



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

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.

JUNE 2019

PLANNING FOR SPORT GUIDANCE

The purpose of this guidance, and the twelve planning-for-sport principles it presents, is to help the planning system provide formal and informal 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, community groups and individuals.

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



CONTENTS



This PDF has interactive elements including hyperlinks to useful external resources. Throughout this document, wherever you see text underlined, it is a link to either another page within this document or an external webpage. You can use the coloured boxes on page 1 to go directly to any of the 12 planning-for-sport principles and you can use the buttons in the top left corner of most pages to return to this contents page or page 1.

PLANNING FOR SPORT: PROVIDING ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

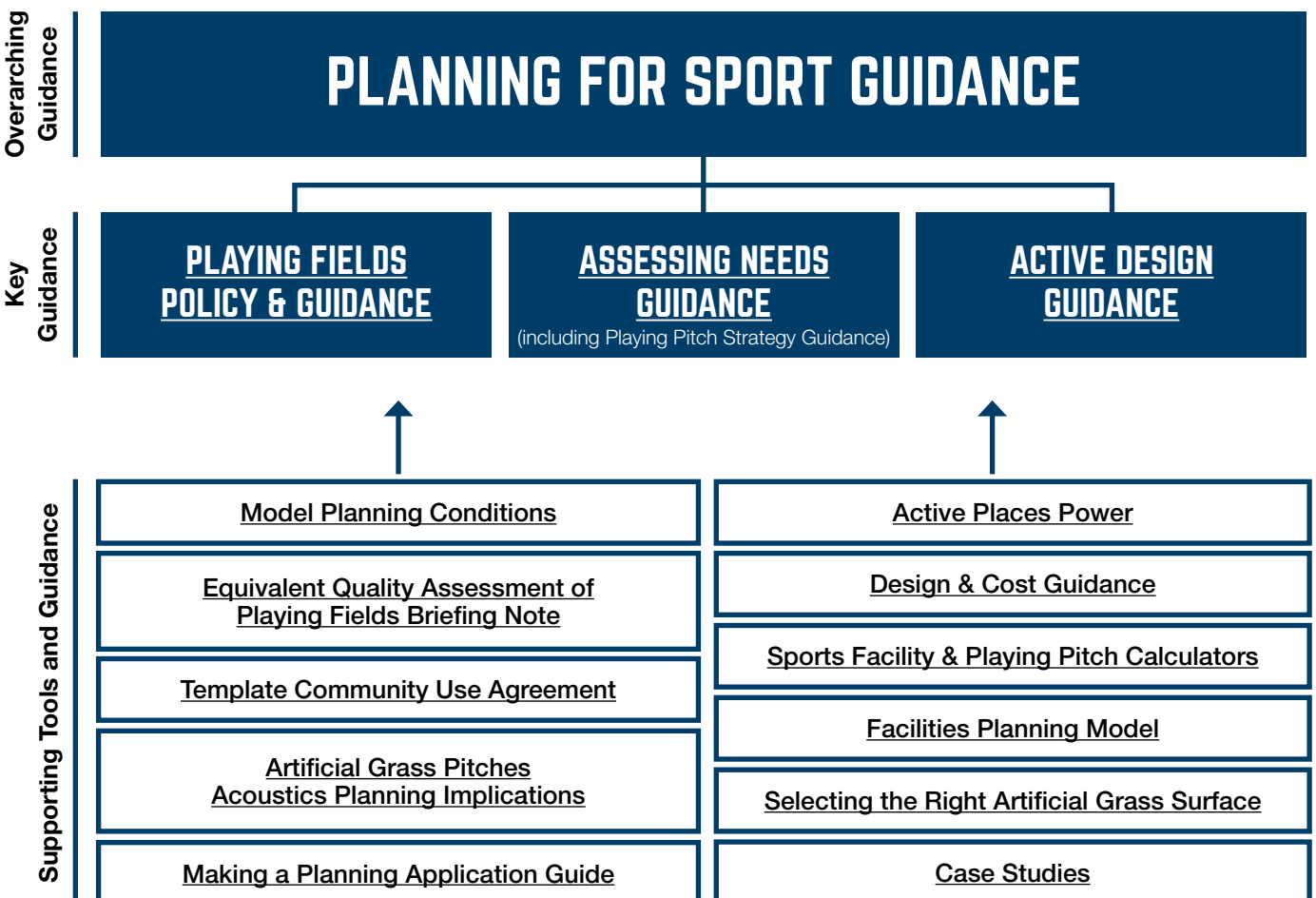
The **many benefits of sport and physical activity**, including to people’s physical and mental health, are widely recognised.

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 both formal and informal opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active, the planning system should **embrace 12 planning-for-sport principles**.

SPORT ENGLAND’S PLANNING GUIDANCE, POLICY AND TOOLS



OVERARCHING

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

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.

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

PROTECT

PROTECT AND PROMOTE EXISTING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION AND ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PREJUDICE ITS USE.

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

ENHANCE

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

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

PROVIDE

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

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

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

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

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



12 PLANNING-FOR-SPORT PRINCIPLES



PART 1: **THE PLANNING SYSTEM & SPORT ENGLAND**



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 needs³ for example 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 policies it contains.

PLANNING POLICY INCLUDES THE PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF:

- Development Plan Documents, which include:
 - Spatial Development Strategies⁴ (containing strategic policies);
 - Local Plans⁵ (which may contain both strategic and non-strategic policies);
 - Neighbourhood Plans (containing non-strategic policies and prepared by parish councils/ neighbourhood forums);
 - Area Action 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 (for example transport, health, education, community and sporting infrastructure); and
 - the progress and effectiveness of local plan policies – this information should be provided on an annual basis by way of an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). An AMR should also summarise the data gathered by a local planning authority relating to indicators in the plan.
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which, for example, may provide guidance on:
 - an approach to developer contributions⁶;
 - design codes and guidance; and
 - how specific sites should be developed (development briefs).

¹ The Government's NPPF (2019) – 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 for example county councils for minerals and waste planning.

³ Needs should be met unless the reasons in paragraph 11b) of the NPPF apply (the NPPF).

⁴ Produced by an elected mayor or combined authority where plan-making powers have been confirmed (for example the London Plan).

⁵ The Planning Inspectorate's maintained list of how local authorities are progressing with their local plans.

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 an independent 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 considerations⁷ 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 right of appeal against most local planning authority decisions and the work of the Planning Inspectorate to assess appeals via written representations, informal hearing or a formal inquiry⁸;
- The implementation of a planning permission and its associated conditions and planning obligations.

⁶ Such SPDs tend to include approaches to securing contributions for open space, sport and recreational provision. 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. More information on CIL and planning obligations is available within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – [The CIL section of the PPG](#).

⁷ What is a material consideration? – [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance](#) – Determining a planning application section, paragraph: 008 and [the Planning Portal's FAQs](#).

⁸ [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance](#) for more information on the planning application appeals process.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁹ 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 ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and 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 wellbeing 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 supporting 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).

⁹ The Government's NPPF (2019)

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).

Proper consideration of open space, sport and recreation is essential in ensuring that spatial development strategies and local plans are found to be sound when they are independently examined. To be sound they need to demonstrate that they meet the four tests set out in the NPPF¹⁰ in that they have been positively prepared, are justified, are effective and deliverable and are consistent with national policy.

The NPPF is supported by the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹¹. 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 on¹², as well as pointing to Sport England’s guidance on assessing the need for sports and recreational facilities¹³.

¹⁰ [The Government’s NPPF \(2019\)](#) – paragraph 35 Examining Plans.

¹¹ [The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance](#).

¹² See the ‘[How Sport England works with the planning system](#)’ section of this guidance (page 10).

¹³ See ‘[Planning for Sport Principle 2](#)’ within this guidance (page 18).

SPORT ENGLAND

STRATEGIES FOR SPORT – GOVERNMENT AND SPORT ENGLAND

Sport England’s current strategy ‘Towards an Active Nation’¹⁴ builds on the Government’s sports strategy ‘Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation’¹⁵ 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 benefits¹⁶ 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 (for example housing, transport, business, education, health 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.



¹⁴ Sport England’s Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016-2021 (2016).

¹⁵ The Government’s Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation’ (2015).

¹⁶ See ‘Planning for Sport Principle 1’ within this guidance (page 16).

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 the loss 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 benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the former or current use.

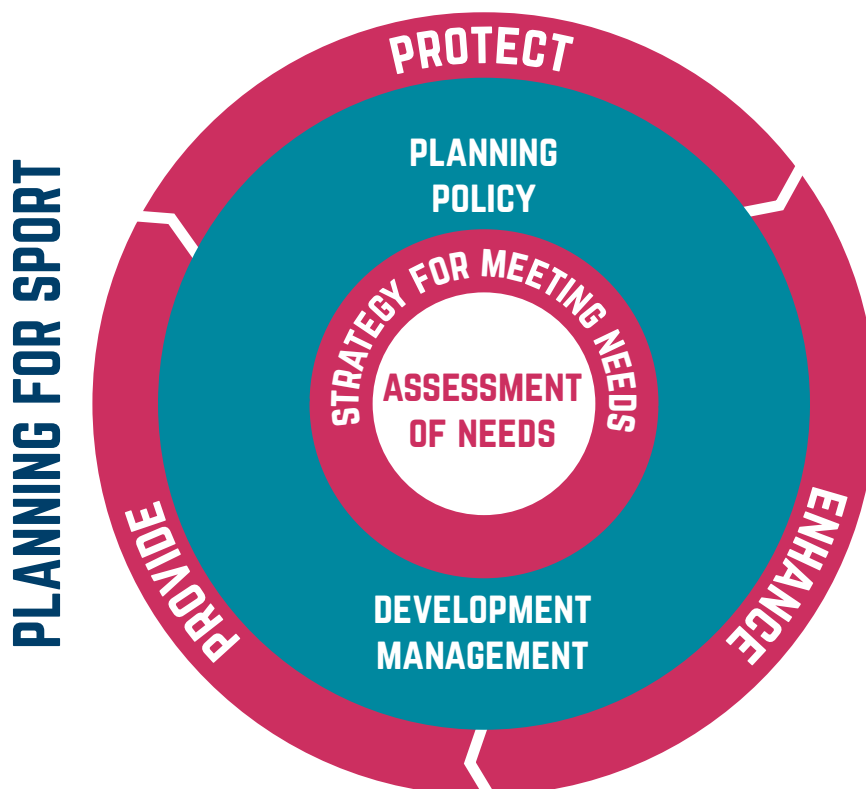
ENHANCE – TO ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH BETTER USE OF EXISTING PROVISION.

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 (for example playing pitch strategy or built facility strategy) to meet the needs. The assessment and strategy should then be positively applied in both the Planning Policy and Development Management aspects of the planning system¹⁷.



¹⁷ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 2' within this guidance (page 18).

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 (for example playing pitch and built facility strategies).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT, including decisions on whether planning permission should be granted, recognises the benefits of and results 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 document¹⁸ presents its playing fields policy and how it assesses such applications. It also provides definitions of key terms used (for example playing field, playing pitch and prejudice the use) along with the information required¹⁹ to enable Sport England to provide a substantive response.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance²⁰ 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. Appendix B provides details of how to consult Sport England and contact details.

¹⁸ Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document (2018).

¹⁹ Appendix A 'Information Requirements' to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document builds on the national validation requirements provided in the Government's planning practice guidance.

²⁰ The Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Open space, sports and recreation facilities section, paragraph 003.



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. A list of Sport England's key guidance and tools, along with some developed by other organisations, is also provided in Appendix A.

OPEN SPACE AND OTHER COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Open space and other community infrastructure (including wider green and blue infrastructure) 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 and proactive approach to the protection, enhancement and provision of open space and other community infrastructure, it focusses its more detailed and technical input into the planning system on the more formal sport and physical activity provision.

²¹ The green infrastructure section of the Government's planning practice guidance which provides a definition of green infrastructure, along with details of its importance and advice on taking a strategic approach to its provision. Blue infrastructure can include rivers, lakes, reservoirs, canals and other waterways along with coastal waters.



PART 2:
APPLYING THE
12 PLANNING-
FOR-SPORT
PRINCIPLES



SPORT ENGLAND'S PLANNING AIM & OBJECTIVES²² 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 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights²³ it has to play in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Applying the 12 principles will help to ensure the planning 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 12 principles are applicable to all areas of the planning system at all levels, for example 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 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:



Plan Makers: for example, local planning authorities, neighbourhood plan making groups, county councils, development corporations, national government.



Decision Takers: for example, local planning authorities (officers and councillors), county councils, development corporations, the planning inspectorate, secretaries of state.



Applicants: for example, developers, planning consultants, educational organisations, sports clubs, neighbourhood and community groups.



Consultees/Stakeholders: for example, the general public, parish councils, neighbourhood plan making groups, community and resident groups, public and non-government bodies.

²² See the 'Sport England's Planning Aim and Objectives' section of this guidance (page 8).

²³ See the 'National Planning Policy Framework' section of this guidance (page 6).



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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 wellbeing of communities.

Whether it's through formal, informal, team, group or individual activities, sport and physical activity generates considerable socio-economic benefits to individuals, communities and the wider society²⁴.

The benefits can be greatest for people who are currently the least active. Although anyone can be inactive, there are some groups in society who are less likely to regularly take part²⁵. These under-represented groups include women and girls, people from lower socio-economic groups, older people, disabled people, people from particular ethnic groups and those with long-term health conditions.

PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Regular participation in sport and physical 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 year²⁶.

MENTAL WELLBEING

Taking part in any sport and physical activity can boost mental health and self-esteem. It has been shown to be effective for reducing depression, anxiety, psychological distress and emotional disturbance²⁷.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a positive link between taking part in sport and academic achievement, reduction in criminal and anti-social behaviour along with improved confidence, self-esteem, social skills and employment opportunities²⁸.

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Sport can provide a focus for a range of activities and initiatives that bring people together, make them feel part of a team or group, 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 economy²⁹ placing sport in the top 15 industry sectors in England. Sport and sport-related activity is estimated to support more than 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, 2.3% of all jobs in England³⁰.

²⁴ 'Benefits of Sport' section of the Sport England website.

²⁵ Sport England's Active Lives surveys which measure the activity levels of people across England.

²⁶ Public Health England, 'Everybody Active, Every Day' (2014) Page 4 – [Public Health England's Everybody Active, Every Day](#).

²⁷ 'Mental Health' section of the Sport England website.

²⁸ 'Individual Development' section of Sport England website.

²⁹ Sport England, Economic Value of Sport of Sport Report (2013) – ['Sport and the Economy' section of the Sport England website](#).

³⁰ Ibid.

HOW PRINCIPLE 1 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
	✓			✓	<p>Include policies which recognise and give great weight to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the wide benefits of sport and physical activity; and - local assessments of need for sport and physical activity and strategies to meet the needs (Principle 2).
	✓			✓	<p>Ensure planning policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 (Principle 8).
	✓			✓	<p>Use available assessment tools, techniques and data³¹ to identify and communicate the wide benefits of sport and physical activity at the local level, for example the health cost saving and social return on investment.</p>
	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Engage broadly including with the public health, sports, transport and education sectors to build consensus and partnerships around promoting and securing the benefits of sport and physical activity.</p>

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
		✓	✓	✓	<p>Recognise and give great weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity in all related planning decisions and consultations.</p>
		✓			<p>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.</p>
			✓		<p>Engage early with local providers³² of sport and physical activity opportunities to understand how a proposed development could secure benefits for sport and physical activity.</p>
			✓		<p>Provide details at the pre-application stage and submit details with a planning application which clearly demonstrate how the proposal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 (Principle 4); - meet identified needs for sport and physical activity provision, for example how the proposal meets with the recommendations and actions of any relevant assessment of need and strategy (Principle 9).
				✓	<p>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, including for under-represented groups.</p>
		✓		<p>Where a health impact assessment is required include consideration of the benefits of sport and physical activity.</p>	

³¹ For example Sport England's MOVES Tool, Value of Sport Monitor and Economic Value of Sport Model, and WHO's HEAT Tool (walking/cycling).

³² Local providers could include sports clubs, community and voluntary groups, local authorities, leisure trusts and operators, county sports partnerships, sports governing bodies and parish/town councils.

OVERARCHING

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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 facilities³³. Within its Planning Practice Guidance, the Government points to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sport and recreational provision³⁴. Sport England's guidance³⁵ 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.

TAILORED ASSESSMENTS

Assessments should be tailored to the local area with their scope reflecting how people in the area currently take part in sport and physical activity and how they may wish to do so in the future. This includes facilities and activities which may encourage people who are currently inactive, along with under-represented groups (Principle 1), to increase their activity levels. 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.

MEETING THE NEEDS

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.

SUCCESS FACTORS

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 difference in the approach for certain provision types (for example the quality of playing pitches is key to determining their capacity to accommodate use whereas for other provision capacity may be more determined by 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 through regular monitoring and review.

³³ [The Government's NPPF \(2019\)](#) – see paragraph 97 and [The Government's Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation' \(2015\)](#) – see page 59.

³⁴ [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance](#) – Open space, sports and recreation facilities section, paragraph: 002.

³⁵ [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 (for example neighbourhood planning bodies should use existing work developed by a 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 guidance.
	✓					Establish and maintain a process to deliver an assessment of need and related strategy, and to keep it robust and up-to-date through annual monitoring and review.
	✓					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 (Principles 4, 6, 8 and 9).

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 include.
		✓				Where a relevant robust and up-to-date assessment and related strategy exists use it to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform planning decisions giving great weight to its findings, recommendations and actions. - Shape a range of development proposals (for example from the nature of new sporting provision and development on educational sites to the provision required to meet the needs generated from new housing development³⁶). - 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 guidance ³⁷ .

³⁶ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 9' within this guidance (page 38)

³⁷ [Sport England's Planning Tools and Guidance website page](#) (includes Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance and Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance).

OVERARCHING

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 wellbeing 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.

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

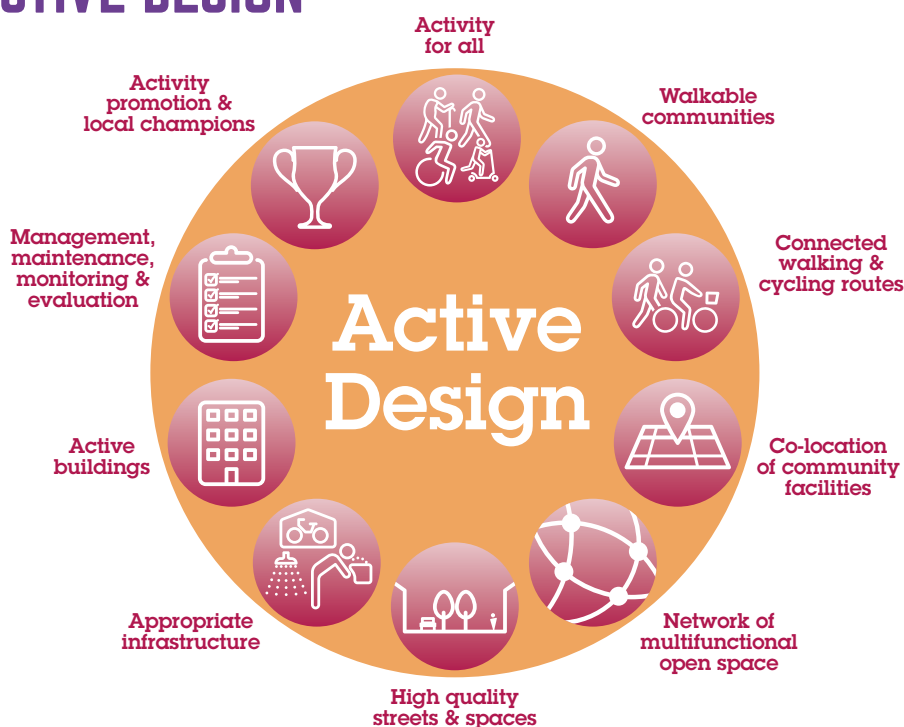
The nature of the built environment has a significant impact on people's ability to take part in sport and be physically active. All professional disciplines and groups (for example planning, health, leisure, property, transport and education) should look to work strategically, proactively and collaboratively, including with local communities to maximise opportunities for active lifestyles.

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 (Principle 10).

ACTIVE DESIGN

Sport England's Active Design guidance, developed in partnership with Public Health England, provides 10 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 lifestyles³⁸. 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 10 principles the Active Design Guidance also provides practical case studies, a model policy and pointers to good practice, as well as a useful checklist which provides a basis to review proposals in an Active Design context.

THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE DESIGN



³⁸ 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 10 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 the model policy provided in the Active Design guidance could be used).
	✓	✓	✓		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 (for example 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 great 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 (Principle 1).
		✓	✓	✓	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.
			✓		Ensure design documents supporting a proposed development (for example Design and Access Statements, Design Codes, Guides and Development Briefs) show how the design and layout of the proposal provides opportunities for people to take part in sport and be physically active. This should include opportunities within the site and how the site links with external opportunities such as walking and cycling networks, along with access to sites providing sport and physical activity opportunities (for example nearby recreation grounds, parks, community and leisure centres) and everyday destinations (for example shops, workplaces and train stations). References to the Active Design principles within these documents can be used to help illustrate this.



OVERARCHING

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

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.

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

PROTECT

PROTECT AND PROMOTE EXISTING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION AND ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PREJUDICE ITS USE.

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

ENHANCE

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

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

PROVIDE

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

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

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

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

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



12 PLANNING-FOR-SPORT PRINCIPLES

PROTECT

PROTECT AND PROMOTE
EXISTING SPORT AND
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
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 – A STATUTORY CONSULTEE

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 document³⁹. 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. The guidance in the document, for example on assessing proposed replacement provision, may also be of use for assessing proposals affecting other sporting provision in line with paragraph 97 of the NPPF.

AGENT OF CHANGE

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. However, the Government is clear in the NPPF⁴⁰ 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 (the agent of change) to secure suitable mitigation (Principle 12).

³⁹ See the 'How Sport England works with the planning system' section of this guidance (page 10). [Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document \(2018\)](#).

⁴⁰ The Government's NPPF (2019) – see paragraph 182.

⁴¹ The Government's NPPF (2019) – see paragraphs 99–101.

⁴² Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document (2018).

HOW PRINCIPLE 4 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
	✓				<p>Ensure planning policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 of the new development to secure appropriate, deliverable and enforceable mitigation (Principle 12).
	✓				<p>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.</p>
	✓				<p>Where appropriate, use local designations to identify and add to the protection afforded to specific provision for formal and/or informal sport and physical activity, such as through Local Green Space⁴¹ or other bespoke designations.</p>

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
		✓			<p>Protect existing sport and recreational provision through the application of paragraph 97 of the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance⁴².</p>
	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Where existing sport and physical activity provision may be affected by a proposed development, engage with relevant parties who may be impacted (for example sports clubs) and those who would need to be consulted on a related planning application (for example Sport England) at an early pre-application stage.</p>
	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Give great weight to the protection of existing provision in all relevant pre-application and application discussions.</p>
		✓	✓		<p>Ensure any potential impacts of a proposed development on existing sport and physical activity provision are considered within planning application documents (for example Design and Access Statements) in accordance with Paragraph 97 of the NPPF.</p>
		✓	✓		<p>Where use of existing sport and physical activity provision may be prejudiced by new development (for example 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, for example sports clubs and national sports governing bodies (Principle 12).</p>
	✓	✓		✓	<p>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 use any available assessment of need and related strategy to inform the response (Principle 2) and provide information on the previous, current and potential future use of the provision for sport and physical activity.</p>
	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Give great weight to Sport England's pre-application advice and response to an application, especially regarding its statutory consultee status.</p>
				✓	<p>Contact the local planning authority (LPA) if you are aware a planning permission, planning condition or related agreement is not being complied with which is adversely affecting the sporting or wider physical activity use of land or facilities. This may include facilities not being available for community use at the times specified by a planning consent or within a Community Use Agreement. If unsure ask the LPA to view a copy of the approved details.</p>

PROTECT

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 wellbeing 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 ([Principle 2](#)). Management and maintenance plans and operations should be regularly reviewed and be able to evolve over time to allow changing needs to be met.

UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

However, when looking to ensure the viability of provision it is important that elements such as cost and programming do not hinder use by under-represented groups within the local community ([Principle 1](#), for example people from lower socio-economic backgrounds). Innovative models, along with revenue support and cross subsidies (where appropriate), should be considered to help balance the viability of a facility with encouraging use by under-represented groups.

PLANNING CONDITIONS AND OBLIGATIONS

Subject to the statutory tests on their use⁴³ planning conditions and planning obligations should be used effectively to secure suitable management and maintenance measures and the requisite funding ([Principle 9](#)). Planning obligations can be secured for both on-site and off-site development where it can be demonstrated that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

MONITORING

Sport and physical activity provision should be monitored to make sure that the spaces and facilities they provide continue to function effectively (including providing for their local communities) 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 ([Principle 2](#)).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Management and maintenance arrangements should also ensure that provision is environmentally sustainable. By doing so, running costs can be reduced enhancing the viability of the provision and allowing available funds to be fed directly back into providing sport and physical activity. For example, energy provision is a major operational cost, which can be reduced by 10–20% by making changes to become more environmentally sustainable. More guidance on how to achieve this can be found in Sport England's Sustainable Clubs Guidance⁴⁴.

⁴³ [The Government's NPPF \(2019\)](#) – see paragraphs 55 and 56

⁴⁴ [Sport England's Sustainable Clubs Guidance](#).

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 (for example including the development and regular review of a management and maintenance plan).
	✓		✓		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)(Principle 2).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

	PM	DT	A	C/S	
			✓		Address the long-term management and maintenance of any new sport and physical activity provision and provide details with the planning application (for example develop a management and maintenance plan).
	✓	✓	✓	✓	Actively explore new and innovative models to secure the viable long-term management and maintenance of sport and physical activity provision while encouraging use by the local community and under-represented groups (Principle 1).
		✓	✓		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, for example including sinking funds to replace elements of the provision such as the surface of an artificial grass pitch (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.
			✓		Include environmentally sustainable measures in any new and enhanced provision which will help to reduce on-going operational costs (or will be cost neutral).



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**SPORT
ENGLAND**

ENHANCE

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

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

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12 PLANNING-FOR-SPORT PRINCIPLES

ENHANCE

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. They can enhance the experience for existing users, increase the capacity of the provision and ensure the best use is made of a site for sport and physical activity. Importantly, improvements can also make using the provision a more attractive proposition for potential new users, enabling greater use by and inclusion for under-represented groups ([Principle 1](#)).

A RANGE OF IMPROVEMENTS

Proposals which improve provision in line with an assessment of need for sport and physical activity provision and any related strategy for the area ([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, for example changing rooms, public conveniences, showering facilities, cycle parking and drinking fountains. Improvements could also include works which enhance access to existing provision by walking and cycling (for example providing safe and convenient links between the provision and existing walking and cycle routes).

CATERING FOR MULTIPLE USERS

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 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 sports⁴⁵ and the needs for the sports in the area ([Principle 2](#)). For example, an existing sand based artificial grass pitch may be currently used for a variety of sports, including hockey, which would not be suited to 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 wherever possible positively addressed within the related planning application.

⁴⁵ 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	
	✓				Ensure planning policy is supportive of improvements to existing provision which meets identified needs, looks to make the best use of a site for sport and physical activity while protecting existing provision and activities, encourages use by under-represented groups (Principle 1) and provides greater access by walking and cycling.
	✓		✓		Consider the long-term use and potential for future growth, or adaptation, of any new site 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 great 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 required, 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.
	✓	✓	✓	✓	Include and support improvements which actively encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater use of existing provision by under-represented groups (Principle 1), and - greater access to provision by walking and cycling, linking in to existing networks.

ENHANCE

ENCOURAGE AND SECURE WIDER COMMUNITY USE OF EXISTING AND NEW SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 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;
- providing enhanced opportunities for under-represented groups ([Principle 1](#)) in the local community to become physically active;
- reducing the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour by having an increased presence on the site.

COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENTS

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 system⁴⁶. 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.

DESIGNING-IN COMMUNITY USE

Community use should be 'designed in' from the outset of a development proposal ([Principle 10](#)). For example, to enable and overcome potential barriers to community use separate secure community access could be included in proposals for educational provision at the early design stages. Community use should also be factored in to wider masterplanning of larger mixed-use developments, for example by ensuring appropriate siting of provision and co-location of facilities.

USE OUR SCHOOL

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 70% of sport halls in England and 48% of grass playing pitches are on educational sites⁴⁷. Sport England's Use our School toolkit⁴⁸ 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.

⁴⁶ Sport England's template community use agreement

⁴⁷ Sport England, [Active Places Power \(February 2019\)](#)

⁴⁸ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes and supports community use of new sport and physical activity provision which is accessible to the widest range of possible users including under-represented groups (Principle 1) and available across the widest range of times; - Supports improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision to enable or enhance community use (Principle 6); - 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 (for example 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 (Principle 10) and taken into account in wider masterplanning work, including the appropriate siting and co-location of provision (Principle 3).
	✓	✓	✓	✓	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, for example ensuring appropriate access and changing provision (Principle 10), and in the masterplanning of new development, for example through appropriate siting and co-location (Principle 3).
		✓	✓	✓	Ensure proposed community use meets identified needs (Principle 2) and is informed by early discussions with existing and potential users (for example 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 (LPA) if use is not being provided in line with the agreement. If unsure ask the LPA to view a copy of the approved details.



OVERARCHING

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

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.

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

PROTECT

PROTECT AND PROMOTE EXISTING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVISION AND ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PREJUDICE ITS USE.

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



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

ENHANCE

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

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

PROVIDE

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

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

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

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

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

12 PLANNING-FOR-SPORT PRINCIPLES

PROVIDE

SUPPORT NEW PROVISION, INCLUDING ALLOCATING NEW 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 wellbeing 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 ([Principle 2](#)). This support should recognise and give great weight to the benefits the provision will provide to the local area ([Principle 1](#)).

DELIVERING PROVISION AND ALLOCATING SITES

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 ([Principle 2](#)). Where relevant, this should include allocating deliverable sites for new provision for sport and physical activity planning policy documents (for example site allocations documents and neighbourhood plans).

When allocating sites, it is important that a range of potentially suitable sites (whether for formal and/or informal provision) have been assessed and the preferred site(s) is well placed to meet the identified needs and is deliverable. This is as important for sites within wider mixed-use allocations as it is for standalone sport and physical activity sites. 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 ([Principle 12](#)).

CO-LOCATING FACILITIES AND SERVICES

To support the operational management and viability of new provision and provide increased opportunities to be active, co-locating several sports, physical activities and other community facilities into a new or improved hub site, alongside other everyday destinations (for example retail, workplaces and health services) 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 sections of the community in a range of new environments.

BRINGING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO UNDER-UTILISED LAND AND BUILDINGS

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supports new sport and physical activity provision which meets identified needs, recognising and giving great weight to the benefits of a proposal (Principle 1); - promotes the appropriate siting and 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; and - recognises the benefits of both formal and non-formal provision (Principle 1).
	✓				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 (standalone and/or as part of wider mixed-use allocations) in planning policy documents (for example site allocations documents and neighbourhood plans).

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

	PM	DT	A	C/S	
			✓	✓	Consult the relevant national sports governing bodies, local sports clubs and community groups at an early pre-application stage to help shape the nature and extent of the provision (for example the location, design, maintenance, accessibility for users, co-location, management and operational viability) and seek their support.
		✓	✓		Consult Sport England at an early pre-application stage for large scale proposals, including mixed use, 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure benefits for sport and physical activity; - Meet identified needs for sport and physical activity provision, for example 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, for example amenity issues (Principle 12)
		✓		✓	Support new sport and physical activity provision which meets identified needs and in doing so recognise and give great weight to the benefits it will provide.
		✓	✓		Promote and secure the appropriate siting, co-location and early delivery of sport and physical activity provision which forms part of a wider development.
		✓	✓	✓	Promote and support appropriate proposals for the use of under-utilised land and buildings to provide for sport and physical activity, including for temporary uses.

PROVIDE

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).

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK [PARAGRAPH 92B]:

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community.

All developments, especially housing, will generate some form of need for sport and physical activity provision. The planning system should take a proactive approach to meeting 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 assessments and strategies 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 needs⁴⁹;
- establish clear deliverable actions (with associated costs) that will meet the needs;
- secure delivery of the actions through the most appropriate mechanism (for example applicant providing the provision directly or by way of developer contributions).

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

For most types of sporting provision the majority of 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 need⁵⁰ and related strategies to establish the most appropriate approach for their area to securing developer contributions, by way of planning obligations⁵¹ (section 106 agreements) and/or where appropriate the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)⁵².

Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note⁵³ 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 use⁵⁴ and highlights limitations with the use of conventional local quantitative standards of provision.

⁴⁹ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 8' within this guidance (page 36).

⁵⁰ See 'Planning for Sport Principle 2' within this guidance (page 18).

⁵¹ [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Planning Obligations section.](#)

⁵² [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Community Infrastructure Levy section.](#)

⁵³ [Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note \(2018\).](#)

⁵⁴ [The Government's NPPF \(2019\) – see paragraph 56.](#)

⁵⁵ [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Other Developer Contributions section.](#)

⁵⁶ [Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note \(2018\).](#)

⁵⁷ [The Government's Planning Practice Guidance – Spending the Levy section.](#)

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - present and justify the range, nature and level of needs that will be generated from new development; - establish and set out (possibly 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 ⁵⁵ and where appropriate utilises CIL effectively ⁵⁶ .
	✓	✓	✓		Ensure proposed actions to meet the needs are specific, deliverable and costed. Costs should include appropriate maintenance and sinking funds (for example 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 specific priority projects of a strategic nature have strong political and officer support at the highest level.
	✓			✓	Town or parish councils (and, where relevant, charging authorities) in receipt of the neighbourhood portion ⁵⁷ of CIL should be proactive in spending CIL funds on projects identified for their area within a relevant robust and up-to-date assessment of need and related strategy (for example a local authority's playing pitch strategy). These projects should be supported 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 2) and tailored approach for the area, understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the likely nature and extent of the needs generated by a proposed development; and - the most appropriate way of meeting the needs and delivering the related provision.
	✓	✓	✓		Secure planning obligations in line with a strategic and tailored approach for meeting the needs for sport and physical activity provision that will be generated from new development within the area.
	✓	✓	✓		Ensure planning obligations relate to specific, deliverable and costed projects, which allow for appropriate long-term management and maintenance (for example 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.

PROVIDE

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 physical 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 a significant barrier to people being active, creating a negative experience of a sport and activity which can be difficult to 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 including responding to the specific needs of under-represented groups ([Principles 1](#) and [3](#)). All new provision should look to 'design in' the fullest possible shared and community use from the outset ([Principle 7](#)) along with opportunities for appropriate co-location, whilst providing for future enhancements and modernisation ([Principle 6](#)).

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

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 bodies⁵⁸. 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 within the National Planning Policy Framework on ensuring good design⁵⁹.

When considering the design of provision reference should also be made to Sport England's Active Design guidance⁶⁰ ([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.

⁵⁸ [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.

⁵⁹ [The Government's NPPF \(2018\)](#) – see section 12 Achieving well-designed places.

⁶⁰ [Sport England's Active Design Guidance \(2015\)](#).

HOW PRINCIPLE 10 CAN BE APPLIED

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 (Principle 1).
	✓				Ensure planning policy promotes fit for purpose and well-designed provision which meets identified needs (Principle 2) and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is accessible to the widest range of potential users across all ages, genders, cultures and abilities; - Responds to the needs of under-represented groups (Principle 1); - 'Designs in' the fullest possible shared and community use (Principle 7); opportunities for appropriate co-location and allows for future enhancements and modernisation; - Integrates with wider opportunities for people to lead active lifestyles (for example walking and cycling networks).
	✓		✓		Recognise, reference and embed Sport England and relevant sport national governing bodies' design guidance and good practice in relevant planning policy documents, for example design codes, guidance and development briefs.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
	✓	✓	✓	✓	Recognise and give great weight in the preparation and assessment of a proposed development to the value of design in enabling people to take part in sport and be physically active (Principle 1).
		✓	✓		Have regard to related assessments of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision in the design of developments (Principle 2).
		✓	✓	✓	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, including under-represented groups (Principle 1) to ensure it is as inclusive as possible (Principle 7).
		✓	✓		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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'designs in' the fullest possible shared and community use (Principle 7), opportunities for appropriate co-location and allows for future enhancements and modernisation. - Integrates with wider opportunities for people to lead active lifestyles (for example walking and cycling networks).
				✓	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 potential users (Principle 3).





PROVIDE

PLAN POSITIVELY FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 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 National Planning Policy Framework (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 (for example national parks and AONBs) and countryside, especially within the urban fringe. Designated landscapes and the urban fringe 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.

GREEN BELT – APPROPRIATE FACILITIES AND CHANGE OF USE

So long as they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, the NPPF states the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation (paragraph 145), and changes of use of land to outdoor sport and recreation (paragraph 146), are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Sport England defines ‘appropriate facilities’ as those that directly support participation in, and help to secure the long-term viability and sustainability of, outdoor sport and recreational activities so long as they preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

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 (Principle 3). It also includes ensuring and supporting appropriate ancillary facilities, for example mountain bike wash-down facilities or car parking and toilets at the start/end of walking and cycle trails.

Some event sports (for example 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 (Principles 4, 6 and 8).

HOW PRINCIPLE 11 CAN BE APPLIED

PLANNING POLICY ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
	✓				
				✓	<p>Respond to planning policy consultations to raise awareness of the unique attributes of particular landscapes and sites used for sport which mean they cannot be easily replicated. Also raise awareness of sites that are used on a temporary basis.</p>

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS	PM	DT	A	C/S	
			✓		✓
		✓	✓	✓	<p>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 (for example providing direct links to paths and cycleways which access such land).</p>
		✓	✓	✓	<p>Support the development of appropriate facilities in designated landscapes and the Green Belt which directly support participation in, and help to secure the long-term viability and sustainability of, outdoor sport and physical activities (so long as they preserve the openness of the Green Belt). This could include changing provision, lighting of outdoor sports facilities, car parking, social and catering facilities, fencing and sports domes (for example covering outdoor tennis courts).</p>
		✓	✓		<p>Be aware of and protect (Principle 4) particular landscapes and sites used for sport 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).</p>

⁶¹ Sport England's Significant Areas for Sport (SASPs) register.

PROVIDE

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 wellbeing 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 Guide⁶². 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 pitches⁶³.

BALL STRIKE

New or enhanced provision for ball playing sports (for example cricket) should positively address any risk of balls leaving the perimeter of the site and potentially striking property or people on adjacent land. Where this risk exists it can usually be mitigated through careful siting and orientation of pitches alongside measures such as ball stop fencing.

Any mitigation to overcome amenity issues should be agreed at the pre-application stage and be sustainable in terms of its long-term management and maintenance.

⁶² Sport England's Making a Planning Application Guide.

⁶³ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognises and gives great weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity (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 issues ⁶⁴ .

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

	PM	DT	A	C/S	
		✓	✓	✓	Recognise and give great weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity in all related planning decisions and consultations (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 (for example where relevant, ensure an appropriate assessment is undertaken by a suitably qualified person/organisation).
		✓	✓		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, enforceable and sustainable based on an appropriate assessment and discussion with relevant parties (for example sports clubs, national governing bodies 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.

⁶⁴ Sport England's design and cost guidance – in particular see the Artificial Sports Lighting section. [Sport England's Artificial Grass Pitch Acoustics – Planning Implications Guidance Note \(2015\)](#).





APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: USEFUL RESOURCES

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 & Playing Pitch Calculator

- Tools 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, for example Assets of Community Value, Right to Bid and Asset Transfer.

Sustainable Clubs

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

Use Our School Toolkit

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

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Public Health England – [Everybody active, every day: framework for physical activity.](#)

NHS England – [Healthy New Towns programme.](#)

Town and Country Planning Association – [Health, Green Infrastructure, Garden Cities & New Towns.](#)

Sustrans – [National Cycle Network, Active Travel Toolbox.](#)

ANNEX B: CONTACTING SPORT ENGLAND

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.

Front and back cover photo:
Carlisle Cricket Club and
Sheepmount Athletics Stadium, Carlisle.

Photo from:





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