

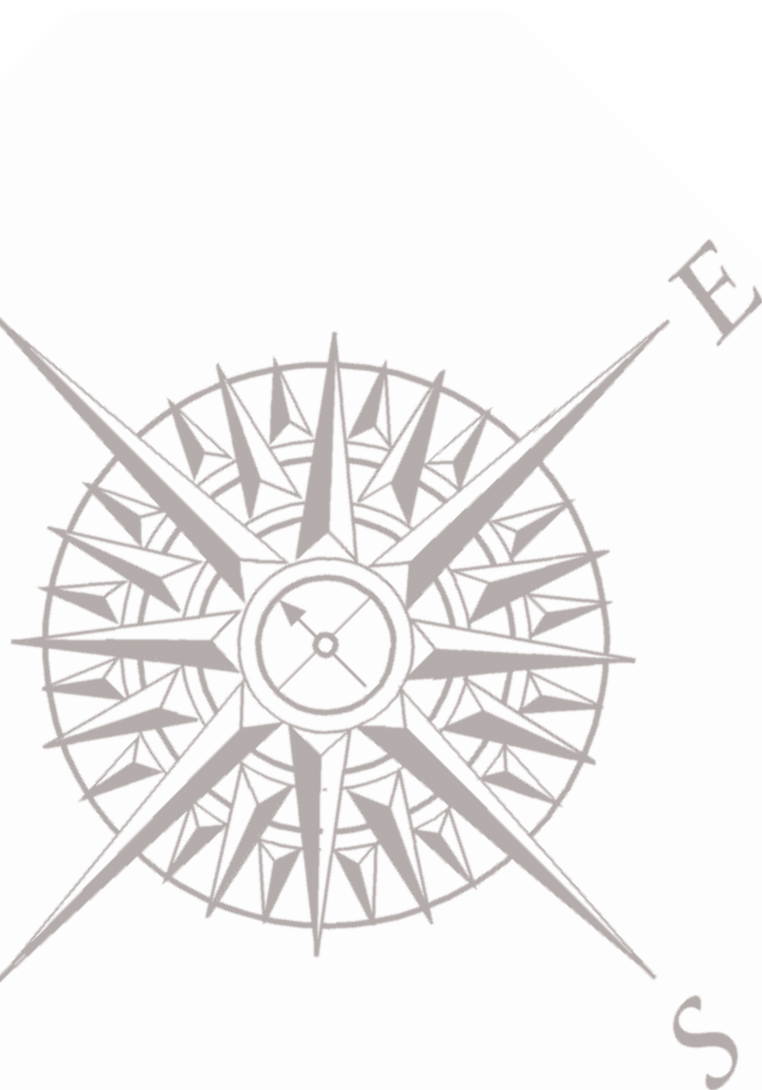
7 TOURISM, RECREATION & THE ARTS

TOURISM

7.01 The Government's strategy for tourism was set out in the document *Tomorrow's Tourism* which was published in 1999. The strategy recognises the importance of tourism in generating wealth, creating jobs, promoting entrepreneurship, providing social and environmental benefits and supporting local diversity and cultural traditions. However, the strategy acknowledges that the potential benefits of tourism will only be sustained if we take care of the fabric on which tourism depends - the unique environment, heritage, culture and the diversity of our landscape and local communities. The strategy therefore advocates a "wise" growth strategy for tourism which integrates the economic, social and environmental implications of tourism and which spreads the benefits throughout society as widely as possible.

7.02 As part of its overall strategy *Tomorrow's Tourism* aims to promote more sustainable tourism developments which: are located on public transport routes; offer pedestrian and cycle access; are linked to other infrastructure (for example, hotels and restaurants); are aesthetically attractive; are in keeping with the quality of building and identity of the area; and cause the minimum of environmental damage during construction, adaptation and operation.

7.03 The Council considers tourism to be a key element in its strategy for economic development and an important contributor to 'Sustaining Our Rural Communities' and 'Sustainable Development', two of the cross-cutting themes identified in its corporate Four Year Strategy. The promotion of tourism is one of four main priority areas identified in the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. Nearly 1300 people are employed in tourism related business and tourism also helps to



7
tourism, recreation & the arts

sustain rural services such as shops and pubs.

7.04 Tourism in Kennet is based largely upon our heritage and countryside and the Local Plan has a key role to play in promoting sustainable tourism by enabling appropriate development whilst at the same time protecting the environment which tourists come to see. Policies have been prepared for the three main tourist attractions - the Kennet & Avon Canal, Avebury World Heritage Site and the District's outstanding countryside.

7.05 Recent research has shown that, whilst Kennet is well provided with tourist attractions, these at present attract day visitors who may spend little or nothing. The research concludes that the full economic benefits of tourism are not being captured due to a lack of visitor accommodation. Policies have therefore been prepared to encourage the provision of a wide range of accommodation to cater for a variety of visitor requirements.

The Kennet and Avon Canal

Policy TR1

DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE KENNET & AVON CANAL

Development which would adversely affect the amenity value, historic fabric, environmental quality or landscape setting of the Kennet and Avon Canal will not be permitted.

7.06 The Kennet and Avon Canal is a major recreational and tourism resource which makes an important contribution to local identity, cultural heritage and the environment. Boat users, anglers, walkers, cyclists and other visitors to the Canal have the potential to bring valuable spending into the local economy. British Waterways estimate that the Caen Hill Flight, perhaps the best known landmark on the Kennet & Avon Canal, receives 100,000 visits each year. The Council's strategy is to secure the full economic benefits of the Canal whilst protecting its historic fabric and the environment qualities which make it special.

7.07 The significance of the Kennet & Avon Canal was illustrated in 1996 when it was awarded £25 million from the Heritage

Lottery Fund, the largest single grant to date. British Waterways have prepared a Conservation Plan on behalf of the Kennet & Avon Canal Partnership as a condition of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The Conservation Plan is a non-statutory, advisory document which seeks to guide the conservation and management of the canal environment. It is supplemented by the Public Transport and Visitor Management Strategy which provides the rationale and framework for the provision of facilities for and management of visitors to the waterway. The Council has taken account of both policy documents when drawing up the policies of this Local Plan. Both documents will be treated as material considerations when making decisions on planning applications.

Policy TR2

FACILITIES FOR BOAT USERS ON THE KENNET & AVON CANAL

With the exception of the proposals at Caen Hill Flight and Martinslade/Upper Foxhangers, proposals for facilities for boat users will be restricted to the redevelopment, improvement or modest extension of existing canal-side infrastructure at Devizes Wharf, Devizes Marina, Horton Bridge, Honeystreet Wharf, Pewsey Wharf, Burbage Wharf and Great Bedwyn Wharf.

7.08 The Public Transport and Visitor Management Strategy divides the Kennet & Avon Canal into three 'character zones' in order to provide a broad framework for planning and management policies. With the exception of Devizes, Kennet's stretch of canal is classed as 'rural'. Along these stretches of the canal the Strategy emphasises the need to retain the rural, undeveloped nature of the canal corridor. Policy TR2 seeks to apply this approach by restricting boating facilities to existing locations whilst allowing for redevelopment, improvement or modest extension to take place. The proposals referred to at Caen Hill Flight and Martinslade/Upper Foxhangers are addressed in Policies TR3 and TR4 respectively.

- 7.09 The type of infrastructure which would be acceptable includes facilities for boat maintenance, mooring, servicing, waste/sewage disposal and the supply of water and fuel. The scale of provision permitted will be dependent on the nature of the existing site and the constraints imposed by the surrounding landscape.
- 7.10 Burbage Wharf is not considered suitable for redevelopment, improvement or extension at present due to poor road access. Development which would result in increased traffic will not be permitted until road improvements proposed by the Highway Authority, namely the Burbage Wharf Diversion, have been implemented.
- 7.11 Developers should seek early consultations with British Waterways and the Environment Agency before submitting planning applications. These should establish standards and suitable safeguards relating to sewage pump out facilities, waste disposal and the storage of fuel and other potential pollutants.
- 7.12 The Public Transport and Visitor Management Strategy identifies an opportunity at Brimslade Farm to develop low key facilities for visitors, to include a tea room, craft workshops and a camping barn. The Council will look sympathetically at proposals which meet this aspiration, provided that they comply with other policies in this Plan.

Caen Hill Flight

Policy TR3

IMPROVEMENTS TO CAEN HILL FLIGHT FACILITIES

Proposals to improve facilities for water-borne users and land-based visitors to Caen Hill Flight will be permitted, provided that they will not have a detrimental impact on ecology, landscape character or the historic fabric of the Flight.

- 7.13 The Public Transport and Visitor Management Strategy classes Devizes as 'urban' in its hierarchy of character zones. The Strategy envisages that the majority of facilities for boat users and canal visitors will be provided in urban zones. These locations are more easily reached by public transport and enable boat users and tourists

to use the facilities and services of the town.

- 7.14 Within the Devizes area, Caen Hill Flight and Devizes Wharf present the best opportunity to concentrate facilities. Policies relating to Devizes Wharf are set out in Chapter 3 on *Economic Development*. At Caen Hill Flight facilities that would be acceptable for water-borne users include temporary moorings, turning points and modest waste disposal and sanitary facilities. Facilities that would be acceptable for land-borne visitors would include car parking, cycle parking, interpretation points, picnicking and recreation facilities.
- 7.15 Caen Hill Flight is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is also an ecologically sensitive area, located within attractive landscape. Proposals will be expected to satisfy other policies in the Plan relating to design, archaeology, ecology and landscape character. Limited new building will be acceptable provided that it relates well to existing buildings. However, for reasons of highway safety, development will not be permitted where it would increase the level of vehicular traffic gaining access in the vicinity of Prison Bridge.

Martinslade/Upper Foxhangers

Policy TR4

PERMANENT OFF-CHANNEL BOATING FACILITIES AT MARTINSLADE/UPPER FOXHANGERS

Proposals for permanent off-channel boating facilities and parking, toilet and related facilities for other canal visitors will be permitted on the stretch of canal between Martinslade and Upper Foxhangers Bridge.

- 7.16 Development proposed in accordance with Policy TR4 may include facilities to support the use of off-channel moorings and casual visits to the canal such as a shop, café and workshops for boat repairs. Related leisure uses such as a public house, restaurant, information point, picnic site, camping and caravan facilities will also be acceptable. Development not associated with the use or enjoyment of the canal, such as residential or retailing, will not be permitted. Proposals will need to satisfy the requirements of

Policy NR7 on landscape character and Policy PD1 on design principles.

Wilts and Berks Canal

Policy TR5

WILTS & BERKS CANAL

The Council recognises the work being undertaken towards the restoration and reconstruction of the Wilts & Berks Canal. In principle, planning permission will be granted for a new canal cutting between Bowerhill and Seend Cleeve to enable the Wilts & Berks Canal to connect with the Kennet & Avon Canal, subject to the need to satisfy other policies of the Plan in relation to archaeology, ecology and landscape character.

7.17 When constructed, the Wilts & Berks Canal extended from Semington Junction, on the Kennet & Avon Canal, to the River Thames in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. The Canal was abandoned by Act of Parliament in 1914 with the land reverting to the riparian owners. Although the majority of the Wilts & Berks Canal is in a restorable condition, the historic line of the Canal has been blocked by development at Melksham. The Wilts & Berks Canal Amenity Group and Trust have been looking at a number of alternative routes for the Canal, several of which involve creating a short stretch (several hundred metres) within the District. The reconstructed canal would connect with the Kennet & Avon Canal at a point north-west of Seend Cleeve. The Council will, in principle, grant planning permission for a new stretch of canal, provided that proposals comply with other policies of the Plan in relation to archaeology, ecology and landscape character.

Avebury World Heritage Site

7.18 The monuments which make up the Avebury World Heritage Site are of international significance. It is vital to ensure that the scale and nature of future tourist activity does not damage the monuments. At the same time it is important to stimulate wider appreciation and awareness of our cultural heritage in order to encourage future generations to continue its protection.

7.19 The policies in this Plan support the objectives of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan. The Management Plan, which was published in 1998, was prepared on behalf of the Avebury World Heritage Site Working Party in consultation with local people and all those with an interest in the management of the area. The District Council was a full partner in the preparation of the Management Plan and is committed to its implementation. The Management Plan will be treated as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

7.20 The tourism-related policies in this chapter are supplemented by additional policies in Chapter 6 on *Conservation of the Historic Heritage*. The policies below contribute towards achieving the following objectives, as set out in the Avebury WHS Management Plan:

- Ensuring that all aspects of public access and tourism at Avebury are sustainable, despite the likelihood of increasing visitor numbers in future;
- Ensuring that the development of any further visitor facilities at Avebury are compatible with sustainability objectives; and
- Reducing the negative effects of visitor pressure at Avebury on quality of life of local community.

Tourist Facilities

Policy TR6

TOURIST FACILITIES IN THE AVEBURY WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Within the Avebury World Heritage Site tourist facilities will only be permitted where they promote the enjoyment, understanding or interpretation of the historic sites and monuments. Development for these purposes will be required to:-

- a) avoid adverse effects upon any monument or its setting;
- b) respect the amenities of existing residents; and
- c) contribute positively to the management of visitor pressures, in support of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan.

7 tourism, recreation & the arts

7.21 Current estimates indicate that Avebury attracts just under 350,000 annual visitors. The generation of additional visitors by attractions unrelated to the Henge and its associated monuments would not be sustainable. However, the Council will encourage proposals to improve the quality of existing interpretative facilities across the World Heritage Site. It will also support proposals to improve access to facilities and items of archaeological interest for all groups of society, including the mobility impaired.

Policy TR7

FACILITIES FOR VISITORS TO AVEBURY

Proposals to improve facilities for visitors to Avebury will be permitted where they:-

- a) do not involve the loss of existing residential accommodation or employment premises;
- b) result in the beneficial use of redundant buildings; *and*
- c) contribute positively to the management of visitor pressures, in support of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan.

7.22 The Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan seeks to ensure that the development of any further visitor facilities at Avebury are compatible with sustainability objectives. Proposals would not be acceptable where they would attract greater numbers of visitors to the Henge/village area. Proposals would be acceptable where it would result in the beneficial use of redundant buildings. However, such development would have to conform to strict standards regarding detailed alterations and acceptable, limited, additional building.

Visitor Accommodation

Policy TR8

VISITOR ACCOMMODATION IN THE AVEBURY WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Within the Avebury World Heritage Site the change of use or conversion of existing buildings to provide (a) hostel accommodation or (b) hotel accommodation that includes budget accommodation and study facilities will be permitted provided that:-

- a) the development respects the archaeological landscape and other characteristics of its surroundings;
- b) any archaeological remains are protected in situ; *and*
- c) the buildings lie within an established building group.

Car Parking

Policy TR9

CAR PARKING IN THE AVEBURY WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Proposals for a car park off the A4361 to the north side of the Henge, or other small car parks which would disperse visitor pressure within the Avebury World Heritage Site will be permitted where the proposal:

- a) would not result in a significant net increase in the number of formal car parking spaces within the World Heritage Site;
- b) would not be detrimental to highway or pedestrian safety;
- c) would not have a detrimental impact upon any monument or its setting; *and*
- d) would not have an adverse impact upon landscape character.

7.23 As part of its strategy to reduce parking congestion in Avebury the World Heritage Site Management Plan proposes the creation of smaller car parks, some of which should be located at a distance from the Henge/village area. The Management Plan envisages that one the parking areas should be located off the A4361 to the north of the Henge to accommodate vehicles arriving from the direction of Swindon. This would be accompanied by a gradual decrease in the capacity of the southern car park by up to a third. The precise extent of

the decrease would be the subject of further investigation.

7.24 The Council supports the objectives of the Management Plan and will work with the Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Committee to find suitable sites. Proposals will need to satisfy the requirements of Policies HH3 and HH4 relating to the impact of development on the World Heritage Site and Policy NR7 on landscape character.

Tourism in the Countryside

7.25 The high quality of Kennet's landscape is a major resource which attracts visitors to the area. It also fulfils an important recreational role for the local population. In particular, the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath, public rights of way network, Salisbury Plain perimeter path and Ridgeway National Trail are significant resources which encourage walking and cycling. The Council is keen to encourage these activities as a means of promoting 'Sustainability' and 'Community Health', two of its corporate objectives. Policies on rights of ways are set out in Chapter 4 on *Accessibility and Transport*.

Small Scale Visitor Facilities

Policy TR10

SMALL SCALE VISITOR FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Planning permission will be granted for the provision of small scale recreational facilities for visitors to the countryside, such as car parks, picnic areas, toilet facilities and interpretation boards, in locations that will allow the greater enjoyment of the natural attractions of the area provided that:-

- a) there will be no adverse effects upon the landscape, ecology or archaeology of the area;
- b) the facility is located in close proximity to the public right of way network or an area to which the public have rights of access;
- c) adequate provision is made for people with impaired mobility; *and*
- d) appropriate measures are included to encourage access by transport modes other than the private car.

7.26 Special designations such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Landscape Area cover much of the Plan area. Proposals for recreational development will therefore need to be in scale and appropriate to the character of the surrounding environment. The Council's aim is to improve what already exists, not to create further major attractions. It will give sympathetic consideration to proposals for the provision of additional facilities for visitors to the Kennet and Avon Canal. Proposals for car parks should pay particular attention to reducing the opportunities for crime through their layout and design. They should also provide secure cycle parking in accordance with the Council's adopted minimum standards, as set out in Policy AT12.

Rural Diversification

Policy TR11

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

In the countryside, permission will be given for (a) small scale tourist attractions or (b) small extensions of existing buildings or small, new structures to facilitate the modest expansion of an established small-scale tourist attraction (provided that the attraction would remain small-scale) subject to the following.

- a) in the case of a new tourist attraction, the proposal makes use of an existing building;
- b) in all cases, the proposed or expanded tourist attraction is directly related to the area in which it is situated; *and*
- c) appropriate measures are included to encourage access by transport modes other than the private car.

7.27 One of the Plan's strategic objectives is to assist in the restructuring of the rural economy by promoting and accommodating diversification that provides employment opportunities without compromising the aims of sustainability. The tourism sector is one example of an activity which has potential for expansion. Certain activities such as 'rare breeds' farms or rural craft industries can often be accommodated in existing buildings without harming the rural environment or landscape.

7 tourism, recreation & the arts

7.28 In recognition of the contribution which tourism makes to local employment opportunities, Chapter 3 on *Economic Development* contains policies relating to the re-use of existing buildings for tourism development (Policy ED13) and the retention of existing tourism uses in villages (Policy ED11 and ED12). Proposals should be in accordance with other policies in the Plan, particularly those relating to landscape character, ecology and archaeology. Proposals will also be considered against Policy PD1 to ensure that adequate road access is provided.

Visitor Accommodation

7.29 The Oxford Brookes Report on the Kennet Economy concluded that the full economic benefits from tourism are not being achieved due to the shortage of bedstock and limited conference facilities. The Council's policies aim to promote a wide range of visitor accommodation to meet a variety of demands. The term 'visitor accommodation' is defined to include hotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfast, hostels, self catering accommodation and camping barns.

Policy TR12

BED & BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION

Proposals for the change of use of existing dwellings to provide bed and breakfast accommodation will be permitted, provided that the proposal does not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents.

7.30 The change of use of an existing dwelling to provide bed and breakfast accommodation will only require planning permission where the Council considers that a material change of use is being proposed. The Council should be contacted informally at an early stage for a judgement on whether planning permission is required. Where a planning application is submitted the proposal will be considered against Policy PD1 for its potential impact on the amenity of nearby residents in relation to issues such as parking, access, noise and disturbance.

Policy TR13

CONVERSION TO VISITOR ACCOMMODATION WITHIN LIMITS OF DEVELOPMENT

Within towns and villages defined by a Limits of Development proposals for the conversion of existing buildings to visitor accommodation will be permitted provided that the property is capable of conversion without affecting the amenity of adjoining properties and the character of the area.

Policy TR14

HOTELS/CONFERENCE FACILITIES IN DEVIZES, MARLBOROUGH, TIDWORTH AND PEWSEY

Proposals for hotel accommodation and conference facilities within, or on the edge of the Limits of Development defined for Devizes, Marlborough, Tidworth and Pewsey will be permitted provided that the development respects the character of the landscape, in accordance with Policy NR7.

Policy TR15

CONVERSIONS TO VISITOR ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Outside the Avebury World Heritage Site, proposals in the countryside for the change of use or conversion of existing buildings to provide visitor accommodation will be permitted where the development would not adversely affect the character of the countryside.

7.31 The Council will actively encourage the provision of small 'camping barns' adjacent to the Kennet and Avon Canal and along the Ridgeway National Trail. It would also welcome the provision of a Youth Hostel in the Pewsey Vale and Avebury areas. Hotels/conference facilities proposed under Policy TR14 will have to comply with Policy

NR7 in relation to the effect on landscape, and to other relevant plan policies, including PD1.

Policy TR16

MOBILE CAMPERS

Proposals for sites for mobile campers (touring caravans, motor caravans, and tents) will be acceptable where:-

- a) the site is well contained within the physical form of the landscape and does not present a visual intrusion;
- b) the site does not form an isolated development but is related to an existing group of buildings;
- c) the site is well related to an existing tourist attraction or other recreational facility;
- d) the site is within easy reach of the main road network; *and*
- e) the proposal does not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding countryside or the amenity of local residents.

Particular attention will be paid to the proposed development's scale and potential impact on the landscape character of the area. Proposals will need to comply with Policy NR7.

7

tourism, recreation & the arts

- 7.32 Policy TR16 balances the need to extend the range of accommodation available for holidaymakers in the District with the need to protect the environment, particularly sensitive landscapes. In order to assess landscape impact proposals will be considered against the policies in Chapter 5 on *Natural Resources*. Sites permitted in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Landscape Area and World Heritage Site should be small in scale, in accordance with Policy NR7.

- 7.33 The Ridgeway National Trail and the Wessex Ridgeway Recreational Trail are long distance routes of national importance and are becoming increasingly popular amongst walkers, cyclists and horseriders. The Council welcomes the development and promotion of this type of activity as a means of encouraging 'green tourism' in furtherance of sustainable development. The Council would welcome the provision of a small campsite facility for limited stays by 'backpackers' and other users of the National Trail.

RECREATION

- 7.34 The Council is committed to ensuring that all sections of the community have access to appropriate sport and recreation opportunities. Physical exercise contributes directly to 'Community Health', one of the corporate cross-cutting themes identified in the Council's Four Year Strategy. The Local Plan has a key role to play in protecting existing outdoor sports and recreation sites, enabling new facilities and ensuring that new housing development makes adequate provision consistent with NPFA standards. Policies relating to new housing developments are contained in Chapter 2 on *Housing and Community Facilities*.

- 7.35 The Council has also prepared the Kennet Leisure Services Strategy which complements the policies and proposals contained in the Local Plan. The Strategy sets out how the Council, through its Leisure Services Division, will deliver leisure opportunities directly, or by enabling initiatives to come to fruition.

Indoor Sport and Recreation

- 7.36 Kennet District Council has successfully worked with Wiltshire County Council, Town Councils and other organisations within the District to provide dual use, indoor sports facilities at Devizes and Marlborough. Dual use facilities are also available at Pewsey and Castledown schools. In addition, the Council has worked closely with the Ministry of Defence to secure the provision of a new leisure centre in Tidworth. The centre opened in July 2000 and is managed by the Council for the benefit of the community.

- 7.37 The Council will continue to support the development of indoor sports facilities, in partnership with other organisations, which are considered to complement the existing range of facilities in the District.

Outdoor Sport and Recreation

Policy TR17

EXISTING OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION SITES

Development of existing outdoor sport and recreational space for other uses within the Limits of Development of towns and villages, as identified on the Inset Maps, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:-

- a) the development of a small part of the existing facility provides improvements to the remaining facilities and provides for their greater use; or
- b) a suitable alternative site, of comparable size and facilities, is provided in an acceptable location; or
- c) the proposal is for an alternative recreational or community use of benefit to local residents. In this case the overall recreational value of the open space available to local residents must be maintained.

7.38 A survey undertaken in 1992, and updated in 1998 to inform the Playing Pitch Strategy, revealed that public and private recreational space for adults and children within Kennet fails to meet the total requirement using the NPFA Six Acre Standard, which has been adopted by the Council as a target for the District as a whole. The standards do allow for the inclusion of educational facilities where, as a matter of policy and practice, they are available for public use. This is generally the case for secondary schools in the District but primary school pitches are rarely, in practice, used by the public. When genuinely available educational facilities are included in the calculation, the level of provision does meet the standards. The Council, therefore, believes that it is necessary to protect all existing outdoor sports and recreation sites to ensure existing levels of provision are maintained and work towards greater out of hours use of those currently unavailable to the public.

7.39 Sites within the Limits of Development of towns and villages are more vulnerable to development pressures and are therefore specifically identified for protection by this policy. Sites within the countryside will be subject to strict controls, as set out in

Chapter 5 on *Natural Resources*. New housing developments will be required to provide recreation space according to the NPFA Six Acre Standard and this is addressed by Policies HC34 and HC35 in Chapter 2 on *Housing and Community Facilities*.

7.40 The development of facilities such as village halls, scout huts or community centres may be appropriate on recreational land. In these circumstances the loss of recreational land will be balanced against the potential benefits to the community. The council will be concerned to ensure that the overall recreational value of the open space available to the local community is maintained.

Policy TR18

NEW OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Proposals for outdoor sport and recreation in the countryside will be permitted where the Council is satisfied that no adverse impact will result upon the local road network, the amenities of residents, other users of the countryside or the conservation of landscape, ecological or archaeological interests of the area.

7.41 A survey undertaken in September 1998 to inform the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy showed that, with a few isolated exceptions, the supply of pitches in secured public use satisfies current demand for pitches for football, cricket, rugby and hockey. Nevertheless, there may be occasions at the local level where new outdoor sports and recreation facilities are required. Proposals will need to satisfy the requirements of the landscape and ecology policies in Chapter 5 on *Natural Resources* and also the archaeological policies in Chapter 6 on *Conservation of the Historic Heritage*.

7.42 The Playing Pitch Strategy states that new pitches or venues for Pewsey Vale and Marlborough Rugby Clubs will be required if the desired improvements and problems raised by these clubs cannot be satisfactorily dealt with at their existing school-based venues. Since the Strategy has been prepared Marlborough Rugby

Club have secured a new club house on Marlborough Common and Pewsey Vale Rugby Club have taken steps to secure new pitches.

Policy TR19

IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING OUTDOOR SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Proposals to improve existing outdoor sports and recreation facilities in order to increase their use and availability will be supported provided that they will not result in an adverse impact upon neighbouring land uses.

7.43 The Playing Pitch Strategy concludes that future emphasis should be placed largely on improving the quality of existing pitches and ancillary facilities. Proposals for club houses, changing facilities, drainage, artificial surfaces and floodlighting will enable existing facilities to be used more intensively and may in some cases be a more efficient solution than providing an entirely new facility. Proposals will be scrutinised for their potential noise and nuisance impacts and the effects of increased traffic, in accordance with Policy PD1.

7.44 The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies a need for 4 additional playing pitches in Devizes to help absorb anticipated future demand generated by new housing in the town. The council considers that this requirement can be met, at least in part, by intensifying the use of existing pitches, in particular the facilities at Green Lane, by improving the basic quality of those pitches.

Extending the Range and Availability of Facilities

7.45 The Council will welcome proposals to extend the range and availability of facilities in the District. In planning future provision, the Playing Pitch Strategy in 1998 recommended that emphasis should be placed upon floodlit multi-court surfaces which would allow for more intensive use by a variety of sports. It also recommended that the Council should seek the provision of a floodlit Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) in Devizes or Marlborough, preferably on a school site subject to an agreement securing community use. A floodlit, dual-use artificial turf pitch is now available at

Devizes School. The results of a review of the Playing Pitch Strategy in 2003 to take account of recent advice in PPG17 has confirmed that emphasis should continue to be placed on improving the quality and use of existing pitches.

7.46 One way to extend the availability of facilities is to improve approaches to management. The Council will continue to negotiate with partners to secure the wider use and availability of outdoor sports and leisure facilities. Policy HC39 in Chapter 2 on *Housing and Community Facilities* aims to ensure that new schools are designed with dual access in mind. This will avoid situations where the location of changing and toilet facilities requires the whole school to be open, thereby causing safety and security problems and incurring unnecessary expense.

Allotments

Policy TR20

PROTECTION OF ALLOTMENTS

Development that would result in the loss of allotments or land last used as allotments, as identified on the Inset Maps, will not be permitted unless replacement allotments are provided. In order to be acceptable to the Local Planning Authority the replacement allotments will:

- a) be comparable in terms of size, accessibility and convenience;
- b) have a soil quality and condition comparable or superior to that of the existing allotments; *and*
- c) avoid detrimental impact on landscape character and landscape features.

7.47 There are no statutory allotments in the District although in many areas demand outstrips supply. Allotments are a valuable community and recreational resource which contribute towards sustainability objectives. They provide the opportunity for people to grow their own food and encourage a greater degree of self-reliance. The adoption of minimum density standards for new housing (see Policy HC5 in Chapter 2 on *Housing and Community Facilities*) gives allotments a greater importance in providing for those people living in dwellings with smaller gardens. Once lost, allotments are

difficult to replace. This policy, therefore, seeks to halt the erosion of allotment provision.

7.48 When considering replacement allotments the Council recognises that allotments are an agricultural use and therefore do not require planning permission. However, associated infrastructure such as highway access, sheds and other allotment paraphernalia may require planning permission and will be considered against the above policy. Before granting planning permission the Council will expect adequate arrangements to be in place for administering the replacement allotments.

Golf

7.49 There are six golf courses within the Plan area. Sport England considers that, although the level of existing provision meets its recommended minimum standards, it does not provide adequate pay and play facilities. Consequently, the Council will give sympathetic consideration to proposals for an additional pay and play golf course. Proposals will be judged against other policies of this Plan, particularly the landscape character and wildlife/ecology policies in Chapter 5, the archaeology policies in Chapter 6 and Policy PD1 in Chapter 1.

Sport and Noise

Policy TR21

SPORT AND NOISE

Proposals for noisy outdoor sports and recreation activities will not be permitted unless they:-

- a) identify the methods for noise mitigation to be employed;
- b) ensure that landscape character, ecology and archaeological features are protected;
- c) demonstrate that any traffic generated will not have an adverse impact on the local road network; *and*
- d) are shown to have no unacceptable impact on either the amenity of local residents or on the amenity of other users of the countryside.

7.50 Noise from motor sports, small private airfields and some gun sports such as clay

pigeon shooting can result in environmental problems to residents, other users of the countryside, the landscape and ecology. Newer activities such as war games can cause disturbance and danger as well as problems of noise. Nuisance also arises where activities such as motor sport attract large numbers of spectators. Proposals for such activities will be judged on their appropriateness to the countryside and their potential environmental effects. Where proposals are permitted the Council may seek to minimise the environmental impact using planning obligations and conditions. In certain cases proposals may be granted a temporary one year permission to enable the Local Planning Authority to review the proposal before considering a permanent consent.

THE ARTS

Policy TR22

PUBLIC ART

The Council will encourage the provision of new works of Public Art on sites requiring Planning Briefs (as identified in Policy PD1), in order to enhance the appearance of the development, the amenity of the area and the quality of the local environment.

7.51 The term 'Public Art' refers to work by artists and craftspeople in the built or natural environment which is in publicly accessible places. Public Art aims to integrate the skills, vision and creative abilities of artists and craftspeople into the whole process of creating new spaces and regenerating old ones. Quality Public Art adds greatly to the public enjoyment of development and encourages a sense of place and local identity. It can also:

- Transform public spaces, creating places for people to interact;
- Provide opportunities to involve local communities in expressing the identity of their area;
- Encourage social inclusion and create concern for the local environment;
- Create work for artists living in the area, safeguarding traditional, local cultural and contemporary skills and involving artists directly in communities;
- Assist in attracting investment to an area;

- Promote quality, innovation and a lasting vision for the future; and
- Improve the quality of life for local residents.

7.52 Public Art can take a number of forms, from the more traditional free-standing works (for example, sculptures of historical figures or fountains) to the integration of works into the fabric of a building or development (such as railings, floor finishes, murals, decorative glass, etc.). In some cases it may be appropriate for artists to be appointed either as part of a design team, or advising a design team to influence areas such as building form and layout, land form and landscape design, lighting, colour and signage. This work would not necessarily result in any identifiable 'art works' but will influence the aesthetic of the overall design. Public Art should be complementary to good building design. It cannot be used as a substitute for good design, neither can it be used to ameliorate poor design. Proposals will need to satisfy the requirements of Policy PD1 in relation to overall design, as well as the Council's Arts Strategy.

Data will be obtained from a variety of sources, such as the Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Committee and its sub-groups, the Council's Economic Development and Tourism Service, the English Tourism Council and South West Tourism. The data collected will be used to inform the next review of the Local Plan.

7

tourism, recreation & the arts

MONITORING STATEMENT

7.53 For the purposes of monitoring the implementation of policies and proposals within this chapter of the Local Plan the Council will monitor the following:

1. The provision and location of new facilities for boat users and visitors to the Kennet & Avon Canal.
2. The contribution being made by the Local Plan toward the objectives of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan.
3. The quantity and type of overnight visitor accommodation being provided in the District.
4. Trends in visitor numbers.
5. Changes in the recreational land supply, including the loss of land to alternative uses and the provision of sport and recreational land in new housing developments.
6. Problems restricting the use of recreation areas.