

## Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Use Related

# SPG 11b Buildings Suitable for Community Use

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In considering buildings for community facilities the Council will have particular regard to the following: adopted Haringey Unitary Development Plan (1998) Policies CSF 1.1 – 1.4 (inclusive), CSF 2.1 - 2.4 (inclusive), CSF 3.1 – 4 (inclusive) and CSF 4, Haringey UDP First Deposit Consultation (2003) Policies CW1 – 3 (inclusive), SPG 9, SPG 10a and this supplementary guidance.
- 1.2. Supplementary guidance is provided below regarding the following:
- Context
  - Day-care centres for the under-fives
    - Suitable buildings for day-care centres in residential areas
    - Suitable buildings for day-care centres in non-residential areas
    - Day care centres in large new developments
  - Schools and other educational facilities
    - New educational facilities
    - Demountable classrooms
    - Dual use of schools and colleges
    - Surplus school land and buildings
  - Health facilities
    - Suitable buildings for health services in residential areas
    - Suitable buildings for health services in non-residential areas
    - Health centres in large new developments
    - Surplus healthcare land and buildings
  - Religious Centres and Community Centres
    - Suitable buildings for community/religious centres

## 2. CONTEXT

- 2.1. This document gives guidance on the kinds of buildings that can be used to provide community facilities in Haringey, and the locations in which they will be acceptable. It should be consulted alongside Haringey's UDP policies. Once a possible suitable premise for community facility has been identified, there are a number of relevant SPGs such as SPG3b: Privacy/Overlooking, Aspect/Outlook and Daylight/Sunlight, SPG 4: Access for All – Mobility, SPG

5: Safety by Design, SPG 8d Biodiversity/Landscaping and Trees and SPG 9: Sustainability Statement – Including Checklist.

- 2.2. Schools, health centres, childcare, places of worship and community halls are all community facilities.
- 2.3. Haringey is home to people from all over the world and people of many different religions, and our community facilities celebrate the diversity of the people who live here. They are essential to all of us, but especially to children, the elderly, the disabled, and many other minority groups. They create opportunities for leisure, learning, and good health for everybody.
- 2.4. Good quality community facilities in Haringey will make our borough healthier, more successful and more tolerant. Below are just a few of the many reasons why good community facilities are essential in improving quality of life in Haringey.
  - Providing enough childcare places for the under-fives is an important step towards helping women get back to work after they have children.
  - Ensuring that Haringey's schools have the room to expand when the number of pupils increases, and that schools have room to provide their students with modern facilities such as computer rooms, is essential in improving the standard of education they provide.
  - Making land available to the NHS to increase their services in Haringey is essential in improving the health of the population.
  - Finally, supporting Haringey's religious groups and helping them to find suitable premises in the borough means that our residents benefit from the services that these organisations provide – not just worship, but also care and communication with many of the borough's most vulnerable people, education, childcare, cultural activities and employment advice.

### 3. **DAY-CARE CENTRES FOR THE UNDER-FIVES**

#### A. **Suitable Buildings for Day-Care Centres in Residential Areas**

- A.1. Residential areas are sometimes appropriate locations for day-care centres because they provide childcare close to where people live.
- A.2. However, childcare facilities can be a problem in residential areas because of noise, road safety, parking, and traffic flow. When an applicant needs planning permission for a childcare facility in a residential area, the Council will expect plans and proposals to show how these problems will be alleviated. This will make sure that the neighbourhood around the proposed facility will not be adversely affected if the proposal goes ahead.
- A.3. Applicants should consider the following:
  - The facility should be in a property that is detached, semi-detached, end of terrace, or on a corner.
  - The facility must have access to a safe area of private open space for the children to play in. This can be owned by the facility or

shared with another nearby facility such as a school, a church or a community centre.

- The facility should meet all the space requirements set by Ofsted.
- There should not be unacceptable inconvenience to neighbours because of noise and traffic disturbance.
- There should be adequate car and cycle parking for deliveries and staff, and space for parents or guardians to drop off children and pick them up.
- The parking area should be landscaped appropriately.
- The environment should be safe, secure and accessible for children and staff.
- If the property was previously in residential use (whether occupied or vacant), where feasible, at least part of the building should remain in residential use.
- The facility should be accessible for disabled people.
- Planning conditions on the number of children or the number of sessions may be used to alleviate some of these problems.

**B. Suitable Buildings for Day-Care Centres in Non-Residential Areas**

B.1. The Council encourages the provision of day care for the under fives in Haringey in areas well served by public transport, and in workplaces, including within town centres. Childcare facilities in these areas can be more convenient for parents, and may help reduce their use of cars.

B.2. The Council will support applications to provide childcare facilities in non-residential areas throughout the borough. However, we will expect applicants to have considered the following in their proposals:

- The proposal must not be contrary to any of the policies in the Haringey Unitary Development Plan
- Within town centres, the facility can be located on the first floor or above, but must not care for more than 12 children at any one time. In addition, the facility should have safe private parking, access away from the main thoroughfare, and meet all the internal and external space standards set by Ofsted.
- The facility must be access to an area of private open space that is safe for the children to play in. This can be owned by the facility or shared with another nearby facility such as a school, a church or a community centre.
- In a Defined Employment Area, new facilities should usually be part of large-scale employment developments to be used by staff. For more information on this criterion, applicants should look at policy EMP 1 in the UDP.
- The facility should be in an area with good public transport links, unless it is a workplace nursery to be used only by employees.
- There should be adequate car and cycle parking for deliveries and staff, and space for parents or guardians to drop off children and pick them up.
- The parking area should be landscaped appropriately.

- The environment should be safe, secure and accessible for children and staff.
- The facility should be accessible for disabled people.
- Planning conditions on the number of children or the number of sessions may be used to alleviate some of these problems.

**C. Day-Care Centres in Large New Developments**

C.1. New large developments put pressure on community facilities because of the number of new people they attract to the area to live, work, shop or be entertained. Large sites are also ideal opportunities to combine high quality childcare facilities within new developments, so it is appropriate that childcare facilities form part of the plans for large sites, particularly if they are to be used for housing, employment or higher education.

C.2. Section 106 Agreements will be used by the Council to require developers to contribute financially to expanding community facilities where they are needed as a direct result of new developments. Separate guidance on Section 106 agreements is available (see SPG 10a: The Negotiation Management and Monitoring of Planning Obligations). The Council will seek day-care facilities as part of developments that fall into any of the following categories:

- Major housing or mixed-use developments
- Major employment or health facilities
- Major higher education developments

**4. SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

**A. New educational facilities**

A.1. Because Haringey's population is growing rapidly, more school and education facilities will be needed. This can be done by expanding existing schools and by building new ones.

A.2. Haringey Council has proposals for education facilities on a number of sites, as defined on the Unitary Development Plan Proposals map. In addition, Haringey Council will endeavour to support applications to create new education facilities in the borough.

A.3. Problems with new educational facilities that have to be addressed in proposals include parking, overlooking, noise and traffic. In order to minimise these possible nuisances, and ensure high quality learning facilities, the Council expects applicants to show how they plan to alleviate these problems.

A.4. Facilities should:

- meet the standards set by the Department of Education and Ofsted
- have safe and convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
- meet a local need for school places
- be accessible for disabled people

**B. Demountable Classrooms**

- B.1. School rolls are often difficult to predict, and demountable classrooms can help manage sudden unexpected increases in numbers of pupils. The Council will normally grant temporary consent for a demountable classroom. The classroom should be sited away from neighbouring residential properties

**C. Dual use of Schools and Colleges**

- C.1. School and college buildings are a resource in which community services other than education can be provided. A playground or private school field can be shared with a nearby nursery school, and after classes buildings and fields can be used for adult education, meetings, exercise classes, sports clubs and many other uses. This is called 'dual' or 'multiple' use.
- C.2. Haringey Council encourages the dual and multiple use of education facilities, provided there is no interference with the facility's primary function.

**D. Surplus School Land and Buildings**

- D.1. If an educational facility is no longer required for education purposes, an alternative use will be sought for the land and/or buildings.
- D.2. If a net loss of educational facilities would result from the change of use of such a facility, the developer would have to prove that it was no longer needed. Before permission would be granted to use the building for non-community uses, the Council would need evidence that the building could not be used by either the education services, or other community service providers such as the health authority, religious groups or community groups.

**5. HEALTH FACILITIES**

**A. Suitable Buildings for Health Services in Residential Areas**

- A.1. Residential areas are sometimes appropriate locations for small-scale health services because they provide care close to where people live. This is particularly useful to people with mobility problems.
- A.2. The Council will support applications to provide small-scale health within residential areas, provided they meet certain criteria. The Council has regard to these criteria in order to ensure high quality facilities, and reduce the disturbance that healthcare facilities can cause in residential areas, which are generally problems of noise, traffic and parking.
- A.3. The Council expects applicants to show how they intend to reduce the problems usually associated with healthcare developments in residential areas. Applicants should consider the following guidance:

- The facility should normally be in a property that is detached, semi-detached, end of terrace, or on a corner.
- The environment should be safe, secure and accessible for patients and staff.
- If the property was previously in residential use (whether occupied or vacant), where feasible, at least part of the building should remain in residential use.
- If the facility is provided in a building that was originally built for residential use, the scale of extensions and forecourt landscaping should not be out of keeping with the property's original use and harmfully detract from its original appearance.

**B. Suitable Buildings for Health Services in Non-Residential Areas**

B.1. Non residential areas are suitable for large-scale health facilities. These facilities improve the health of the population and generate employment opportunities. The Council will endeavour to support proposals for large health centres in non-residential areas. However, applicants should have regard to the guidance set out below, and show in their proposals how this has been taken into account.

- The development should be in an area with a public transport accessibility level of 4 or above
- The building should be inherently suited to provide health care
- Large Health developments should also provide a day-care centre for the under-fives, to be used by staff and in some cases by patients.
- There should be safe access to the site for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- The environment should be safe, secure and accessible for patients and staff.
- The facility should be accessible to disabled people

**C. Health Centres in Large New Developments**

C.1. New large developments put pressure on community facilities because of the number of new people they attract to the area to live, work, shop or be entertained. Large sites are also ideal opportunities to combine high quality healthcare facilities within new developments, so it is appropriate that health facilities form part of the plans for large sites, particularly if they are to be used for housing or higher education.

C.2. Section 106 agreements will be used to require developers to contribute financially to expanding community facilities where they are needed as a direct result of development. Guidance on Section 106 agreements is available from us. In addition, healthcare facilities should form part of plans that fall into any of the following categories:

- Major Housing or mixed-use developments
- Higher education developments

C.3. The healthcare facilities provided should be of a high quality, and should meet all of the requirements of the NHS and the guidance in this section.

**D. Surplus Healthcare Land and Buildings**

- D.1. If a health facility is no longer required for healthcare purposes, an alternative use will be sought for the land and/or buildings.
- D.2. If a net loss of all community facilities would result from the change of use of such a facility, the developer would have to prove that it was no longer needed for community use. Before permission would be granted to use the building for non-community uses, the Council would need evidence that the building could not be used for healthcare, education, worship or as a community centre. Alternatively, permission would be considered if the development included the provision of a superior quality facility in the locality as a replacement.
- D.3. In the case of large sites, a comprehensive mixed-use scheme would be acceptable, provided that community uses made up a percentage of the new uses on the site.

**6. RELIGIOUS CENTRES AND COMMUNITY CENTRES**

**A. Suitable Buildings for Community/Religious Centres**

- A.1. Religious groups and other community groups who provide a service to the local area often have problems finding accommodation that will suit their needs and that is affordable for them. Generally they require large sites, and these need to be outside of Defined Employment Areas, (land on which only offices, warehouses and industries are given planning permission) because they are not considered in planning terms to be an employment use.
- A.2. The main problems that community centres and places of worship face are the likelihood that the facility will increase noise, traffic or parking problems to levels that would harm the amenity of local residents. This will be taken into consideration when deciding whether planning permission should be granted for a place of worship or a community centre. If a facility is not contrary to the guidance below, it is less likely to be problematic.
- A.3. Applicants should show in their proposals that the following points have been taken into consideration:
- The facility should be in a detached building, or in a section of a detached building or terrace of buildings with non-residential uses. In rare cases other kinds of buildings may be allowed, but they would have to be inherently suitable for a religious centre (for example a former church that had since changed its use).
  - Small-scale facilities that will not be used for worship can be located in large corner properties.
  - If the majority of the client group does not live within walking distance of the site, the site should be in a non-residential area. In this instance the site should also be in part of the borough with a

public transport accessibility level of 4 or higher, as shown on the map of public transport accessibility levels in the Unitary Development Plan.

- The facility will have to have safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

A.4. In determining an application, the Council will want to see details of the kinds of activity that will be taking place, the hours during which they will be taking place, the numbers of people that will be expected to attend, and where they will be arriving from. If planning permission is granted, it may specify at what times of day certain activities can take place. These measures are taken in order to reduce the levels of noise and traffic problems that could be caused by the facility. It is particularly important that these issues are considered when assessing applications for religious and community centres, as complaints about noise and traffic can damage the relationship between the facility and its neighbours, and can be both time-consuming and expensive for all parties concerned.

*This SPG has been consulted on as part of the Haringey UDP First Deposit Consultation. As such, it is a material consideration in determining planning applications.*