

# Adopted Local Plan - Sport, Recreation & Leisure

## Sport, Recreation & Leisure

**Objective:** to preserve and improve existing sports, recreation and leisure facilities in the District, and bring forward suitable new provision to meet the needs of the District's communities, through the Council's own initiatives, and in association with other bodies.

### 11.1

Increasing leisure time is a feature of contemporary life. The policies and proposals of the Local Plan acknowledge the Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy, which relates principally to facilities to serve Salisbury and its surrounding area, and also the sport and recreation needs of the rest of the District.

### 11.2

With the exception of the reference to the retention and provision of open space, this chapter does not relate to the New Forest Heritage Area, which is dealt with separately in Chapter 8.

## Sport and Recreation Strategy

### 11.3

The aim of the District Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy is to formulate policies and plans for the Council's involvement in the provision, enabling, support and influencing of sport and recreation. A number of sports schemes identified in the strategy have already been implemented, or are in the process of implementation, for example the provision of new football pitches at Netherhampton Road, and a new netball centre at Westwood St Thomas School. The District Council also intends to provide new public cricket facilities at Britford Lane in Salisbury. Other facilities, which the strategy found to be deficient, will be brought forward during the Plan period, wherever possible. The provision of most of these will necessitate levelled land in or around the City of Salisbury and finance to provide these facilities has yet to be identified in every case.

## Sport and Leisure Facilities

### 11.4

There are a number of privately owned sports facilities in the plan area, such as Old Sarum airfield, High Post and Salisbury and South Wilts Sports Club. The Local Planning Authority recognises the contribution which these facilities make, and will seek to retain them. These sites often also contribute to the visual quality of the area, and are covered by specific landscape designations. Recreational proposals on land on the periphery of settlements or in the countryside will be subject to the landscape and countryside policies of the Local Plan.

## 11.5

Facilities for indoor sport and recreation vary throughout the plan area, with facilities mainly concentrated at Salisbury Leisure Centre, Tisbury and District Sports Centre and the Brian Whitehead Centre at Downton. Village and community halls also provide valuable arenas for indoor sports and recreation activities. Proposals for new indoor or outdoor recreation facilities or the expansion of existing facilities will be permitted subject to there being no significant adverse impact on the landscape.

## 11.6

In recent years, the range of leisure activities available throughout the United Kingdom has expanded and facilities such as bowling alleys, indoor adventure playgrounds for children, and multi screen cinemas are now becoming common features in large towns and cities. Where such proposals come forward, the Local Planning Authority will assess their impact in terms of the effect on the city or town centre, and also the landscape implications of the proposal. Where sites on the edge of or outside of the centre are proposed, the Local Planning Authority will expect the developer to demonstrate that all the potential town centre sites have been investigated and why these are unsuitable for the proposed development.

*Policy R1A and R1B*

## **Countryside Recreation**

### 11.7

The countryside within the Local Plan area is highly attractive and provides both formal and informal recreational opportunities. Recreation development will be restricted to uses and facilities which do not detract from the nature conservation value, landscape quality, agricultural quality, archaeological value, or rural character of the area.

*Policy R1C*

## **Provision of New Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities**

### 11.8

It is important that sufficient public open space is provided throughout the District to meet existing and future needs for recreational activities. Salisbury District is, however, deficient in the provision of recreation open space, most significantly in Salisbury, when compared to the National Playing Fields Association's (NPFA) standard of 2.43 hectares (6 acres) per 1000 population. In addition, the quality of existing facilities throughout the District is often poor. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be produced on the current provision of open space in the District.

## 11.9

The NPFA considers its standard to be the minimum requirement for outdoor play space. It covers space for outdoor sports for all age groups and space specifically provided for children's play. The standard excludes landscaped areas, roadside verges, public gardens and other informal amenity areas within a residential development, for which additional provision may be necessary.

## 11.10

Further residential development in the District will exacerbate the current deficiencies in provision and increase pressure on poor quality facilities. The Local Planning Authority has therefore adopted the upper target figures for the provision of both children's equipped play facilities (0.3 hectares per thousand population) and for youth and adult facilities (1.8 hectares per thousand population) of the NPFA's minimum standard.

### *Policy R2*

## 11.11

These standards apply to all proposals for new residential developments. The standards will only be relaxed where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that there are adequate facilities in the vicinity of the proposed development. The Local Planning Authority will also consider reducing these requirements where accommodation for those with special needs is proposed.

## 11.12

Appendix IV to this Local Plan, "Standards for the Provision of Public Open Space in Association with New Residential development expands on the Local Plan's policies.

## 11.13

Where developments are of a sufficient scale to provide a recreation facility or facilities within the site, developers will be required to do so in accordance with the standards laid down by this Local Plan. The open space should be fully laid out, equipped and landscaped prior to the occupation of a substantial part of development. Alternatively, in Salisbury City, the District Council may be willing to provide facilities within the development site on behalf of the developer, subject to the receipt of appropriate levels of contributions for the provision and maintenance of the facilities. Full details of the Local Planning Authority's scale of payments for the provision of recreation space are available from the Planning Office on request.

## 11.14

The full open space standards of policy R2 will probably only be achieved on the allocated sites within the Local Plan. On smaller sites, the Local Planning Authority will expect the developer to meet the standards of the Local Plan on-site as far as possible and, in addition, contribute towards securing new or improved off-site recreation facilities at a level related to the size of the proposed development. Provision for the future maintenance of the proposed on-site public open space must be made, and this will generally involve dedication to the District Council's City Area Committee, the local town or parish council or residents' group.

**11.15**

The smaller settlements in the District generally have limited recreational facilities and little amenity space. The Local Planning Authority recognises there is little prospect that additional open space will be provided through residential development because of the limited growth that is contemplated for these settlements. There are normally, however, opportunities to improve existing recreation facilities in the area in accordance with policy R2. As a consequence of the present operation of R2, recreation facilities in the District are slowly being improved through, for example the provision of new equipment, and new sites have also been developed.

**11.16**

If functional and accessible open space facilities (either in part or full) cannot be provided on-site, then the Local Planning Authority will expect developers to enter into a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure the provision or improvement of public open space at a level appropriate to the proposed development. The Local Planning Authority is willing to accept financial contributions towards off-site provision from developers.

**11.17**

Where developments involving flats are proposed, in addition to assessing the recreational demand from the development, the Local Planning Authority will place particular emphasis on the provision of attractive amenity space within the site to serve the development's informal recreational needs, having regard to the size of units, the likely type of inhabitant and the location of the site.

**11.18**

In exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that the recreational open space requirements established by this Local Plan would have the effect of making the provision of low-cost housing

economically not viable, the Local Planning Authority may be prepared to consider relaxing the requirements in part or in whole.

## **Proposed Strategy for the Expenditure of Developers' Contributions**

11.19

The Local Planning Authority is currently establishing a strategy for the expenditure of developers' contributions, in consultation with town and parish councils. It is intended that future versions of this plan will implement the proposed strategy, which will highlight a hierarchy of settlements for the location of new and expansion of existing recreation facilities, including new recreation site allocations where appropriate.

## **Accommodation for the Elderly**

11.20

The Local Planning Authority recognises that certain developments, such as nursing home accommodation for the elderly, generate different open space needs because of the greater reliance which their occupants have on on-site amenity space and the very limited demand for recreational facilities. On-site amenity space is, however, important in these types of development, providing pleasant views from habitable rooms within the development and as sitting out areas for residents. Amenity space within the site should therefore be of a sufficient size and landscaped to provide an attractive sitting out area, and make use of southern and south western aspects. It should also be provided where it would allow residents to enjoy interaction with the wider community. Where developers of such schemes are prepared to enter into a Section 106 legal agreement with the Local Planning Authority restricting the future occupancy of the development, the Local Planning Authority will waive the requirement for recreation open space for nursing homes.

### *Policy R3*

11.21

In development proposals for other "retirement homes", residents are often still active and there is demand, although somewhat limited, for recreation facilities. Where developers of such schemes are prepared to enter into a Section 106 legal agreement with the Local Planning Authority with regard to the future occupancy of the residences, the recreational open space standards may be reduced. Full details are provided in Appendix IV. Indoor recreation facilities are often important to the inhabitants of these developments, and the Council will consider the impact of the development on existing facilities in accordance with policy R4.

## **Indoor Community and Leisure Provision**

11.22

The majority of new residential development within the District is concentrated in Salisbury and Amesbury and the Local Planning Authority will require these allocations to make appropriate provision for social and community facilities. Elsewhere, developments in a settlement may generate substantial new demand for these types of facilities and those presently available may be incapable of accommodating this demand due to, for example, the size of the building or its quality. In such instances, the Local Planning Authority will seek developers to provide land and the facility (or a contribution towards it) within the development site or, alternatively, a contribution towards improving the present facilities, whichever is the more appropriate, relevant to the demand generated by the proposed development.

*Policy R4*

## **Public Open Space**

11.23

Public open space, such as formal playing pitches, children's play areas and urban parks, is a scarce resource and the Local Plan seeks to protect what exists. This includes sites in recreation use which are not specifically identified in the Local Plan due to their location outside the areas covered by the Inset Maps. Development which would lead to the loss of public open space, or private open space which is potentially available for public use, will normally be resisted.

## **Protection of Existing Outdoor Facilities**

11.24

The Local Plan identifies existing public and private recreation space and policy R5 protects these spaces from development. Often, when private recreation sites are no longer required for their original use, they can contribute to meeting the shortfall in existing provision for use by the general public. The redevelopment of private sites will only be allowed where the sports and recreation facilities can be best retained, and improved (including greater access for the public where appropriate) through the redevelopment of part of the site, or where alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available, or there is an excess of recreational and public open space provision in the area, taking into account the recreational and amenity value of such provision.

*Policy R5*

11.25

Urban parks will be retained for their recreational and aesthetic value and development unrelated to their recreational use will not generally be allowed.

*Policy R6*

## **Dual Use of Educational Facilities**

11.26

The Local Planning Authority recognises the valuable additional contribution which school facilities have made in the past in providing recreational facilities outside of school hours. The District is presently lacking in the provision of a number of facilities, such as football pitches, and the use of school playing pitches could assist in satisfying existing demand. Similarly, the covering of outdoor school swimming pools in the District's more rural areas could provide all year round swimming opportunities. It is acknowledged, however, that the use of school facilities is at the discretion of school governors. The erection of new buildings for joint use will be permitted where they would be within settlements, or on appropriate land immediately adjoining a recreation area, subject to there being no adverse landscape impact.

*Policy R7*

11.27

Where the Education Authority declares schools and their facilities surplus to educational requirements, the Local Planning Authority will investigate how the site's potential to provide community facilities could be best utilised. Many playing fields are also important in landscape terms. For these reasons, the Council will seek to retain these sites in recreation use.

## **Public Open Space Allocations**

11.28

**Amesbury** Land between the proposed new housing site at Amesbury and the A345 and Stockport Road is designated for public open space, both formal and informal, including 1 hectare for use as a new cemetery (as outlined in policy PS10). The creation of this area as a recreation resource will ensure the long term protection of the area and provide the opportunity to create new areas of nature conservation interest. The configuration and precise nature of these land uses and their timing will be addressed during the public consultation period leading to the adoption of a development brief for the area.

*Policy R8*

11.29

**Downton** The proposed housing development in Downton will require the relocation of existing allotments. In order to assist in this process and provide opportunities for new recreational facilities in the village, approximately 3 hectares of land on the north of Wick Lane opposite the proposed development site are identified for recreational and allotment use.

*Policy R9*

11.30

**Durrington** Public open space provision in Durrington is presently imbalanced, with the facilities located in the east of the village. The Local Plan allocates a site for new housing development in Durrington to the east of Netheravon Road, and public open space will be required as part of this development which, other than children's equipped play facilities, is to be located adjacent to the Netheravon Road and adjoins existing amenity space to the south of the development site. The Local Planning Authority allocated a strip of land immediately adjacent to the road, including these two spaces, as Public Open Space in the Previous Salisbury District Local Plan with the intention that this area is developed as an informal park with sports facilities. This allocation is carried forward in this Local Plan and Durrington Parish Council is currently pursuing the possibility of a Millennium Park for the area. It is the intention that Durrington Parish Council will acquire and control the land for recreation purposes

*Policy R10*

11.31

**West Knoyle** There is presently no recreation provision within West Knoyle. The District Council owns land within the village and this is allocated as a new recreation ground for the village. It is the intention that West Knoyle Parish Council will acquire and control the land for recreation purposes.

*Policy R11*

11.32

**Wilton** Elsewhere in this Local Plan, land is proposed for a new park and ride site off The Avenue at Wilton. In order to provide a buffer between the park and ride site and development on the opposite side of The Avenue, land is allocated for new recreation provision.

*Policy R12*

11.33



**Winterslow** The existing recreation ground in Winterslow is of an insufficient size to cater for the needs of the community. The Local Plan therefore allocates additional land adjacent to the recreation ground as an extension to it. It is the intention that Winterslow Parish Council will acquire and control the land for recreational purposes.

*Policy R13*

## **Leisure Facilities Allocation, London Road, Salisbury**

11.34

The District Council has allocated a Park and Ride site on land to the south of London Road, one of the principal entrances to the city. The remainder of the site lends itself to development, and the Council considers it appropriate for a mixed form of development, including leisure uses where these cannot be accommodated on a centre or edge of centre site, subject to there being no adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the city centre, particularly the evening economy.

*Policy R14*

## **Noisy Sports**

11.35

Noisy sports, such as motor cycling, recreational flying and clay pigeon shooting, are becoming more popular, both in terms of formal organised activities and informal users. Agricultural diversification has also resulted in farmers and landowners seeking other means of income and considering the use of their land for these types of activities. These sports often occur in inappropriate locations, for example close to residential areas, public rights of way, and on playing fields, and can cause environmental problems through noise, dust and physical erosion. With increasing participation, the potential for nuisance will intensify and there is a need to provide suitable sites. These are normally situated in the countryside, separate from residential development, other recreational users, and areas of nature conservation value, or in despoiled land such as disused quarry sites. Proposals for new noisy sports development will be considered against the criteria in policy R1C. Sites should be well screened due to the high visual quality of the District, and development will be granted initially a temporary one year permission to enable the Local Planning Authority to review the proposal before considering a permanent consent.

## **Water Sports**

11.36

The District contains five main rivers, the Avon, Bourne, Ebbles, Nadder and Wylye, which are collectively known as the Salisbury River Avon System and designated a Special Area of Conservation, an SSSI and an Area of High Ecological Value. Few water sports take place on these rivers at present and there is little opportunity to expand water based recreational activities given the lack of potentially suitable water facilities in the District. Proposals for the development of new water sports will be considered against policy R1C. The conservation of the natural environment is of primary importance and proposals for the development of new water based sports facilities will be carefully considered against this particular criterion. Advice will be sought from the Environment Agency, which has statutory duties in respect of water recreation, the protection of water quality, fisheries and flood defence.

## **Golf Courses**

11.37

The ecological and landscape quality of the District is high and, as a consequence, the development of golf courses in some parts of the District is considered inappropriate. Proposals for golf courses will not be permitted in the Salisbury River Avon System Special Area of Conservation, or a Site of Special Scientific Interest due to the ecological sensitivity of these sites. Elsewhere, proposals concerning the creation of golf courses will be considered having regard to the criteria set out in policy R15, particularly their effect on the landscape. New buildings will be resisted unless they are small in scale, for example modest club houses.

*Policy R15*

## **Development With River Frontages and Public Access**

11.38

There is presently limited public access to the rivers in the District and increased access is desirable. The Local Planning Authority does, however, recognise the ecological importance of the rivers and banks and any proposals to improve public access will be carefully examined to ensure there is no adverse impact on the wildlife habitats of these areas. In the principal settlements, development proposals involving sites abutting a river bank will, where appropriate, require a strip of land adjoining the river, of not less than six metres width to be dedicated and laid out for public access. The Local Planning Authority will also consider the desirability of improving public access to the river valleys, which are also of significant ecological value, and any development must not adversely affect the quality of the natural environment.

*Policy R16*

## **Public Rights of Way**

11.39

The District is generally well provided with public rights of way linking settlements to the countryside. The Local Planning Authority will seek to safeguard and improve access to the countryside. It will also encourage the increased use of footpaths and bridleways, for example liaising with the County Council (which is responsible for the maintenance of public rights of way), landowners and other organisations, having due regard for the protection of the landscape (particularly in the New Forest Heritage Area), sites of nature conservation interest and the amenities of local residents. Development proposals may sometimes present opportunities to provide new public footpaths or improve existing ones, and the Local Planning Authority will seek the co-operation of landowners and farmers to exploit such opportunities wherever possible. Proposals for closures or diversions will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative route is permitted which is no less attractive than the original route, and which will be dedicated as a public right of way and waymarked by the time the original route is closed. The Local Planning Authority is able to create new rights of way, by agreement between the landowner and the local authority whenever possible, with a view to co-operation or, if necessary, by using compulsory powers.

*Policy R17*

11.40

There are two long distance footpaths within the Local Plan area, the Clarendon Way which runs between Salisbury and Winchester, and the Avon Valley Path, which links Salisbury with Christchurch. There is potential to extend this latter path northwards, and the possibility exists to establish other long distance routes, perhaps utilising old drove roads, subject to obtaining the agreement of landowners and farmers to their implementation. The District Council will play its part in developing and promoting these paths and, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, will ensure that they are adequately signposted.

*Policy R18*

## **Avon Valley Project**

11.41

The site of the Avon Valley Project (AVP), on the margin between the urban environment of the city and the open countryside, and its easy accessibility to a large part of the city's population, makes the Project

Area a very valuable asset for the local community and also visitors to the city. The aims of the Project are to conserve and enhance the nature environment, and create compatible informal recreation and educational opportunities. The ecological and landscape value of the areas and of the wider Avon valley is extremely high and is attractive for walking and other forms of outdoor informal recreation, such as birdwatching. Part of the Area is designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The Council is working in partnership with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who manage the Avon Valley Project on the Council's behalf through the Salisbury Wildlife Project.

11.42

The Council has carried out a number of environmental enhancement works, for example to the watermeadow and reed bed, and laid a boardwalk along the river. The Project involves land within the Council's ownership but there may be scope for further expansion in the future. There are a number of public footpaths in the valley, and the Council considers there is great potential value in linking the city with the countryside by combining the existing riverside walk with rights of way in the valley and to Old Sarum. The extensive nature of the existing paths means that, initially, the provision of short links only would be necessary.

*Policy R19*

## **Cycling**

11.43

Cycling is an increasingly popular activity for leisure and an alternative means of travel. Wiltshire County Council is responsible for the provision and maintenance of cycle routes, and in 1983 introduced the Wiltshire Cycleway. This route extends into the plan area enabling cyclists to journey along the river valleys on waymarked routes. The County Council proposes a cycle network within and around Salisbury as part of its Transportation Policy and Programme bid to Central Government. The County Council has recently commissioned Sustrans to investigate additional routes through the county and links with the south west region as a whole, which this Council has given its support to, in principle. The Local Planning Authority will support further improvements and extensions to the cycleway provided these do not conflict with the protection of the landscape or sites of nature conservation interest. Policies TR12-TR14 seek to improve cycling facilities throughout the District in order to provide a safe alternative mode of transport for business and pleasure.

## **Allotments**

11.44

Allotment sites are generally well utilised although demand for plots varies from time to time. The development of these sites will be resisted unless alternative sites of equal quality are made available or it can be demonstrated that the demand for allotments no longer exists in the local area.

*Policy R20*