



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

## East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

### Matter 10 – Equine Related Activity

East Cambridgeshire District Council

Hearing Statement

September 2018

## Matter 10: Equine related activity

### **Relevant Policies- LP9, LP10, LP11 and LP12**

**Issue 1: Whether the Local Plan has been positively prepared and whether it is justified, effective and consistent with national policy in relation to the approach towards the horse racing industry, equine sports and recreation?**

**41. Are the policies of the Plan consistent with national policy, effective and justified in the context of the horse racing industry? How could the policies of the plan be more flexible and make greater provision for the equine industry and other horse related developments without undermining the wider objective of the Local Plan and remaining consistent with national policy?**

Breaking the question into two parts:

Firstly, *are the policies of the Plan consistent with national policy, effective and justified in the context of the horse racing industry?*

Yes, the Plan policies are consistent, effective and justified in this context.

Documents PS.EVR9-12 provide detailed background and justification to each of the policies.

More specifically:

- Para 19 of the NPPF states, in relation to building a strong, competitive economy, that *'planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth'*: this objective, in relation to the horse racing industry, is directly supported by policies LP9 Equine Development, LP10 Development Affecting the Horse Racing Industry and Newmarket1 Newmarket Fringe's Local Character and Facilities. LP9 supports equine related development, but sets reasonable criteria to ensure that development does not have detrimental impacts, in line with the NPPF. LP10 is very supportive of the equine industry, seeking to prohibit development that would have an adverse impact on the industry. Newmarket1 acknowledges that the economy and character of Newmarket Fringe and the wider area is heavily influenced by the horse racing industry and specifically requires that this be respected by all development.
- NPPF para 20 requires that *'to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century'*. Again, policies LP9, LP10 and Newmarket1 help meet this requirement, as well as LP3 The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside, which permits, in principle, equine related development outside village envelopes, and LP31 Development in the Countryside, which permits dwellings for equine and stud operations subject to meeting the requirements of that policy.
- NPPF para 21 states that local planning authorities should *'support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting... Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances... facilitate flexible working*

*practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit*': again, the policies listed above will collectively achieve these aims.

We see no conflict between the Plan, especially the policies referred above, and the NPPF.

Secondly, turning to the question of whether *the policies of the Plan could be more flexible and make greater provision for the equine industry and other horse related developments without undermining the wider objective of the Local Plan and remaining consistent with national policy*, we believe that the plan already offers considerable flexibility and provision in regard to the equine industry and other horse related developments, and makes notable, direct and positive provision for this sector of the economy.

Policy LP9 expressly supports the principle of both domestic and commercial horse racing and equestrian development. The limited criteria that the policy requires to be met are not excessive, nor unduly restrictive, and above all are necessary in order to ensure that the requirements of the NPPF are met, for example:

- Para 17 (4<sup>th</sup> bullet): 'seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings' (met by criteria e and f of LP9)
- Para 28 (1<sup>st</sup> bullet): 'support the *sustainable* growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas' (emphasis added, met by criteria a, f and g).
- Para 123, which requires that planning policy aim to avoid adverse impacts in relation to noise, and para 125, which relates to light pollution, are met by criteria e and g.

Policy LP10 by its nature and explicit wording is clearly in favour of the industry.

LP3 (and the associated criteria in LP9) and LP31, exceptionally permit equine related development and dwellings outside village envelopes. The criteria set out in the Plan are wholly in line with (and necessary to ensure compliance with) para 55 of the NPPF.

As stated above, we are satisfied that the Plan offers flexibility and notable provision. Indeed, we believe that to offer more flexibility and even greater provision could result in conflict with the NPPF: specifically, for example, conflict with the sustainability objectives, para 55, para 17 (4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> bullets).

Further, if any greater flexibility was given, the ability to practically and reasonably condition such flexibility and subsequently enforce it (i.e. the equine industry given even greater exceptional flexibility than it already is being singled out for and given) would either be non-existent or require excessive resource to monitor.

Overall, and to put it even more simply, there are no grounds that the plan is 'unsound' for not providing sufficient flexibility, or making sufficient provision, for the equine industry and other horse related developments. If anything, the plan is arguable excessive in terms of its provisions for this sector, considering that many other sectors of the economy also perform a vital function in the district yet are not singled out in the same way that the equine industry is.