



Hot Food Take-Aways

The purpose of this Local Planning Guidance Note is to amplify national and local planning policies and community strategy objectives regarding improving sustainable design, community health and quality of life. This Note is part of a broader Healthy Eating and Being More Active Strategy to tackle obesity in the County Borough and focuses on hot food takeaways with regard to appropriate location and concentration, highway safety, general amenity and community health issues. The guidance note amplifies Unitary Development Plan policies GDP1, S1, S2, S5 and T8 updates the existing LPGN 9 and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

This LPGN has been subject to public consultation in May and June 2011 and was adopted by the Council in December 2011.

9

*Available in
alternative formats*

Background

Planning and public health have a long shared history. Welsh Assembly Government guidance, as contained in Planning Policy Wales and "Creating an Active Wales" (2010), emphasises the importance of facilitating a built environment that supports, rather than inhibits, physical activity and access to natural green spaces for walking and cycling. The Royal Town Planning Institute Good Practice Guidance Note "Delivering Healthy Communities" (2009) states that "spatial planning has a key role to play in shaping environments which make it possible for people to make healthier choices about exercise, local services, travel, food, nature and leisure".

Although hot food takeaway outlets can provide a popular service and source of employment to local communities, particularly in Wrexham town and designated district shopping centres, and for late evening trade, they can have a detrimental impact on the retail character and function of

shopping centres, residential amenity and community health. Such harmful impacts can include litter, odour, anti-social behaviour, noise and general disturbance, parking and traffic problems and longer term health impacts.

Hot food takeaways are defined as establishments whose primary business is the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

General Guidance

Development which results in the loss of or significant damage to residential amenity, quality of life, community health, traffic movement or highway and pedestrian safety will not be permitted.

General Location

New hot food takeaways should not be located in:

- Wrexham town centre (principal shopping streets) if they are detrimental to the character, vitality or viability of the area;
- predominantly residential areas;
- within 400 metres of the boundary of a school or tertiary college.



Hot food takeaways may be acceptable in:

- Wrexham town centre (non-principal shopping streets) where less than 30% of the total length of one side of a street frontage and no two consecutive units are used for such purposes;
- in the designated district shopping centres of Borras Park (Wrexham), Cefn Mawr, Chirk, Coedpoeth, Gresford, Gwersyllt, Holt, Penybryn (Wrexham), Ruabon and Rhos;
- in other local mixed residential/commercial areas and isolated locations.



Proximity to Schools and Tertiary Colleges

The Government estimates the annual cost of overweight and obese individuals to the NHS to be £4.2 billion, a figure which is predicted to more than double by 2050. The Welsh Health Survey (2009) found that 56% of men and 49% of women, 52% of all people in the County Borough are classified as overweight or obese. Research indicates that once obesity is developed, it is difficult to treat. An obese adolescent is

likely to remain so during adulthood, which may lead to associated medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, cancer, heart and liver disease) and reduced life expectancy.

Food outlets in close proximity to and surrounding schools can provide an added incentive and temptation to children to over-consume fast food. Most fast food takeaways are a source of cheap, energy dense and nutrient poor foods. Research indicates that children attending schools near fast food outlets are more likely to be obese than those whose schools are more inaccessible to such outlets (Currie et. al. 2009). In the County Borough nearly 60% of schools are located near to hot food takeaway outlets. Having additional outlets close to schools would negate efforts by the Council and its partners in supporting the Healthy Schools and Appetite for Life Programmes to ensure that

young people have access to healthy options. Whilst pupils in primary education are not allowed out of school premises during the school day, research indicates that the most popular time for purchasing food from shops is after school.

Highway Safety and Parking

Hot food takeaways tend to attract a high proportion of car borne and short stay customers which, without essential accessible parking provision, can affect traffic flow and road safety. Often there is an increased occurrence of obstructed parking and interruption to the steady flow of traffic along the roads adjacent to these premises. Customers may be tempted to park for short periods to visit takeaway premises, often jeopardising the safety of other road users and pedestrians or park in adjacent residential streets thereby inconveniencing residents.



The impact of a proposal on the safety of pedestrians and road users will be considered with regard to:

- the existing use of the site;
- existing traffic conditions;
- the accessibility of the site by public transport, by cycling or walking;
- the availability of easily accessible parking provision in close proximity to the premises, including on-street parking;
- proximity of proposal to lighting junctions, pelican crossings, bus bays and bus stops;
- the availability of safe and legal loading areas in close proximity; and
- the implications for the amenity of the surrounding



area (particularly if predominantly residential).

A delivery and service plan statement will be required for all applications.

Proposals must not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety (e.g. near to lighting junctions, pelican crossings, bus bays and bus stops).

Hours of Operation

Planning restrictions may be placed on hot food takeaway hours of operation. A single set of time limits would not be appropriate throughout the County Borough, because areas vary so much:

- within Wrexham town centre (non-principal shopping streets) and designated district shopping centres, where there is no housing adjacent to or in close proximity to the premises, it is unlikely that any restrictions will be placed on the hours and days of operation.
- in designated district shopping centres, where there is housing adjacent to or in



close proximity to the proposal site, opening hours are likely to be restricted to Mon-Sat 10.00am-11.30pm, Sunday 10.00am-11.00pm.

- other local mixed residential/commercial areas and isolated locations will be considered on their merits and are likely to be 10.00am - 6.00pm

In addition, licensing requirements apply for operations undertaken between 11.00 pm and 5.00 am. Where operating times have been set as a condition of the planning permission and this is different to the approved licensing hours, the earlier closing time must be observed.

Control of Odours and Cooking Smells

Odours produced through cooking processes in hot food takeaways can cause amenity problems, particularly in areas which are residential in character. Often, natural ventilation is inadequate and extraction systems that satisfy environmental health standards, incorporating



extraction ducts, fans and filter, must be installed to effectively disperse odours and be designed so that they do not have an unacceptable impact on the visual and general amenity of the building and the adjacent street scene. A condition shall be placed on any permission requiring the installation and regular maintenance of an extraction vent before the business commences trading. If unacceptable smells and fumes cannot be prevented by appropriate means, planning permission will not normally be granted.

Disposal of Waste Products

Inadequate refuse storage facilities can harm visual amenity and increase risk to public health. Commercial bin stores of a suitable size, conveniently sited for access for refuse collection services and screened and designed to respect the character of the

area and not cause nuisance to adjacent residential or commercial property, must be contained within the site. Where waste storage provision is considered inadequate, planning permission will not normally be granted. The discharge of fat or grease can cause problems for the public drainage system. Suitable grease traps must be installed on all drains to prevent possible blockages and flooding of adjacent properties. Full details of refuse storage arrangements and grease traps must be included in all planning applications.

Litter

Litter is inherently unsightly, can cause considerable annoyance to residents and adjoining businesses and can attract pests and vermin. Litterbins should be placed on the forecourt of premises. It is the operators' responsibility to ensure litterbins are regularly

maintained and emptied, and the surrounding area remains litter free. A planning condition requiring the installation of on-site litterbins will be applied to every application for a hot food takeaway outlet.

Safety, Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Hot food takeaways can attract gatherings of people which can result in crime and disorder particularly at night. The consideration of proposals for new developments or change of use of premises for use as hot food takeaways will include crime and disorder issues. Where there is crime and antisocial behaviour concerns, the applicant may be required to enter into a legal agreement to contribute financially to the provision of safety and security mitigation measures (e.g. CCTV systems). Proposals considered to pose an unacceptable risk may not receive a licence.



For further information contact:

Head of Community
Development and Wellbeing
Lambpit Street,
Wrexham LL11 1AR
Telephone: (01978) 292017
Fax: (01978) 292502
www.wrexham.gov.uk

Adopted October 1994,
Revised July 2011
Revised December 2011