

### Introduction

Policies on community facilities, sport and recreation are required for the Local Plan in order to direct facilities to suitable locations. It is necessary to safeguard the existing range of community and sports facilities to encourage the development of new facilities where deficiencies have been identified.

### Context

The Government's objective through the planning system is to seek to protect and enhance land and resources. Through SPP11 on Open Space and Physical Activity, this requires planning policies to be robust to safeguard established open spaces, playing fields and access routes where they contribute to local community needs and enjoyment. Sportscotland is the national body for sport in Scotland. Together with partners, Sportscotland plays an important role in taking forward Sport 21, the national strategy for Scotland, which promotes sport and facilities throughout Scotland.

**POLICY CF1: SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Development proposals which impact on community facilities will be refused unless;

- a. the facility is in need of replacement,
- b. alternative facilities will be provided that are of equivalent standard and accessibility, or,
- c. the development will provide sufficient local public compensation for the loss of all or part of the safeguarded site and facilities must be directly replaced unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer required, or,

Where land or buildings in community use become surplus to current or anticipated future requirements, alternative uses which are compatible with adjoining uses and any remaining community uses, will in principle be considered with other local plan policies.

Town and village statements will identify where local facilities are under provided, or in need of upgrading.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The aim of this policy is to protect public and private facilities which help to support and enhance a community and to support new facilities. Where sites are to be redeveloped it will be important to secure adequate benefits for the community to ensure it is no worse off as a result. Where new facilities are proposed, these shall be fully accessible to potential user groups including the disabled and less mobile.

**CONFORMS TO:**

The policy conforms to SPP11 on Open Space and Physical Activity.

**POLICY CROSS REFERENCE/ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:**

Policy IMP1: Development Requirements; 'This Common Inheritance' (1990) (Environment White Paper) – Creation of recreational and amenity open space- particularly in urban areas.

NPFA 6 Acre Standard - open space standard.

## POLICY CF2: PROVIDING RECREATIONAL LAND AND OPEN SPACE

### i) Preparation of an open space strategy

The Council will prepare an open space strategy and this will be subject to consultation with stakeholders.

### ii) Provision of new sporting and recreational facilities

The Council supports proposals for new sporting and recreational facilities.

### iii) Safeguarding existing recreational land and open space

Development proposals, which impact on existing sporting and recreational facilities (i.e. playing field, sports pitch or other recreational open space), will not be permitted unless:

- a. The proposed development is required to enhance the principal use of the site as a sporting facility and will result in an overall improvement of its sporting and recreational potential, and not result in a negative impact upon its overall amenity value and its accessibility; OR
- b. The facilities are no longer required for their original purpose and there is clearly an excess of such sporting facilities in the wider area, taking into account long-term strategy.

### JUSTIFICATION:

The aims of this policy are:

- to commit the Council to the preparation of an open space strategy, including a playing field strategy, in consultation with stakeholders;
- to encourage proposals for new or enhanced sports/recreational facilities; and
- to protect existing, valued sporting facilities and recreational open space from inappropriate development proposals.

The first stage of work leading to the preparation of an open space strategy is already underway with an audit being undertaken of existing open space provision and its quality as a basis for the identification of current and future recreation land and open space needs in Moray. The key stages of this process leading to the Open Space Strategy (OSS) will all be undertaken in consultation with the stakeholders.

The Council section responsible for Sports Development will be consulted on whether proposals meet the policy criteria. In addition, quality and quantity of facilities will be a priority when assessing a site.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy E4: Green Spaces.

### CONFORMS TO:

The policy conforms to SPP11: Open Space and Physical Activity, National Playing Fields Association 6 Acre Standard and PAN65: Planning and Open Space.

### POLICY CROSS-REFERENCE/ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:

Sport21, Planning policy for the protection of playing fields – Sportscotland; Moray Community Planning Partnership's Natural Grass and Synthetic Turf Pitches Strategy 2007-2012;

Policy E4: Green Spaces;

Policy IMP1: Development Requirements;

Policy IMP3: Developer Contributions;

Policy IMP4: Action Plan.

**POLICY CF3: COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION: ACCESS AND TRAILS**

Development proposals will not be permitted which prejudice rights of way, identified paths and trails for non-motorised public access, inclusive of routes from the statutory Moray Core Paths Plan and the wider Moray Local Access Development Plan. Continued monitoring of impact will be required in environmentally sensitive areas.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The aim of this policy is to protect environmentally sensitive areas and existing or planned public outdoor access routes, through establishing a co-ordinated approach for countryside access and management across Moray. The aim of this policy is to ensure that existing public access is protected and future development does not restrict future opportunities for the extension of the public access network. Encouragement is also given to enhancement of non-motorised access around and between communities and new development.

**CONFORMS TO:**

The policy conforms to SPP11 on Open Space and Physical Activity, The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Policy.

**POLICY CROSS REFERENCE/ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:**

Moray Local Access Development Plan. Policy IMP4 Action Plan.

**POLICY CF4: GOLF COURSES AND DRIVING RANGES**

Planning permission will be granted for golf course and driving range developments providing the following criteria are met;

- a. the proposal does not include housing or other development proposals that would not be acceptable under other policies,
- b. the proposal does not adversely affect the public right of way network or paths used for access purposes unless an acceptable alternative route is provided,
- c. the proposal does not adversely affect the character of the natural and built environment. Associated buildings will require to comply with policies for buildings in the countryside in terms of siting and design.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The aim of this policy is to protect the countryside from adverse development from golf courses. Proposals will be analysed in terms of impacts on the landscape character, environmental impacts, design and use of the development. The policy is to ensure that only golf related activities will take place at the site to prohibit further development in the countryside and protect against adverse development. The proposal should demonstrate a positive contribution to biodiversity.

**CONFORMS TO:**

The policy conforms to SPP11 on Open Space and Physical Activity.

**POLICY CROSS REFERENCE/ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:**

Policy E4: Green Spaces, Policy IMP1: Development Requirements, PAN 43: Golf Courses and Associated Development.