

North Wiltshire Local Development Framework

Draft Open Space SPD

October 2007

Improving North Wiltshire

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1. Introduction

What is the Draft Open Space SPD?

This guidance seeks to provide further clarity on the District Council's existing open space policies C2, CF2 and CF3 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

- Providing a summary of national, regional and local plan policies relating to open space.
- Seeking to help facilitate the delivery of open space.
- Offering detailed guidance on how to calculate open space contributions.
- Setting out the Council's open space monitoring targets to be included in the North Wiltshire Annual Monitoring Report.

How do I comment on this document?

This document is now out for public consultation from the **12th October 2007 – 23rd November 2007**.

The document will be consulted on in accordance with the requirements set out in the Councils adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

We welcome all comments and attach a questionnaire at the back of this document intended to help facilitate responses. If you have any queries concerning this document please contact any member of the Spatial Planning Team or Assets Design and Regeneration Team.

Additional questionnaires can be requested from the Spatial Planning Team (Details below), downloaded from the Council website: www.northwilts.gov.uk/LDF or picked up at any library or information points across the district. Completed questionnaires should be returned to the Spatial Planning Team.

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What Happens Next?

At the end of the six-week consultation period the Council will review all representations received and make appropriate amendments to the draft document. All members of the North Wiltshire community that submit representations will receive a reply summarising their representation and the Council's response. It is anticipated that the SPD will be adopted in January 2008.

Sustainability Appraisal

DCLG guidance 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks' states:

"SA is required for all RSSs, DPDs and SPDs under the Act, and must incorporate the requirements of the SEA Directive. However, under Article 3(3) and 3(4) of the Directive, SEA is required for plans and programmes which "determine the use of small areas at a local level" or which are "minor modifications" to plans and programmes and which would otherwise be caught by the Directive, only where they are determined to be likely to have a significant environmental effects."

As the Draft Open Space SPD is unlikely to have any significant environmental, social or economic effects the Council has determined that a Sustainability Appraisal for the Draft Open Space SPD is not required under Article 3.4 of the Directive.

1.1 Purpose

This document is offered as advice to developers on the Council's approach to the provision of public open space (POS). As a Supplementary Planning Document it will be taken as material consideration in determining requirements associated with planning applications. As well as providing the general principles, and much detail, the document also signposts readers to other sources of information, both other documents and web domains, which will give applicants an understanding of the POS requirement early in the planning process. This should then give a degree of certainty to applicants and allow them to proceed with minimal of support. However, advice is always available for clarification of policies if needed, and it is recognised that in the case of major applications regular contact will help the smooth progress of applications. The key priority is to ensure that public open space of all descriptions adequately meets the current and future needs of the community

1.2 Context

In recent years the benefits and importance of open space has risen as a national issue and the updating in 2002 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Sport, Open Space and Recreation has pathed the way a resurgence of interest in the creation and management of open space following many years of decline.

Many policy documents have been written championing this resurgent interest, documents such as Green Spaces, Better Places (DTLR, 2002), Accessible Greenspace (English Nature, 2000) and The Value of Green Space (CABE Space, 2004). All of these promote high quality, accessible open space, and the skills and finance necessary to maintain them. Clearly the planning process is the main instrument to meeting these aims.

As a local authority North Wiltshire District Council has an obligation to try to meet the expectations of its citizens including the provision of leisure and recreation opportunities. It also has to bear in mind Best Value and Corporate Performance Assessment. All of these are useful drivers for improving quality of facilities and set against that background the approach of this document is in favour of creating larger, multi-purpose, accessible open space and the improvement of existing provision.

2 Policy Framework

2.1 National Policy

2.1.1 Policy Planning Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

PPG17, updated in 2002, sets out the Government's policy on open space, sport and recreation, the main planning objectives being:

- Supporting an urban renaissance. Local networks of high quality and well managed and maintained open spaces, and sport and recreational facilities, help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe. Green spaces in urban areas perform vital functions as areas for nature conservation and biodiversity and by acting as 'green lungs' can assist in meeting objectives to improve air quality;
- Supporting a rural renewal. The countryside can provide opportunities for recreation and visitors can play an important role in the regeneration of the economies of rural areas. Open spaces within rural settlements and accessibility to local sports and recreational facilities contribute to the quality of life and well being of people who live in rural areas;
- Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion. Well-planned and maintained open spaces and good quality sports and recreational facilities can play a major part in improving people's sense of well being in the place they live and work. As a focal point for community activities, they can bring together members of deprived communities and provide opportunities for people for social interaction;
- Health and well being. Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children of all ages through play, sporting activities and interaction with others;
- Promoting more sustainable development. By ensuring that open space and sports and recreational facilities are easily accessible by walking and cycling, and that more heavily used or intensive sports and recreational facilities are planned for locations well served by public transport.

A key change from the previous PPG17 is that of the requirement to undertake a local assessment of existing open space provision and the setting of local provision standards to ensure that adequate supply of high quality open space is provided.

It is recommended that existing areas of open space that are of high quality or valued by a community should be given protection and any development within them strictly controlled. Areas of particular quality may include:

- Small areas of open space in urban areas that provide an important local amenity and offer recreational and play opportunities;
- Areas of open space that provide a community resource and can be used for informal events;
- Areas of open space that particularly benefit wildlife and biodiversity.

In terms of provision of new open space it is recommended that local authorities should:

- Promote accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, and ensure that facilities are accessible for people with disabilities;
- Locate more intensive recreational uses in sites where they can contribute to town centre vitality and viability;
- Avoid any significant loss of amenity to residents, neighbouring uses or biodiversity;
- Improve the quality of the public realm through good design;
- Look to provide areas of open space in commercial and industrial areas;
- Add to and enhance the range and quality of existing facilities;
- Carefully consider security and personal safety, especially of children;
- Meet the regeneration needs of areas, using brownfield sites in preference to greenfield sites;
- Consider the scope for using any surplus land for open space, sport or recreational use, weighing this against alternative uses;
- Assess the impact of new facilities on social inclusion; and,
- Consider the recreational needs of visitors and tourists.

Finally, PPG17 states that local authorities will be justified (provided that a local assessment has been undertaken and standards set) in seeking planning obligations where the existing quality of POS provision is inadequate, or where new development will increase the local need.

2.1.2 Policy Planning Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PPS9 sets out planning policies on the protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system. This document replaced Planning Policy Guidance 9: Conservation in 2005. The main point of the document is to ensure that the natural resource is protected from damage as a result of development:

‘Plan policies and planning decisions should aim to maintain, and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. In taking decisions, local planning authorities should ensure that appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance; protected species; and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment’.

The Statement also proposes that there are opportunities to increase biodiversity through developments:

‘Development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design. When considering proposals, local planning authorities should maximise such opportunities in and around developments, using planning obligations where appropriate’

As well as creating new opportunities, the existing resource should be borne in mind:

‘Networks of natural habitats provide a valuable resource. They can link sites of biodiversity importance and provide routes or stepping stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species in the wider environment. Local authorities should aim to maintain networks by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans. Such networks should be protected from development, and, where possible, strengthened by or integrated within it. This may be done as part of a wider strategy for the protection and extension of open space and access routes such as canals and rivers, including those within urban areas’.

2.1.3 Circular 2005/05: Planning Obligations

‘The purpose of circular 2005/05 is to provide advice.....on the use of planning obligations under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.’

The document provides a definition of generally used terms such as planning conditions and planning obligations – known as Section 106 agreements, and when they can be used. The policy requires that planning obligations are only sought so long as they meet these criteria:

- Relevant to planning
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable
- Directly related to the development
- Fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development, and
- Reasonable in all other respects.

It goes on to describe the way in which contributions can be gathered (in-kind or financial) and used.

2.1.4 Green Spaces, Better Places

This document is the final report of the Urban Greenspaces Taskforce, which was set up in 2001 to advise the Government on policies and proposals for the future of urban parks, play areas and green spaces. The document is in four parts. Part one sets the scene, detailing the benefits that open spaces bring. Part two outlines current concerns about parks and green spaces and sets out proposals to overcome them. Part three sets out the need for a strategic policy framework within which decision-makers should operate. The final section takes forward the recommendations and shows why they can deliver all the benefits of green space.

One of the key recommendations arising from the report was the creation of a national body to represent the interest of open space. This has now been achieved with the establishment of 'Greenspace'.

The other recommendations that are pertinent indicate that local authorities should:

- involve and support communities in green space service planning and delivery;
- promote and support partnership working for improving local green spaces;
- explore the potential for making greater use of local 'open space trusts' as an effective option for delivering improvements to green spaces and their management and maintenance;
- Provide information and advice on available funding streams and opportunities for supporting local partnerships involving local resident, voluntary and business groups;
- Provide effective leadership at the highest level within the council by designating an elected Member to champion and promote parks and green spaces;

- Give greater weight to the contribution of local green spaces in improving the quality of people's lives;
- Develop and implement a green space strategy;
- Carry out design reviews for failing or unsatisfactory spaces;
- Prepare a management plan for every major park, groups of smaller parks and types of open space such as allotments;
- Undertake a Best Value review of their park and green space services.

2.2 Local Framework

2.2.1 The North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011

Within the [Local Plan 2011](#) there are three key policies which need to be considered, these are C2 Community Infrastructure Core Policy, CF2 Leisure Facilities and Open Space, and CF3 Provision of Open Space. The main points for each policy are detailed below. For a fuller explanation refer to the Local Plan.

C2 Community Infrastructure Core Policy

Provision for the directly related community infrastructure costs of all major development proposals, appropriate to the scale of that development, will be sought. The local planning authority will examine each major development proposal for its need to contribute to the following community infrastructure requirements and negotiate to secure planning obligations or by means of other appropriate methods to secure the requirements identified. The community infrastructure requirements are (abbreviated list):

- Community buildings and facilities
- New or improved public open spaces
- Leisure, sport and recreation provision
- Environmental protection and enhancement
- Art in the community

Policy CF2 Leisure Facilities and Open Space

Proposals for the redevelopment, replacement or improvement of existing leisure facilities or open spaces, will be permitted provided that:

The replacement or improved facilities will be at least equivalent in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, and there will be no reduction in the overall capacity of leisure facilities and/or open spaces in the area of the development to accommodate demand; or

ii) The Council accepts that the loss of the existing facility or open space would not result in a deficiency, in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility in accordance with the methodology in North Wiltshire's Open Spaces Study, either now or in the foreseeable future and a clear environmental justification can be made for an alternative use; or

iii) The proposed development is for outdoor or indoor leisure facilities that will be of sufficient benefit to the community to outweigh the loss of the existing facility or open space; or

iv) Development proposals will improve facilities ancillary to its use.

Policy CF3 Provision of Open Space

Proposals for new housing development will be required to make provision for open space on site, to provide 15m² for Local Parks and 3m² for play areas per person.

The Council will accept in the appropriate circumstances, financial payments from developers for provision of open space according to the following order of preference:

i) Provision of open space elsewhere which is appropriately located in relation to the development;

Contributions towards the upgrading of existing nearby open spaces

Development will be required to make contributions to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity and/or quality of open space and the future maintenance of open space provided to meet needs arising from the new development.

All residential developments regardless of scale have the potential to contribute to the increased need generated to improve existing open spaces or provide new open spaces. The preference will be to provide new open space provision on site. However, this may not be practical for minor residential development proposals. For these minor residential proposals, the use of a financial contribution would normally be considered appropriate.

2.2.2 North Wiltshire Open Space Study

Following the recommendation of PPG17: Planning for Sport, Open Space and Recreation the Council undertook an audit of the public open space provision (excluding formal sports provision) in the District. This audit followed the process set out in the Companion Guide to PPG17 – Assessing Needs and Opportunities – and was completed in 2004 as the [North Wiltshire Open Space Study](#). The Study complements existing documents including the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

2.2.3 Leisure Facilities Strategy 2001 – 2007 and the [Playing Pitch Strategy 2001 – 2007](#)

Both of these documents are coming to the end of their useful life but are still current, and therefore relevant, until they are formally superseded. The former document covers sport, arts, countryside, museums and heritage, commercial leisure and play facilities, whilst the second covers sport only. Clearly there is some overlap between these two documents as well as the Open Space Study described above.

3 Assessment of Public Open Space

- 3.1 The North Wiltshire Open Space Study utilised the open space typology set out in the companion guide to PPG17 as detailed in Table 3.1 for the basis of the audit undertaken. From the resultant list a hierarchy of open space (excluding formal sports pitches) each with distinct characteristics and purpose was produced and this is shown in Table 3.2.
- 3.2 In the creation of this hierarchy a number of standards were referred to and adapted to meet local standards. In the setting of these standards a number of aspects were taken into account including, catchment areas (i.e. the distance people will travel), the extent of the population serving the areas and the carrying capacity. The minimum size of open space is a Local Park at 0.2 ha and this is the minimum that would be acceptable within a new development. If this minimum size is not reached then other options would be followed as detailed in Section 4.
- 3.3 The Open Space Study also looked at the quality of open space and concluded that there were many areas that were falling some way short of the desired standard and there was, therefore, plenty of scope to improve these areas given the necessary resources.
- 3.4 The Council is not the only provider of POS, town and parish councils also have a role, as does the private sector and housing associations, in owning and managing recreational areas and for future planning of facilities. We will work with other authorities, partner organisations and stakeholders to realise the common goal of improved provision.

	Typology	Description
Green space	Parks and Gardens	Accessible, opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
	Semi-natural greenspace	Areas acting as a wildlife refuge or areas with a nature conservation designation.
	Green corridor	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for pleasure or travel.
	Outdoor sports facilities	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics, or countryside and water sports.
	Amenity Greenspace	Areas for informal activities close to home or work, or enhancement of the appearance of residential area.
	Play Areas	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people.
	Allotments & community gardens	Opportunities for people to grow produce – sustainability.
	Cemeteries and churchyards	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to nature conservation.
Urban Space	Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

Table 3.1: Open Space typology (derived from the Companion Guide to PPG17)

- 3.5 It is recommended that guidance is sought early in the application stage to ascertain what the preferred option would be for any given locality.

Type of Open Space	Description/Characteristics	Approximate size and Catchment
District Park	Largest park in hierarchy with the widest range of infrastructure, facilities and biological interest. Likely to attract visitors from a wide area.	Min. of 2 hectares (20,000m ²). Catchment of 3.2km (2.2km pedestrian).
Community Park	Serving several linked neighbourhoods and may have similar facilities to a District Park.	Min. 1 hectares (10,000m ²). Catchment of 1 km (700m pedestrian).
Local Park	Serving defined areas and particularly valuable in areas of high density housing.	Min. of 0.2 hectares (2000m ²). Catchment of 400m (280m pedestrian).
Allotment	For growing of vegetables. Also biodiversity interest.	No minimum size or catchment currently set.
Play Area	Variety of play equipment and potential links to wider play network.	Currently based on NPFA standards.
Linear open space (greenway)	Pedestrian and cycle visits. Strong leisure use. Biodiversity corridors.	N/a

Table 3.2: Classification of POS derived from the North Wiltshire Open Space Study

4 Provision of POS

4.1 There are a number of general assumptions that are made with regard to POS and new developments:

- All developments (residential, commercial and industrial) will create a demand for open space and should therefore contribute towards its provision.
- For residential developments only the net increase of bed space is taken into account.
- The minimum size for on-site open space is 0.2ha (a Local Park).
- Either a financial contribution or the creation of a POS elsewhere will be required where the minimum size is not 'generated' on-site.

4.2 The Council does not, as yet, have any method for calculating the POS requirement for commercial or industrial developments, however, sites will be expected to provide areas of landscaped open space of an appropriate size, scale and character within or adjacent to the development, or provide a financial contribution in lieu. The area, or contribution, will be a matter of negotiation as part of the overall planning application.

4.3 Residential Developments

4.3.1 To calculate the area of POS required for a residential development Tables 4.1 and 4.2 should be used. The former identifies which types of construction need to contribute to POS provision whilst the latter enables the calculation of the area of POS based on the general requirement of 15m² per person for Park provision and 3m² for play provision.

Open Space type Dwelling Type	Park	Play Area
Open market new build	✓	✓
Extensions	✓	✓
Conversions	✓	✓
One bedroom dwellings	✓	X
Affordable housing	✓	✓
Sheltered/Warden assisted housing	✓	X
Nursing/residential homes	X	X
Permanent mobile homes	✓	✓
Temporary accommodation	X	X

Table 4.1: POS Requirement by Dwelling Type

Size of Dwelling	No. of Residents *	POS (15 m ² per person)	Play Area (3 m ² per person)	Total Area (M ²)
1 bed	2 adults	2 x 15	nil	30 x A = B
2bed	2 adults + 1 child	3 x 15	1 x 3	48 x A = C
3 bed	2 Adults + 2 child	4 x 15	2 x 3	66 x A = D
4+ bed	2 Adults + 3 child	5 x 15	3 x 3	84 x A = E
Total POS requirement:				B+C+D+E

Where A = the number of units. *Assumes maximum occupancy rates.

Table 4.2: Amount of POS per Dwelling Type

4.3.2 Where a development generates open space of 0.2ha (excluding landscape areas) or above then generally this should be provided as an integral, designed, feature of the development site. As the development increases in size the POS requirement will also increase in line with the categories of Park given in Table 3.2 above. Each park category has an associated level of infrastructure and facilities which may be required and these are listed in Table 4.3.

Facility/Feature	District Park	Community Park	Local Park
Toilets ¹	A	B	C
Café	B	C	C
Lighting ²	A	A	A
Litter bins & dog bins	A	A	A
Car Parking	A	B	C
Nature Trails	B	C	C
Paths ³	A	A	A
Cycle paths ³	A	A	A
Picnic area/seating	A	A	A
Sports pitches*	B	B	B
Sports courts	A	B	B
Play area	A (NEAP)	A (LEAP)	A (LEAP)
Performance space	B	B	C
Shelter	B	B	C
Standing water	A	B	C
Running water	A	B	C
Woodland	A	B	C
Hedgerow	A	B	C
Specimen trees	A	B	B
Formal planting	A	A	B
Informal grassland	A	A	B
Recreation grassland	A	A	A
Rough grassland	B	B	C

A – Highly desirable; B – Desirable; C – Considered not to be essential at these sites

¹ These should be fully accessible. ² Where appropriate.

³ With links to the wider network. * If needed

NEAP – Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play

LEAP – Local Equipped Area for Play

Table 4.3: Facilities Expected at Park Sites

4.3.3 Given that the minimum size of POS is 0.2 hectares (Local Park) many developments are likely to be of too small a scale to warrant the creation of on-site POS and an appropriate financial contribution for off-site POS, or the up-grading of near by facilities, would therefore be required. The exception to this may be a play area where a LEAP could be required on-site, depending upon existing provision in the wider area.

4.3.4 For larger sites, this Authority is willing to consider off-site contributions as an alternative to on-site provision, and in many cases that may be the preferred option. Another option is a mixture of on-site provision and a financial contribution to improve off-site provision, so long as the on-site provision meets the minimum size requirement.

4.4 Off site contribution

The level of financial contribution in lieu of on-site POS is a complex calculation taking into account the area of POS generated, the average property price for North Wiltshire (derived from the Land Registry figures) and the area of land within the site which would otherwise have been POS. A 'calculator' has been produced which simplifies the calculation process and is available as an on-line resource (http://www.northwilts.gov.uk/index/leisure/lt_parks_recreation-newpage.htm). This will give an indicative figure and should not be taken as the final contribution amount.

4.5 Development on Existing POS

There is a strong desire to protect existing POS but also the recognition that some open space may be surplus to requirement. The Open Space Study concluded that there was a general deficiency of open space in the District and in line with CF2 of the Local Plan 2011 developers would be required to provide an equivalent facility if proved that a space is not surplus to requirement. The process of doing so should involve community consultation and follow recognised methodologies. The Council will verify the conclusion of any work presented in support of an application and take into account projected population growth.

4.6 Section 106 Agreements

The Council does not currently utilise a standard section 106 but rather tailors each one to the individual circumstances of the particular development, i.e. it will either have a clause for on site provision or a monetary figure for off-site contribution, or a combination of these.

5 Implementation

5.1 On Site Public Open Space

5.1.1 Design Standards

The design of POS (including equipped play areas) is a critical aspect of provision. Whether it be a new site or improvements to an existing site the design is, perhaps, the key aspect of ensuring that a site meets the requirements and expectations of its users (providing a stimulating and rewarding experience), doesn't attract anti-social behaviour, and ensures that management does not become a costly burden in future years. Whilst table 4.3 suggests features that should be included at the different levels of Park, this does not constitute comprehensive guidance for design of POS. The following is a list giving the types of subjects that need to be considered, some of which are discussed in later sections, with signposts to sources of further information in **Appendix 1**:

- Design and construction standards
- Trees in relation to buildings and construction
- Inclusive design and accessibility
- Community safety and risk assessment
- Future maintenance & management
- Landscape character & context
- Children's play
- Biodiversity and wildlife habitat
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes and other water courses
- Sustainability

Developers should refer to the current BS standards for individual aspects of the design and use guidance provided by organisations such as Sport England and GreenSpace. Design should always aim to maintain and reinforce local distinctiveness and character, for example, by using local materials, and this is especially the case in conservation areas and within landscape designations. The design, construction and maintenance schedules will all need to be approved by the Council.

5.1.2 Biodiversity

Developers, will of course, have regard for the relevant legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, but there are also many opportunities for building-in measures within developments that would result in a net increase of biodiversity. Local Authorities now have a duty to have regard for conserving biodiversity outside of designated sites, and can use planning obligations

to achieve this aim as set out in PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation as previously detailed in 2.1.2.

The design of POS then will be required to include measures that will increase biodiversity, and link to the wider green network where possible. Existing natural features should not be compromised, and expanded where possible. In the right circumstances new POS may be completely semi-natural, for example, the extension of an existing woodland. However, in these cases subsequent management may need a different approach, perhaps by engaging conservation bodies, and a management plan will be required. In all cases the objectives of the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan should be taken into account.

5.1.3 Trees and Hedgerows

Mature trees and hedgerows are features which should be retained and incorporated within the POS, however there are a number of issues that should be resolved:

- Developers will need to take into account the Hedgerow Regulations 2007 and any Tree Preservation Orders in force.
- The features should be incorporated in such a way so as to minimise any future boundary and maintenance disputes. The Council will not generally adopt land where, for example, a hedgerow is in joint ownership with a neighbouring property.
- Hedgerows should be in a managed state (if necessary) – either trimmed for amenity hedgerows or layered/part-layered for semi-natural hedgerows.
- Mature trees included within the POS should have been inspected by a suitably qualified arborist and any remedial work undertaken prior to adoption to ensure that trees are in a healthy state, and that any risks to public health and safety have been satisfactorily addressed.

Further information is contained within the relevant BS standard noted in Appendix 1.

5.1.4 Allotments

In most of the towns in North Wiltshire there is a shortfall of allotment sites with resulting waiting lists. Interest in allotment gardening is increasing nationally and has many benefits to individuals, society and biodiversity. The Council is, therefore, keen to see the creation of new sites and where appropriate may seek new plots, and the associated infrastructure, instead of the more traditional POS.

5.1.5 Play Areas

The Council is keen to see the provision of high quality play opportunities, both equipped and non-equipped play and has a Play Strategy which outlines our approach towards play provision and identifies some future projects. Where a POS is to include an equipped play area this must be of at least a LEAP standard (based on the National Playing Field Association's Six Acre Standard - currently under review), and RoSPA criteria in terms of size, location and layout, but should also be designed to have a high play value in terms of the number and type of equipment. The design of the play area must follow good design practice, be located to ensure good surveillance whilst not offering the potential for causing a nuisance, away from natural and man made hazards, and offer a wide variety of experiences for the users. The equipment manufacturer and installation must meet the Council's approval. A RoSPA post installation inspection certificate must be provided upon completion of the installation (along with any manufacturers warranty) and again at adoption, if these occur at different times.

5.1.6 Management Options

There are a number of management options for new POS the main ones being:

- Adoption by the Council
- Retention by the developer either for management in-house or for a residents management company or such other structure, or
- The establishment of a Trust

Whilst the latter two of these options would not involve the Council directly, we would have to ensure the long term viability of the facility, and would therefore need to see legally binding evidence of the management structure, and/or financial standing before any planning obligations are discharged.

If the Council are to adopt the POS then there is a procedure to follow as detailed below.

5.1.7 Adoption Process

It is recommended that developers engage the relevant Council officers at a pre-application stage to enable an exchange of ideas and to ascertain any pre-determined requirements. If this has happened, and the POS has been built to the agreed design and in accordance to the specification then the adoption process should be straightforward. When the POS is built and at the beginning of the maintenance period it will be inspected by the Council and an interim certificate issued. If the design deviates from the plan or is below standard in its implementation then this will need to be

remedied before an interim certificate is issued. A twenty four month maintenance and defects period will be operated for all open space except play areas where the Council will take ownership upon completion. This may need a legal agreement to ensure access across land still with the developer. In larger developments the installation of play areas may be delayed till near the end of the build stage (exact point to be agreed) so long as potential residents are made aware of any proposed play areas by prominent signage. As a requirement of adoption a copy of the 'as built' plans, maintenance schedules, relevant reports (for example arboricultural reports) and a copy of the health and safety file will be required prior to the land transfer. These plans must show clearly marked easement routes and buried services.

5.1.8 Commuted Sums

Commuted sums are those payments intended for the future maintenance of the POS. The Council will take payment (normally at the time of adoption) for this purpose based on the area and features of the facility, to establish an annual sum which will then be multiplied by 20 years to obtain the overall figure. The total cost will be based on the current rates at the time of adoption, not the date of planning permission and will therefore be subject to an inflation rate based on the Retail Price Index. The current rates (2007) are given in **Appendix 2** and will be reviewed annually.

5.2 Off Site Public Open Space

5.2.1 Financial Contribution

An indication of the level of contribution will already be known from the on-line calculator but not the timing of the contribution. There will be a presumption that contributions will be paid prior to the start of the development but some flexibility is possible with payment at a mutually agreed trigger point.

5.2.2 Use of Financial Contributions

It has already been stated that the intention is to improve the current supply of POS, regardless of ownership, and the use of financial contributions gained through section 106 agreements and unilateral payments is an appropriate way of achieving this goal. The monies can then be used on their own or as match funding with a suitable grant application.

The off-site contribution will be used to create a new community facility, POS, sports facility, play area or allotment plots near the development, or improve an existing facility. Where the nearest facility does not need any investment then the next nearest site would

be identified until a suitable recipient site is found. In many cases there will already be an identified project in the locality of the development. However, there may be cases where it proves legitimate to use funding in a wider area. Monies may be used to meet the aims of Council strategies such as the Countryside and Open Space Strategy or Play Strategy and in the case of larger developments a proportion of the contribution may be pooled and used for the improvement or creation of district wide facilities. In many instances the Council will not be responsible for the delivery of the subsequent project and in this case the contribution would be passed to the appropriate town or parish council (as the most likely agents) following an agreement as to the use of the monies.

6. Monitoring

We will actively monitor the success of the Open Space Policies to ensure that the procedures for implementing open space is up to date and meeting the Council's targets. This monitoring review will occur within the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which will assess the extent to which the Open Space policies are being successfully implemented. The AMR will identify the key challenges and opportunities for the provision of open space and revisions will be made.

Core Indicators

LDF Indicator	Other Indicator	Policy	Indicator	Target
OS1	NCOI 4c,	N/A	Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard.	1 hectare (10,000m ²)

Output Indicators

LDF Indicator	Local Plan Policy	Indicator
OS2	Policy C2 & CF3	Amount of new open space in hectares provided through policy CF3 as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Park ▪ Community Park ▪ Local Park
OS3	Policy C2 & CF3	Number of Planning applications through policy CF3 contributing towards open space provision for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allotments ▪ Play Areas ▪ Linear open space
OS4	Policy C2 & CF2	Number of Planning applications under policy CF2 failing to replace or improve open space provision in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility or in accordance with the open space study.

Appendix 1 – Design Information

This appendix provides signposts to sources of information across a broad section of subjects.

Policy

Document	Web link
Planning Policy Guide 17: Planning for Sport, Open Space and Recreation	http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/planningpolicyguidance/229224/
Companion Guide to PPG17	http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/planningpolicyguidance/229224/
Planning Policy Guide 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/1020432885185.html
Green Spaces, Better Places	http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1163277

Consultants/Organisations

Topic	Organisation	Web link
Landscape designers and managers	Landscape Institute	http://www.landscapeinstitute.org
Tree surveys and Tree work	The Arboricultural Association	http://www.trees.org.uk/index.php
Sports, Leisure & amenity Managers	Sport England	http://www.sportengland.org/
	ISPAL	http://www.ispal.org.uk/index.cfm
Biodiversity	English Nature/Town and Country Planning Association	http://www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/publication/PDF/TCP/Abiodiversityguide.pdf
Allotments	The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners	http://www.nsalg.org.uk/
Children's play	NPFA	http://www.playing-fields.com/
	ROSPA	http://www.rospace.org.uk/playsafety/index.htm

Standards

Current British & European standards and codes of practise should be seen as providing a minimum standard to be achieved. A selection of the most common standards relevant to open space is as follows:

Topic	Standard	Web link
Play Areas	EN1176 & EN1177	http://www.rospace.org.uk/playsafety/info/10_en1176.htm

Specification of plant material

Document/Subject	Web link
The National Plant Specification	http://www.gohelios.co.uk/NPS.htm

Trees in relation to construction - NHBC, BS, DCMS

Risk & public safety

Organisation	Web link
Cabe, Cabe Space	http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=41
ROSPA	http://www.rospa.org.uk/playsafety/index.htm

Community Safety

Topic	Web link
Secured by Design	http://www.securedbydesign.com/

The local Police Architectural Liaison Officer will also be able to help on this issue. Contact Wiltshire Police on 0845 408 7000.

Open Space Quality & management

Organisation	Web link
Cabe/Cabe Space	http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=41
GreenSpace	http://www.green-space.org.uk/
Green Flag Award	http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/award/default.asp?n=&sectionId=27&parentId=241&pageId=241

Appendix 2 – Commuted Sum Payments

Feature	Rate	Cost (annual)
Grass Maintenance		
Amenity short grass – gang mown	m ²	0.12
Amenity short grass – pedestrian mown	m ²	0.23
Amenity long grass – tractor mown	m ²	0.018
Amenity long grass – pedestrian mown	m ²	0.29
Cutting rough grass by petrol strimmer	m ²	0.12
Species rich meadow management	m ²	0.29
Edge Maintenance		
Maintain edges where grass abuts pathway or hard surface	m	0.10
Maintain edges where grass abuts planting bed	m	0.15
Existing and Mature Planting		
Semi-mature trees	nr	3.75
Fully mature Trees	nr	40.00
Over mature and veteran trees	nr	75.00
Traditional hedge management	nr	4.06
Hedgerows		
Ornamental hedge up to 2m high	m	2.97
Ornamental hedge 2m – 4m high	m	8.97
Field hedge up to 2m high	m	2.88
Field hedge 2m – 4m high	m	7.63
New Planting Areas		
Specimen trees	nr	0.56
Native woodland planting	m ²	0.86
Woody ornamental shrub planted areas	m ²	0.86
Groundcover and herbaceous shrub planted areas	m ²	0.90

Boundary Features

Timber post and rail 1.2m high	m	0.76
Timber close-board fencing 1.8m high	m	1.36
Timber knee rail/trip rail	m	1.69
Metal estate fencing	m	2.00
Metal bow-top railing	m	2.00
Ornamental metal railings	m	2.00

Paving

Macadam Pathways/cycleways	m ²	0.34
Bound gravels	m ²	1.54
Gravel graded rolled limestone paths and cycleways	m ²	0.49
Stone/concrete flag paving	m ²	0.15
Paviors/block paving	m ²	0.15

Furniture

Timber bollard	nr	4.58
Metal bollard	nr	0.48
Litter/dog bins	nr	32.82
Timber bench	nr	30.67
Metal bench	nr	7.43
Stone or concrete bench	nr	4.53
Cycle stand	nr	1.85

Other Features

Ditches	m	1.75
Play areas	A one-off payment equal to the cost of equipment and installation costs.	

Table 5.1: Commuted Payment Rates (prices are based on SPONS Landscape and External Works Price Book 2007).

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Bengali

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Urdu

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