

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan Examination

Matter 7 Statement – Social and Community

22 DECEMBER 2022

Introduction

1. This statement is a response from the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Council (BCKLWN) to the following issues and questions raised by the Inspectors relating to Matter 7 of the examination into the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan relating to Social and Community.
2. References used in this statement (e.g.[F10],[D10]) relate to documents held in the examination library as either a submission document or as part of the wider evidence base.

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Responses to Matter 7 Questions

Issue 7: Is the Plan justified, effective and consistent with national policy in respect of its policies for community and culture?

Community and Culture (Policy LP36)

Q366. Is Criterion 6 of Policy LP36 justified and consistent with national policy in resisting development which would result in the loss of existing cultural facilities, irrespective of whether those facilities are required or remain viable?

No. Whilst the aim of the policy is to protect existing cultural facilities it is acknowledged that in order for the policy to be effective it should be modified to enable the loss of cultural facilities if they are no longer required or viable. We propose the following main modifications to criterion 6 of Policy LP06 and supporting text:

Suggested Main modification to LP06 Criterion 6

Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of any premises resulting in a loss of existing cultural facilities will be supported where:

a) unless equivalent new or improved facilities, where need justifies, can be provided within the same settlement boundary or in close proximity of the existing facility: or

b) it can be demonstrated that there is no current or forecast future demand for the use through provision of marketing information

c) Where the use is no longer viable, the Council will require supporting information setting out reasons as to why the use is no longer viable and cannot be made viable in the foreseeable future. This should include details demonstrating that the premises has been marketed for use as a cultural facility for a period of at least 12 months.

Suggested Main Modification to supporting text

Demand for cultural facilities varies over time and as a result there may no longer be a demand for an existing facility. Where proposals would involve the loss of a cultural facility, we will expect the applicant to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction there had been a search for alternative cultural uses for the site through a marketing exercise which should be undertaken over a period of at least 12 months and be based on a realistic price/rent which is supported by the Council. This recognises that competition from other land uses could harm the variety of the Borough's cultural offer. Once lost, cultural uses cannot easily be replaced as land and construction costs make it challenging to provide new facilities.

Community Facilities (Policy LP37)

Q367. For effectiveness and to ensure consistency with national policy in promoting healthy communities, should Criterion 2 of Policy LP37 permit development resulting in the loss of an existing community facility, if the proposal would replace the facility in a suitable alternative location?

Yes. The following main modification to criterion 2 of Policy LP37 is proposed to address this:

2. Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that either:

- a. the facility or service concerned will be adequately ~~area currently~~ served by an easily accessible existing or new facility in an appropriate alternative location ~~it would remain suitably provided following the loss, or, if not;~~
- b. it is no longer viable or feasible to retain the premises in a community facility use;