



PLANNING FOR SPORT GUIDANCE

Guidance on how the planning system can help to provide opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active.

CONSULTATION DRAFT

It is proposed that this document and associated new website page will replace Sport England's current aim and objectives website page, its forward planning and development management website pages and guides, along with its previous supporting advice website page and guide.

AUGUST 2018

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Publication Date	Document Title	Key changes from the previous version and updates since publication
Consultation Draft	August 2018	Planning for Sport Guidance	N/a

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PLANNING FOR SPORT GUIDANCE

The purpose of this guidance is to help the planning system provide opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active.

It is hoped that it will be of assistance to all involved in or looking to engage with the planning system in England. This includes local authority officers and councillors, planning inspectors, developers and consultants through to parish/town councils, neighbourhood forums, public health leads, sports clubs/organisations and community groups.

The document and the twelve planning for sport principles it contains will also help to guide and support Sport England's engagement with the planning system.

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PLANNING FOR SPORT

The many benefits of sport and physical activity, including to people's physical and mental health, are widely recognised.

Our built and natural environments are key to helping people change their behaviours to lead more active and healthier lifestyles.

The planning system plays a vital role in shaping our environments.

To help provide environments that protect, enhance and provide opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active, the planning system should embrace twelve planning for sport principles.

THE 12 PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLES

OVERARCHING

- 1.** Recognise and give significant weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity.
- 2.** Undertake, maintain and apply robust and up to date assessments of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision, and base policies, decisions and guidance upon them.
- 3.** Plan, design and maintain buildings, developments, facilities, land and environments that enable people to lead active lifestyles.

PROTECT

- 4.** Protect existing sport and physical activity provision and ensure new development does not prejudice its use.
- 5.** Ensure long-term viable management and maintenance of new and existing sport and physical activity provision.

ENHANCE

- 6.** Support improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision where they are needed.
- 7.** Encourage and secure wider community use of existing and new sport and physical activity provision.

PROVIDE

- 8.** Support new provision, including allocating new sites, for sport and physical activity which meets identified needs.
- 9.** Ensure a positive approach to meeting the needs generated by new development for sport and physical activity provision.
- 10.** Provide sport and physical activity provision which is fit for purpose and well designed.
- 11.** Plan positively for sport and physical activity provision in designated landscapes and the Green Belt.
- 12.** Proactively address any amenity issues arising from sport and physical activity developments

THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The Government, within its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In contributing to sustainable development, the NPPF highlights the need for the planning system to perform an economic role, a social role and an environmental role¹.

To perform these roles the planning system operates through two main functions:

- **PLANNING POLICY**

Making development plans, planning policies and guidance.

- **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

Developing and deciding applications for planning permission.

WHAT IS PLANNING POLICY?

As a minimum, local planning authorities² are required to develop and maintain a Development Plan which addresses the strategic priorities for their area and meets objectively assessed needs e.g. for housing and community infrastructure.

The Development Plan, based on up-to-date evidence, should provide planning policies which positively manage, shape and promote development for its area. Alongside policies to address strategic priorities, a Development Plan may set out more detailed local policies for specific areas and be supplemented by other planning documents which provide guidance on implementing the planning policies it contains.

PLANNING POLICY INCLUDES THE PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF:

- Development Plan Documents, which include:
 - Spatial Development Strategies and Local Plans;
 - Neighbourhood Plans (prepared by Parish Councils/Neighbourhood Forums);
 - Area Actions Plans;
 - Site Allocations Documents;
- An evidence base, which includes up to date information for an area on:
 - its economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects;
 - the need for housing, business and infrastructure (e.g. transport, health, education, community and sporting infrastructure).
- Supplementary Planning Documents which, for example, may provide guidance on:
 - An approach to developer contributions³;
 - Design codes and guidance;
 - How specific sites should be developed (development briefs).

¹ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) – see paragraph 8.

² Local planning authorities are usually the local unitary, district or borough council for an area but for certain planning functions or areas may be other public bodies e.g. County Councils for minerals and waste planning.

³ Developers may be required to provide contributions towards the infrastructure required to support development by way of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and/or planning obligations in the form of section 106 agreements.

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT?

Development Management relates to the preparation, submission, assessment and implementation of planning applications for development. Decisions on whether applications receive planning permission are normally made by the relevant local planning authority for the area. In specific circumstances, including where an applicant appeals a decision made by a local planning authority, the decision will be made by a Planning Inspector or the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan for the area, unless material considerations⁴ indicate otherwise.

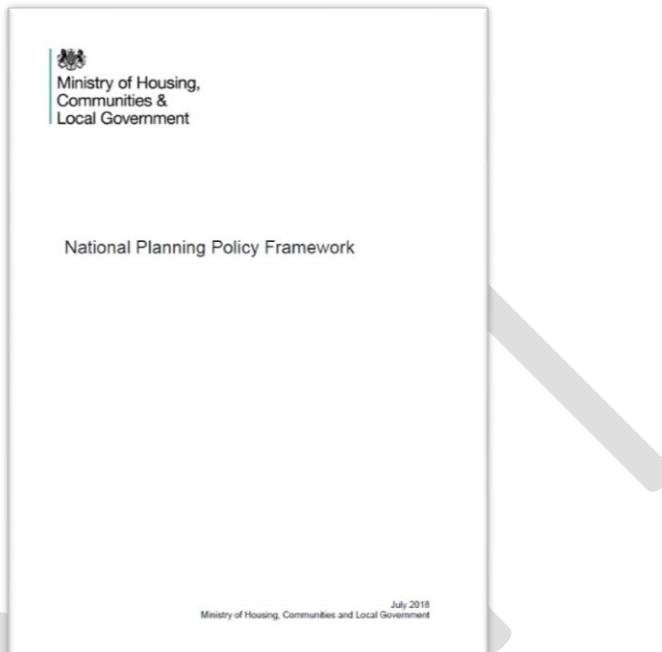
THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS INCLUDES:

- Pre-application discussions, for example between the applicant and the local planning authority, along with relevant community groups, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees;
- Development of an application and supporting documents and plans;
- Formal public consultation by the local planning authority once an application has been submitted;
- The assessment of and decision on the application by the local planning authority, including any conditions and/or planning obligations to be attached to any permission;
- The appeal process and the work of the Planning Inspectorate to assess applications via written representations, informal hearing or a formal inquiry;
- The implementation of a planning permission and its associated conditions and planning obligations.

⁴ What is a material consideration? – [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Determining a planning application section, paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 21b-008-20140306 and [web link](#) to the Planning Portal's FAQs.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵ sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It provides a framework guiding the preparation of development plan documents, associated evidence base and supplementary planning documents (Planning Policy). It is also a material consideration which should be taken into account when determining applications for planning permission (Development Management).



The importance of promoting healthy communities is a key focus of the NPPF in achieving sustainable development. The NPPF states that the overarching social objective of the planning system is:

'to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.....by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing.'
(Paragraph 8).

Supporting this core objective, the NPPF states how the planning system should plan positively to achieve healthy places and provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs. This includes:

- enabling and supporting healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling (Paragraph 91c);
- planning positively for provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (including sports venues and open space) and other local services (Paragraph 92a);
- taking into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community (Paragraph 92b); and
- guarding against unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services (Paragraph 92c).

⁵ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018)

The NPPF also states that:

'access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities'
(Paragraph 96).

In providing specific detail on planning positively for open space, sport and recreational provision, the NPPF is clear that:

- planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreational facilities and opportunities for new provision (Paragraph 96);
- information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate (Paragraph 96);
- existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless one of three specific circumstances are met (Paragraph 97);
- planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access including providing better facilities for users (Paragraph 98); and
- land of particular recreational value to a local community can be designated as a Local Green Space affording it greater protection (Paragraph 101).

The NPPF is supported by the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)⁶. The PPG provides additional context and guidance on a range of topics including health and wellbeing, along with open space, sports and recreational facilities. The PPG also includes details of the types of planning applications that Sport England should be consulted on⁷, as well as pointing to Sport England's guidance on assessing the need for sports and recreational facilities⁸.

⁶ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance.

⁷ See the 'How Sport England works with the planning system' section of this document (page 8).

⁸ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 2' within this guidance document (page 14).

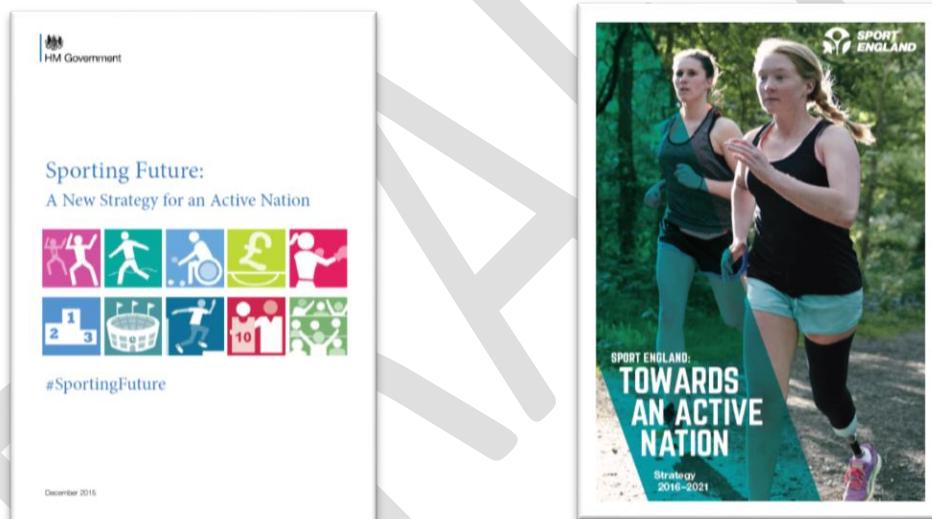
SPORT ENGLAND

STRATEGIES FOR SPORT - GOVERNMENT AND SPORT ENGLAND

Sport England's current strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'⁹ builds on the Government's sports strategy 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation'¹⁰ which, alongside participation, focusses on how sport changes lives and is a force for social good.

Sport England's strategy sets a vision for everyone in England regardless of age, background or level of ability to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. Some will be young, fit and talented, but most will not. We need a sport sector that welcomes everyone – meets their needs, treats them as individuals and values them as customers.

To help achieve this vision and deliver against the outcomes set by the Government strategy, Sport England wants everyone to experience the benefits¹¹ that taking part in sport and physical activity brings including: physical wellbeing; mental wellbeing; individual development; economic development; and social and community development.



The Government strategy states that:

'it is important that the wider built and natural environment is designed to make taking part in physical activity safer and easier, making activity the easy choice' (Section 8 'Infrastructure').

'if this new strategy is to work effectively, all parts of government must work more closely together towards clear, shared outcomes. There is universal agreement across all Whitehall departments about this, and a shared commitment to delivering it' (Introduction).

As the planning system works and engages across several functions (e.g. housing, transport, business, education and leisure) it has a vital role to play in shaping our built and natural environments to support the delivery of the Government and Sport England strategies.

⁹ [Web link](#) to Sport England's Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016-2021 (2016).

¹⁰ [Web link](#) to the Government's Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation' (2015).

¹¹ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 1' within this document (page 12).

SPORT ENGLAND'S PLANNING AIM

Sport England's aim in working with the planning system is to help provide active environments that maximise opportunities for sport and physical activity for all, enabling the already active to be more so and the inactive to become active.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES: PROTECT, ENHANCE, PROVIDE

This aim is supported by three objectives:

Protect - To protect the right opportunities in the right places.

Existing provision should be protected unless an assessment has demonstrated there is an excess of the provision and the specific buildings or land are surplus to requirements, or equivalent or better provision will be provided as replacement.

Enhance - To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision.

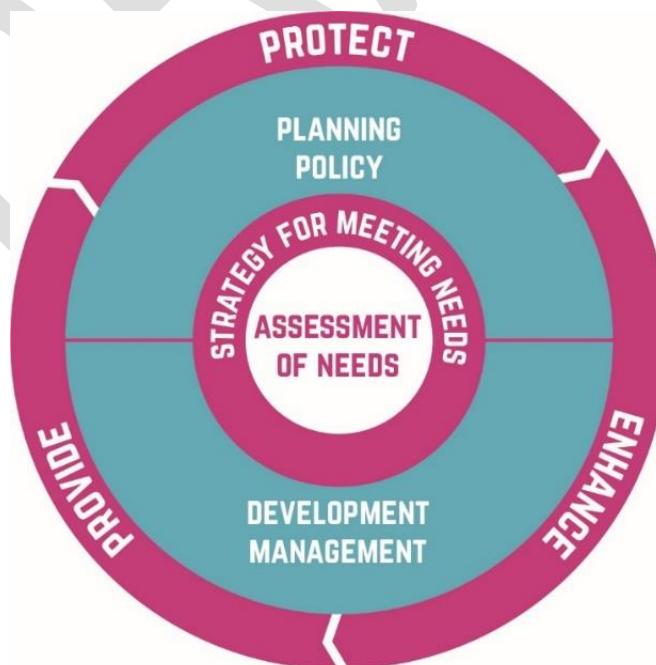
The use of existing provision should be optimised, for example through quality, access and management improvements supported by appropriate ancillary facilities.

Provide - To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations.

Appropriate new provision that meets needs and encourages people to play sport and be physically active should be provided by adapting existing places and through new development.

Understanding people's needs is central to meeting the objectives and planning effectively for sport and physical activity. An assessment of needs should inform a strategy to meet the needs that is positively applied in both the Planning Policy and Development Management aspects of the planning system¹².

PLANNING FOR SPORT



¹² See 'Planning for Sport Principle 2' within this document (page 14).

HOW SPORT ENGLAND WORKS WITH THE PLANNING SYSTEM

To achieve its planning aim and objectives Sport England plays an active role in the planning system. This includes helping to shape national, strategic and local planning policy and development plan documents, along with the design and masterplanning of large scale developments and responding to planning application consultations.

Sport England also helps local authorities to develop their evidence base so the needs of people in their area for sporting provision, and the needs arising from new development, are understood and can be met.

Sport England engages with both aspects of the planning system to help ensure:

PLANNING POLICY and related development plan documents are positive towards sport and physical activity and are based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need and strategies to meet the needs (e.g. playing pitch and built facility strategies).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT including decisions on whether planning permission should be granted, recognise the benefits of and result in positive outcomes for sport and physical activity.

PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATIONS

Sport England has a specific role in the planning system as a statutory consultee on planning applications for development affecting or prejudicing the use of playing fields. Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document¹³ presents its playing fields policy and how it assesses such applications.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance¹⁴ also advises local planning authorities to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to:

- loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility;
- proposals which lead to the loss of use for sport of a major body of water;
- creation of a major sports facility;
- creation of a site for one or more playing pitches;
- development which creates opportunities for sport (such as the creation of a body of water bigger than two hectares following sand and gravel extraction);
- artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility;
- a residential development of 300 dwellings or more.

Sport England welcomes pre-application consultations especially on proposals affecting or prejudicing the use of existing playing fields, and for new large-scale housing led development or major sports facilities.



¹³ [Web link](#) to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document (2018).

¹⁴ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance - Open space, sports and recreation facilities section, paragraph 003
Reference ID: 37-003-20140306.

ADVOCACY, GUIDANCE AND TOOLS

Sport England also acts more generally as an advocate for sport and physical activity in the planning system. To support its work, and that of others in the planning system, Sport England provides and contributes to related guidance and tools. In doing so, Sport England engages with a range of parties including Government, local authorities, national governing bodies of sport, developers, planning and leisure consultancies, and professional and representative bodies.

Relevant guidance and tools provided by Sport England and other parties are highlighted against the respective planning for sport principles within Part 2 of this guidance document. A list of Sport England's key guidance and tools is also provided in Annex A.

OPEN SPACE AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Open space and other infrastructure (e.g. green and blue infrastructure¹⁵) are important settings for sport and physical activity. This guidance and the 12 planning for sport principles it contains, along with Sport England's assessing needs guidance, can be used to help the planning system plan positively for such provision. However, whilst Sport England advocates the need for a strategic approach to the protection, enhancement and provision of open space and other infrastructure, it limits its detailed and technical input into the planning system to the provision of more formal sport and physical activity provision.

¹⁵ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) – see Glossary (page 67) for a definition of Green Infrastructure. Blue infrastructure includes rivers, lakes, reservoirs, canals and other waterways along with coastal waters.

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APPLYING THE 12 PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLES

SPORT ENGLAND'S PLANNING AIM AND OBJECTIVES¹⁶ ARE SUPPORTED BY 12 PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLES.

The 12 planning for sport principles are targeted at helping the planning system contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by fulfilling the key role the NPPF highlights¹⁷ it has to play in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Applying the principles will help to ensure the system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunities for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings.

The principles are applicable to all areas of the planning system at all levels e.g. strategic, local authority and neighbourhood planning levels. As such they are of relevance to all involved in or looking to engage with the planning system.

For each of the 12 planning for sport principles this part of the guidance document presents:

- Their link to national planning policy as set out in the NPPF;
- Detail on the nature of each principle; and
- Practical actions on how the principle can be applied in both the Planning Policy and Development Management aspects of the planning system.

To help the variety of potential users of this guidance apply the principles, each suggested action is accompanied by an indication of which of the key participants in the planning system it is relevant to.

The key participants are listed as:

 <u>PM</u> Plan Makers	 <u>DT</u> Decision Takers	 <u>A</u> Applicants	 <u>C/S</u> Consultees/Stakeholders
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¹⁶ See the 'Sport England's Planning Aim and Objectives' section of this document (page 7).

¹⁷ See the 'National Planning Policy Framework' section of this document (page 4).



PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 1:

RECOGNISE AND GIVE SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT TO THE BENEFITS OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 96]:

Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.

Sport and physical activity generate considerable socio-economic benefits to individuals, communities and wider society¹⁸.

PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Regular participation in sport and physically activity can reduce the risk of many chronic health conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer and obesity. The impact of physical inactivity is estimated to cost the UK £7.4 billion per year¹⁹.

MENTAL WELLBEING

Taking part in sport and being physically active has been shown to be effective for reducing depression, anxiety, psychological distress and emotional disturbance.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a positive link between taking part in sport and academic achievement, reduction in criminal behaviour, whilst providing opportunities for personal development²⁰.

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sport can provide a focus for a range of activities and initiatives that strengthen and expand social networks and enhance community identity and cohesion.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

In 2010, sport and sport-related activity contributed £20.3 billion to the English economy²¹ placing sport in the top 15 industry sectors in England. Sport and sport-related activity is estimated to support over 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, 2.3% of all jobs in England²².

¹⁸ [Web link](#) to the ‘Benefits of Sport’ section of the Sport England website.

¹⁹ Public Health England, ‘Everybody Active, Every Day’ (2014) Page 4 – [Web link](#) to Public Health England’s Everybody Active, Every Day.

²⁰ [Web link](#) to ‘Individual Development’ section of Sport England website.

²¹ Sport England, Economic Value of Sport of Sport Report (2013) – [Web link](#) to Sport England’s Sport and the Economy website page.

²² Ibid.

HOW PRINCIPLE 1 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Include policies which recognise and give significant weight to:

- the wide benefits of sport and physical activity; and
- local assessments of need for sport and physical activity and strategies to improve provision.



Ensure planning policy:

- protects existing provision for sport and physical activity; and
- encourages and supports proposals for new or enhanced sport and physical activity provision which meet identified needs.



Use available assessment tools, techniques and data²³ to identify and communicate the wide benefits of sport and physical activity at the local level e.g. the health cost saving and social return on investment.



Engage broadly including with the health, sports, transport and education sectors to build consensus and partnerships around promoting and securing the benefits of sport and physical activity.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Recognise and give significant weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity in all related planning decisions.

Include a section in all relevant planning officer reports which provides an assessment of the benefits and/or detriment of a proposed development to promoting healthy communities, including participation in sport and physical activity and how the proposal meets identified needs for such provision.



Engage early with local providers of sport and physical activity opportunities to understand how a proposed development could secure benefits for sport and physical activity.



Provide details at the pre-application stage and submit details with a planning application which clearly demonstrate how the proposal will:

- protect, enhance and provide opportunities for sport and physical activity;
- protect existing provision in line with identified needs while making the best use of a site for sport and physical activity;
- meet identified needs for sport and physical activity provision e.g. how the proposal meets with the recommendations and actions of any relevant assessment of need and strategy.



Engage with applicants and submit comments on planning applications highlighting the benefits or detriment of a proposed development for sport and physical activity. If appropriate, suggest how a development could be improved to provide greater benefits.



Where a health impact assessment is required include consideration of the benefits of sport and physical activity.

²³ E.g. Sport England's [MOVES Tool](#); [Value of Sport Monitor](#) and [Economic Value of Sport Model](#), and WHO's [HEAT Tool](#) (walking/cycling).

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 2:

UNDERTAKE, MAINTAIN AND APPLY ROBUST AND UP TO DATE ASSESSMENTS OF NEED AND STRATEGIES FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION, AND BASE POLICIES, DECISIONS AND GUIDANCE UPON THEM.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 96]:

Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

Understanding people's needs for sport and physical activity is fundamental to providing the facilities and land required to meet their needs, enabling them to engage in such activity and helping to create healthy and sustainable communities.

The Government is clear that planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities²⁴. Within its Planning Practice Guidance, the Government points to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sport and recreational provision²⁵. Sport England's guidance²⁶ sets out a staged approach to assessing needs and developing and delivering a strategy to meet the needs which focuses on four key elements - the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of provision.

For every type of provision it includes, an assessment should provide a clear understanding of the overall adequacy of provision to meet current and future needs. It should also highlight specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses for individual provision types, geographical areas and sections of the community.

The findings and issues from an assessment should be used to develop a strategy to meet the needs which provides a clear set of recommendations supported by a deliverable and prioritised site-specific action plan. Alongside informing the development and implementation of planning policies, an assessment and strategy should be proactively applied by all relevant parties across the planning system and within other relevant sectors.

Critical factors for the successful development and application of an assessment and related strategy include the need to:

- prepare and tailor the approach resulting in a tailored brief for the work;
- understand the differences in the approach for certain provision types (e.g. the quality of playing pitches is key to determining their capacity to accommodate use whereas for other provision the focus may be on opening hours);
- work collaboratively across sectors to make the best use of available resources and ensure a variety of parties can benefit from and apply an assessment and strategy;
- put a process in place to keep an assessment and strategy robust and up to date.

²⁴ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) - see paragraph 97 and [Web link](#) to the Government's Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation' (2015) – see page 59.

²⁵ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance - Open space, sports and recreation facilities section, paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 37-002-20140306.

²⁶ [Web link](#) to Sport England's Planning Tools and Guidance website page (includes Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance and Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance).

HOW PRINCIPLE 2 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Understand if assessments of need and related strategies currently exist for your area and the provision they include before undertaking any additional work (e.g. Neighbourhood Planning Bodies should use existing work developed at the local authority where it is robust and up to date).



Work collaboratively with other relevant parties to undertake or update an assessment of need and a related strategy for specific provision types in line with Sport England's guidance²⁸.



Establish and maintain a process to deliver an assessment of need and related strategy, and to keep it robust and up to date.



Base all relevant planning policies (i.e. at strategic, local and neighbourhood levels) on the findings, recommendations and actions of a robust and up to date assessment of need and related strategy.



Proactively apply the findings, recommendations and actions from an assessment of need and related strategy in relevant development plan and supplementary planning documents, such as the preparation of Infrastructure Delivery Plans, Site Allocations Documents, Neighbourhood Plans, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, Green Infrastructure Strategies and approaches to developer contributions.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Understand if assessments of need and related strategies currently exist for your area and what provision types they includes.



Where a relevant robust and up to date assessment and related strategy exists use it to:

- Inform planning decisions giving great weight to its findings, recommendations and actions.
- Shape a range of development proposals (e.g. from the nature of new sporting provision and development on educational sites to the provision required to meet the needs generated from new housing development²⁷).
- Inform responses to pre-application and application consultations.



Where an assessment of need is required to inform a development proposal, but one is not in place then undertake one in line with Sport England's guidance²⁸.

²⁷ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 9' within this document (page 29).

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 3:

PLAN, DESIGN AND MAINTAIN BUILDINGS, DEVELOPMENTS, FACILITIES, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTS THAT ENABLE PEOPLE TO LEAD ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 91]:

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

The nature of the built environment has a significant impact on people's ability to take part in sport and be physically active. Good proactive planning and design should create environments that make taking part in sport and being physically active an easy and attractive choice for people and communities. Early attention to providing for sport and physical activity in the masterplanning and design of developments will help to ensure this is the case and secure greater opportunities for people to lead healthier and more active lifestyles.

Sport England's Active Design guidance, developed in partnership with Public Health England, provides ten principles to inspire and inform the design and layout of cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, streets and open spaces to promote participation in sport, physical activity and active lifestyles²⁸. The Active Design principles can be applied to many different forms of development across many different settings and apply equally to the design of new places and the enhancement of existing places. Supporting the ten principles the Active Design Guidance also provides practical case studies and pointers to good practice.

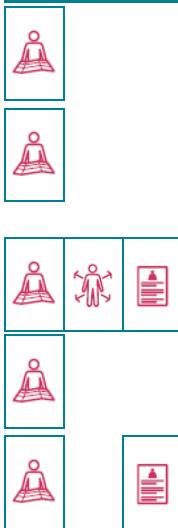


²⁸ [Web link to Sport England's Active Design Guidance \(2015\)](#).

HOW PRINCIPLE 3 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Explicitly promote Active Design and its ten principles within all relevant planning policy documents at all levels (strategic, local and neighbourhood).

Include Active Design related policies within relevant planning policy documents (for assistance use the model policy provided in the Active Design guidance).

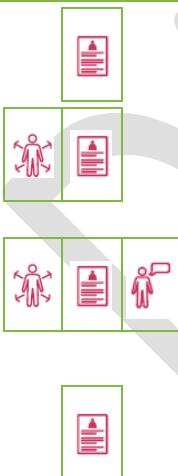
Include Active Design as a key theme in design codes and guides, and the subsequent work of any design review panels.

Apply the principles of Active Design creatively within planning policies to help meet specific and targeted health and wellbeing measures and indicators.

To inform the development of plans and policies for specific geographical areas (e.g. a neighbourhood area or an area to be covered by a development brief) use the principles and checklist within the Active Design guidance to undertake an appraisal of the potential of the area to enable and support people to lead active lifestyles.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Embrace the Active Design principles in the early planning and design of developments.

Give significant weight to the role and benefits of sport and physical activity in delivering healthy and inclusive communities within decision making, and in the preparation of development proposals and planning application material.

Use the checklist within the Active Design guidance to assess proposals at the pre-application and application stages against the Active Design principles, and to inform responses to pre-application and application consultations.

Design documents supporting a proposed development (e.g. Design and Access Statements, Design Codes, Guides and Development Briefs) must show how the design and layout of the proposal provides opportunities for people to take part in sport and be physically active. References to the Active Design principles within these documents can be used to help illustrate this.



Plan Makers (PM)



Decision Takers (DT)



Applicants (A)



Consultees/Stakeholder (C/S)



PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 4:

PROTECT EXISTING SPORT AND RECREATIONAL PROVISION AND ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PREJUDICE ITS USE

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 97]:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 182]:

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs).

The Government is clear that existing sport and recreational provision should be protected unless one of three specific circumstances are met. This protection is afforded to all provision irrespective of whether it is in public, private or educational ownership and regardless of the nature and level of use. It also relates to ancillary facilities including clubhouses, changing rooms and parking facilities. In relation to the first circumstance set out in paragraph 97 of the NPPF, it should be noted that:

- i. a lack of use of sport and recreational provision should not be taken as necessarily indicating an absence of need in an area; and that
- ii. school plans and assessments showing an excess of playing field provision for the purposes of Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 or Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010 (or their replacements), do not provide an adequate assessment as they do not assess the wider sporting and community need for provision.

Sport England is a statutory consultee on planning applications for development affecting playing fields. Sport England's playing fields policy and how it assesses such applications is set out in its Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document²⁹. The policy and supporting guidance are in line with the Government's commitment in the NPPF to the protection of sport and recreational provision. The document also provides helpful clarification and additional guidance to assist all with assessing related planning applications and protecting provision.

Existing sport and physical activity provision may give rise to effects that could be deemed a statutory nuisance to proposed development planned in close proximity to it. These effects could prejudice the use of the existing provision, for example due to the risk of a cricket ball being hit into a development proposed adjacent to an existing cricket ground, or noise generated from an existing nearby Artificial Grass Pitch which due to having sports lighting is used regularly late into the evenings. However, the Government is clear in the NPPF³⁰ that in such circumstances the existing facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed upon them and it is for the applicant of the new development to secure suitable mitigation.

²⁹ See the 'How Sport England works with the planning system' section of this document (page 8). [Web link](#) to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document (2018).

³⁰ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) - see paragraph 182.

HOW PRINCIPLE 4 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Ensure planning policy;

- Protects existing sport and recreational provision in line with the NPPF (paragraph 97) and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy;
- Is proactive in ensuring that new development will not prejudice the use or place unreasonable restrictions on the use of existing sport and physical activity provision;
- Is clear that where existing sport and physical activity provision may give rise to a statutory nuisance in light of new development it is for the applicant to secure appropriate, deliverable and enforceable mitigation.



Take into account the need to protect existing sport and physical activity provision, and maintain adequate safety margins, when assessing the suitability of new land allocations.



Where appropriate, use local designations to identify and add to the protection afforded to specific provision for sport and physical activity, such as through Local Green Space³¹ or other bespoke designations.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Protect existing sport and recreational provision through the application of paragraph 97 of the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance³²



Where existing sport and physical activity provision may be affected by a proposed development engage with relevant parties who may be impacted (e.g. sports clubs), and those who would need to be consulted on a related planning application (e.g. Sport England), at an early pre-application stage.



Give significant weight to the protection of existing provision in all relevant pre-application and application discussions.

Applicants should demonstrate that the potential impacts of a proposed development on existing sport and physical activity provision are considered within planning application documents (e.g. Design and Access Statements) in accordance with Paragraph 97 of the NPPF.



Where use of existing sport and physical activity provision may be prejudiced by new development (e.g. due to risks of ball strike from an existing cricket pitch), submit mitigation measures to protect the existing provision with the application for the new development, rather than leaving them to be dealt with by condition. Ensure the measures are appropriate, deliverable and enforceable based on an appropriate assessment and discussion with key parties (e.g. sports clubs and national sports governing bodies).

³¹ [Web link to the Government's NPPF \(2018\)](#) - see paragraphs 99 to 101.

³² [Web link to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document \(2018\)](#).



Plan Makers (PM)



Decision Takers (DT)



Applicants (A)



Consultees/Stakeholder (C/S)



Respond to pre-application and application consultations affecting existing sport and physical activity provision in line with paragraph 97 of the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document. When responding provide information on the previous, current and potential future use of the provision for sport and physical activity.



Give significant weight to Sport England's pre-application advice and response to an application, especially regarding its statutory consultee status.

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Plan Makers (PM)



Decision Takers (DT)



Applicants (A)



Consultees/Stakeholder (C/S)

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PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 5:

ENSURE LONG-TERM VIABLE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF NEW AND EXISTING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 96]:

Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.

Long-term viable management and maintenance of provision is fundamental to ensuring a network of high quality opportunities for sport and physical activity that are attractive to existing and potential new users.

The management and maintenance of new and existing provision should be considered and secured through the planning system. This is required to help ensure the long term use and viability of provision, allowing maximum functionality through its established lifetime so it continues to deliver benefits to its fullest potential. This will enable the sport and physical activity provision to continue to fulfil its role in meeting the identified needs of the area (see Principle 2).

Subject to the statutory tests on their use³³ planning conditions and planning obligations should be used effectively to secure suitable management and maintenance measures and the requisite funding (see Principle 9). Planning obligations can be secured for both on-site and off-site development, where it can be demonstrated that such contributions are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Sport and physical activity provision should be monitored to make sure that the spaces and facilities they provide continue to function effectively and are being managed and maintained to a suitable quality. This is especially important for certain provision types such as playing pitches where the quality and maintenance of the pitches is key to the amount of play they can regularly accommodate. This monitoring should be commensurate, achievable, focussed and accurate and should ideally form part of a planned update to an assessment of need and related strategy for the area (see Principle 2).

³³ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) - see paragraphs 55 and 56.

HOW PRINCIPLE 5 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Ensure relevant planning policies consider, reflect and set clear criteria for the long-term management and maintenance of sport and physical activity provision.



Monitor and evaluate any provision which has been delivered, to ensure it continues to meet assessed needs and opportunities. The information and data gathered from any monitoring should be utilised within any updates to relevant assessments of need and related strategies.



Proactively engage in relevant planning policy consultations to share knowledge on the quality of provision and its associated management and maintenance (including inputting to the development or updates of assessments of needs and related strategies).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Consider the long-term management and maintenance of any new sport and physical activity provision and provide details with the planning application.



Actively explore new and innovative models to secure the viable long-term management and maintenance of sport and physical activity provision.



Use planning conditions and obligations to secure the long-term management and maintenance of sport and physical activity provision including, where appropriate, adequate capital and revenue funding e.g. including sinking funds to replace elements of the provision such as the surface of an Artificial Grass Pitch. (see Principle 9).

Inform the local planning authority (LPA) of any sport and physical activity provision that is not being managed or maintained in line with the related planning permission and approved details. If unsure ask the LPA to view a copy of the approved details.



PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 6:

SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 92d]:

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.

Improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision can play a key role in helping people to become and stay active as well as improving the use and viability of the provision. Along with enhancing the experience for existing users, improvements can increase the capacity of the provision, make the best use of a site for sport and physical activity while making the provision a more attractive proposition for potential new users.

Proposals which improve provision in line with an assessment of need for sport and physical activity provision and any related strategy for the area (see Principle 2) should be supported. Improvements may range from providing sports lighting to increase the hours an outdoor sports facility can be used through to ancillary infrastructure which supports the continued or enhanced community use of a facility e.g. changing rooms, public conveniences, showering facilities, cycle parking and drinking fountains.

While improvements may be welcomed, it should be ensured that they do not inadvertently prejudice other sport and physical activity users of the provision or the wider site. Where a space has multiple users, an improvement for one user may displace others or reduce some opportunities for flexible use of the wider site over time. An example of this is the need to carefully assess any proposal to replace the surface of an existing sand based Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) with a football specific 3G surface. Before it can be determined whether this is an improvement to the existing facility it is important to understand the suitability of the different surfaces for various sports³⁴ and the needs for the sports in the area (principle 2). For example, an existing sand based AGP may be currently used for a variety of sports including Hockey which would not be suited a 3G surface.

Any adverse impacts of appropriate improvements on other users, or neighbouring uses (see amenity issues under principle 12), should be considered and addressed within the related planning application.

³⁴ [Web link to Sport England's Selecting the Right Artificial Surface Guidance Document \(2010\).](#)

HOW PRINCIPLE 6 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Write planning policy to be supportive of improvements to existing provision which meets identified needs and looks to make the best use of a site for sport and physical activity while protecting existing provision and activities.



Consider the long-term use and potential for future growth, or adaptation, of any new allocations for sport and physical activity provision.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Submit details with a planning application which demonstrate how the proposed improvements meet with the identified needs for the area (Principle 2) and the benefits they will provide for sport and physical activity (Principle 1).



For significant improvements, engage at an early pre-application stage with the national governing bodies for the relevant sports to seek their advice on how the proposal fits with the needs of the area and to ensure the improvements are fit for purpose.



Recognise and give significant weight to how the improvements meet identified needs for the area (Principle 2) and the benefits they will provide (Principle 1).



Actively explore opportunities to improve provision which will make the best use of a site for sport and physical activity while protecting existing provision and activities.



Appropriately assess and where appropriate mitigate any impact on existing users and/or potential amenity issues arising from the proposed improvements (Principle 12).



Where appropriate, support proposed improvements at the pre-application and planning application stage highlighting the benefits of the improvements to sport and physical activity in the area.



PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 7:

ENCOURAGE AND SECURE WIDER COMMUNITY USE OF EXISTING AND NEW SPORT AND RECREATIONAL PROVISION.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 92a]:

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;

Broadening the use of existing and new provision can provide new and enhanced opportunities for all parts of the community to take part in sport and be physically active. It can also help to provide a range of wider benefits including:

- raising the profile of the provision;
- improving community cohesion, along with connections between the owners/managers of the provision and the local community;
- generating additional income streams to support the viability of the provision;
- improving the sport and physical activity offer provided by the site by allowing sports clubs and other organisations regular and secure access;
- reducing the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour by having an increased presence on the site.

Any community use of sport and physical activity provision should be well managed and provide a safe environment. The development and implementation of Community Use Agreements (CUAs) can help to ensure this by setting out how the community use is intended to operate. This should cover a range of matters including hours of availability, management arrangements, pricing policy and a mechanism for review. Sport England has developed a template CUA which provides a clear basis for drawing up agreements through the planning system³⁵. CUAs should be secured for relevant new and enhanced provision through a legal (s106) agreement or by way of a condition attached to a planning permission.

Many educational sites, including schools of all kinds, academies, sports colleges and universities have very good sports facilities which are often underused out of normal school hours. Approximately 72% of sport halls in England and 49% of grass playing pitches are on educational sites³⁶. Sport England's Use our School toolkit³⁷ provides a resource to support schools in opening their facilities to the community and keeping them open. It provides tried and tested solutions, real life practice, tips and downloadable resources.

³⁵ [Web link](#) to Sport England's template community use agreement

³⁶ Sport England, Active Places Power (July 2018) – [web link](#) to the Active Places Power website.

³⁷ [Web link](#) to Sport England's Use our School Toolkit.

HOW PRINCIPLE 7 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Ensure that, in line with identified needs, planning policy:

- Promotes and supports community use of new sport and physical activity provision which is accessible to the widest range of possible users and available across the widest range of times;
- Supports improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision to enable or enhance community use;
- Wherever appropriate, promotes the use of community use agreements for new and improved sport and physical activity provision.



Through planning policy and other relevant documents (e.g. design codes, design guidance and development briefs), promote the need for community use to be ‘designed in’ to all new relevant sport and recreational provision, including new educational developments (see Principle 10).



Work with relevant parties to put in place and maintain a process to monitor the implementation of community use agreements secured through the planning system.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



‘Design in’ community use to all new relevant sport and physical activity provision, taking into account the needs of different user groups e.g. ensuring appropriate access and changing provision (see Principle 10).



Ensure proposed community use meets identified needs (see Principle 2) and is informed by early discussions with existing and potential users (e.g. local sports clubs and providers of wider physical activity opportunities in the local area).



Using Sport England’s template as a basis, develop and submit a community use agreement with an application for new or improved sport and physical activity provision.



Utilise planning conditions or s106 agreements to secure broader community use of existing and new provision, including the development and implementation of community use agreements.



Engage early in the planning process to promote the need for, and benefits of, community use, and provide comments on the design of development and any draft community use agreement.



Raise awareness of any community use agreement with the local community and contact the local planning authority if use is not being provided in line with the agreement.

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 8:

SUPPORT NEW PROVISION, INCLUDING ALLOCATING SITES, FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WHICH MEETS IDENTIFIED NEEDS.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 91c]:

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

New provision for sport and physical activity should be supported where it meets identified needs (see Principle 2). This support should recognise and give significant weight to the benefits the provision will provide to the local area (see Principle 1).

The planning system should be proactive in delivering new sport and physical activity provision which implements the recommendations and actions of relevant assessments of need and related strategies (see Principle 2). Where relevant, this should include allocating sites for new provision for sport and physical activity within planning policy documents (e.g. site allocations documents and neighbourhood plans). When allocating sites, it is important that a range of potentially suitable sites have been assessed and the preferred site(s) is well placed to meet the identified needs and is deliverable. The allocation should provide details on the suitability and extent of the site, the type of provision and ancillary facilities proposed, the likely nature and level of use of the provision along with access details and any necessary mitigation measures (see Principle 12).

To support the operational management and viability of new provision and sports development opportunities, co-locating several sports, physical activity and other community facilities into a new or improved hub site can provide significant benefits. This may include supporting community use of existing sports facilities, particularly on school sites and other educational establishments, and bringing sport and physical activity opportunities to new sectors of the community.

While it should not be taken as a way of addressing long term identified needs, the planning system should support appropriate temporary use of under-utilised land and buildings to provide sport and physical activity opportunities. This could include showcasing sports and activities and holding ‘have a go’ sessions in vacant employment or retail buildings, especially in areas where people currently have limited access to alternative sport and physical activity provision.

HOW PRINCIPLE 8 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Ensure planning policy:

- supports new sport and physical activity provision which meets identified needs, recognising and giving significant weight to the benefits of a proposal (see Principle 1);
- promotes co-location of facilities and services;
- is positive towards the temporary use of under-utilised land and buildings to provide sport and physical activity opportunities.



Based on evidence from a robust and up to date assessment of need and related strategy (Principle 2) include appropriate site allocations for sport and physical activity in planning policy documents (e.g. site allocations documents and neighbourhood plans).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Consult the relevant national sports governing bodies and local sports clubs at an early pre-application stage to help shape the nature and extent of the provision (e.g. the location, design, maintenance, accessibility for users, co-location, management and operational viability) and secure their support.



Consult Sport England at an early pre-application stage for large scale proposals and those that will affect existing playing field land.

Discuss at pre-application stage, and thereafter submit details with a planning application, which clearly demonstrate how the proposed development will:

- Secure benefits for sport and physical activity;
- Meet identified needs for sport and physical activity provision e.g. set out how the proposed development meets with the findings, recommendations and actions of any relevant assessment of need and strategy for such provision (Principle 2);
- Mitigate any issues that may arise from its development e.g. amenity issues (Principle 12)



Support new sport and physical activity provision which meets identified needs and in doing so recognise and give significant weight to the benefits it will provide.



Promote and secure early delivery of sport and physical activity provision which forms part of a wider development.

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 9:

ENSURE A POSITIVE APPROACH TO MEETING THE NEEDS GENERATED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 34]:

Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as ..., health, ..., green and digital infrastructure).

All developments, especially housing, will generate needs for a range of sport and physical activity provision. The planning system should take a proactive approach to meet these needs. Alongside designing development so that it enables people to lead active lifestyles (Principle 3), any approach should be informed by a robust and up-to-date assessment of need for sport and physical activity provision and related strategies (Principle 2). The findings, recommendations and actions in these documents should be used to help:

- estimate and justify the range, nature and level of needs that will be generated from new development;
- determine the most appropriate way of meeting the needs³⁸
- establish clear deliverable actions (with associated costs) that will meet the needs;
- secure delivery of the actions through the most appropriate mechanism (e.g. applicant providing the provision directly or by way of developer contributions).

All development will generate a need for some form of sport and physical activity provision. However, for most types of sporting provision most development will be unlikely, by itself, to generate need to the extent that a new facility is required. Therefore, to ensure the sport and physical activity needs arising from all development are met it is important that plan makers take a proactive and strategic approach. This will include using assessments of need³⁹ and related strategies to establish the most appropriate approach for their area to securing developer contributions, by way of planning obligations⁴⁰ (Section 106 Agreements) and/or where appropriate the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)⁴¹.

Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note⁴² provides advice on an overall approach a plan making authority could take to using CIL and planning obligations to help meet the needs generated by new development. In doing so, it looks to ensure related planning obligations meet the statutory tests for their use⁴³ and highlights limitations with the use of conventional local quantitative standards of provision.

³⁸ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 8' within this document (page 27).

³⁹ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 2' within this document (page 14).

⁴⁰ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Planning Obligations section.

⁴¹ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Community Infrastructure Levy section.

⁴² [Web link](#) to Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note (2018).

⁴³ [Web link](#) to the Government's NPPF (2018) - see paragraph 56.

HOW PRINCIPLE 9 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Use the information from an assessment of need and related strategies (Principle 2) to:

- present and justify the range, nature and level of needs that will be generated from new development;
- establish and set out (possible in a Supplementary Planning Document) a proactive approach that is tailored to how best to meet the needs generated from new development in the area and deliver the related provision.



Ensure a strategic approach to meeting the needs from planned developments across the area which looks at how best to use planning obligations in the context of meeting the Regulation 122 tests and pooling restrictions⁴⁴ and where appropriate utilises CIL⁴⁵.



Ensure proposed actions to meet the needs are specific, deliverable and costed. Costs should include appropriate maintenance and sinking funds (e.g. to replace the surface of an Artificial Grass Pitch) to ensure their long-term use.



Make clear who is responsible for the delivery, management and maintenance of the identified facilities along with when and how they should be delivered.



Ensure any provision placed on a Regulation 123 list is limited to a small number of specific priority projects of a strategic nature with strong political and officer support. Avoid including generic provision (e.g. outdoor sport or playing pitches) as this may hinder the subsequent use of planning obligations for the provision.



Town or Parish Councils, and where relevant charging authorities, in receipt of the neighbourhood portion⁴⁶ of CIL should be proactive in spending CIL funds on projects identified within their area by any assessment of need and related strategies. Where appropriate such projects should be included in relevant Neighbourhood Plans.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



At an early pre-application stage and in line with any assessment of need and related strategies (Principle 1) and tailored approach for the area:

- understand the likely nature of the needs generated by a proposed development; and
- the most appropriate way of meeting the needs and deliver the related provision.



Secure planning obligations in line with a locally led approach for meeting the needs for sport and physical activity provision within the area.

⁴⁴ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Other Developer Contributions section.

⁴⁵ [Web link](#) to Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note (2018).

⁴⁶ [Web link](#) to the Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Spending the Levy section.



Plan Makers (PM)



Decision Takers (DT)



Applicants (A)



Consultees/Stakeholder (C/S)



Ensure planning obligations are secured taking into account a strategic approach to meeting the needs from development across the area (e.g. how best to use planning obligations in the context of meeting the Regulation 122 tests and pooling restrictions).



Ensure planning obligations relate to specific, deliverable and costed projects, which allow for appropriate long-term management and maintenance (e.g. including sinking funds to replace the surface of an Artificial Grass Pitch) and that it is clear who is responsible for their delivery along with when and how they should be delivered.



Where large scale housing developments are to be delivered in phases or through multiple applications, ensure the nature of provision to meet the needs and its delivery is co-ordinated. If on-site sporting provision is to be provided it is likely that locating this together on a single new site serving the whole development, and to which all phases/applications contribute, should be sought.

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PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 10:

PROVIDE SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION WHICH IS FIT FOR PURPOSE AND WELL DESIGNED.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 124]:

The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve...

Well-designed provision that is fit for purpose can actively encourage and support people to maintain and increase their participation in sport and physically activity. It can help enable physically inactive people to be more active by providing a pleasant experience in a safe and welcoming environment. However, the opposite is also true, with inappropriate and poorly designed provision acting as significant barrier to people being active, creating a negative experience of a sport and activity which can be difficult overcome, especially for people who are not regular participants.

Provision should be designed to meet identified needs and be accessible to the widest range of potential users across all ages, genders, cultures and abilities. All new provision should look to ‘design in’ the fullest possible shared and community use from the outset (see Principle 7) along with opportunities for appropriate co-location, whilst providing for future enhancements and modernisation.

The design of provision should look to learn from, and wherever possible adhere to good practice guidance, including design guidance provided by Sport England and the respective sport’s governing bodies⁴⁷. Proposals to enhance existing or provide new sport and physical activity provision should have regard to this guidance as a means of responding to the Government’s emphasis on ensuring good design within the NPPF⁴⁸.

When considering the design of provision reference should also be made to Sport England’s Active Design guidance⁴⁹ (see Principle 3), including Active Design principles:

- 4: Co-location of community facilities;
- 5: Network of multifunctional open space;
- 7: Appropriate infrastructure and
- 8: Active buildings.

In doing so, the design of any sport and physical activity provision should look to proactively integrate with wider opportunities for people to lead active lifestyles. This could include linking access routes into wider walking and cycle networks, along with providing shelter and appropriate ancillary infrastructure such as storage to support and provide a base for other sports and physical activities.

⁴⁷ [Web link](#) to Sport England’s design and cost guidance - includes multiple sections which reflect the specific design considerations which need to be reviewed for specific facilities, as well as audit/check lists, case studies, cost guidance and downloadable CAD drawings.

⁴⁸ [Web link](#) to the Government’s NPPF (2018) – see section 12 Achieving well-designed places.

⁴⁹ [Web link](#) to Sport England’s Active Design Guidance (2015).

HOW PRINCIPLE 10 CAN BE APPLIED IN

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Recognise the value of design in enabling people to take part in sport and be physically active.



Ensure planning policy promotes fit for purpose and well-designed provision which meets identified needs and:

- Is accessible to the widest range of potential users across all ages, genders, cultures and abilities;
- ‘Designs in’ the fullest possible shared and community use, opportunities for appropriate co-location and allows for future enhancements and modernisation.
- Integrates with wider opportunities for people to lead active lifestyles.

Recognise, reference and embed Sport England and relevant sport national governing bodies design guidance and good practice in relevant planning policy documents e.g. design codes, guidance and development briefs.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Recognise and give significant weight in the development and assessment of a proposed development to the value of design in enabling people to take part in sport and be physically active.



Have regard to related assessments of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision in the design of developments.



Actively engage with and consider the views and requirements of a wide variety of potential end users throughout the design process for new or improved provision to ensure it is as inclusive as possible.



Wherever relevant, ensure developments adhere to design guidance and good practice provided by Sport England and the relevant sport national governing bodies.



Ensure that as a default new sport and physical activity provision:

- ‘designs in’ the fullest possible shared and community use, opportunities for appropriate co-location and allows for future enhancements and modernisation.
- Integrates with wider opportunities for people to lead active lifestyles.



Engage early to help shape the design of new sport and physical activity provision and share any knowledge of how the proposed design may be improved to meet local needs and provide for a range of potential users.



Plan Makers (PM)



Decision Takers (DT)



Applicants (A)



Consultees/Stakeholder (C/S)

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 11:

PLAN POSITIVELY FOR SPORT AND RECREATIONAL PROVISION IN DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES AND THE GREEN BELT.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 141]:

Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

The Government within the NPPF recognises the importance of the Green Belt as a beneficial resource for providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation. The principle in the NPPF of planning positively for such activity should also be extended to other designated landscapes (e.g. national parks and AONBs) and countryside, especially within the urban fringe. Designated landscapes are often important locations for a range of sport and physical activities which cannot be easily undertaken elsewhere. Alongside the Green Belt, urban fringe land provides an often-untapped resource for outdoor sport and physical activity near a substantial proportion of the population.

The NPPF states that the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation (paragraph 144), and the change of use of land to outdoor sport and recreation, so long as it preserves its openness (paragraph 145), are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Sport England defines ‘appropriate facilities’ as those that directly support participation in outdoor sport and recreational activities along with those that help to secure the long-term viability and sustainability of the activities.

Positive planning in other designated landscapes should include providing and supporting outdoor facilities and land for sports and physical activities that rely on and will encourage people to visit the landscapes. It also includes ensuring and supporting appropriate ancillary facilities e.g. mountain bike wash-down facilities or car parking and toilets at the start/end of walking and cycle trails.

Some event sports (e.g. well-established trail-based events) may take place within designated landscapes and the wider countryside for a limited number of days a year. These events and the land and facilities they use should be recognised, protected and where necessary enhanced through the planning system.

HOW PRINCIPLE 11 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Within the Green Belt, other designated landscapes and the urban fringe, ensure planning policy:

- Supports the need to plan positively to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity;
- Allocates new sites for outdoor sport and physical activity provision (see principle 8) in line with identified needs (see principle 2). This may include an allocation to help an existing sports club on a tight urban site relocate to new and enhanced provision, so it can meet increasing demand;
- Supports the development of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation;
- Be aware of and support sport and physical activities and related events that use land and facilities on a temporary basis (including protecting permitted development rights).
- Be aware of and protect (Principle 4) land and facilities on which a sport or physical activity relies because it cannot be easily replicated. This could include access to waterways for a range of water sports or airfields for gliding and parachuting. Sport England's register of Significant Areas for Sport⁵⁰ will help with identifying such sites for certain sports.



Respond to planning policy consultations to raise awareness of the unique attributes of sport sites which mean they cannot be easily replicated. Also raise awareness of sites that are used on a temporary basis.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Support appropriate proposals for new and enhanced sport and physical activity provision in the Green Belt, other designated landscapes and the urban fringe which meet identified needs.



Ensure relevant development proposals provide greater access to and opportunities for sport and physical activity in the Green Belt, other designated landscapes and the urban fringe (e.g. providing direct links to paths and cycleways which access such land).



Support the development of appropriate facilities in such landscapes which directly support participation in outdoor sport and physical activity and will help to secure the long-term viability and sustainability of the activities. This could include changing provision, lighting of outdoor sports facilities, car parking, social and catering facilities, fencing and sports domes (e.g. covering outdoor tennis courts).



Be aware of and protect (Principle 4) sport sites which due to their unique attributes cannot be easily replicated as well as those that are used on a temporary basis (including the protecting of permitted development rights).

⁵⁰ [Web link to Sport England's Significant Areas for Sport \(SASPs\) register.](#)

PLANNING FOR SPORT PRINCIPLE 12:

PROACTIVELY ADDRESS ANY AMENITY ISSUES ARISING FROM SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DEVELOPMENTS.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 96]:

Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

National Planning Policy Framework [Paragraph 178]:

Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location.

Sport and physical activity provision can lead to amenity issues arising with surrounding uses. The planning system should be proactive and positive in identifying and addressing these issues so the benefits to the community of the related sport and physical activity can be realised (Principle 1), and to ensure the needs of communities for such provision can be met (Principle 2). Amenity issues may arise from new sport and physical activity provision or proposals looking to make the best use of existing provision.

More detailed guidance on how to approach these issues is set out in Sport England's Making a Planning Application Guide⁵¹. In summary, however the following are important matters that plan makers, decision takers and applicants should positively address:

- Lighting - The lighting of outdoor sports facilities extends the hours a facility is available, especially in the winter months. This provides enhanced opportunities for people to participate in sport and can be critical to the long-term viability of a facility. The significant advances in lighting technology over recent years should be recognised which can minimise the impact on local amenity and neighbouring properties.
- Noise – Noise associated with sport and physical activity provision can range from engine noise from motorsports to the voices of players and balls hitting boards on artificial grass pitches. With appropriate siting and suitable mitigation measures acceptable noise levels can be achieved for the vast majority of noise generating provision, allowing for their full operation without adversely affecting surrounding uses. Sport England has specific guidance on the planning implications of noise generated by the use of Artificial Grass Pitches⁵².
- Ball strike – New or enhanced provision for ball playing sports (e.g. cricket) should positively address any risk of balls leaving the perimeter of the site and potentially striking property or people on adjacent land. This risk can usually be mitigated through careful siting and orientation of pitches alongside measures such as ball stop fencing.

⁵¹ [Web link](#) to Sport England's Making a Planning Application Guide (2009 – to be updated in 2018).

⁵² [Web link](#) to Sport England's Artificial Grass Pitch Acoustics – Planning Implications Guidance Note (2015).

HOW PRINCIPLE 12 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Ensure planning policy:

- Recognises and gives significant weight to the benefit of sport and physical activity provision (Principle 1) and the need to make the best use of new and existing provision;
- Is positive and proactive in seeking to overcome amenity issues arising from sport and physical activity development.



Early in the masterplanning of developments which will include sport and physical activity provision, identify possible amenity issues and ensure they are designed out so the use of the provision will not be adversely affected or limited.

Refer to Sport England and national governing bodies of sport guidance on design and amenity issues⁵³

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

PM DT A C/S



Recognise and give significant weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity in all related planning decisions (Principle 1) and the need to make the best use of new and existing provision.



Consult neighbouring uses, identify and look to design out potential amenity issues at an early pre-application stage in the development of any sport and physical activity provision.



Fully understand the likely impact of a potential issue and how it can be positively addressed through appropriate mitigation.



Submit mitigation measures to address amenity issues with an application, rather than leaving them to be dealt with by condition, and ensure the measures are appropriate, deliverable and enforceable based on an appropriate assessment and discussion with relevant parties (e.g. sports clubs, National Governing Bodies and Sport and Sport England).



Give careful consideration in the development of any application to the relationship between new or enhanced sport and physical activity provision and existing or proposed neighbouring uses. Recognise that in some cases amenity issues may go to the heart of determining an application.



Support the provision of new or enhanced sport and physical activity provision unless it can be clearly demonstrated that they will have unacceptable impact on amenity which cannot be addressed through mitigation measures.

⁵³ [Web link](#) to Sport England's design and cost guidance – in particular see the Artificial Sports Lighting section. [Web link](#) to Sport England's Artificial Grass Pitch Acoustics – Planning Implications Guidance Note (2015).

GOVERNMENT

National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)

SPORT ENGLAND

Strategy, Planning Policy & Guidance

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016-2021

Playing Field Policy & Guidance

- Sport England's policy and guidance on planning applications affecting playing fields.

Active Design

- Guidance on encouraging opportunities to take part in sport and be physically active through the design and layout of our built environment.

Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide

- A recommended approach to assessing the need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance

- A recommended approach to assessing the need for playing pitches and developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy.

Planning Resources & Information

Making a Planning Application Guide

- A step by step guide to help sports clubs apply and obtain planning permission for new and/or enhanced sports facilities.

Model Planning Conditions

- A set of model conditions to assist with determining planning applications affecting existing and proposing new/enhanced sporting provision.

Template Community Use Agreement

- A template document that can form the basis of an agreement for securing community use of educational sports facilities including details of how the use will operate.

Playing Field Application Statistics

- Annual figures on the playing field related planning applications Sport England is consulted on as a statutory consultee.

Planning Tools

Active Places Power

- A website which provides a database of sports facilities and interactive mapping and reporting tools to help guide investment decisions and the development of assessments of need and strategies for sporting provision.

Facilities Planning Model

- A computer model which helps to assess the strategic provision of sports facilities.

Sports Facility Calculator

- A tool to help with quantifying how much demand for key community sports facilities may be generated by the population of new development or growth area.

Facility Specific Guidance

Equivalent Quality Assessment of Playing Fields Briefing Note

- Technical guidance to help determine whether proposals for replacement playing field land provide ‘equivalent quality’ (relates to Exception 4 to Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy).

Artificial Grass Pitches Acoustics Planning Implications

- Details of acoustic implications associated with artificial grass pitches, appropriate noise criteria, assessment methods and practical measures to reduce noise.

Selecting the Right Artificial Grass Surface

- Guidance, developed with the main pitch sport national governing bodies, setting out a common approach for selecting the appropriate artificial surface for a facility.

Design and Cost Guidance

- A series of design and cost guidance for a range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities

Other Useful Guidance and Resources

Active Lives Survey

- A nationwide survey measuring how people participate in sport and physical activity.

Understanding Audiences

- Insights into what affects and influences the sporting behavior of specific population groups.

Tackling Inactivity Insight

- Guidance and insight to help target and support inactive people to get active.

Benefits to Sport Information

- Research and evidence on the socio-economic benefits of sport and physical activity.

Community Rights for Sport Guidance

- Guidance and toolkits to help understand how community rights can be used to benefit sport e.g. Assets of Community Value, Right to Bid and Asset Transfer.

Sustainable Clubs

- A website providing guidance to help community sports clubs use environmentally sustainability to reduce their running costs.

Use Our School Toolkit

- A resource to support schools in providing community access to their sports facilities.

CONTACTS - PLANNING

For enquiries regarding a planning consultation, development, site or facility please email the relevant geographical email:

planning.north@sportengland.org

North East, North West, Yorkshire

planning.central@sportengland.org

West Midlands, East Midlands, East.

planning.south@sportengland.org

South West, South East, London.

For general enquiries and those regarding Sport England's planning policy, guidance and tools please email: planningforsport@sportengland.org

Sport England's planning team can also be contacted by phone on 020 7273 1777 or by post at either its London or Loughborough offices:

- **London:** 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF,
- **Loughborough:** Sport Park, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3QF

CONTACTS - FUNDING

For any Sport England funding related enquiry please visit www.sportengland.org/funding or call the funding helpline on 0345 8508508.

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