

Interim Policy for Hot Food Take-Away Uses



Interim Policy for Hot Food Take-Away Uses

Purpose

The intention of this interim policy is to manage the number of A5 hot food take-away uses in Broxbourne in order to promote a range of eating and drinking establishments within the borough whilst protecting the amenity of the borough and having regards to the health of the boroughs adults and children.

At present the Local Plan contains a single criteria based policy, RTC7, for the determination of applications for restaurants, cafes, hot food take-aways and drinking establishments. It is considered that this policy does not completely fulfil the purpose set out above. Furthermore the Council believes that hot food take-away uses can have more of an impact upon the local environment in terms of litter, noise and congestion and contribute less to the vitality of the borough's shopping centres than restaurant and café uses. Therefore a separate policy for hot food take-aways is essential.

Background and Policy Justification

There are currently 73 take-aways in the borough and apart from Stevenage there are more take-aways per head of population than surrounding boroughs.

Local authority	No of take-aways	No of take-aways per 10,000 people	No of people per take-away unit
Broxbourne	73	7.8 take-aways	1,282 persons
Enfield	199	6.4 take-aways	1,570 persons
Epping Forest	46	3.7 take-aways	2,710 persons
East Herts	72	5.2 take-aways	1,913 persons
Stevenage	72	8.6 take-aways	1,166 persons
Harlow	56	6.8 take-aways	1,462 persons

On the one hand this relatively large number of take-aways has served a burgeoning demand for fast food establishments, has extended choice and competition within the food sector and has enlivened the evening economy. On the other, hot food takeaways have introduced the potential for increased incidents of anti social behaviour, affected the balance of shops and services within town and neighbourhood centres, created litter nuisance and introduced a form of cuisine that has contributed to increasing levels of obesity, particularly for children. The estimated level of adult obesity in Broxbourne is higher than the England average at 26.4% and child obesity is also higher¹.

¹ NHS Health Profile for Broxbourne 2012

The Council needs to strike a balance between these benefits and disadvantages in setting out its policy for the future consideration of applications for new hot food take-aways. The wording of the policy that follows consequently enables the decision maker to take account of the impacts of hot food takeaways on the particular circumstances of their locations. It takes account of the wider impacts on the town centre, local centre or neighbourhood in which the proposal is located as well as the potential impacts on public health and public behaviour.

The policy also aims to control the clustering of hot food take-aways in order to retain a balanced mix of shops and services within local centres and to preserve the amenity of the local environment by controlling the noise, smells and general disturbance generated from the use.

Interim Policy for Hot food Take-Away Uses

Proposals involving the establishment of hot food take-away uses will be determined against the following criteria:

- (a) The contribution it makes towards the character, role, function, vitality and viability of the shopping centre, its night-time economy and the local area;
- (b) The proliferation and clustering of hot food take-away uses within the centre and local area;
- (c) The proximity of the use to local schools and the potential impacts that could arise as a consequence;
- (d) The impact on the amenity of neighbours;
- (e) The impact upon the quality of the local environment in terms of noise, litter, smells and/or vibrations;
- (f) The impact on anti social behaviour in the locality;
- (g) The impact of access, servicing and parking arrangements on highway safety, traffic flows, congestion and parking;
- (h) The impact of ventilation extracts on the streetscape and the amenity of neighbouring properties; and
- (i) The potential for mitigation through legal agreement or conditions to minimise the impact on the local environment.

NB: This policy will apply to any future definition or classification of a hot food take-away use