

PART 2

Name: Tom Clarke

Organisation (if applicable): Theatres Trust

Please state which part of the Neighbourhood Plan (for example which section, paragraph or policy) your representation relates too:

Policy TC2

Please use the space below to make comments on this part of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Trust requests the addition of cultural facilities such as theatres and cinemas to the list of 'appropriate uses' outlined within the policy. Such uses are recognised as main town centre uses by the NPPF. This would also ensure consistency with paragraph 70 the NPPF which says that planning policies should plan positively for the provision of cultural buildings and other services to "enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments".

Cultural activities are an essential element of a sustainable community as they help promote well-being and improve quality of life. Participation in cultural events can contribute to social cohesion, reduce isolation and loneliness, and cultural activity can contribute to skills development and learning, as well as providing the entertainment and stimulation needed to sustain vibrant communities and grow the economy. There is a growing awareness of the role that the arts and culture play in developing an educated workforce and in attracting an educated workforce and residents to towns, cities and surrounding areas. They are important in supporting the local and visitor economy by attracting people to these centres where other businesses then benefit from the flow on effects, meeting the stated policy objective of attracting footfall.

It is plausible that local-scale arts and cultural uses such as a community theatre or small music venue could come forward in Hednesford, therefore the Neighbourhood Plan should provide a more flexible framework with which to support such uses.

In turn we recommend the list of permitted use classes is also amended to refer to 'compatible Sui Generis uses' and also D2; certainly the latter covers gyms and fitness centres which are listed as permitted uses in the accompanying box.