

11. INTRODUCTION

- 11.1 Worthing offers opportunities for a wide range of leisure and recreation activities, both informally and formally. Worthing's natural assets, in particular the countryside and beach provide a key resource for informal recreation. Whilst it is important that people are able to use and appreciate areas such as the South Downs, it is also important that activities which are undertaken in the countryside are in keeping with the character of the countryside, in order that it is not spoilt physically, and the enjoyment of others is not harmed.
- 11.2 Worthing's seafront is predominantly built-up, and the promenade, paths and beaches play an important part in defining the character of the seafront. It is important that these facilities are maintained and enhanced. Other areas of open space within the Borough, such as parks and gardens, ensure that residents across the town have access to open space nearby. Similarly, these areas must be protected.
- 11.3 Formal opportunities for leisure and recreation include sports centres, playing fields, and children's playspace. It is important, for both health and social well-being, that such facilities are provided in new development where appropriate, and that the range and quality of such facilities across the Borough is improved.
- 11.4 Although Worthing Borough Council provides many facilities across the Borough, it is likely that new development may be provided by the private or voluntary sectors. Worthing Borough Council produced a Draft Leisure Strategy in 1994, and although this is not a statutory document, some of the proposals contained within it have land use implications, and are therefore included in this Local Plan. It should also be noted that the Council's leisure strategy is being revised in the context of a Cultural Strategy which is due for publication in Spring 2004.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- 11.5 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 - Sport and Recreation states that sufficient provision should be made for the recreation needs of the community, including elderly and disabled people. Existing open space should be protected, as should public rights of way and playing fields. In the countryside, quality and natural beauty should be protected; sport and recreation should not conflict with this. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 - Housing states that Local Planning Authorities should have clear policies for the protection and creation of open space and playing fields.
- 11.6 Planning Policy Guidance Note 7 – The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development also stresses the need to respect the balance between provision for the recreational needs of visitors and residents, with respect for the rural environment.

West Sussex Structure Plan

- 11.7 Both the West Sussex Structure Plan 1993 and the West Sussex Structure Plan Review provide the context for Local Plan policies. The importance of the countryside for quiet informal recreation is stressed. Within the Built Up Area, open space can make a contribution to both townscape and wildlife; recreation land should be protected, unless

adequate alternative provision is made. The assets and amenity of the coast should be enhanced and conserved, and access to it encouraged.

LEISURE AND RECREATION OUTSIDE OF THE BUILT UP AREA

- 11.8 The countryside has an important role to play in providing informal leisure opportunities. However, there are a number of constraints to developing these in the countryside around Worthing. Taking into account Government advice, policies of West Sussex County Council and the character of the countryside within Worthing Borough, recreational development outside the Built Up Area Boundary should be restricted to certain informal activities only. These are defined within the West Sussex Structure Plan as those pursuits which are quiet, spontaneous and uncompetitive such as walking, riding or cycling.
- 11.9 In terms of the location of recreational development outside the Built Up Area Boundary there should be no adverse effect on good quality agricultural land, the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, strategic gaps, nature conservation, or conflict with any other countryside policy. In addition, whilst quiet, informal recreational pursuits are unlikely to be detrimental to nearby residents, associated development may cause some loss of amenity. The harmful effect on residential amenity of, for example, access points, hard surfaces, car parks and buildings such as stables, will be material considerations in assessing such proposals. Any associated development must comply with all relevant policies.

POLICY LR1

Recreational development outside the built up area boundary will normally be permitted for quiet informal activities having regard to the policies for agricultural land, the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, strategic gaps, nature conservation and other relevant policies, and where there is no significant detriment to the amenity of nearby residents.

Permission will not normally be granted for formal recreation provision, or for recreational activities which require buildings and associated features, or which would have an adverse effect on the character of the countryside by virtue of noise or traffic.

Public Rights Of Way

- 11.10 The established Public Rights of Way network enables access to, and throughout the countryside, as well as within the Built Up Area. It is essential that this is maintained and protected. This issue is dealt with more specifically in Policy TR7 of Chapter 7 – Transport.

Golf Development

- 11.11 The main organised leisure activity outside the Built Up Area is golf; there are three courses to the north-east of the town, situated entirely within the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In addition, there is a nine-hole course at Brooklands

Pleasure Park, situated within the strategic gap. These courses provide a valuable recreation facility for residents of Worthing and surrounding areas, as well as visitors to the area. Development necessary for the maintenance and improvement of existing golf courses will be supported in principle, provided there is no conflict with other policies, notably those relating to the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Golf courses and associated development can have a negative impact on their surroundings; lighting, car parks, accesses and signing, amongst other features, can lead to "urbanisation" of the countryside. In addition, they can have an adverse effect on natural habitats, and may require a large amount of water. Consequently, golf development within the countryside must be very carefully balanced with other issues, including the protection of the countryside, (in particular, the need to conserve and enhance the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) as well as strategic gaps, nature conservation interest and agricultural land.

- 11.12 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 states that golf courses can have a significant impact on the countryside, and that they should be designed to: "ensure harmony with the surrounding countryside and to conserve the natural environment". More detailed guidance is given in West Sussex County Council's document: "Golf Development in West Sussex: Policy Guidance". Worthing Borough Council will have regard to this document in assessing all applications relating to golf development.
- 11.13 Golf driving ranges can have a particularly adverse effect on the countryside, due to the impact of buildings and lighting, and can constitute an "urban" form of development. Unless most basic in form, driving ranges are unlikely to be acceptable within the countryside.

POLICY LR2

Development necessary for the improvement or maintenance of Worthing's golf courses will be permitted, providing there is no damage to the special landscape character and appearance of the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and proposals comply with Policy LR3.

POLICY LR 3

New golf facilities will be permitted only where:-

- (i) proposed development would not be harmful to the landscape character of the site and the area in which it is located;**
- (ii) there will be no adverse impact on nature conservation interests and providing, where appropriate, native species (preferably of local origins) are used in planting schemes;**
- (iii) an adequate supply of water can be demonstrated;**
- (iv) there is no irreversible loss of high grade agricultural land;**

- (v) there is no unacceptable disruption to public rights of way;**
- (vi) there is no unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity;
and**
- (vii) the proposal complies with all other relevant policies.**

Permission will not normally be granted for golf driving ranges outside the built up area boundary.

Brooklands

- 11.14 Brooklands Pleasure Park is a recreation facility both for local people and tourists, which provides a boating lake, pitch and putt, putting, nine-hole golf course and miniature railway, in addition to play areas, and open spaces. The site offers some potential for recreational development and landscape enhancement.
- 11.15 However, the site lies outside the Built Up Area Boundary and within the strategic gap and, therefore, despite its urban character, is classified as “countryside” in terms of planning policy. A strict planning policy framework exists in strategic gaps and this is set out both in Policy C5 of this Plan and C5 of the 1993 Structure Plan. Both policies state that development will only be permitted where it would not compromise individually or cumulatively the objectives and fundamental integrity of the strategic gap. The Structure Plan also states that opportunities will be sought to conserve and improve the landscape and amenity of such areas, and that development for recreational purposes may be permitted where this improves the landscape and does not involve substantial buildings or large areas of hardstanding. Chapter 3 (Countryside) of this Plan sets out the Local Plan context for the Strategic Gaps within the Borough.
- 11.16 Some development has been carried out in recent years, due to the need by Southern Water to improve the East Worthing Treatment Works. As a result, a new access road has been provided at the north end of the Park.
- 11.17 Due to the sensitive location of Brooklands within the strategic gap between Worthing and Sompting/Lancing, any recreational development must respect the objectives of the strategic gap. Brooklands plays an important part in preventing the coalescence of settlements, and forms a clear visual break for travellers passing east-west by road and rail. Any form of development must not diminish the visual break between settlements, in any part of the gap. Any new buildings should therefore be minimal, and located away from the railway line or A259, and should generally replace existing buildings. The Structure Plan states that in those strategic gaps where a degree of "urban" activity exists already, consolidation should be prevented; replacement may be accepted if the existing level of activity is not increased, and the landscape improved. Cumulative erosion of the gaps must be avoided.
- 11.18 Opportunities for some recreational development, landscape and associated nature conservation improvements exist, and could incorporate the re-organisation, upgrading and visual improvement of existing facilities within the context of the above policy framework. An area to the north-west of Brooklands, formerly used as landfill and

currently fenced-off from the remainder of Brooklands Park, may also be suitable for recreational development. Due to the location of the site adjacent to the railway line, it is especially important that any development retains the "open" nature of the site.

- 11.19 It is important that adequate parking facilities are provided within Brooklands itself, as the area is remote from any public car parks and the busy roads which run along the east and south sides of Brooklands are unsuitable for parking. The A259 is particularly busy; no new access should be created onto this road. The new access road provides only a limited opportunity to access any further recreational development in the northern part of the Park. The existing access onto Western Road to the north of the lake is likely to remain as the primary access to the car park facilities for users of the Park.
- 11.20 There are residential properties close to Brooklands to the east and west, and St. Paul's Avenue (within Adur District) is extremely close to Brooklands to the north. Any new development at the north or north-west of the Park must be carefully sited so as to not cause nuisance to the occupiers of these properties. Furthermore, in any new development proper consideration should be given to the presence in Brooklands of contaminated land and the potential for emitting landfill gas, as well as to measures required for environmental improvements.

POLICY LR4

Development in Brooklands will not normally be permitted unless all the following criteria are met:-

- (i) development is for recreational and/or landscape enhancement purposes;**
- (ii) any new access is taken from Western Road and/or the existing access road;**
- (iii) there is no significant adverse impact on nearby residents;**
- (iv) adequate investigations and measures have been taken to deal with contaminated land and potential for landfill gas emissions; and**
- (v) the proposal complies with all other relevant policies.**

Coastal Recreation

- 11.21 Certain parts of Worthing's coastline are popular for coastal recreation - notably the area around Worthing Yacht Club. However, given the character of Worthing's seafront and nature of the tidal movement along this part of the coast, there are limited opportunities for further marine-based recreation. (See the Coastal Chapter).

LEISURE AND RECREATION WITHIN THE BUILT UP AREA**Outdoor Recreation Space Survey & Protection of Existing Outdoor Recreation Space**

- 11.22 Government guidance recognises that sport and recreation are important components of civilised life and have a valuable social and economic role. Use of land as open space is no less important than other uses. Once built on, open space is likely to be lost to the community forever. As Worthing is a predominantly urban borough, open space within the Built Up Area is of particular importance.
- 11.23 Outdoor recreation space provides opportunities for relaxation, sport and play, and contributes visually to breaks in built development. Such space is located throughout the Borough, usually close to demand and easily accessible. It may be in public ownership, such as parks, gardens or recreation grounds; or private ownership, such as school playing fields. It may also incorporate associated car parking facilities.
- 11.24 As part of the preparation of this Local Plan, an extensive survey was undertaken in July 1999 to establish the extent of outdoor recreation space throughout the Borough. This survey has been published as a background document to this Plan and copies are available for purchase from the Planning Section.
- 11.25 The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Document ‘The Six Acre Standard’ forms the basis for assessing the survey findings. The NPFA was established in 1925 to ensure that every man, woman and child has access to recreational space within easy reach of their homes. Since 1938, the NPFA has recommended that 2.43 hectares (6 acres) of outdoor play space be provided per 1000 population, and that Local Authorities adopt this as a minimum standard. Full details of the standard are contained in the aforementioned NPFA document published in 1993, and are also set out in the Outdoor Recreation Space Survey 1999.
- 11.26 The Council’s Outdoor Recreation Space Survey 1999 incorporated the following categories of recreation space (all figures rounded):-
- (i) Equipped Children’s Play Space - playgrounds with a range of equipment for children of all ages.
Area in Survey = 2.53 hectares.
 - (ii) Casual/ Informal Play Space - characteristically open, fairly level grassed area suitable for informal play games. The majority of such sites are easily accessible from surrounding residential areas, but a few sites are in more peripheral locations.
Area in Survey = 80.84 hectares
 - (iii) Adult/Youth Outdoor Sport - pitches, courts, greens and tracks that are areas laid out for formal sport and are properly maintained throughout the year. The majority of these sites are maintained by the Council; however, the survey also includes dual-use educational and some privately owned facilities.
Area in Survey = 47.77 hectares.
 - (iv) Formal Parks & Gardens - floral beds, parks, formal gardens etc. providing an outdoor recreational facility, but not to be considered as ‘play/ sport’ space in the context of the NPFA standards.

Area in survey = 10.19 hectares.

- (v) Other Formal/ Informal Areas - these areas were identified in the 1996 Urban Amenity Open Space Survey, but upon visiting the sites they were deemed not to fall within the NPFA categories. This category includes woodland areas, nature areas, incidental areas, miniature railways, the Par 3 golf facility and large boating lake at Brooklands.
Area in Survey = 34.94 hectares.

- 11.27 The total area of the five categories included in the 1999 survey equals 176.27 hectares. The survey details are analysed and presented in the background report on both a borough and ward basis. The survey report also sets out those areas excluded from the survey.
- 11.28 However, only categories (i) to (iii) are comparable against the NPFA standard, and again this is set out in full in the survey report. In summary, the survey comparisons show that the overall outdoor playing/ sports space available within the Borough is, at present, 131.14 hectares, which equals 56.8% of the overall figure recommended by the NPFA given the Borough's population. With regard to children's play space 83.37 hectares is provided (129.8% of the standard); but this is broken down into 2.53 hectares of equipped children's play space (10.52% of the standard) and 80.84 hectares of casual/ informal play space (186.6% of the standard). Adult/ youth outdoor sport provision totalled 47.77 hectares (29.2% of the standard).
- 11.29 Whilst it is acknowledged that the survey findings have indicated a significant provision of casual/informal playing space, this is not distributed evenly throughout all wards in the Borough. Significant deficiencies in both equipped children's play space and adult/ youth formal sport are particularly notable from the survey findings. It is thus considered that there may also be potential for some of the areas identified as casual/ informal play space to be used for the provision of additional equipped children's play space and/ or formal sport.
- 11.30 It is acknowledged that only categories (i) – (iii) are comparable, and therefore their retention is justifiable, against the NPFA standard. However, it is also considered that the areas covered by categories (iv) and (v) have significant community and amenity value in terms of providing formal and informal recreation opportunities. Thus, it is considered to be justifiable for the areas identified in categories (iv) and (v) to also be incorporated in the provisions of Policy LR5 below.
- 11.31 The policies in this chapter of the Local Plan set out the Council's commitment not only to protect existing areas of outdoor recreation space, but also to identify areas where further provision could be made in the Plan period, including areas within new residential developments.
- 11.32 Development on land identified in the 1999 Outdoor Space Survey document and shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map (together with any subsequent reviews/updates), other than that incidental to recreational use of the outdoor recreation space, will therefore be resisted. ("Incidental to recreational use " in this instance, refers to development to improve the recreational use of the space, in keeping with its open character and appearance).
- 11.33 If, for any extraordinary reason, an area of outdoor recreation space is developed for another use, the applicant will be expected to make available alternative provision of equivalent community benefit; (that is the same sort of activities can be carried out

adequately within it, and its visual quality is, or can be improved to, a similar standard). A Section 106 agreement, in accordance with the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act (as substituted by section 12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991), would be used in such instances.

Consultations on proposals affecting playing fields

- 11.34 The views of Sport England will be sought on any development proposals affecting existing playing fields provision. The views of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will be sought on any proposal for hard development on former high grade agricultural land subsequently brought into playing field use.

POLICY LR5

Development on areas of outdoor recreation space, as identified in the 1999 Outdoor Recreation Space Survey document and shown on the Proposals Map (or any subsequent reviews/ updates), will not be permitted, other than that which is incidental to their use, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) a proposal would not unacceptably exacerbate an existing deficiency in accessible outdoor recreation space in the ward in which the site is located and the adjoining wards; or**
- (ii) where there is not an existing deficiency, the loss of the site will not create an unacceptable deficiency in accessible outdoor recreation space in the ward in which the site is located and the adjoining wards; and**
- (iii) the outdoor recreation space facilities affected by the proposed development can best be retained and enhanced (including the creation of better access for the public where appropriate), through the redevelopment of a small part of the site, or replacement provision of similar facilities to be provided and made accessible to the public in a suitable alternative location.**

In exceptional circumstances, where planning permission is granted for development on an area of outdoor recreation space, the Council will normally expect developers to enter into a legal agreement in order to ensure that the on site facilities are retained and enhanced, or similar facilities are provided on an alternative site.

- 11.35 Spaces with visual amenity value only which are unsuitable for play, such as grass verges, some grassed spaces within housing areas, or incidental space within the street scene, are important for their amenity value and should be protected from development. A policy relating to this can be found in the Built Environment Chapter. Furthermore, the contribution of both outdoor recreation space and general amenity

space in the provision of wildlife habitats is also addressed in the Conservation of Resources and Pollution Control Chapter.

Provision of Further Outdoor Recreation Space – Identified Sites

- 11.36 Worthing Borough Council adopted a Playing Field Strategy in 1988, which set out the future provision of playing fields in the Borough. This Strategy differs from the Local Plan in that it has no statutory status, but issues within it overlap with those which concern the Local Plan.
- 11.37 The Playing Field Strategy has been reviewed due to changes in demand for playing fields, as well as changes in methodology used; consequently a Revised Playing Fields Strategy was published in October 1994. A number of changes have affected the allocation of playing fields: acquisition of playing fields at Goring Hall; development of the Council Nursery site for social housing; the Inspector's Report on the Local Plan (adopted 1994) and the impact of the East Worthing Access Road. Those proposals arising from the Revised Strategy, with particular land use implications, are therefore incorporated into this document. The Revised Strategy identifies six new pitches to be provided throughout the Borough, in the medium/long term. Where appropriate, regard will be given to the content of future reviews of the Playing Field Strategy during the period of this Local Plan.

POLICY LR6

Development for public playing fields of land within the West Durrington Housing Policy H4 area, as shown on the Proposals Map and referred to in the West Durrington Development Brief will be permitted subject to the following criteria;

- (i) the provision of two playing fields are provided, one to be all-weather and floodlit;**
- (ii) changing facilities provided on site;**
- (iii) facilities to adjoin educational institutions to allow for integrated use**

The principles guiding development on the site are set out in the West Durrington Development Brief, adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- 11.38 The Council has previously identified land west of Adur Avenue in West Durrington for public playing field development. Following the identification of a major site at West Durrington for new housing development and associated leisure, social and community facilities, it is now proposed that land be allocated elsewhere within this Policy H4 area for public playing field use, adjoining a new indoor leisure facility. Is this still the case
- 11.39 In addition to the new playing field opportunity at the West Durrington site, the Council has already acquired playing field land at Goring Hall (in association with

development at the nearby hospital), together with a financial contribution for its improvement. The Council intends to use this land as public playing fields, but as no change of use is involved this site is not identified on the Proposals Map. In view of the high cost of bringing services to this site, it is anticipated that any new facilities, eg. changing accommodation, required to facilitate its increased use would be provided at the adjoining Fernhurst Recreation Ground.

- 11.40 A junior soccer centre may be developed at Victoria Park, in conjunction with a local youth football organisation. This will help meet the need for facilities for young people within the urban area. It is recognised that this development may require new changing accommodation and other facilities.

POLICY LR7

The development of facilities to create a junior soccer centre at Victoria Park will be permitted, subject to the following criteria:

- (i) the provision of changing and shower facilities;**
- (ii) the flexible use of indoor space for other uses such as meetings, functions, lectures etc. and**
- (iii) adequate cycle and parking provision;**

On site Provision of Future Outdoor Recreation Space – Within New Housing Developments

- 11.41 It is important for the amenity of residents that open space for play and recreation is provided in conjunction with new residential development. Most residential development (with the exception of some specialist housing) creates demand for such facilities. The National Playing Fields Association's (NPFA) guidance document "The Six Acre Standard – Minimum Standards For Outdoor Playing Space" (1992) recommends a minimum standard for outdoor recreation space to be provided in new development.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 11.42 The Borough Council has also produced supplementary planning guidance (SPG) entitled 'Providing for Play – A Guide for Residential Developers', which provides operational details for both on-site provision and the commuted payments scheme.

Categories of Recreation Provision subject to the NPFA Standard

Outdoor Recreation Space Standard : 2.4 Hectares Per 1,000 Population

- 11.43 Outdoor recreation space will be sought in relation to new residential developments, (of 10 or more dwellings) in accordance with the standards given in Policy LR8 below, which are derived from the NPFA standards (1992). The standards seek to ensure that all new residential development provides 2.4 hectares of outdoor recreation space per 1,000 population. This is broken down into two main elements –

children's play space and adult/youth outdoor sport. Where the NPFA standard offers a range (e.g. 1.6 –1.8 hectares for adult/youth outdoor sport) the mid point of the NPFA standard range has been used (e.g. 1.7 Ha). This stance is taken in order to offer clear guidance to developers and to ensure that the overall outdoor recreation space provides 2.4 Ha per 1,000 population.

Children's Play Space : 0.7 Hectare Per 1,000 Population

- 11.44 This element is divided into two sections: – children's equipped play areas to the standard of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population and casual or informal play space to the standard of 0.45 hectares 1,000 population. The relationship between a play area and its surroundings is particularly important. Play areas should be well related to areas of open space or playing fields, where possible, to link open spaces within the built environment.
- 11.45 Children's equipped play areas primarily comprise of 'Local Equipped Areas for Play' (LEAP) and 'Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play' (NEAP), as detailed in the NPFA document and explained in the Borough Council's SPG. Developers should seek the Council's agreement in respect to what type of provision would be appropriate to their proposal. Developers will be expected to fund the provision of all play equipment, which must conform to British or equivalent European Standards. The Council will normally require playgrounds to be suitably laid out and equipment installed before 25% of the houses are occupied.
- 11.46 Casual or informal play spaces are areas of land that are safe and accessible for children for casual or informal play. In order for them to be safe and accessible they must therefore be taken into consideration, like all the other elements of play space, at an early stage in the design and layout of a development proposal. Within this element of play space regard should be given to the needs of 4-6 year olds by the provision of 'Local Areas for Play'. Such provision is detailed in the Supplementary Planning Guidance document.

Adult/Youth Outdoor Sport : 1.7 Hectares Per 1,000 Population

- 11.47 Adult/youth outdoor sport facilities comprise of pitches, greens, courts, athletic tracks and other miscellaneous areas such as croquet lawns and training areas. Within this element of play space provision it is felt 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population should be pitch sports as suggested by the NPFA. This is also covered in the SPG.

Applying the Standard to New Housing Developments

- 11.48 Whilst it is recognised that every new dwelling is likely to increase the demand for outdoor recreation space, it is felt the requirement for such provision needs to be balanced against an effective, efficient and manageable way of handling residential development proposals. For this reason the provision of outdoor recreation space, as set out in Policy LR8 below, will not be sought in relation to residential proposals for nine or less units. All elements of the standard will, however, be required where a proposal for 1-9 residential units is submitted on land that forms part of a larger developable site. The reason for this is to prevent sites from being split in order to overcome some of the play space requirements. The cumulative effect of this approach will be kept under review and, if necessary, the threshold will be amended in the future as appropriate.

- 11.49 The Council will only seek the provision of outdoor recreation space, in line with the detailed standards in Policy LR8, to meet the needs of the proposed development. Developers will not, therefore, be expected to provide recreation facilities over and above those that can actually be justified by the development. The provision of outdoor recreation space will be in addition to incidental amenity and landscaped areas. Policy BE16 and paragraph 5.38 in the Built Environment chapter of this Plan deal with the landscaping and incidental open space requirements for new development proposals.
- 11.50 Where there is no existing shortfall, identified by the findings of the 1999 Outdoor Recreation Survey, (and any subsequent reviews/updates), of a particular type of open space in the relevant or adjoining wards, against the detailed standards set out in Policy LR8, then any housing proposal will not be expected to make any new provision of this type of open space. Where appropriate, however, should a housing proposal exacerbate or unreasonably constrain existing facilities a contribution towards the upgrading of existing facilities will be sought.

Types of Housing Development to which the Standards Apply

- 11.51 The standards apply to new residential units, including flats, and conversions to residential use. In respect to conversions of existing residential properties an assessment of the existing play space requirement will be made and only the additional play space requirement, if there is any, will be sought. Where the proposed development is for specialist housing which will not create a demand for all or some of the elements of outdoor recreation space, no respective requirement will be sought. For example, housing for the elderly will not generate a requirement for outdoor children's equipped play space or casual/informal play space. Regard may still be given, however, to the need for the provision of (or contribution to) appropriate outdoor sports facilities e.g. bowling greens. Where specialist housing has been developed and subsequently an application is submitted to make the housing available to the general public, the Council will seek the outstanding elements of the outdoor recreation space in accordance with Policy LR8.

Providing and Maintaining Outdoor Recreation Space

- 11.52 All outdoor recreational areas should be on land suitable for the purpose, properly drained and appropriately located in order to be safe and accessible to residents. Adequate buffer areas must also be provided in order to protect the amenities of the surrounding properties. Appropriate arrangements must be made for the future maintenance of the outdoor recreational areas. The Council will consult with Sport England on major pitch proposals.
- 11.53 New areas of open space, including recreational facilities and children's play space, may be either privately maintained, or passed to Worthing Borough Council. Where they are to be passed to the Borough Council, the developer/interested parties may be expected to make a financial contribution (controlled by a legal agreement and in accordance with Annex B of Circular 1/97) towards the on-going maintenance costs.
- 11.54 Calculation of appropriate on-site provision to meet the standards and the application of the standards are explained in full in the Supplementary Planning Guidance, 'Providing for Play – A Guide for Residential Developers', which is available from the Planning Section. Advice on suitable on-site facilities can also be sought from Worthing Borough Council's Leisure and Cultural Services.

**Off site Provision by Commuted Payments of Further Outdoor Recreation Space
– Within New Housing Developments**

- 11.55 It is recognised that a certain area of land is needed in order to give effective provision of outdoor recreation space. There will thus be instances where the outdoor recreation space requirement of a residential scheme will not be of an amount to provide an appropriate area for some or all elements of outdoor recreation space, and it will not be practicable to seek such provision on-site. For example, the area of adult/youth sports facilities generated by a scheme for ten dwellings will not be sufficient, in itself, to provide a sports pitch/court. It is recognised, however, that the cumulative effect of a series of developments which do not provide any or provide a reduced amount of outdoor recreation space would be to fail to provide for these new demands and would exacerbate any existing deficiencies. Consequently, where a residential development will generate a need for outdoor recreation space but it is impracticable to provide all or part of it on-site, the Council will seek to secure a financial contribution towards the provision of equivalent facilities elsewhere within the same ward or immediately adjoining wards.
- 11.56 Similarly, where the Council considers it to be more appropriate for the provision of the outdoor recreation space to be provided off-site (e.g. for reasons of safety) the Council may enter into negotiations with the developer in order to secure a financial contribution for the off-site provision.
- 11.57 All persons with an interest in the site will be expected to enter into a legal agreement made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as substituted by section 12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) in order to secure the financial contribution. The legal agreements will be in accordance with the guidance given in Annex B of the DOE Circular 1/97.

POLICY LR8

For residential developments of 10 or more units, provision of outdoor recreation space will be sought generated by the development, in accordance with the standard of 2.4 Ha per 1,000 population, will be sought as follows:-

- (i) children's equipped play areas proportional to the standard of 0.25 Ha per 1,000 population. No single play area shall normally be less than 0.056 Ha.**
- (ii) casual or informal play space proportional to the standard of 0.45 Ha per 1,000 population. Within this criterion, regard should be given to the provision of 'Local Areas for Play' (LAP) which need to be suitable and safe for 4-6 year olds.**
- (iii) adult/youth outdoor sports facilities proportional to the standard of 1.7 Ha per 1,000 population, of which 1.2 Ha per 1,000 population should be for pitch sports.**

The Council will seek to secure the provision of the agreed outdoor recreation space by the use of conditions or by legal agreement, as appropriate.

Where it is not practicable or appropriate for all or part of the outdoor recreation space requirement generated by a development to be provided on site, the Council will seek to enter into a legal agreement with the developer in order to secure an appropriate financial contribution so that the respective outdoor recreation space requirement can be provided elsewhere in the ward of the development or an adjoining ward.

Allotments

- 11.59 Allotments form a valuable recreation amenity resource within the Built Up Area. This is demonstrated by the high demand for plots in recent years, and a waiting list is operated by Worthing Borough Council. As a result it is considered important that all existing allotments should be retained and protected against development. Opportunities may be taken within the life of this Plan to create new allotment facilities through development.

POLICY LR9

Development on existing allotments will not be permitted, other than that which is incidental to their use.

West Durrington

- 11.60 Leisure and recreation facilities play an important part in the life of a community and it is important that these are provided as part of any new development. Such facilities will therefore be provided as part of the development of West Durrington as a new neighbourhood. Policy H4 in the Housing Chapter and the West Durrington Development Brief provide further details on this site.

The Aquarena

- 11.61 The Aquarena is an important leisure facility within the Borough, providing a swimming pool, a learner pool, gym and other fitness related activities. It is adjoined to the south by a boating pool and to the west by a paddling pool and a children's fun park (Peter Pan's Playground) located within an open grassed area which forms the setting for Beach House, a Grade II* Listed Building.
- 11.62 It is likely that within the lifetime of this Local Plan, the Aquarena may require redevelopment, possibly incorporating the existing boating lake and paddling pool. Redevelopment of this area for a mix of leisure uses should take the opportunity to enhance the setting of Beach House and provide for a development which respects and relates to the seafront setting.

- 11.63 Apart from the Sea Place/ Eirene Road area, this is the only development site in Worthing that is not separated from the promenade and foreshore by a road; this direct relationship with the seafront should be taken fully into account during the preparation of redevelopment proposals.
- 11.64 Given the location of this site on the busy Brighton Road, a transport assessment will be required to consider the need for any improvements to the local highway network and to non-car modes of travel arising from the redevelopment of the site.
- 11.65 A development brief will be produced to set out the principles guiding any redevelopment of this site. Any major leisure redevelopment proposals for this site would also be subject to Policy LR12.

POLICY LR10

Redevelopment of the Aquarena, including the area to the south and west as shown on the Proposals Map, will be permitted for a mix of sports and leisure uses, providing that:

- (i) there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the setting of Beach House; and**
- (ii) adequate provision is made for car and cycle parking.**

A transport assessment will be required to assess the need for any off-site highway works and improvements to encourage non-car modes of travel.

Worthing Leisure Centre

- 11.66 The Leisure Centre was opened in 1972 and currently provides for a range of both sporting and social facilities, which includes the Lotus Health Suite Gym, badminton and squash courts and the Amazon Adventure children's activity area. Outdoor sports facilities are situated on the land immediately to the east of the leisure centre, and include Astroturf pitches, athletics track and areas for field sports, and winter sports pitches, plus a children's play area and basketball area.
- 11.67 It is likely that within the lifetime of this Local Plan, the Leisure Centre may require redevelopment, with potential for a range of mixed leisure uses.
- 11.68 It is uncertain at this stage whether any future redevelopment of the Leisure Centre would have any impact upon the adjoining outdoor sports area. As residential properties immediately adjoin the southern and eastern boundaries of the outdoor sports area, any redevelopment proposal would need to ensure that there was no unacceptable loss of amenity to these nearby residents.
- 11.69 Access to the site is provided from the main Shaftesbury Road into a car park immediately south of the Leisure Centre. Given the turning and visibility issues associated with the use of this access, a transport assessment will be required to

consider the need for any improvements to the local highway network and to non-car modes of travel arising from the redevelopment of the site.

- 11.70 A development brief will be produced to set out the principles guiding any redevelopment of this site. Any major redevelopment proposals for this site would also be subject to Policy LR12.

POLICY LR11

Worthing Borough Council will permit the redevelopment of the Worthing Leisure Centre for a mix of sports and leisure uses, subject to:-

- (i) there being no unacceptable loss of amenity to nearby residents;**
- (ii) adequate car and cycle parking being provided;**
- (iii) the submission of a transport assessment to assess the need for any off-site highway works and improvements to encourage non-car modes of travel; and**
- (iv) the proposal complying with other relevant policies of this Plan.**

The Grafton Site

- 11.71 The Grafton Site is located on Worthing seafront between the Grafton Deck to the east and Augusta Place to the west. A development brief produced by Worthing Borough Council in May 1994 suggests three potential uses for this site; an hotel, residential use, or a leisure related activity. This issue is addressed in the Mixed Sites Chapter.

Major Leisure Development

- 11.72 Recently, there has been evidence of increased development pressure for major leisure schemes which tend to include a number of indoor leisure uses within one development. These may, for example, include multiplex cinemas, nightclubs, family entertainment centres, fitness suites, swimming pools and associated food and drink facilities.
- 11.73 Planning Policy Guidance Note 6 provides guidance on the location of such developments and, in general terms, encourages major leisure schemes to be located in or on the edge of town centres as such sites will serve to enhance the vitality of the town centre. Where this is not possible, such developments should be located on sites which are, or are able to be, highly accessible by public transport.
- 11.74 PPG 6 highlights the need for leisure schemes which attract a lot of people to be the subject of a sequential assessment of site availability – much in the same way as major retail schemes. The guidance makes clear that some leisure uses, eg. bingo and

pubs, are best located in local centres and that encouragement of a wide range of facilities in district and local centres consistent with the function of the centre can help to reduce the need for travel. PPG 6 also specifically states that where appropriate sites can be found in or on the edge of town centres, these should be considered for major leisure uses, eg. small multi screen cinemas. In accordance with this guidance, two edge-of-centre sites (The Aquarena and Teville Gate) are specifically identified in this plan, as well as two town centre sites (the Grafton site and Union Place). Out of town proposals will normally be resisted.

- 11.75 A Ministerial Statement has clarified that proposals for new leisure development which accord with an up to date plan strategy or are proposed on sites within an existing centre, should not be required to demonstrate that they satisfy the test of need because this should have been taken into account in the development plan. The Ministerial Statement goes on to state that new leisure proposals located at an edge of centre or out of centre location which are not in accordance with an up to date development plan strategy should be required to demonstrate the need for additional facilities. This does not simply mean showing that there is spare physical capacity or demand in terms of available expenditure within the proposal's catchment area.
- 11.76 There are sites within or close to the town centre which are potentially available for leisure development. These include the Aquarena, Teville Gate, the Grafton site and the Union Place Car Park and Police Station site. Policies for the Aquarena site are set out in LR10 above, for Teville Gate and the Grafton site in MS2 and MS4 within the Mixed Uses chapter, and for Union Place in S4 within the Shopping chapter of this plan. Such sites, however, are limited in size and are unlikely to be able to accommodate a larger mixed leisure scheme, although there is scope for smaller leisure facilities on these sites. In consequence, schemes may be promoted away from the town centre and where this happens, the applicant will need to justify the chosen location in a sequential assessment of the site, demonstrate that it is highly accessible by public transport and demonstrate that there is a need for such facilities. The Council will consult with Sport England on any major leisure development proposal.

POLICY LR12

Leisure development will normally be permitted provided that:-

- (i) it is proposed in the 'town centre' location, or if it is proposed elsewhere in the built up area, its location is justified by a thorough sequential assessment of alternative site availability;**
- (ii) in the case of proposed developments at an edge-of-centre or out of centre location, the developer can demonstrate the need for additional facilities;**
- (iii) the development is (or it is proposed as part of the development to be made) accessible by a choice of means of transport and proposes attractive pedestrian and cycle links to nearby facilities and appropriate car parking;**

-
- (iv) the scale, siting, design and appearance of buildings and ancillary developments are appropriate to the scale and character of the surrounding area and that adequate landscaping is proposed;**
 - (v) the development has adequate access to the main road network, would not adversely affect the safe and free movement of vehicles on the network and would not result in an unacceptable increase in traffic passing through any neighbouring residential areas;**
 - (vi) activities associated with the development, such as operating hours, lighting, vehicular movement, servicing, deliveries and other ancillary operations would not adversely affect the character or amenity of the surrounding area or the amenities of nearby residents; and**
 - (vii) the proposal complies with other relevant policies of this Plan.**

11.77 Policy LR12 will be applied to any significant leisure development proposal which would attract a lot of people and which would be appropriate for a town centre. It will not be applied to local facilities designed to attract clients from a local area.

