

LB Waltham Forest Development Management Policies Local Plan Document

Session; Heritage

21 May 2013

30 minutes

Agenda

Participants; Inspector, Council.

Issues; policy DM29

- 1) Council's overall view of, and response to, representations and Inspector's questions. Presentation of proposed amendments.
- 2) DM29

I am not content with the response to my Q216.

As the Council correctly observes, para 126 of the NPPF describes what a local authority should set out in its local plan. It should be a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. But as drafted, much of policy DM29 is negative, not positive; A(i) "refuse", A(ii)"refuse", A(iii)"restrict", A(iv) "resist", B "not agree", C "not permit".

Parts D (to be deleted),E, F, G, H, I and the proposed J are more positive but I see nothing which I can recognise as a positive strategy for dealing with heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats (presumably there is a list of assets at risk; where is the analysis of what threatens them and what policies/proposals would rescue them?); nothing which identifies viable uses to which heritage assets under threat could be put, consistent with their conservation; nothing which identifies the wider social, cultural, economic or environmental benefits which might be taken into account in the context of Waltham Forest when considering proposals involving heritage assets and nothing which identifies the opportunities presented by historic assets (though I appreciate that this last may be more appropriate for the site allocations DPD).

Other than the former paragraph 30.13 (now to become part J of the policy), 30.22 and 30.25, I get little sense that this policy derives from an understanding of the needs of the heritage assets of Waltham Forest; it appears more like a mechanistic rehearsal of the provisions of paragraphs 126 to 141 of the NPPF. Be aware (see para 1 of the NPPF) that these set out requirements for the planning system, so could apply variously to local

plan formulation, administrative procedures or the consideration of applications, so paragraph 128, for example, need not necessarily be replicated in a Local Plan document; it reads to me more like a validation requirement.

Former paragraph 30.11 pointed out that the Council has obtained article IV directions in 9 out of 11 conservation areas in order to ensure their good management but there was no policy (or policies; presumably specific to each conservation area) for their positive use, even though paragraph 30.12 suggested that the Council had prepared guidance notes for each C.A. - hence the purpose of my question 218.

I am generally content with the Council's responses to my other questions but it seems to me that there is more work to be done to this policy to make it compliant with government policy in the NPPF and to be effective in the context of LBWF. I had not expected this to remain an issue and so had not identified a hearing session to discuss the matter, but I do so now.