

Community Facilities

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Introduction

Community facilities are an essential and indispensable feature of any area. Services such as education, health, social services, libraries, the Police, Fire and Ambulance services all help to support the quality of life in a community. Everyone benefits from community facilities at one time or another, whether that is through going to school, receiving medical treatment at a hospital or clinic, or just visiting the local library. Some, the less fortunate members of the community, are more dependent upon particular health and social services. They may need long stays in hospital, a place in a nursing home or access to day care facilities. For most of us just knowing that the wide variety of community facilities are there if we need them is reassuring enough. For groups such as the old, sick and infirm these facilities are often a daily necessity.

For the purposes of the UDP community facilities has been taken to include the following: education facilities, social services, health services, libraries and arts, community centres and halls, childcare facilities, Police, Fire and Ambulance services, and the Post Office.

The UDP is of necessity a land use plan and, as such, is limited in the action it can take to bring about improvements in community facilities. The UDP cannot become directly involved in the levels of service provision or the methods by which services are delivered, these matters remain with the service providers. However, as a land use based plan, the UDP can allocate sites where a proposed community facility provision has been identified and it can attempt to look favourably on such facilities providing certain safeguards are taken in relation to the local environment and residential amenity.

STRATEGY, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Strategy

Community facilities, unlike many of the topics in this Plan, is not treated as a distinct issue in the Strategy for the Plan. However, in outlining an overall approach for the UDP, the protection and enhancement of those aspects of the Borough which are vital to the quality of life, enjoyed by local residents and visitors to the Borough, is seen to be a key issue.

Community facilities make an important contribution to the quality of life offered by the Borough. Therefore, protecting, improving and making provision for new community facilities will help to maintain and improve the quality of life enjoyed by the Borough's residents.

Objectives and Targets

To achieve the broad aims for the community facilities policies set out in the Strategy, a number of more detailed objectives and targets have been identified below. Each of these objectives is listed, followed by the relevant targets. It should be noted that some of the targets may relate to more than

one objective, and where this occurs the target has been listed with what is felt to be the most appropriate objective.

Objective 1: To improve, protect and expand the provision of community facilities.

- Generally giving favourable consideration to proposals for new and improved community facilities, where these do not conflict with residential amenity or the local environment.
- The identification of sites for particular community facilities.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

The detailed development control policies and proposals concerning community facilities are presented below. Following each of the policies there is a reasoned justification. The appropriate general land use policies, or Part I policies, which can be found collectively in Part I of the Plan, are included in this section preceding the relevant Part II policies. The reasoned justifications of these policies are also included here.

CF1 - PROPOSALS FOR NEW AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals for new and improved community facilities will generally be looked on favourably by the Council.

Justification

It is to everyone's benefit that there are community facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, places of worship, nurseries, schools, meeting places and care facilities of a high standard, in sufficient numbers and in the right locations. The Council will, therefore, generally look favourably on proposals for additional or improved community facilities, where these do not conflict with amenity or the local environment.

CF1/1 - Location of New Community Facilities

Proposals for new and improved community facilities will be considered with regard to the following factors:

- **impact on residential amenity and the local environment;**
- **traffic generation and car parking provision;**
- **the scale and size of the development;**
- **where applicable, access to shops and other services;**
- **if the use is intended to serve a local community, or catchment area, the suitability of the chosen location in relation to that community or catchment area;**
- **accessibility by public and private transport;**
- **the needs and requirements of the disabled;**

The following sites have been identified for the provision of new community facilities:

CF1/1/1 - Land fronting Bolton Road, Bury (0.50 ha.).

Planning permission was granted for a new church and car park on this site in 1989 to enable the replacement of the existing Bolton Road Methodist church building. The proposed new church should incorporate multi-functional community facilities.

CF1/1/2 - Land Adjoining Radcliffe Civic Hall (0.40 ha.).

This site has been identified under proposals for the Radcliffe Renewal initiative for the re-location of Radcliffe Library. The existing library on Stand Lane is on the southern edge of the town centre, a more central location for this valuable facility is felt more appropriate.

CF1/1/3 - Land at the Junction of Albert Road and Hazel Avenue, Whitefield (0.15 ha.)

Outline planning permission has been granted for a sports hall and ancillary car parking on this site. The sports hall is to be linked to the use of the building on the site as a community centre. These facilities are to replace those facilities which could be lost by the implementation of Housing Proposal H1/1/40 - Land at Albert Road/Hazel Road, Whitefield.

Justification

It is acknowledged that community facilities are, on the whole, to the benefit of everyone. However, whilst the community benefits from such facilities, those in closest proximity to them could be subject to inconvenience, disturbance and disadvantages such as noise, litter, extra traffic movement and on-street car parking. To ensure that potential neighbours are not overly disadvantaged, any proposals for community facilities will need to be assessed as to their effect on the environment and amenity, particularly in residential areas. Proposals where the potential benefits occurring from the community facility are out-weighed by the negative effects on the environment and amenity, will normally be unacceptable.

In addition, in examining proposals for new community facilities it will often be necessary to consider the needs of those using the facilities, such as whether the facilities are accessible by both public and private transport, are in close proximity to local facilities such as shops and post offices, and suit the needs of the disabled.

In those instances, such as a doctors' surgery, health centre or local library, where a use is intended to serve a local community or catchment area, a suitable location within or in relation to the community or catchment area may be considered preferable. The provision of facilities for the disabled will be determined through negotiation with the developer.

CF2 - EDUCATION LAND AND BUILDINGS

The Council will, where appropriate, consider favourably proposals for the provision, improvement and dual use of educational facilities.

Justification

The provision of education services is an essential part of everyday life. To some extent better educational opportunities can only be attained by having the right land and buildings in the right places. The Council as local planning authority, and as local education authority has a role to play by monitoring the scale and location of educational provision, by providing additional facilities where resources permit and by encouraging the dual use of education land and buildings.

CF2/1- Bury College

The Council will support proposals for the establishment of Bury College on a single site, and the following areas have been identified for college provision:

CF2/1/1 - Existing Site of Bury College, Market Street and Peel College Site, Bury.

The land covered by the existing Market Street and Peel College sites is allocated for a College of Further Education.

CF2/1/2 - Land at Townside Fields for expansion of Bury College, Bury (3.07 ha.)

This site is identified as an Opportunity Site on the Bury Town Centre Inset Map, suitable for expansion of the College leading to a link between the two existing sites in proposal CF2/1/1. The site is also identified as suitable for business (B1) and office uses (see also Economy Proposal EC1/2/6). A combination of educational and employment uses would be viewed favourably.

Justification

The Council will support proposals for the expansion and centralisation of Bury College on a single site. At the present time the favoured option for the College is to link the Peel College and Market

Street sites by expanding onto land at Townside Fields. This land, identified as an Opportunity Site on the Bury Town Centre Inset Map, is also suitable for other uses such as Business (B1) and office uses. Any other proposed use will have to take account of the proposed College expansion.

CF3 - SOCIAL SERVICES

The Council will, where appropriate, consider favourably proposals for the provision of new, and the improvement of existing social services facilities for children, young people, elderly people, people with mental and/or physical handicaps and illnesses, and other groups with special needs.

Justification

The Council is committed to the principle of "care in the community". This means that, wherever possible, people will be encouraged to live in the community rather than in large institutions. The Council's policies and plans concerning Community Care are expressed in the annual Community Care Plan produced jointly with Bury Health Authority and Bury Family Health Services Authority. Although this may mean less need for residential type care facilities, it may well mean a need for an increase in day care and support facilities. Whatever the needs, the Council will support new and improved social services for those who are often some of the most disadvantaged in society provided that they do not conflict with existing residential amenity, the environment and other policies in the Plan.

CF3/1- Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes

Residential care homes will be located in residential areas and will be permitted where they do not conflict with the amenity of adjoining areas.

Justification

Recent years have seen a strong increase in the number of residential care homes and nursing homes, particularly those for the elderly. Such facilities provide an important source of care and will be accepted, providing they do not pose a threat to residential amenity, and are in accordance with any supplementary planning guidance issued by the Council. Any such supplementary planning guidance will be issued solely for the guidance and assistance of planning applicants and will be consistent with the Plan and subject to Council approval. Where appropriate, public consultation will be carried out. Guidance is currently contained in Development Control Practice Note 2 "Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes".

CF4 - HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Improvements to existing, and proposals for new healthcare facilities will generally be looked on favourably by the Council.

Justification

Healthcare facilities such as doctors' surgeries, clinics and hospitals are needed by everyone at some time in their life. The quality of healthcare that a community receives is affected by the type and number of healthcare facilities it provides. The Council will endeavour to improve healthcare facilities in the Borough through the UDP, by looking favourably on proposals for new healthcare facilities, and by seeking improvements to existing facilities wherever possible.

CF4/1- Fairfield General Hospital

The following site is identified for the possible future expansion of Fairfield General Hospital:

CF4/1/1- Land off Jericho Road, Bury (3.50 ha.).

Justification

This area is allocated for the expansion of Fairfield General Hospital, should the Health Authority proceed with proposals for a district general hospital.

CF5 - CHILDCARE FACILITIES The Council will look favourably on proposals for childcare facilities, such as nurseries, workplace nurseries, creches and playgroups.

Justification

Childcare is becoming increasingly important. This is a result of more women with children going out to work, the rise in the number of young children, and the increasing number of employers wishing to employ women to replace the declining number of young workers. For these reasons the Council will normally look favourably on proposals as a way to improving the provision of childcare facilities.

CF5/1 - Childcare Facilities in New Developments

The Council will seek and encourage, where appropriate, the provision of nursery facilities in connection with employment generating development proposals and creche facilities in connection with proposals for retail, leisure and tourism development.

Justification

In many developments childcare needs are often overlooked. The onus for their provision should not fall entirely upon the local community, nor should their absence deny local people employment opportunities or the chance to fully engage in pursuits such as shopping or leisure and recreation. In appropriate cases, the Council will seek to secure planning obligations with those developers providing employment opportunities for some contribution towards nursery provision, and with those developers proposing new retail, leisure and tourism facilities for creche facilities. In this latter instance, this will increase the opportunity for families, especially those with young children, to make full use of such facilities. The need for planning obligations will be assessed using the guidance issued in Circular 1/97 "Planning Obligations" and the rules governing planning agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.