

Central Lancashire Local Plan Examination

Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 11 – Healthy and Inclusive Communities (Policies HC1 – HC7)

Issue 11 - Does the Plan set out a positively prepared strategy and policies for healthy and inclusive communities which is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

11.1 Does HC1 provide an effective framework to achieving inclusive, safe and healthy places?

Yes. As a strategic policy, HC1 presents the broad objectives (criteria a-d)) which more detailed policies HC2-HC7 will consequently help deliver. These are consistent with NPPF (2023) para 96-97 (NPPF (2024) paras 96+98) and are informed by the statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). NPPG Paragraph: 002 Reference ID:53-002-20190722 advises that the JSNA is a key strategy to take into account. Furthermore, the policy introduces established tools such as Tenure Neutral Housing, ‘Secured by Design’ guidance and Health Impact Assessments, which will help assess whether an inclusive, safe, and healthy place is being proposed.

11.2 Are the requirements of HC2 justified by a robust evidence base and are they consistent with national policy? Will they provide an effective framework for determining applications?

Policy HC2 is justified by a robust evidence base set out within the Hot Food Takeaways and Spatial Planning Topic Paper ([TP02](#)), prepared by LCC’s Public Health team. The study presents local data linking childhood obesity, deprivation levels, and quantum of hot food takeaways. The study consequently makes three recommendations, two of which (criteria b) the policy adopts as requirements.

Both the Topic Paper and HC2 were drafted consistent with NPPF (2023), for which the NPPF (2024) transitional arrangement allows. For reference, page 4 of the Topic Paper’s main report sets the relevant national policy of the time. Consequently, the policy is ‘sound’ as currently drafted. The policy is also clearly consistent with the intention of NPPF (2024) paragraph 97.

If the Inspectors are minded to conclude that approaches to hot food takeaways are omitted from the transitional arrangements as the current NPPF is more prescriptive than the former however, the CLAs acknowledge that modifications may be necessary to ensure that collectively HC2 and NPPF (2024) paragraph 97 provide an effective decision-making framework.

11.3 Does the approach in HC3 provide an effective framework for retaining existing, and allowing new, community, health and education facilities including potential extensions to existing facilities? Is it justified for the policy to cover such a wide range of different types of use? Will it ensure the future needs for different types of facilities will be met?

Yes, the approach in HC3 provides an effective framework for retaining existing, and allowing new community, health, and education facilities. New and enhanced community services and facilities will be supported where they are well related to the communities they serve and address their needs. A loss of a facility will only be supported where it meets the criteria set out in part 2 of the policy. Further explanation of the requirements for satisfying these criteria are set out in the justification text.

Yes, it is justified for the policy to cover such a wide range of different types of use. Community, health, and education facilities are the organisations, places and spaces that support the day-to-day activities of communities. The policy is supportive of all community, health, and education facilities, and one policy covering all uses does not weaken the level of support provided to the different types of use. The justification text further expands on the support for each type of use.

Yes, the policy will ensure the future needs for different types of development are met. The policy allows for new, community, health, and education facilities, and also for the enhancement of existing facilities.

A minor amendment (MA16 in [CD03](#)) is proposed to the policy to correct a factual error.

11.4 Does HC4 provide an effective framework for new places of worship including those seeking to utilise existing buildings?

Yes, Policy HC4 provides an effective decision-making framework that positively supports proposals for the provision of Places of Worship and/ or religious institutions, in accordance with Paragraph 98(a) of the Framework (2024). It ensures that such proposals for new provision are considered within a strategic and inclusive planning framework. Further, paragraph 6.32 of the supporting text to Policy HC4, explicitly

acknowledges organisations may seek to re-use existing buildings for religious purposes. The supporting text signposts relevant Local Plan policies (Policies EN4, EN7, EN8 & ST2) that proposals must comply with, helping to minimise adverse impacts on neighbouring uses, particularly the impact of religious uses upon the amenity of adjacent dwelling-houses, as well as local road and parking infrastructure.

11.5 Is the approach in HC5 based on a robust and up-to-date evidence base? Will it be effective in ensuring the needs for new open space, sport and recreation facilities are met?

Policy HC5 is based on the Central Lancashire Open Space Assessment Report 2019 (EV04), updated information from the Central Lancashire Open Space Assessment Report 2025 DRAFT (EV23) and the Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy (including the Assessment Report (EV01), Action Plan (EV02), and Stage E Report (EV08)). It is considered that these evidence bases are robust and up to date.

The CLAs consider that the policy will be effective in ensuring that the need for new open space, sport and recreation facilities, or extensions to existing facilities, is met. The policy allows for sufficient flexibility whilst being supportive of proposals for new provision and ancillary developments.

11.6 Is the approach for protecting existing open space, sport and recreational facilities in HC6 justified and consistent with national policy? Will it be effective in both retaining valuable facilities and making effective use of land and buildings?

Yes, the approach for protecting existing open space, sport, and recreational facilities in HC6 is justified and reflects national policy as contained within paragraph 103 of the NPPF (2023). In addition to the requirements of national policy, the CLAs are also seeking to protect open space, sport and recreational facilities that make a significant contribution to the character of an area. However, it is considered that this element of the policy complies with paragraphs 135 c) and 180 b) of the Framework.

The policy provides sufficient scope to ensure that it will be effective at retaining valuable facilities, as per the Framework, as well as allowing appropriate development proposals and effective use of land and buildings when such proposals meet the policy requirements.

11.7 Does HC7 provide an effective and justified framework to ensure the needs for cemeteries and crematoria over the plan period are met?

Yes, Policy HC7 provides an effective and flexible framework to support positive decision-making in response to both projected, and unforeseen capacity requirements that may arise over the plan period. The safeguarded land identified in Criteria 2 of Policy HC7 is justified through engagement held with Preston and Chorley Councils' Cemeteries and Crematoria services, who confirmed that projected future burial and crematoria capacity needs are expected to be met through the allocation of sites HC7.1 and EN5.1 as set out in documents CD01 & CD02. Where need arises outside of allocated expansion sites, Criteria 3 provides a positive framework to support expansion of non-allocated, existing provision to meet local faith and community need. Additionally, Criteria 4 enables a flexible approach to be taken by the CLAs, supporting the development of appropriately located new burial and/or crematoria provision.