



East Hampshire District Council
Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy
2024 – 2040
Appendix G – Existing Planning Policies

Appendix G – National, Regional and Local Planning Policy: Sport and Recreation Facilities

National Planning Policy

The relevant policy promoting healthy and safe communities in the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 is at paragraphs 96 and 97:

Para 96 -

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which:

- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*
- b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of beautiful, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*
- 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.*

Para 97 –

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- a) 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;*
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.*

The relevant national planning policy protecting existing sports facilities and land is at paragraphs 102 and 103 of the NPPF 2023:

Para 102 -

'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'.

Para 103 -

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- 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*
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.'*

Regional and Sub Regional Planning Policy

The last Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East of England - The South East Plan (published in May 2009) – had previously set out a vision and strategic framework for growth to 2026.

The overall spatial vision set out in The South East Plan 2009-2026 had a focus on health and climate change:

A socially and economically strong, healthy and just South East that respects the limits of the global environment. Achieving this will require the active involvement of all individuals to deliver a society where everyone, including the most deprived, benefits from and contributes to a better quality of life. At the same time the impact of current high levels of resource use will be reduced and the quality of the environment will be maintained and enhanced.

The Government has subsequently revoked the South East Plan.

The Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH) brings together the local authorities in the South Hampshire sub region (including parts of the southern parishes of **Horndean, Clanfield and Rowlands Castle**) to support sustainable development, economic growth and coordinate strategic planning activities. The most recent PFSH Spatial Position Statement was published December 2023. It has no status as a development plan document but does help to inform the preparation and strategic co-ordination of local plans. It has no direct reference to sports facilities but aims to deliver principles for sustainable growth which includes the delivery of new and enhanced multifunctional green infrastructure. It is intended that Southampton and Portsmouth will be the main focus for investment and development as these areas provide major employment, retail, leisure, entertainment, higher education and cultural centres for the sub-region.

County Planning Policy

At the county level, Hampshire County Council has no planning responsibilities of direct relevance to sports facilities aside from provision for physical education and sport in its schools.

The Hampshire Active Partnership – the charity 'Energise Me' - is the lead organisation working to create the conditions for an active population in the county of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and to use the power of sport and physical activity to transform lives. The Energise Me team works alongside numerous public, private and voluntary partners, bringing together expertise, resources and ideas from all parts of the sports, health and physical activity arena in Hampshire.

The Energise Me Strategy 2022-2027 'We Can Be Active' contains policies aimed at meeting needs and aspirations of the sector in the county. It prioritises those most in need and facing the greatest barriers to participation working in partnership across local government, sport, business and the voluntary sector to increase activity levels reduce inequality and transform lives through sport and physical activity.

The strategy sets out five broad goals that summarise what people need to be active:

1. **Positive early experiences** for our children and young people
2. **Opportunities** that meet our needs and interests and are accessible and easy to find.
3. **Places and travel routes** where we *all* feel safe and are encouraged to be active.
4. **Support** to help us get started or keep moving when we feel that we can't do it alone.
5. **Bold leaders** working together to create happier and healthier communities.

Local Planning Policy

The current adopted statutory development plans for the East Hampshire District Council Local Planning Authority Area are made up of:

- **East Hampshire District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy** prepared by the District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). It was adopted by East Hampshire District Council in May 2014. (It has now been superseded in the South Downs National Park by the South Downs Local Plan, which was adopted in July 2019).
- **East Hampshire District Local Plan Part 2 – Housing & Employment Allocations**
- **Saved Policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review** - Many of the Second Review Local Plan's policies have been superseded by policies in the Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy. The remaining 'saved' policies will continue to be used in determining planning applications until replaced by policies in a new Local Plan.
- **Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan**
- **Neighbourhood Plans** - These are prepared by town/parish councils to set a locally specific development framework to guide development in their area. At the time of publication of the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) in July 2023, five Neighbourhood Plans had been 'made' and form part of the development plan for their areas. These are **Alton, Beech, Bentley, Medstead & Four Marks and Ropley**. A further three neighbourhood planning areas have been designated - Bentworth, Bramshott & Liphook and Rowlands Castle.

The Existing Local Plan

The **Local Plan Joint Core Strategy (2014)** shapes and guides development in East Hampshire to 2028. It provides a policy framework that plans for new development to deliver the following vision that has been developed alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy:

By 2028, East Hampshire will be a better place where people live, work and build businesses in safe, attractive and prosperous towns and villages. They will have good access to a range of housing, jobs, leisure and community facilities, and enjoy a high quality built, historic and natural environment. They will live and work in a way that respects resources and protects and enhances the District's natural environment.

Towards achieving this vision, the Local Plan Joint Core Strategy includes key planning policies relating to proposals for new sport and recreation facilities and proposals involving the loss of facilities. The key Local Plan policies of relevance are as follows:

CP16 - Protection and provision of social infrastructure

Development proposing the change of use or loss of premises or land currently or last used for community facilities, public services, leisure and cultural uses will only be permitted where both the following criteria are met: a) the facility is no longer required and alternative facilities are easily accessible for the community they are intended to serve; and b) it can be demonstrated through a rigorous marketing exercise that the use is no longer viable, that all reasonable efforts have been made to retain it and that there is no alternative use that would provide a beneficial facility to the local

community.

Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public services, leisure and cultural uses that result in improvements to meeting the needs of the district will be supported. Such facilities will be required to be easily accessible to all sectors of the community and, in rural areas where public transport may be poor, support will be given to innovative schemes that seek to improve local delivery of services. The provision or improvement of facilities and services, required as a result of new development will be secured through developer contributions either through S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) mechanisms.

CP17 - Protection of open space, sport and recreation and built facilities

Development that results in the loss of a sport, recreation or play facility will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) there is a surplus of provision according to the local open space and built facilities standards; or*
- b) alternative facilities of equal or better quality and quantity can be provided in an equally accessible location.*

CP18 - Provision of open space, sport and recreation and built facilities

All new residential developments will provide, as a minimum standard, the equivalent of 3.45 ha of public open space per 1,000 population to serve the needs generated by the new development. Contributions to built facility provision will also be required to meet various standards depending on the facility being provided. Standards for both open space and built facilities are set out in the East Hampshire PPG17 Open Space, Sport and Recreation study (including built facilities) 2008 (or the most up to date similar survey).

Improvements will be made to enhance recreation, play, sports and built facilities within communities and throughout the district. Opportunities to improve physical fitness and well being will be enhanced by the provision of accessible green spaces in towns and villages and encouraging opportunities for walking and cycling wherever possible. The improvement of open space, sport and recreation facilities, including built facilities, will be implemented in the following way:

- a) new sites (with the exception of those to be provided within the Whitehill & Bordon Strategic Allocation) will be allocated either through the Local Plan: Allocations, the South Downs National Park Local Plan or neighbourhood plans;*
- b) all new residential development will be required to make provision for public open space that is designed to a high standard and is 'fit for purpose', either through on-site provision or by financial contribution to enhance or create off-site provision and management of open space (based on the minimum requirement of 3.45 ha per 1,000 population);*
- c) provision will be secured through developer contributions through S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) mechanisms;*
- d) where any deficiency in a particular category of open space in an area exists, the Council and National Park Authority will seek to offset this deficiency by seeking to secure a higher provision of this particular category of open space for the benefit of the community although the overall requirement of 3.45 ha per 1,000 population will remain;*
- e) well designed high quality play spaces for children and young people will be supported;*
- f) informal recreation will be encouraged by the implementation of green infrastructure opportunities in towns and villages.*

Emerging Local Plan Policy

A new District Local Plan for 2021 – 2040 covering those parts of the district outside the South Downs National Park (see Figure G1) is in development, led by the District Council. A Regulation 18 stage

consultation draft was made public in January 2024.

The emerging policy includes the following key objectives of direct relevance to the strategy:

Objective C:

Prioritising the health and well-being of communities in delivering what's needed to support new development:

C1 – Enable and encourage timely development of services and infrastructure to support strong communities.

C2 – Enable infrastructure (including community facilities) to keep pace with technology and improve and adapt to meet current and future needs.

C3 – Maintain and enhance the built and natural environments to support habitats and their connectivity, help the public to access and enjoy open spaces and green infrastructure.

C4 – Ensure sport and recreation opportunities are available in the right location to meet current and future needs.

The key draft policies of relevance to the sports facilities strategy are in Chapter 8 of the District Local Plan 2021 – 2040, as follows:

DGC1: Infrastructure:

DGC1.1 - Infrastructure necessary to support new development will be available when first needed. To achieve this, the delivery of development may need to be phased to reflect the delivery of infrastructure.

DGC1.2 - Development proposals must consider all the infrastructure implications of a scheme; not just those on the site or its immediate vicinity.

DGC1.3 - The delivery of necessary infrastructure will be secured by planning condition and/or, planning obligation and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

DGC1.4 - When determining planning applications and attaching appropriate planning conditions and/or planning obligations, regard will be had, to the delivery and timing of delivery of the key infrastructure, or otherwise alternative interventions which provide comparable mitigation.

DGC1.5 - If appropriate, the imposition of Grampian conditions will be considered to secure the provision of infrastructure when it is needed.

DGC1.6 - If the timely provision of infrastructure necessary to support new development cannot be secured in line with this policy, planning permission will be refused.

DGC3: New and Improved Community Facilities:

DGC3.1 - Planning permission will be granted for:

a) the redevelopment, improvement or expansion of existing community facilities where the development complies with other relevant policies in the plan.

b) new community facilities, only where it can be demonstrated that demand cannot be met by existing facilities (whether in current form or improved/expanded/redeveloped). Any new facilities must be designed to be resilient to changing social needs.

DGC4: Protection of Community Facilities:

DGC4.1 - Open Space, Sports and Recreation: Development involving the loss of open space, sports or recreation facilities will only be permitted if:

The site or facility is surplus in terms of all the functions an open space or facility can perform, and is of low value and poor quality, as shown by the East Hampshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs and Opportunities Assessment (2018) or subsequent update; or replacement provision is made in a location well-related to the users of the existing facility, and is of equivalent or greater quality, quantity and accessibility; or

1. *the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits to sport and recreation of which clearly outweighs the loss; or*
2. *the development is for a small part of the site; where it has been demonstrated that it will result in an enhanced sport or recreational facility.*

DGC4.2 - All other Community Facilities: Development proposing the change of use or loss of premises or land currently or last used for community facilities will only be permitted if:

1. *it is no longer needed, and alternatives are easily accessible for the community they are intended to serve without causing unreasonable reduction or shortfall in the local service provision; and*
2. *it can be demonstrated through a rigorous marketing exercise that:*
 - i) *the use is no longer viable, and*
 - ii) *all reasonable efforts have been made to retain it, and there is no alternative viable use of the land or facility as a community facility*

DGC5: Provision and Enhancement of Open Space, Sport and Recreation:

DGC5.1 - New residential development will be required to provide new or enhanced provision of useable public open space, sports and recreation facilities in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix E¹ and in compliance with the latest Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs and Opportunities Assessment (2018) or its subsequent replacement. However, consideration will also be given to the improvement and enhancement of nearby sports and recreation facilities that are of a low-quality standard or a poor state of repair.

Open space, sports and recreation provision requirements should:

1. *be provided on-site or within close proximity to the site, in a suitable location. Exceptionally, where the development does not allow for the provision of such open space on site or within close proximity of the site, developers will be required to make a financial contribution of equivalent value towards the provision of new, or improvement of open space, sport or recreational facilities elsewhere in the locality, through entering into a legal agreement or another suitable mechanism;*
2. *be multifunctional, fit for purpose, publicly accessible, support healthy lifestyles and meet the demands for participation now and in the future for outdoor recreation;*
3. *consider the context of any existing provision (including deficiencies in particular types of open space or identified priorities in terms of facilities) and maximise any opportunities for improvement within the wider area where these are relevant to the development of the site;*
4. *secure (when new provision is provided), appropriate mechanisms which will ensure the future satisfactory maintenance and management of the open space, sports and recreational facility in the long term.*

A holistic approach to the design of new open space should be taken including considering the contribution to place making, the green network and protecting and enhancing nature conservation and the water environment.

New provision should also protect, enhance and manage path networks for active travel and/or recreation, including new and existing links to the wider countryside.

¹ [Appendix E: Proposed Quantity and Accessibility Standards for Open Space](#)

Figure G1: East Hampshire Planning Area

