

Policy DSP52: Community Facilities

Response to Fareham Local Plan: Shaping Fareham's Future.

Introduction

- 1.1 This response relates to Policy DSP52: Community Facilities
- 1.2 We have considered the policy with regard to the principles set out within the Framework. Local Plans should “plan” positively for development; be justified; effective; and consistent with the Framework. Policy DSP52 is not sound.
- 1.3 The proposed policy contradicts the Frameworks aims of promoting sustainable development. Not only is this negative planning but should be considered unjustified. The Framework provides no justification for protection of unviable community facilities.
2. **The policy is not positively prepared, justified, effective or consistent with the Framework.**
 - 2.1 The policy will restrict growth. The Framework “foreword” confirms that sustainable development is about positive growth, making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.
 - 2.2 The proposed policy is overly protective and not justified or positive in its approach. This is contrary to para 14 of the Framework which advises authorities to positively seek opportunities to meet development needs of their area.
 - 2.3 Thus the policy is inconsistent with para 19 and 21 of the Framework. Para 19 states:

Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

Para 21 states:

Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations.
 - 2.4 Furthermore the policy requires long term marketing campaign of 12 months before community facilities can be considered for other uses. This is substantially more prescriptive than the test in para 21 “Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstance”.
 - 2.5 It is considered that 12 months is highly restrictive in the current economic climate. It is unfeasible and unreasonable to expect a developer to wait for a year for the chance to develop. This is contained within the policy to stop developers even trying to develop. As a result, the inclusion of this hurdle will in fact reduce the viability for the developer and thus contradict the NPPF, which seeks to promote sustainable development. Further to this, the inclusion of this line could prevent a deteriorating unviable facility to be developed, thus denying the local community the opportunity of a more viable, sustainable facility.
 - 2.6 No consideration is given to the viability of the community facility. The Framework outlines no parameters for the retention of an unviable community facility.
 - 2.7 No consideration is given to the achievement of sustainable development as required throughout the Framework.

- 2.8 No consideration has been given to the potential negative impact that the policy may have on the local community, employment provision or to sustainability.
- 2.9 We have demonstrated above that the policy is not consistent with national planning policy.
- 2.10 The proposal does not accord with the “golden thread” running through the Framework which seeks to build a strong competitive economy. The policy potentially stifles economic development and is not consistent with the policy framework.

3. Soundness – summary

- 3.1 The proposed policy is considered unsound and fails to meet the four tests of the Framework. It is not positively prepared; justified; effective; or consistent with national planning policy. The policy is therefore not viable and should therefore be deleted.
- 3.2 We reserve the right to expand on, and provide evidence to support the points raised above at any examination in public.