

13

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES



Introduction	366
Sustainable Transport	378
Parking	386
Community Facilities	390
Open Space and Sports and Recreation	396

13

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Introduction



13.1 It is important that growth and development in the borough is supported by the timely provision of infrastructure and services, so that new communities are sustainable, well-integrated and function effectively.

13.2 The provision of infrastructure in the right location, at the right scale and at the right time, is essential to support planned development and to ensure that existing communities are not adversely affected by new development.

13.3 The council has worked in partnership with infrastructure and service providers and neighbouring authorities to identify the infrastructure required to support growth across the borough, whether that be upgrading and extending existing infrastructure and / or the provision of new infrastructure and services. The details of the Infrastructure and Services that are required to deliver the Local Plan (2042) are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and its associated delivery schedules, which form a key part of the Local Plan evidence base.

13.4 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a 'live' document, and it is continually updated as and when infrastructure and service providers, provide their latest information. These documents identify existing infrastructure and service capacity, known existing deficiencies, and they identify the infrastructure that will be required to support new development, including indicative costs (which are subject to indexation), details of funding provider/s, delivery mechanisms and indicative phasing.

13.5 In addition to this, some of the infrastructure providers e.g. utility providers produce 5-year business plans which detail their planned infrastructure, services and funding for that period to meet the demands of an increased population and these are subject to approval by the relevant regulator. Some elements of infrastructure can be delivered quickly and developed under the use of the relevant Permitted Development Rights. However, other infrastructure requires planning consent and / or other consents from Regulators or Agencies. IDP's will be regularly monitored and updated to reflect changes in infrastructure requirements, funding and delivery programmes.

13.6 There is a range of infrastructure and services that may be necessary to ensure that development is acceptable in planning terms. Figure 13.1 sets out a range of infrastructure types (although this list is not exhaustive).

13.7 The IDP and its associated delivery schedules will / can be used at various stages in decision-making. This includes for pre-application engagement where they will be used to help inform the required on site and off site delivery of infrastructure and services, for negotiations and also decision making on planning applications. They will also be used to inform planning conditions, legal agreements and can also be used to help inform planning appeals.

13.8 Developers will be expected at the pre application stage (where relevant) and as part of their planning application to demonstrate how their proposals respond to the most up-to-date IDP and the latest known infrastructure requirements. This may also be set out in the formal responses from statutory consultees. Information should include what infrastructure and services are proposed to be delivered, how infrastructure requirements and services will be delivered in a timely, coordinated and phased manner (including frontloading where this is required), and how cumulative and cross-boundary impacts have been accounted for.

13.9 Not all development within the borough will be required to mitigate its impact on infrastructure and service provision, as some investment may be delivered through alternative funding streams or relate to asset renewal including extensions and upgrades. Development will only be required to contribute towards infrastructure that is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and which meets the required statutory tests.

Figure 13.1: Main Infrastructure Types

Topic	Categories
Transport	Road, bus, rail, cycling and walking
Education	Primary and secondary schools, further and higher education, adult learning/community learning
Health and Social Care	Health care, hospitals, and adult social services
Sport and Community Infrastructure	Sport, recreation, open space, libraries and community centres
Public Services	Emergency services (police/ fire/ambulance), recycling, waste management and disposal
Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Flood Infrastructure	Biodiversity, flood and surface water management
Utilities	Water, wastewater, electricity, gas and telecommunications

Infrastructure Contributions

13.10 The funding and delivery of infrastructure is often complex and may require contributions from multiple sources. Infrastructure may be delivered directly by a developer as part of a development proposal, or through financial contributions secured to support provision elsewhere, depending on the nature and impact of the proposed development, the current local infrastructure capacity and subject to the site-specific circumstances. The following are the main funding mechanisms available to the council.

S106 Planning Obligations

13.11 Planning obligations also known as Section 106 agreements, are legal agreements between the council, developers and the landowners. They are used to secure the provision, specification and phasing of infrastructure, services and mitigation measures necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms. The council does not currently operate a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

13.12 Planning obligations must meet the required legislative tests which are set out in Regulation 122 of [The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations \(2010\)](#) (as amended). These require that planning obligation(s) are:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

13.13 Section 106 obligations may secure infrastructure either through on-site provision, such as community facilities, or through financial contributions towards off-site provision delivered by the council or other service providers. For example, land or financial contributions towards education may be transferred or paid to the Local Education Authority to support the delivery of school places or land for a new school required to serve the development, which may also serve other areas/ developments. Section 106 Agreements are managed and monitored by the relevant Council/s.

S278 Agreements

13.14 A Section 278 agreement (or S278), of the Highways Act 1980, enables developers to negotiate and agree with the relevant highways authority to design, fund and / or deliver works to the public highway including the local and strategic highway. These agreements are entered into with the relevant Local Highway Authority or National Highways, and they are used to secure highway related improvements required to mitigate the transport impacts of proposed development. It should be noted that there can be cross boundary agreements involving more than one Local Highway Authority. Section 278 agreements are separate to, but may be coordinated with, Section 106 obligations, planning conditions and information that is included on a planning decision notice. Section 278 Agreements are managed and monitored by the council.

Infrastructure Funding Statement

13.15 The council publishes an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which provides information on developer contributions that have been secured, received, allocated and spent. The IFS also sets out how contributions are being used to deliver different infrastructure projects and it provides transparency regarding the future allocation of funds.

13.16 In liaison with infrastructure providers, the council will continue to secure contributions from developers relating to their development in order to support the delivery of infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and/ or any other infrastructure that is identified to be required to make development acceptable in planning terms. This may be identified by other stakeholders / partners or officers in response to a planning application, as a result of pre-application engagement and / or through the formal planning application consultation process. The Local Plan provides a clear framework to enable infrastructure planning and investment across the borough.

13.17 Infrastructure will also be funded through a range of other sources, including central government funding, infrastructure providers' investment programmes, and funding secured through bids and partnerships.

13.18 Policy INF1 Provision of Infrastructure and Services provides the overarching framework for ensuring that development is supported by the timely provision of infrastructure. This includes securing contributions through appropriate mechanisms and ensuring that infrastructure delivery is frontloaded in the early stages where possible and coordinated with the phasing of development to ensure that new development does not adversely impact existing infrastructure and services.

Policy INF1: Provision of Infrastructure and Services

- 1 Adequate infrastructure and services are important for creating, sustaining and securing healthy communities. Development proposals must demonstrate, having regard to cumulative and cross-boundary impacts, that sufficient infrastructure, capacity and services are available or will be delivered in a timely manner to support the development. New development must mitigate its impacts upon the existing infrastructure and service capacity.
- 2 Engagement with relevant infrastructure and service providers must be undertaken at the earliest opportunity, to confirm what new and/ or extended infrastructure, services and utilities will be required. This should include discussions to understand infrastructure delivery timescales to support the development. This includes engagement with relevant statutory consultees / service providers including the Local Education Authority, the Local Highway Authority, the relevant regional and local NHS providers, utility and energy providers, community infrastructure providers and end users of these facilities as relevant, to ensure needs arising from development are clearly identified.
- 3 Any discussions in relation to the planning of future infrastructure and services need to consider any other developments within the vicinity that are already under construction, have planning consent, are subject to a current planning application or planning appeal, or are included as an allocated site within an adopted Local Plan including those located in neighbouring local authorities which are served by the same infrastructure.
- 4 Proposals must demonstrate how they respond to engagement undertaken in support of the application and to relevant infrastructure evidence available at the time of determination, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This should include consideration of infrastructure requirements, delivery priorities, phasing and service capacity, where relevant to the proposal.
- 5 Planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there is, or will be, sufficient infrastructure and services to meet the requirements that would arise from the proposed development. Applicants must demonstrate that sufficient infrastructure capacity exists to accommodate their proposed development in addition to other consented development or that new infrastructure can be funded and delivered in time to support the proposed development. Development that would result in unacceptable pressure on existing infrastructure and services and that would harm its functionality by taking it over capacity, or that would prejudice the delivery of already planned and consented infrastructure, will be refused planning permission.

Policy INF1: Provision of Infrastructure and Services continued

- 6 New healthcare, education, community, indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation facilities and services (where required) must be provided in suitable locations that relate well to both existing and new development to ensure accessibility and community cohesion. These facilities must be accessible by existing or new or improved public transport services and by walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Appropriate parking for a range of end users will also be expected.
- 7 Where development gives rise to the need for expanded or the creation of new education, healthcare, or community facilities (including community centres and village halls), proposals must demonstrate that adequate infrastructure and / or service capacity exists or that it would be capable of being delivered to support the scale of growth proposed. This includes the potential to include safeguarded land to allow potential future extension/s and to ensure new facilities are not landlocked. Where new infrastructure and/ or service facilities are required, suitable provision must be made on-site within the development or in an accessible, nearby location. Community infrastructure and / or service provision must be coordinated with and form part of the phasing of the whole development and delivered at the appropriate stage. Where identified as necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms, this may include delivery in the earlier stages of the development, including prior to commencement or occupation to ensure that services and infrastructure are in place to support the new community or to mitigate the impact of the development.
- 8 Development that incorporates low carbon or decentralised utility infrastructure will be supported where it assists in meeting national and the council's climate objectives.
- 9 Applicants must demonstrate, in consultation with the relevant statutory undertakers and regulators that their development proposal will be able to connect to adequate utility infrastructure and services, including water supply, waste water, gas and electric energy and telecommunications networks. In relation to water, applicants must demonstrate, that there is sufficient water supply and waste water conveyance and treatment, or that the infrastructure providers can fund and deliver additional capacity when required to serve the proposed development (including the consideration of phases) without causing unacceptable harm to groundwater, water quality and supply, sewerage and sewage treatment services to existing properties, businesses and/ or the wider environment. Mains connections should be provided where feasible. Development that cannot be supported by the required utility infrastructure capacity will be refused planning permission unless impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

Strategic Policy

- 10 Applicants must engage with commercial telephone, broadband and mobile providers at an early stage (pre-application stage if relevant) to ensure the delivery of high-quality digital connectivity, including high-speed broadband (with full fibre where available) and sufficient mobile telecommunications coverage including the shared use of existing mast sites and supporting infrastructure, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. Mobile telecommunications proposals should refer to the local authority sites register, to ascertain the existing mobile coverage. Proposals should demonstrate that site selection has had regard to the amenity of nearby residential, educational, health and community facilities, whilst recognising the operational requirements of the network and should also demonstrate that any visual or other amenity impacts have been minimised through siting and design.
- 11 New or improved infrastructure and services will be delivered either on-site by developers and / or off-site via developers or other organisations through the use of planning conditions, Section 106 obligations, Section 278 agreements or other appropriate mechanisms. Where applicable, contributions will be linked to conditioned development phasing including trigger points (e.g. construction stages, completion, occupation etc) to ensure that the design, planning consent, licensing and delivery of infrastructure occurs when it is required and to ensure it does not cause problems in relation to the existing infrastructure capacity and services.
- 12 Where there is a need to expand existing infrastructure or to create new infrastructure in relation to public and / or private community, education (early years/nursery, primary, secondary, sixth form and SEND) or healthcare facilities including any dual use buildings this will include the safeguarding of land and the provision of funding for those dedicated end uses within development sites for this provision. This will include, where justified by evidence, safeguarding land required for future expansion and ensuring that sufficient access arrangements are retained to enable the site and any future expansion area to be developed. This provision for funding and / or land would be secured, phased and delivered through the required planning conditions and legal agreements including Section 106 Agreements to ensure timely and coordinated provision.
- 13 Long-term management and maintenance of infrastructure assets and related services must be secured where necessary to ensure that infrastructure remains functional and fit for purpose in perpetuity.

Policy INF1: Provision of Infrastructure and Services continued

Phased delivery of infrastructure and services

- 14 Infrastructure delivery must be aligned with the phasing and timing of development and must ensure that infrastructure is available when required to support development. This may include delivery prior to commencement or occupation where necessary. Public transport, education, healthcare and community and leisure facilities must be delivered in step with housing occupation to avoid unacceptable pressure on existing services as agreed with providers and the council.
- 15 Where development is phased or delivered by multiple parties, proposals must ensure coordinated infrastructure delivery, including provision to the boundary of each phase, and must not compromise existing infrastructure or future connections. Infrastructure delivery must be in accordance with an agreed masterplan and phasing plan (if relevant) for the overall development that would be secured by the relevant legal agreement and associated planning conditions.
- 16 All infrastructure must be delivered to appropriate regulatory and provider standards, with arrangements agreed for adoption or long-term management.

Policy Implementation

13.19 This Policy will be applied to all forms of development (as relevant to those requiring infrastructure) and seeks to ensure that infrastructure and services are planned, funded, consented (as applicable) and delivered in a timely, coordinated, and sustainable manner. Applicants must demonstrate that sufficient infrastructure capacity exists or will be provided and delivered in time to support the proposed development, having regard to cumulative and cross-boundary impacts, and in accordance with the most up-to-date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP and its delivery schedules), and other information from providers as relevant.

13.20 At the outset of the planning process, applicants must review infrastructure provision and engage with relevant infrastructure and service providers. Early engagement, including at the pre-application stage if relevant, is required to establish the current infrastructure provision, its capacity, future requirements and mitigation to make the development acceptable, delivery mechanisms (including funding and consents) and the required phasing. This must include engagement with utility providers, transport authorities, the local education authority, NHS, education providers and other relevant bodies.

13.21 Pre Application submissions (as relevant) and planning application submissions must clearly set out:

- Details of their engagement with infrastructure planners and providers and the resultant requirements;

- The current related infrastructure and its current capacity taking account of any existing planning consents, their related legal agreements and their construction stages;
- The types and sizes of infrastructure required to support the development;
- Details of whether the infrastructure is on and / or off site;
- Details of any land that may be required and how that will be delivered;
- How and when it will be delivered including mechanisms and required consents;
- How and when it will be funded;
- How provision relates to the proposed development phasing; and
- How long-term ownership and / or management and maintenance will be secured.

13.22 Infrastructure delivery may be secured through on-site provision or off-site contributions, including through Section 106 and / or Section 278 agreements, planning conditions and / or other appropriate mechanisms. Within the relevant legal agreements, contributions will be index linked and will be directly linked to the development phasing which will include trigger points for provision of the infrastructure and services and / or payments to ensure that infrastructure is funded, consented, delivered and is operational in a timely and coordinated manner. Ownership, maintenance and management costs and any related requirements will be set out within the relevant legal agreement/s.

13.23 Where development is phased or involves multiple developers, a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery will be required and will need to be demonstrated through masterplanning and / or a development agreement. This includes ensuring that infrastructure is delivered to the boundary of each phase or land parcel to enable future connections. Proposals that would compromise existing infrastructure, restrict future connections or prejudice delivery of other sites coming forward or infrastructure delivery as identified in the IDP will not be permitted.

13.24 Applicants must demonstrate that adequate utility capacity exists, or will be funded and delivered, including wastewater, water supply, energy and digital communications networks. This must be agreed with relevant providers and secured as part of the development proposal.

13.25 All infrastructure must be delivered to appropriate regulatory and provider standards, with arrangements agreed for adoption and/or long-term management.

13.26 Development proposals that comply with up-to-date Local Plan policies will be assumed to be viable. Viability will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be robustly justified. Where viability is raised, applicants must submit an open-book viability assessment to the council as part of the planning application submission or earlier at pre-application stage for an independent review which will be undertaken by specialists that are appointed by the council.

13.27 Where an element of reduced provision is deemed accepted by the council, in the interests of delivering a viable development, this will only be where the other benefits of development clearly outweigh the harm arising from any shortfall. In such cases, monitoring, review and clawback mechanisms will be secured via the relevant legal agreement(s) to ensure that policy, infrastructure and service requirements can be delivered if viability improves following the grant of permission.

13.28 The council will monitor the delivery of infrastructure and services secured through planning obligations through its annual Infrastructure Funding Statement and ongoing review of the IDP. This will support transparency, effective infrastructure planning and the timely delivery of infrastructure required to support growth.

13.29 Where development proposals do not adequately address policy, infrastructure and service requirements identified in the IDP or as other information or evidence from service providers indicates, planning permission will be refused unless appropriate mitigation and the relevant legal agreement(s) can be secured.



Sustainable Transport



13.30 New development across the borough will place additional pressure onto the existing strategic and local transport networks, public transport and related sustainable transport infrastructure and car parking provision. It is therefore essential that growth is planned, managed, phased and delivered in a way that supports a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system. There is a need to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable impacts on the highways and / or public transport network whilst enabling an increasing shift towards more accessible and more sustainable patterns of movement. Without appropriate intervention, this is likely to result in increased congestion, longer journey times, poorer air quality and adverse impacts on public health, including reduced levels of physical activity where accessible, active travel options are not available or are limited or are unattractive.

13.31 The Local Plan adopts a vision-led ‘decide and provide’ approach, moving away from a traditional ‘predict and provide’ model which focuses primarily on accommodating forecast traffic growth. Instead, this approach seeks to focus on place making, reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, and to prioritise sustainable modes of transport including the use of electric vehicles, shared private transport, public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. It is recognised that some individuals (e.g. the disabled) due to their personal circumstances, and or their location and their day-to-day needs will still need to use a private vehicle.

13.32 This ‘decide and provide’ approach to transport planning responds directly to the climate change emergency, the need to improve air quality and the need to improve and protect public health, and the requirement to deliver more inclusive and accessible places in order to reduce inequalities and to improve social cohesion. It also reflects the objectives of the Kent Local Transport Plan 5 (2024), which promotes an infrastructure-first, multi-modal and adaptive approach to transport planning.

13.33 The borough currently experiences high levels of car dependency and there are gaps in the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure and services, particularly in relation to a lack of connectivity between existing settlements. The Local Plan seeks to address these challenges by proposing that development is located in sustainable locations and ensuring that opportunities to enhance and expand sustainable transport networks are maximised through the provision of new development and by seeking opportunities to secure other forms of external funding as and when opportunities arise.

13.34 Policy INF2 relates to Sustainable Transport and Active Travel. It sets out how development will be required to deliver and contribute towards high-quality, inclusive and integrated transport infrastructure and services, ensuring that sustainable modes of transport are prioritised and that any residual impacts on the strategic and local highway network are appropriately mitigated.

Policy INF2: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

- 1 The council and the local highways authority recognises the importance of delivering and enhancing sustainable and active travel infrastructure which is accessible to all and is essential to support the vitality and cohesion of new and existing communities.
- 2 Adopting a 'decide and provide' approach, the council will work in partnership with National Highways, the local highway authority (i.e. currently Kent County Council) and transport planners and providers to ensure that future development meets the legislative requirements and minimises the need to travel, prioritises sustainable modes, and that developers seek to appropriately mitigate the travel demand and traffic impacts of their development. This may include the requirement for the provision of a transport statement or a transport impact assessment / and or a travel plan.
- 3 At a very early stage developers will need to undertake pre application engagement with the local highway authority in relation to their proposals, their proposed draft transport statements, their proposed transport solutions and mitigation strategies and (where relevant) to arrange to use the relevant local authority highways model(s) to inform their highways proposals.
- 4 Development proposals will be required to design schemes that will contribute to healthy places and streets and enable an integrated and improved transport network for all users, prioritising walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, reducing car journeys and providing greater sustainable travel choices. Developers will be required to demonstrate how they have achieved this within their planning application submission including within their Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement or Transport Impact Assessment and within their Masterplan.

Public transport and active travel

- 5 It is acknowledged that transport and travel solutions and mitigation options will vary from site to site, and between urban and rural locations. Site promoters must give proportionate priority, reflecting the scale and location of development to the following:
 - a Supporting and enhancing existing bus services, especially those from and connecting to rural service centres and larger villages, to make these more attractive and commercially sustainable through enhanced service frequency, hours of operation and the provision of high-quality, accessible vehicles and kerb-side facilities including bus stops, shelters, seating, real time signage including disabled facilities. Development will also support behaviour change measures, including:
 - i promotion of bus travel to new occupiers;
 - ii providing travel incentives such as discounted or taster tickets;

Strategic Policy

- iii highlighting national and local bus incentive schemes and railcards.
 - iv supporting measures identified in the Kent Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) and other relevant transport evidence;
 - b Supporting, enhancing and extending rail services through the provision of access and railway station facilities improvements that make rail more accessible, desirable, convenient and safer for passengers to undertake linked non-car journeys where they can do so;
 - c Supporting rail provision for the sustainable movement of freight;
 - d Providing high-quality, safe and direct on-site routes for walking, wheeling and cycling as appropriate, connecting to the wider network, alongside supporting measures such as secure and safe cycle parking with electric charging points and user incentives (including cycle vouchers for new occupiers);
 - e Having regard to the Kent Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Tonbridge and Malling Active Travel Strategy in seeking to protect and enhance off-site public rights of way to achieve a high-quality network of routes for walking, wheeling, cycling and equestrian use that are coherent, direct and accessible, and which are compliant with the relevant legislation and guidance including Local Transport Note 1/20 (or any subsequent guidance); and
 - f Where appropriate provide contributions towards the borough council's car club scheme (subject to operational coverage), in particular where on-site parking provision is restricted, and supporting opportunities for shared and low-car mobility solutions where appropriate.
- 6 Active travel infrastructure must be accessible, inclusive and safe for all users, including children, older people and disabled people and where appropriate integrated with green and blue infrastructure. Cycle infrastructure must be designed to accommodate adapted and non-standard cycles (including tricycles, cargo bikes and wheelchair-accessible cycles).

Strategic Policy

Policy INF2: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel continued

Traffic and highways

- 7 In terms of highway design and traffic management, developments will be supported where:
 - a They meet the requirements of National Highways and / or the local highways authority;
 - b They meet the requirements of the Local Transport Plan, associated transport strategies, the Local Plan and the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - c They meet the policy and requirements of the Council's Environmental Health Department including the Air Quality Strategy, the Air Quality Management Plan and Noise Quality Strategy;
 - d Their proposed transport scheme has been modelled and validated using the required national and / or local transport model/s;
 - e The impacts do not cause unacceptable harm to highway safety, public health, local amenity and / or the character of the area;
- f Streets, roads and junctions within the development, including those to be altered or added as a result of the development, are designed and delivered in accordance with appropriate national and local design standards, prioritising place and movement;
- g Safe and suitable access is achieved for all users, including service and emergency vehicles with appropriate turning provision; and
- h Layouts are designed to manage vehicle speeds and prioritise non-motorised travel (walking, wheeling and cycling), particularly where segregated provision cannot be achieved.
- 8 Development proposals must be supported by a Design and Access Statement, a Transport Statement and / or a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan as appropriate based on the requirements of the local highway authority and the scale and nature of the development. Where required, transport assessments must fully consider the full extent of transport implications arising from the development including multi-modal impacts, cumulative impacts, and opportunities to maximise sustainable travel. Assessments must also demonstrate how the proposal accords with national policy, local transport policies, local plan policies, and best practice, taking into account national and local guidance in meeting those requirements.
- 9 Required on and/ or off site transport infrastructure and related mitigation measures will be secured through the relevant legal agreements including Section 106's and Section 278's together with the relevant planning conditions. These will ensure that the required transport infrastructure, services and mitigation are delivered in a phased, timely and co-ordinated manner, aligned with policy INF1, housing trajectories and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Strategic Policy

Policy Implementation

13.35 Policy INF2 relating to Sustainable Transport and Active Travel will be applied to all development proposals where public and / or private transport impacts arise. The scale and nature of mitigation required will be proportionate to the scale, type and location of development, taking into account accessibility, the capacity and availability of the existing transport infrastructure and services together with the opportunities to support and enhance sustainable travel.

13.36 At the outset of the planning application process, applicants must engage with the relevant local highway authority or multiple authorities if the development has cross border implications. They must also engage where relevant with National Highways, transport planners and operators and other relevant stakeholders including community and disabled groups where appropriate.

Early engagement is required to ensure that any relevant transport modelling is undertaken and assessed, to establish the relevant transport impacts on the existing transport infrastructure and services, to identify the transport infrastructure and services that will be required, to identify and agree the funding streams and delivery mechanisms, and to agree the appropriate phasing and related trigger for payments during the construction of the development in order to maximise sustainable travel and reduce reliance on private vehicle use.

13.37 Pre application submissions relating to transport matters must include:

- i Written details and a masterplan of the proposal;
- ii Drawing/s showing the existing public and private transport infrastructure networks and services relating to strategic and local highways, buses, rail, water transport (if any), cycling, walking, wheeling;
- iii Details of the proposed transport models that are being proposed to use, including what will be modelled and what timetable has been agreed for that modelling, including validation with the local transport authority;

- iv If the development is located in a cross boundary location, or if it impacts the cross boundary transport network then applicants must ensure that they undertake pre application engagement with the relevant cross boundary local highway authority, and existing public and private transport operators within that area;
- v Provide a draft scope / or first draft of the design and access statement, transport statement or transport assessment, travel plan, air quality assessment, noise quality assessment, parking strategy and construction management plan;
- vi Provide a draft mitigation strategy with a draft heads of terms relating to transport infrastructure, services and mitigation together with any related draft drawings; and
- vii Details of any pre application engagement and any related responses that have been undertaken / received.

13.38 Planning applications must clearly set out:

- The details of the existing transport infrastructure and services that the development intends to utilise and / or connect;
- The transport infrastructure, services and mitigation measures required to support the development;
- How and when infrastructure and mitigation will be delivered;
- How the transport infrastructure, services and mitigation provision relates to development phasing and trigger points; and
- How long-term management, monitoring and maintenance of the proposed transport infrastructure, services and mitigation will be funded, secured and delivered.

13.39 Planning applications must be supported by the appropriate level of Transport Assessment, Transport Statement and/or Travel Plan, prepared in accordance with legislation and the local highway authority guidance. These must:

- Detail the highways model(s) that were used, the modelling undertaken, the validation and detail the relevant outputs;
- Assess the full extent of the impacts on the current highways and public transport network, cycling, wheeling and walking routes including multi-modal, capacity implications and cumulative effects in the borough and if relevant within any adjoining local authority area;
- Identify appropriate mitigation measures including details of their cost, mechanism of delivery, timetable for delivery, management and maintenance;
- Demonstrate how sustainable travel has been prioritised throughout the development; and
- Set out detailed measures and incentives to promote and encourage sustainable travel behaviour to construction workers and to the end users of the development.

13.40 Travel Plans must include clear targets, monitoring arrangements and review mechanisms, including provision for remedial measures where targets are not achieved, reflecting a 'decide and provide' approach to transport impacts.

13.41 Where on-site transport infrastructure is required, this must be integrated into the design and layout of the development from the outset and detailed within the proposed masterplan. This includes provision for walking, wheeling and cycling networks, public transport infrastructure, and safe and suitable access for all users.

13.42 Where off-site transport infrastructure and / or improvements are required, these must be clearly identified within the pre application submission and the planning application submission, including the scope of proposals, the scope of the works, timing and delivery mechanisms. Such measures may include improvements to:

- The highway network;
- Public transport services and infrastructure;
- Public rights of way and active travel routes; and
- Associated supporting infrastructure.

13.43 Transport infrastructure and mitigation measures will be secured through planning conditions, Section 106 obligations and/or Section 278 agreements, as appropriate. Contributions will be linked to development phasing and trigger points during the development phases (e.g. implementation, commencement, defined completion and occupation stages) to ensure that infrastructure is delivered in a phased, timely and coordinated manner, in accordance with Policy INF1, informed by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the Local Transport Plan and other transport and relevant council strategies.

13.44 Development proposals must demonstrate that adequate transport infrastructure capacity exists, or will be provided in time, to support the end users of the development without causing capacity issues for existing infrastructure and services or existing communities. Proposals that would result in unacceptable impacts on the existing strategic and / or local transport network, public health or which fail to provide appropriate mitigation, will not be permitted.



Parking

13.45 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear that parking, alongside other transport considerations, should be addressed from the earliest stages and should be integral to the design of development, contributing to the creation of safe, attractive and high quality places. The council therefore requires the appropriate provision of parking in new developments, ensuring that it is well designed, fit for purpose and capable of meeting the needs of all occupants and end users over time. This includes parking for private vehicles, visitors, servicing and deliveries, and bicycles (including adaptive cycles), motorcycles, and other relevant modes.

13.46 For all development, the council has regard to the latest adopted car parking standards which are currently the Kent County Council (KCC) Parking Standards (2025). These car parking standards provide a comprehensive framework for considering parking for all vehicle types and sizes and seeks to balance the need to provide sufficient parking to support development, ensure the safe and efficient operation of the public highway, and encourage travel by more sustainable modes. The local highway authority guidance also provides advice on parking design and layout, disabled parking and mobility aids, parking for residential and non-residential development land uses, electric vehicles, motorcycles, cycles and adaptive cycles.

13.47 The KCC Parking Standards distinguish between town centre, edge of centre, suburban and rural locations, recognising that parking demand and travel behaviour vary by context and location. The standards are intended to act as a starting point for considering appropriate levels of parking provision and do not set maximum parking levels. This approach reflects past experience that overly restrictive standards can result in increased pressure for on-street parking, particularly in edge-of-centre and suburban areas, leading to parking stress, highway safety concerns and reduce residential amenity. A pragmatic, site-specific and end user approach is therefore encouraged to make the development accessible, attractive and useable whilst complementing public transport provision and services, cycling and walking.

13.48 The Local Plan seeks to respond to the challenges of climate change, whilst also ensuring that development remains functional and accessible. In locations that are well served by existing public transport services, such as town centres for example, or other locations with frequent rail and bus services, it may be appropriate for some residential and employment development to provide lower levels of parking, where this is supported by evidence. However, any reduction in parking provision must be realistic, justified and consistent with local circumstances, including car ownership levels and the availability and reliability of alternative modes of transport.

Policy INF3: Parking

- 1 Development proposals must provide adequate, well-designed and well-integrated parking provision for all vehicle types and sizes, including cars, motorcycles, cycles (including adaptive cycles), mobility aids, electric vehicles. Provision should accord with the local highway authority standards which are currently the Kent County Council's Parking Standards (2025) or any subsequent replacement guidance, unless robust justification is provided.
- 2 Applicants are expected to engage early with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority on parking provision, layout and design to ensure that parking contributes positively to the overall design, character, quality, safety and functionality of the development. In considering new parking provision, proposals must have regard to local circumstances and national policy requirements, including:
 - a The type, mix and use of development;
 - b The different needs of end users of the development;
 - c The type and size of potential end user vehicles;
 - d Reasonable demand arising from the development including the various types of visitor parking needs;
 - e The proximity, accessibility and availability of public transport;
 - f Opportunities to promote and facilitate travel by sustainable modes;
 - g Local car ownership levels;
 - h Existing/ and or nearby parking provision, parking controls and the capacity in the surrounding area;
 - i Local travel patterns and behaviour;
 - j The safe operation of the public highway including the local and pedestrian highway and local cycle routes; and
 - k The potential impacts of development generated parking on existing surrounding areas, including surrounding existing residential areas, employment sites, town, local and village centres.

Parking provision should support a balanced approach between accommodating various end user demand and promoting sustainable transport choices, consistent with national policy.
- 3 For residential development, the amount, location, layout and design of parking must be considered at an early stage and as an integral part of the design process. Provision must:
 - a Reflect how parking spaces and infrastructure will be used in practice;
 - b Ensure that parking on internal roads does not restrict access, delivery, service, refuse or emergency vehicle movements with appropriate measures put in place to manage parking where necessary including where it causes a highway safety issue;
 - c Include flexible provision capable of accommodating larger sized cars, vans, HGV's, larger delivery vehicles, caravans, camper vans, and electric vehicle charging equipment;
 - d Ensure that parking provision does not dominate or detract from the character, appearance or quality of the public realm;
 - e Ensure that parking areas are safe, secure and, where appropriate, overlooked to allow natural surveillance; and
 - f Incorporate permeable surfacing and sustainable drainage measures, where practicable.

Policy INF3: Parking continued

- 4 For non-residential development, parking provision must be determined through a site-specific assessment taking into account predicted demand, operational requirements and local context. Applicants must demonstrate that parking demand (including staff and servicing requirements) is either met on-site or appropriately mitigated and managed.
- 5 New non-residential development must provide an appropriate level of:
 - a Accessible and disabled parking;
 - b Parking for mobility aids and adaptive cycles,
 - c Secure and convenient cycle, e-cycle and motorcycle parking;
 - d Electric vehicle and bike charging infrastructure, with appropriate signage;
 - e Parking and storage for bicycles, e-bicycles and motorcycles should also be provided in accordance with the guidance.
 - f Dedicated parking areas for visitors including customers, delivery vehicles including vans and HGVs, emergency vehicles.

Parking provision should be designed to be adaptable over time to respond to changing designs, technologies and travel patterns.

- 6 Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and, where appropriate, Parking Management Plans will be required to support and justify proposed parking arrangements, including their effective operation and impacts on surrounding areas.
- 7 Where proposed parking provision deviates significantly from local highway authority's standards, a robust and evidenced justification must be provided detailing the alternative proposal, which must be reviewed and approved by the local highway authority as well as the local planning authority.

Policy Implementation

13.49 The local authority highway (currently KCC) Parking Standards are intended to be flexible and to support early pre application engagement between applicants, the local planning and highway authority. The local highway authority recognises that travel patterns, vehicle ownership levels and transport technologies are evolving. Parking design and provision should therefore be capable of adapting over time to respond to design change and technological change, including innovation in vehicle types, sizes, energy requirements and charging infrastructure.

13.50 Vehicle parking should be provided at a level that is appropriate to the size, type and location of development, taking into account current and future demand ensuring it does not cause overflow car parking issues for existing communities. This includes provision for plug-in hybrid and electric vehicle, as well as facilities to support assisted and low-carbon modes such as e-bicycles and motorability vehicles.

13.51 Developers must take a realistic and evidence based approach to the anticipated effects of modal shift when determining the type, level and location of parking provision within a development. This should be informed by the latest local highway authority parking standards, the Local Transport Plan, the relevant policies within this Local Plan and the relevant transport evidence that supports the Local Plan. Applicants should also consider the impact of other nearby consented schemes some of which may not have commenced construction.

13.52 Applicants will be required to undertake and provide parking assessments, transport assessments or Travel Plans and to produce a parking strategy. Any assessments should be based on a recognised methodology, up to date surveys, and they must reflect the site-specific circumstances, including the various different end user requirements, the range of vehicle types and sizes, charging and energy provision, accessibility, local travel patterns and the availability of alternative transport modes.

13.53 Insufficient on site vehicular parking, or an over reliance on unallocated or visitor spaces, can result in unforeseen parking stress and create accessibility and highway safety issues both on the pavements and roads within a development and beyond. Where this leads to increased parking on pavements and / or on-street parking, it can adversely affect highway safety, personal safety, restrict the movement of residents including children, the elderly and disabled, employee, service and / or emergency vehicles, harm the amenity of surrounding areas and cause issues between the existing and new communities. Such negative outcomes may necessitate retrospective parking controls and should be avoided through the provision of appropriately designed and managed parking as part of new development.

Community Facilities



13.54 National policy requires planning policies and decisions to support the integration between existing businesses and community facilities, recognising that such facilities may be publicly or privately owned. Community facilities, including dual use facilities play a range of critical roles in relation to social cohesion, supporting health, well-being and quality of life, particularly where they are accessible to the communities they serve.

13.55 The borough benefits from a wide and diverse range of community facilities including community centres, village halls, local shops, places of worship, education (including their dual use facilities) and healthcare facilities, libraries, public houses and cultural venues. These facilities support a wide range of social, recreational, cultural and economic functions, contributing to social cohesion, health and well-being and community resilience. The functioning, availability, accessibility, capacity, management and maintenance of such facilities are key considerations in meeting day-to-day needs of our current and future local communities. It is also recognised that some of these community facilities may have cross border and wider catchments.

13.56 The council seeks to protect, retain, enhance and / or expand existing community facilities and ensure provision is delivered where required, particularly in areas of identified deficiency or to meet needs arising from new development. Proposals that diversify, adapt and/or widen the use of existing community facilities to support a broader range of services will be supported where this ensures that existing uses are protected but also where this assists in securing their long-term viability, provided that their primary community function(s) is not undermined.

13.57 New, enhanced and expanded community facilities should be planned positively and informed by up-to-date evidence of local needs, including relevant strategies, infrastructure delivery plans and engagement with service providers. Facilities should be flexible and adaptable in their design, management and accessibility in order to support a range of uses over time, maximise utilisation, and remain responsive to changing community requirements as well as incorporating energy efficient measures to assist with operational costs and viability.

13.58 The loss of community facilities can have significant adverse impacts on communities. The council will strongly resist the loss of any community facilities unless robust and proportionate evidence demonstrates that they are no longer needed, are no longer viable, or that they can first be replaced with equivalent or better provision in an accessible location. This includes protecting ancillary features such as parking, storage, waste and recycling facilities and / or supporting spaces that are integral to the operation and viability of the facility.

13.59 Where loss or redevelopment is proposed, applicants must provide clear, detailed up-to-date evidence-based justification, including (where relevant) factual marketing evidence and viability information including financial information. This should demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to retain the facility or secure an alternative community use, or to secure an alternative more financially viable venue, in line with the policy criteria. Any viability evidence should be consistent with the council's wider approach to viability and it will be assessed by an independent assessor who is chosen and appointed by the council.

13.60 Policy INF 4 ensures a comprehensive approach to community infrastructure by supporting retention, enhancement, modernisation, extension and the creation of new provision, setting out a range of clear criteria for assessing the loss of community facilities, services and their supporting infrastructure. Policy INF4 requires that new and improved facilities are accessible for all, inclusive, adaptable and well-related to the communities they serve.

Policy INF4: Community Facilities

Retention, improvement and provision

- 1 The council will support the retention, enhancement, modernisation and extension of existing community facilities.
- 2 The Council will support the provision of new community facilities including multi-use facilities, particularly in areas where there are identified deficiencies in provision or where facilities are required to meet needs arising from new development.
- 3 Improvements to existing facilities must ensure that quality, accessibility and the range of services are maintained and / or enhanced so that residents and end users are able to meet their day-to-day social, recreational, cultural and community needs. Provision of new or enhanced community infrastructure required to support development will be secured in accordance with Policy INF1 (Provision of Infrastructure and Services) and informed by the council's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan, other community strategies, evidence base and relevant engagement with providers and existing and potential end users.

Loss of existing facilities

- 4 Development proposals including demolition, conversion, change of use and / or for new development that would result in the loss, or partial loss, of a community facility will be refused planning permission unless it can be clearly demonstrated that one or more of the following criteria applies:
 - a The existing community facility is no longer needed to meet the identified community need/s, having regard to up-to-date evidence of demand and the availability, capacity and accessibility of alternative similar and nearby community facilities and service provision;
 - b The current community use(s) are no longer financially viable and all reasonable steps have been taken to support its continued operation, including diversification, and / or applying for funding, and this has been robustly evidenced;
 - c The facility has been actively and publicly marketed for a continuous period of at least 12 months at a realistic price. Relevant evidence will include a record of individuals and organisations who have contacted the estate agent and who have visited and

viewed the facilities, and will be required to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of securing the existing or alternative community use(s);

d Replacement community infrastructure and services provision of the equivalent building(s) and service(s) and/or improved quality, accessibility and functionality will be first designed, funded, consented and delivered in accordance with Policy INF1 and will be provided in a suitable location that is accessible to the community it serves, and is made available prior to, or in tandem with, the loss; in the case of a partial loss of community infrastructure and associated service/s, that the:

- i Remaining community infrastructure and / or service(s) and / or facilities will be enhanced and it can be clearly evidenced that they can be made more viable; and
- ii Proposal is necessary to secure the long-term retention of the community infrastructure, use/s and associated services, including through appropriate cross-subsidy.

Strategic Policy

Any justification relating to viability must be consistent with the council's approach and requirements as detailed in Policy INF1.

- 5 Proposals that would result in the loss of ancillary features or supporting infrastructure that are integral to the functioning and viability of a community facility (including but not limited to, car parking, storage, waste and recycling or function space), will be refused unless:
 - a It is demonstrated that the existing community facility and services would remain accessible, viable and functional without them; or
 - b Appropriate mitigation or re-provision nearby is secured.

Delivery of new and enhanced provision

- 6 New and / or enhanced and /or expanded community buildings, facilities and services including land, buildings, management and maintenance will be delivered through on-site provision within the development and / or through financial contributions secured through planning obligations, where required to meet the needs arising from new development.

New and improved facilities

- 7 Proposals for new or improved community facilities will be supported, where they:
 - a Are located within, adjoining or are well related to a settlement with a settlement boundary; facilities that do not meet that criteria will be supported where it is clearly demonstrated that the facility is necessary and suitable having regard to the needs of the community it will serve and the character of the area is not harmed;

- b Are accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes, particularly walking, wheeling or cycling and are appropriately connected to the communities they intend to serve;
- c Are designed to be flexible and adaptable to support a range of community uses and to respond to changing needs over time;
- d Provide inclusive and accessible environments, including appropriate facilities for children, older people and disabled users; and
- e Are designed to promote community safety and minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.



Policy Implementation

13.61 Planning applications will be assessed against Policy INF4 to ensure proposals support the retention, enhancement or appropriate provision of community facilities. For new or improved facilities, this will include consideration of location relative to sustainable settlements, accessibility by sustainable modes, inclusivity, safety, and the ability to support flexible and multi-functional use.

13.62 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how proposals respond to identified current and future community needs. This should be informed, where relevant, by up-to-date evidence such as local needs assessments, service strategies, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and engagement with infrastructure planners and providers. Where development generates a need for new and / or enhanced provision, this will be secured through on-site delivery and/or off-site delivery through planning conditions and planning obligations controlled via the relevant legal agreements in accordance with Policy INF1.

13.63 Proposals involving the loss (in whole or part) of a community facility must provide robust, proportionate, transparent, up to date, factual evidence to justify this, in line with the criteria set out in Policy INF4. This may include:

- Evidence of lack of need, lack of use and reasons why including the consideration of the range of end users, the capacity required, and alternative nearby equivalent accessible provision;
- Up to date factual viability evidence demonstrating that all reasonable steps to maintain the existing community use/s have been explored, including dual use, diversification, and external funding bids/ opportunities;
- Evidence of up-to-date active public marketing of the owned or leased community for a continuous period of at least the last 12 months at a realistic price; and
- Details of any equivalent replacement community provision including its funding, location, design, building/s and facilities, capacity, quality, energy provision, accessibility, phasing, management and maintenance.

13.64 The council will require independent verification of all of the submitted evidence by a consultant that they appoint which will be funded by the applicant/s.

13.65 Proposals that would result in the loss of any ancillary or any supporting infrastructure and / or facilities would need to evidence written reasoned justification and will also need to demonstrate that the main facilities would not be impacted and that they would remain viable and functional, or that appropriate, equivalent adjoining / adjacent re-provision can be secured.



Open Space and Sports and Recreation



13.66 The provision of accessible, high-quality and well-maintained informal and formal open spaces, play areas, allotments, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreational facilities is important to support people in living active and healthy lifestyles and in providing opportunities for people of all abilities and ages to participate in sport, leisure and recreation. Access to a network of such spaces and indoor and outdoor facilities is essential to support healthy, inclusive communities. They also contribute to positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving physical and mental health, well-being and quality of life. In addition, outdoor leisure and recreational space can also contribute to the public realm, strengthen green and blue infrastructure networks, support climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as providing other multiple functions and benefits associated with green and blue infrastructure.

13.67 To understand both the current and likely future position in relation to the need for informal and formal open space, play areas, allotments, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreation provision the council has prepared and will maintain an up-to-date evidence base. This includes:

- Open Space Study (2025) identifies those areas in the borough that have an open space deficiency in relation to the differing types of open space. These deficiencies are identified in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.
- The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2025) presents a supply and demand assessment of all formal playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities across the borough.
- The Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (2025) presents a supply and demand assessment for indoor sports facilities across the borough.

13.68 On a general basis, the evidence identifies a need to protect existing informal and formal open space, play areas, allotments, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreation provision from loss. To improve and expand the quality and variety of existing provision, improve the management and maintenance of the provision, and make additional provision to support future development and the growing demand, taking into account both current deficiencies, the needs arising from planned growth and the requirements and views of the relevant facilitators, providers and end users.

13.69 The facilities covered by this Policy include:

- Parks and Gardens - including country parks, parks and formal gardens;
- Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces - including heathland and nature reserves, woodland, wetlands, water courses, ponds and unimproved grassland;
- Amenity Greenspaces – including informal recreational open space, green space in residential development, village greens, other incidental landscaped areas and private greenspace that has visual or other value, even if no physical public access is possible;
- Play Areas for Children and Young People - including equipped play facilities, wheeled sports facilities (e.g. Skatepark), ball courts, meeting places and shelters;
- Outdoor Sports Facilities – including sports pitches & tennis courts, bowling greens and athletics tracks, school playing fields (where there are local agreements for community use or where the field is crossed by a public right of way);

- Indoor Sports Facilities – including multi-use sports halls, competition and leisure swimming pools, health and fitness facilities, squash courts, indoor tennis facilities and indoor bowls facilities;
- Allotments – including allotments, community gardens and city farms; and
- Cemeteries and churchyards – including public cemeteries, burial grounds, churchyards and crematoria grounds, where these provide amenity, green infrastructure or informal recreational value.

13.70 As the borough continues to grow, it is essential that new development contributes to the provision, enhancement and long-term management and maintenance of accessible and inclusive indoor and outdoor recreational spaces, facilities and buildings. All residential developments generate additional demand for this wide range of facilities. Without appropriate planning and investment, this can lead to increased pressure on existing facilities and infrastructure, which can result in reduced accessibility and reduced capacity, a decline in service quality and can impact people's health and well-being.

13.71 Policy INF5 ensures that new development responds to both the quantitative and qualitative needs identified in the council's evidence base. The council's evidence base provides a robust framework for assessing local provision and identifying gaps in accessibility, capacity, and quality in conjunction with the consultation responses provided from statutory consultees, operators and the community which will all be used to inform decision-making, on site provision and / or off site provision and the required developer contributions. These will be secured and controlled by the use of planning conditions and a Section 106 legal agreement.

13.72 Policy INF5 also recognises the importance of flexibility in delivery. While on-site provision including land, buildings and facilities is generally preferred to ensure direct access for new residents, end users of the development and the local community, particularly for larger developments, off-site contributions may be appropriate where they offer greater community benefits or where site constraints limit feasibility.

13.73 Furthermore, Policy INF5 promotes inclusive access to all open spaces, play areas, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreational facilities, including those located within dual use educational settings, through the use of community use agreements or similar mechanisms in order to secure long-term community access. Policy INF5 must be read in conjunction with all policies within this Local Plan and all new extended and new facilities must demonstrate that they support sustainable design principles and provide sustainable drainage, that they enhance biodiversity, and they provide cost effective and energy-efficient infrastructure and that all new, enhanced and extended provision must be safe, secure, inclusive, and fit for purpose.

13.74 By securing appropriate provision, protecting existing facilities and their supporting infrastructure, and ensuring long-term management arrangements, this policy aims to ensure that open space, sports, leisure and recreation facilities remain fit for purpose, resilient, and beneficial to the community in perpetuity, and continue to meet identified needs over the plan period.

Policy INF5: Outdoor and Indoor Sports, Recreation and Open Space Provision

- 1 The council will protect, enhance and support the provision of new, accessible and high quality informal and formal open space, play areas, indoor and outdoor sport leisure and recreation facilities, recognising their contribution to health and wellbeing, social cohesion, local and competitive sport, climate resilience and biodiversity. Development proposals should contribute towards a well-connected network of high-quality provision across the borough, informed by robust and up-to-date evidence and engagement with statutory consultees and the local community including existing providers, clubs, teams as relevant.

Open Space, Sports, Leisure and Recreation Facilities

- 2 Residential development of 6 or more dwellings (use classes C3 and C4) will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision, enhancement and long-term maintenance of open space, sport and recreation facilities, in accordance with the standards set out in Annex 5, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such provision is not viable.
- 3 High quality and functional on-site provision must be sought in accordance with Annex 5, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that circumstances exist where off-site provision would better provide for the community, there is already a quantitative or qualitative surplus of provision, or site constraints cannot be overcome to deliver on-site provision. Any alternative approach must be fully justified, supported by evidence, consulted upon with end users as relevant and agreed with the Council.

- 4 The type, quantity and design of open space, indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and recreation provision will be determined through early engagement taking into account the council's most up-to-date Open Space Study, Annex 5 standards, local deficiencies and priorities together with the scale, location, population generation of the development and the other characteristics of the development. Any proposals should integrate high-quality provision from the outset as part of pre-application engagement and comprehensive site design.
- 5 Where part or full off-site provision is deemed appropriate, contributions will be directed to land / and or projects within the ward or adjoining area, prioritising locations that are accessible to future occupants / end users and addressing identified deficiencies and identified local needs. Provision should also take into account other consented developments. Provision will be secured through the use of planning conditions and Section 106 legal agreements as appropriate.

Strategic Policy

Sports and Leisure facilities (including indoor facilities, playing pitches and ancillary facilities)

- 6 Proposals for new or enhanced indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities will be supported where they address identified current and future local needs and/ or deficits, that are based on the latest evidence including the council's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy and the Indoor Sports facilities Strategy and are appropriate in relation to scale, location and accessibility. The Council will have regard to legislation, Health Guidance, Sports England Guidance and tools, including relevant calculators, where appropriate and any relevant information provided from local sports operators and the community.
- 7 Residential development of 6 or more dwellings (use classes C3 and C4) will be required to contribute towards sports provision (in addition to open space and recreation provision), where evidence identifies additional demand arising from the development.

- 8 The scale of development and the site-specific context will inform whether new provision should be delivered on-site or through contributions towards off-site provision, having regard to the capacity, quality and accessibility of existing facilities and opportunities to enhance them. Requirements for mitigation in relation to proposed site allocations in the Local Plan, are set out in further detail within the IDP. New provision will need to include appropriate ancillary facilities and parking.
- 9 Indoor and outdoor sports provision will be supported where it will facilitate dual and multi-use and has community access to facilities including indoor and outdoor school sport and leisure provision, secured with a community use agreement, or similar mechanism to ensure long-term access including out of school hours and during holiday periods.

Protection of existing open space, indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and sports facilities

- 10 Existing open space, play areas, playing fields indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities and their ancillary facilities, will be protected from loss, unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a The site is surplus to current and future requirements; or
 - b The loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility in a nearby suitable location; or
 - c The development is for alternative indoor / and or outdoor sports, leisure and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss.

Policy INF5: Outdoor and Indoor Sports, Recreation and Open Space Provision continued

Design, accessibility and environmental quality

- 11 In accordance with legislation and other policies in this Local Plan, the provision and design of new open space, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreation provision will be expected to:
- a Provide safe, secure, inclusive and accessible facilities fit for use by all users;
 - b Be sustainably located, relating well to the existing and future communities they serve;
 - c Contribute to green and blue infrastructure networks, biodiversity and sustainable urban drainage;
 - d Incorporate appropriate lighting including the consideration of using LED heads and switching gear;
 - e Incorporate sustainable design measures;
 - f Incorporate cost effective, low carbon energy provision and air conditioning where relevant; and
 - g Be fit for purpose and capable of long-term use. Where future expansion is identified as necessary by the facility operator

or supported by evidence of future need, sufficient land should be safeguarded to enable that expansion to take place.

Delivery, funding, management and maintenance

- 12 All required open space, play space, allotments, indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and recreation provision including land, buildings, equipment and financial contributions will be secured through planning obligations including Section 106 Agreements and planning conditions, ensuring that facilities are delivered in a timely, controlled and co-ordinated manner, as required by policy INF1, including appropriate triggers, phasing arrangements and outputs on the ground, having regard to relevant details in the IDP.
- 13 Development proposals must demonstrate how provision will be funded, managed and maintained in perpetuity, including clear governance arrangements and funding mechanisms. Where appropriate, commuted sums or management contributions will be required. Management Plans and

operational arrangements will be required to be submitted by applicants, which clearly demonstrate how facilities will be appropriately funded, managed and maintained.

- 14 Proposals that would result in the loss of, or harm to, ancillary facilities or features that support the function and viability of open space, play space, indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and/ or recreation provision (including, but not limited to, vehicle parking, access arrangements and changing facilities) will be refused planning permission unless it can be factually evidenced and demonstrated that:
- a The facility will continue to function effectively and meet identified needs; or
 - b Equivalent or improved provision is secured; or
 - c Any harm is clearly outweighed by wider benefits and appropriately mitigated.

Strategic Policy

Policy Implementation

13.75 Policy INF5 will apply to all residential developments of 6 or more dwellings (use classes C3 and C4), this is also applicable to proposals for mixed use, conversions, change of use, market and affordable housing and older persons housing (where a need for such facilities is generated / occupants are active (e.g. retirement, sheltered) and permanent mobile homes. This threshold reflects the point at which development creates meaningful demand, whilst ensuring requirements remain proportionate and viable.

13.76 The type and scale of provision will be determined with reference to the council's most up-to-date evidence base, including the Open Space Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, as well as Sport England's calculators where appropriate and the Health Impact Assessment, together with consideration of the evidence provided from operators, end users and the community as relevant. Annex 5 sets out the standards for on-site provision (including typologies such as amenity and natural green space) and provides calculations for children's play and allotments, ensuring provision addresses identified quantitative, qualitative and accessibility needs.

13.77 Applicants will be expected to engage with the council, the relevant statutory consultees and the community at the pre-application stage to discuss and agree requirements. Early engagement will ensure that the required provision is integrated into site design and reflects local priorities and local needs and is considered alongside viability.



On-site vs Off-site Provision

13.78 High-quality on-site land and provision including buildings, facilities and equipment will be sought as the starting point, particularly for large scale developments, in accordance with Annex 5 of this Local Plan. Off-site contributions may be appropriate where:

- On-site provision is not feasible due to site constraints;
- Off-site provision would better serve the community; and
- Existing provision within the locality has sufficient capacity and accessibility to meet the needs arising from the development and off-site contributions would support its continued improvement or enhancement.

13.79 All departures from on-site provision must be justified by proportionate evidence. Off-site facilities and contributions must be locally relevant, accessible to the development, and directed towards addressing identified deficiencies, including improvements to the quality, capacity or accessibility of existing facilities. Financial contributions will be secured through Section 106 agreements, whilst on-site provision and associated requirements may be secured through planning conditions and/or planning obligations, as appropriate.

Securing Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

13.80 Provision including land and facilities and contributions will be secured through planning conditions and S106 planning obligations, at a level proportionate to the development, and having regard to viability, covering both delivery and long-term funding, management and maintenance of facilities. Where development is exempt from the Infrastructure Levy, necessary infrastructure contributions may still be secured through Section 106 agreements where permitted by legislation and justified by the impacts of the development.

13.81 For indoor and outdoor sports and leisure provision, the council will use Sport England's calculators alongside local evidence on capacity and accessibility and engage with the operators and the local community where relevant to determine the contributions that are required for provision, funding, management and maintenance. Where on-site sports and leisure facilities are required, applicants should follow Sport England guidance and best practice to deliver high-quality, fit-for-purpose and accessible provision, meeting or exceeding relevant design standards including providing cost effective low carbon energy solutions.

13.82 Where justified by evidence of current or future need, or identified as necessary by the facility operator, Sport England or the relevant governing body of sport, the design of new facilities should safeguard sufficient land to enable future expansion. Any safeguarded land should be of an appropriate size and configuration to accommodate the identified expansion and should not rely upon the future loss of operational parking, access arrangements or other infrastructure necessary for the effective operation of the facility.

13.83 Not all indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities will require land to be safeguarded for future expansion. Any requirement for safeguarded land should be proportionate and informed by evidence of current and future demand, the operational requirements of the facility, Sport England guidance and the views of relevant operators or governing bodies. The extent of any safeguarded land will be considered on a site-specific basis.

Long-Term Funding, Management and Maintenance

13.84 Developers must demonstrate that on-site provision will be effectively funded, managed and maintained for the lifetime of the development. This may include:

- a** Developer or management company responsibility; and/or
- b** Commuted sums or other secured funding mechanisms for transfer to an agreed body.

The above will be secured via a Section 106 Agreement and planning conditions.

Ancillary infrastructure and facilities

13.85 Proposals must ensure that changes to existing indoor/ outdoor private and public sports and leisure facilities, including the loss of ancillary infrastructure such as parking, access or supporting buildings, do not undermine their function or viability unless adequately mitigated or appropriately replaced and / or enhanced.