistent with the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.



- 4.8 It is expected that the Council 'roles forward', with amendments as necessary, the existing policy approach of the current Local Plan Policy 9 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities, into the new Local Plan. The current policy approach has proven successful in managing the Open Space, Sport and Recreation in the Borough.
- 4.9 The Council will also look to review and update its evidence base to ensure that a fair and robust approach is taken to deliver all necessary infrastructure to support the planned levels of growth up to 2041.

Potential options:

- Continue with the existing policy approach and update the evidence base supporting the Policy position.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current policy approach set out in current Local Plan Policy 9 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities, ensuring that it is up to date with current national planning policy and guidance?
- Do you consider that there are more appropriate options relating to the delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities in relation to new development?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



## **Built leisure facilities**

### **What the government says:**

- 4.10 The NPPF states that *'strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for: a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development'*.
- 4.11 With regards to ensuring the vitality of the town centres, the NPPF states that *'planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should: a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters'*.
- 4.12 In light of Covid-19, changing habits of the population for shopping online and for home deliveries, as well as some creative alterations to the Use Classes Order and the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) by the Government in recent years, it is clear that the high street and town centres in general will need to be adaptable and responsive to trends and changing demands. The leisure industry is one example of how the role of the high street could change in the future, as the NPPF recognises. It states that *'planning policies should: a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters; ... Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary'*.

### **What the Council says:**

- 4.13 In collaboration with Sport England, the Council is keen to ensure that the current level of provision of the built leisure facilities in the Borough, namely sports halls, swimming pools and small halls or community venues, are sufficient for the projected growth within the Borough over the Plan period up to 2041 (should that be the end of the Plan period). The Council continually monitors and assesses the local community's needs to ensure that provision of built and community facilities within the Borough is appropriate.
- 4.14 The Council will also seek no net loss of the current levels of built leisure facility provision in the Borough.
- 4.15 In producing the Council's current Local Plan evidenced produced in partnership with Sport England concluded that the levels of built facilities in the Borough were sufficient to meet growth demands up to 2031. Therefore, in collaboration with Sport England, the Council must assess the increased demand up to the end of the new Plan period and determine whether the current supply of built leisure facilities is able to meet the additional growth in population.



Potential options:

- In collaboration with Sport England, assess whether there will be an increased demand up to the end of the new Local Plan period and determine whether the current supply of built leisure facilities is able to meet the additional demand to accommodate the forecasted growth in population.
- Apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Questions:

- Should the Council draft a new Policy to address Built Leisure Facilities needs in the Borough, taking account of up to date national planning policy and guidance, as well as local evidence?
- Should the Council only apply the Policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance?
- Do you consider that the Borough area is deficient in a certain type of built leisure facility?
- Do you consider that the Borough area has a surplus in a certain type of built leisure facility?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



## **Built health facilities**

### What the government says:

4.16 The NPPF states that in order *'to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments'*.

### What the Council says:

4.17 The Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing the health and wellbeing of its residents. Due to this commitment, the Council has set up its own Health and Wellbeing Board that brings key decision makers together from a range of local health providers to review local health data, share information on service provision and lobby for change. The Council will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that all of its residents are happy and live long and healthy lives, with less inequality.

4.18 The Council has also established regular lines of communication with the local Clinical Commissioning Group and the National Health Service (NHS), as well as local GP surgeries and other health partners. This communication enables regular meetings and dialogue to keep the 'finger on the pulse' when seeking opportunities to:

- support the NHS (including local GP Surgeries) in delivering a health and wellbeing service which meets the needs of Borough's residents;
- encourage healthier communities through the targeting of unhealthy lifestyle choices;
- seek contributions towards new or enhanced health facilities from developers where new housing development will result in a shortfall of provision; and,
- ensure increased access to the Borough's open spaces as well as offering increased opportunities for physical activity.

4.19 The Council is determined to continue to maintain this communication and to increase the effectiveness of this collaboration as part of the new Local Plan.

### Potential options:

- In collaboration with the local Clinical Commissioning Group and the National Health Service (NHS), as well as local GP surgeries and other health partners, assess the increased demand up to the end of the new Plan period and determine whether the current supply of built health facilities are able to meet the additional demand to accommodate the forecasted growth in population.
- Continue with the existing approach and update the evidence base supporting the Council's Policy position.
- Apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.



Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current policy approach set out in Local Plan Policy 46 – Infrastructure and Developer Contributions, ensuring that it and supporting evidence is up to date with current national planning policy and guidance?
- Should the Council draft a new Policy to address Built Health Facility needs in the Borough, taking account of up to date national planning policy and guidance, as well as local evidence?
- Should the Council only apply the Policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance?
- Do you consider that the Borough area is deficient in built health facilities?
- Do you consider that the Borough area has about the right amount of built health facilities?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



## Health Impact Assessments

### What the government says:

- 4.20 The NPPF states that *'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: ... c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling'*.
- 4.21 National government requires local planning authorities to ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision taking. Public health organisations, health service organisations, commissioners and providers, and local communities are expected to work effectively with local planning authorities in order to promote healthy communities and support appropriate health infrastructure.
- 4.22 National planning practice guidance recognises that early engagement between all key stakeholders around the health agenda through the production of new Local Plans is essential. This collaborative approach, it states, would allow for them *'to work together on any necessary mitigation measures. A health impact assessment is a useful tool to use where there are expected to be significant impacts'*.

### What the Council says:

- 4.23 The Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing the health and wellbeing of its residents. Due to this commitment, the Council has established a Health and Wellbeing Board that aims to bring key decision makers together from a range of local health providers to review local health data, share information on service provision and lobby for change. The Council will continue to strive to ensure that all of its residents are content and live long and healthy lives, with less inequality.
- 4.24 By having a positive approach to local health and wellbeing, the Council, in partnership with relevant bodies, continues to seek opportunities to create and support vibrant, sustainable and healthy communities by promoting and facilitating healthy living and lifestyle choices as well as creating an environment that offers plentiful opportunities for improving health and wellbeing.
- 4.25 In the Borough's current Local Plan, the Plan makes reference and has Policy-led objectives that seek to ensure that all new development contributes towards providing an array of opportunities for healthy living and wellbeing of the Borough's residents. For example, where applicable, all new development proposals should, through design and provision, encourage walking and cycling, as well as encourage the use of other sustainable modes of transport. Where there is potential to do so, development should also contribute towards the provision of and / or the refurbishment of footpaths, cycle ways, canal towpaths, outdoor adult gyms, outdoor sports provision, children's play equipment and recreational open spaces.
- 4.26 The current Local Plan contains Policy 5 – Improving Health and Wellbeing, that requires *'all residential development proposals of 11 units or more and non-residential development proposals of a combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000 square metres will be required to submit a Health Impact Assessment screening statement. The statement will measure the potential impact and demands of the development proposal upon the existing services and facilities'*.





- 4.27 The Council will work in partnership with the Leicestershire Public Health team and the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group in due course to support the production of the new Local Plan to ensure its evidence base and Policy approach is as robust and up to date as possible.
- 4.28 As part of this work, the Council will seek input into the development of the new Local Plan's Health Impact Assessment and with the key objective being to manage the impact of planned growth on local communities and health services and to create healthier places to live and work for the existing and new communities in the Borough.

Potential options:

- Continue with existing approach to Health Impact Assessments, as set out in the Council's current Local Plan Policy 5 – Improving Health and Wellbeing, with amendments to the Policy wording to account for relevant National Policy updates and local evidence base.
- Continue to work closely with all relevant stakeholders, throughout both the Local Plan process and planning application processes.
- Remove the policy approach and only apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current Local Plan policy relating to Health Impact Assessments (Policy 5) with wording amendments where necessary?
- Should the Council remove the policy approach and only apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.

