

POLICY 72 LAND FOR LEISURE

High priority will be given to the provision of land for a wide range of leisure activities. Provision should enable the needs of all sections of the community to be met in appropriate locations.

Needs will be assessed on the basis of widely accepted standards of provision, adapted according to the character of the local area.

Appropriate locations are subject to the other policies of this plan, considered to be:

- (a) within reasonable distance of the homes of the likely participants;**
- (b) where the pattern of movement generated can be accommodated satisfactorily on adjoining highways; and**
- (c) where the impact of the land use on the environment and local amenity is kept to a satisfactory minimum. Judgement about this impact will have regard to the guidance on intensity of leisure uses set out in the background to this policy.**

Specific sites affected are listed in the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites.

Reasons

- 72.1 Leisure is a major land user and demand for recreational and sports facilities is growing and diversifying. Access to leisure facilities is an important requirement of the community. Provision may be close to homes (e.g. for children's play space) or a significant drive away (e.g. for minority countryside sports activities like war games which can cause nuisance and disturbance), depending upon the nature of the activity and suitability of land available.

Background

- 72.2 *Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' recognises that open space, sport and recreation underpin people's quality of life. The Plan's policies cover provision of a range of accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities. A new assessment of existing and future needs, and an audit of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be undertaken before the next review of the Plan.*
- 72.3 *Advice on leisure provision and need from bodies such as Sport England, the Arts Council and their regional elements, will be taken into account by the Borough Council.*

General guidance on the intensity of leisure activity and suitable locations for leisure development is set out below. Criteria establishing the intensity of activities are:

Intensity of Activity

	High	Medium	Low
Building Cover Index (1)	5-100%	2 - 5%	under 2%
Car Parking Index (2)	50-100%	10 - 50%	under 10%
User Index (3)	Over 800	50 - 800	under 50

- (1) Building area as a percentage of site area
 (2) Car parking area as a percentage of site area
 (3) Number of people per hectare per average day.

Examples of activities in each category and where they may be located are summarised below:

Intensity	Activity	General Location
High	Hotel; theatre; cinema; bowling alley; skating rink; (indoor) sports centre	Town centres with good accessibility
Medium	Meeting halls; neighbourhood sports facilities; outdoor entertainment; golf; flying; motor sports; "combat games"; camping	In towns outside town centres. River valleys between towns within visually damaged or unfarmable areas with good accessibility to the urban fringe - but not where open, exposed, vulnerable to urban influences or threatened by coalescence, or sensitive wildlife habitats or sites of scientific or archaeological significance.
Low	Walking; picnicking; other casual outdoor activities requiring little adaptation of the land and which are not disruptive	River valleys between towns. Exceptionally in open countryside, where confined to scenic drives, footpaths and bridleways, supplemented by small car parks and picnic sites at viewpoints and key access points.

Based on County Structure Plan (1991)
