



## **Social Infrastructure and Facilities**

### **Policy CT1: Protecting Existing Community and Social Facilities**

- A. The Council will ensure that social and community uses are protected or enhanced throughout the borough.
- B. To ensure that sufficient social and community facilities are available to borough residents, the following sequential approach must be followed:
  - i. Protect land and/or buildings where the current use is or the last use was a social or community use, for re-use for the same, similar or related use.
  - ii. Permit the change of use of land and/ or buildings where the current or last use was a social or community use from one social and community use to another social and community use which predominantly serves, or which provides significant benefits to, borough residents and where it is demonstrated that there is a greater benefit to the borough resulting from this change of use.
  - iii. Permit enabling development on land and/or buildings where the current use is, or the last use was, a social and community use to significantly improve that use; provide another social and community use on site; significantly improve or provide new social and community uses elsewhere within the borough and where it can be demonstrated that there is a greater benefit to the borough resulting from this enabling development.

### **Places for Everyone Links**

Policy JP-P3

### **Relevant Strategic Objectives**

SO2, SO6 and SO9

- 11.5. Community facilities and local services enhance the sustainability of a local community and are often highly valued by local people. Such



facilities and services cover a range of services that meet local and wider strategic needs for the borough and contribute towards a good quality of life.

11.6. Their role in creating a sense of community and providing valuable social infrastructure is essential to the borough's position as one of Greater Manchester's most desirable places to live.

11.7. For the purposes of the policy, social and community uses are grouped into the following broad categories, defined as follows:

- Health and social care facilities, including (both private and NHS) GP practices, hospitals, community pharmacists, dental surgeries and other diagnostic and healthcare services.
- Education and childcare facilities, including primary and secondary, private and grant maintained, schools, creches, nurseries and youth facilities, as well as colleges and universities. It also includes Special Educational Needs and Disability provision and Further Education provision.
- Cultural uses, including galleries, theatres, museums, rehearsal and dance studios, auction houses, exhibition spaces, cinemas, events and music venues, creative industry infrastructure.
- Uses supporting the emergency sectors, including fire stations, ambulance stations and police stations.
- Bespoke premises for voluntary sector, including (but not restricted to) tenants and residents' associations, social enterprises, charities and community organisations.
- Other "valued use". These include (but are not restricted to) uses such as launderettes, public houses, pharmacies, post offices, petrol filling stations, libraries, community centres and meeting rooms and places of worship.

11.8. The role of social infrastructure in developing strong and inclusive communities cannot be underestimated. The borough's community



infrastructure needs will be kept under review to ensure they continue to be met. The Council will work with providers of local services to review existing provision, to identify future needs, and ensure the most efficient use of land in delivering services.

- 11.9. Following the introduction of Use Classes E and the flexibility this offers, the Council is unable to protect some social and community uses. Changes within Classes E do not constitute development and therefore are not subject to planning control. However, should a Class E social and community use seek to change to a different use class (for example to sui generis), it would be subject to Policies CT1 and CT2.
- 11.10. The Council also acknowledges that the needs of communities change as well as the frameworks in which some of the social infrastructure providers operate. Therefore, while criterion B(i) of Policy CT1 requires the same or similar use or related use, if this need cannot be demonstrated other types of social and community uses can be provided. Robust evidence in the form of prolonged marketing and local needs assessment of social and community infrastructure should be submitted to demonstrate why criterion B(i) cannot be met - as set out in Policy CT2. Similar evidence will be required if criterion B(ii) also cannot be met.
- 11.11. Where a proposal is seeking to meet the policy requirements to demonstrate benefits to the local community or the borough, evidence should be submitted in the form of a local needs assessment of social and community infrastructure need and the applicant should justify in some detail how the local community will be served by the development.
- 11.12. Criterion B(iii) of Policy CT1 can only be applied where the sequential approach has been followed and robustly demonstrated as set out above.



### **Consultation Question 11-1**

Do you support Policy CT1? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.

### **Consultation Question 11-2**

Do you think the Council should protect the loss of community facilities and local services through a sequential test (as set out in Policy CT1 above), or by requiring a statement setting out evidence as to why a particular facility is not needed?