

- 11.12 In addition, Crawley has a particular role within its sub-region as a provider of recreation and leisure facilities. This not only increases the variety and choice of facilities for the residents of Crawley, but also attracts visitors to Crawley and enhances the status of the borough. Within this context there will be a need to identify appropriate locations which are highly accessible by a variety of means of transport. Outside the built-up area recreational activity does occur, particularly in the form of farm based tourism. Farm based tourism can be an important component of the rural economy. However, the policies in the Countryside Chapter and Recreation and Leisure Chapter are particularly relevant.
- 11.13 The following objectives set out what the Plan envisages for recreation and leisure provision in Crawley and its surrounding area.

Objectives for Recreation and Leisure

Objective 1

To ensure sufficient and appropriate opportunities for recreation facilities to be provided to meet the needs of the borough

- 11.14 The development of recreation and leisure facilities that meet the expanding and changing needs of the borough are very important. However, actual local demand for recreation facilities often only becomes evident when the facilities have been provided. It is, therefore, important that the Plan makes allowance for the provision of as many types of recreation facility as possible.
- 11.15 The provision of recreation facilities should aim to be of the highest standard. This objective is beneficial for the users themselves and the status of the borough as perceived by visitors to Crawley.
- 11.16 The location of some recreation facilities can have an adverse impact upon the environment. In particular, certain recreation facilities, such as those intending to serve the sub-region, will encourage travel. Locating such facilities so that they are accessible by a variety of means of transport will reduce the impact of the motor car and hence reduce energy consumption. An additional concern is the impact of new recreation development on the countryside. Consequently, facilities will be encouraged to locate within the built-up area and designed to a high standard which seeks to conserve and enhance the environment.
- 11.17 Within Crawley there are sections of the community who have a below average access to a motor car. These groups are, however, increasing their participation in recreation activities. Therefore, facilities need to be designed and located to be easily reached by public transport, foot or bicycle.

11.20 The loss of sites providing for recreation needs could result in a reduction in the quality of life for residents. However, there are instances when poor siting or changing needs result in the demand for a facility decreasing to a level which renders the continued operation of that facility non-viable. Under these circumstances the land might be better used for another purpose.

SITING OF NEW FACILITIES

Major Built Facilities Serving the whole Town or a Wider Area

- 11.22 Some recreation and leisure uses can generate large amounts of traffic, particularly if they attract people from a wide area. New developments will be encouraged to be sited in locations which are accessible by a variety of means of transport, particularly public transport. In many cases the preferred location will be in or near to the town centre. Consequently, the design of such facilities must be to a high standard and one which takes into account the natural and built environment. This is particularly important for buildings that serve a wider catchment area since these buildings may

Policy RL5

Proposals for the development of recreation and leisure uses within the core, primary and secondary shopping areas will normally be permitted provided that:

- (i) the design of the street frontage remains compatible with the shopping function of that particular area;**
- (ii) the use is complementary to the town centre's shopping function; and**
- (iii) in the case of existing buildings within the core and primary shopping areas the proposed use is not located on the ground floor of a shopping unit.**

11.23 Many recreation uses draw custom to an area during the evening and at weekends. Permitting recreation uses within the town centre could also complement its shopping function by attracting visitors after shoppers have gone. The main function of the town centre is, however, retail. Other uses must not be allowed to jeopardise this. Some recreation uses could assist in regenerating use and interest in secondary shopping areas and may help limit the 'deadening' effect of conversion to office uses. Proposals for amusement arcades are dealt with separately in Policy SH19.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Specific Sites**Policy RL6**

Land will be reserved north of Ifield Avenue for major leisure and recreation facilities as part of a mixed leisure and commercial development.

The redevelopment of the site will be subject to the satisfactory relocation of existing uses currently occupying the site and will be in accordance with a development brief to be prepared by the Borough Council.

11.24 Crawley is well provided with sports facilities, particularly for the common team sports. However, its provision of leisure, recreation and entertainment facilities, often provided by the private sector, is not as good. Land north of Ifield Avenue offers a prime opportunity to provide some of these facilities in a complex which is easily accessible by a range of modes of transport. Indeed, this is considered to be the main, if not only, such site capable of accommodating a prestigious leisure development of regional significance which can enhance the borough's status in the same manner as developments in other towns such as Guildford. It would also contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre. By locating several leisure uses within the complex, it may be possible to achieve economies of scale in the development of the area. The site does, however, require a high quality development which reflects its position between two main roads.

11.25 There are at present a number of valued recreation and community uses on the site. The Borough Council is investigating the options for relocating them. Policy RL18 identifies a site that could accommodate the bowls club (Development now

completed). All of the recreation facilities have now been successfully relocated and the development of the allocation initiated. The fire station, however, continues to operate from its current location although the Council will continue to support proposals for its relocation if it enables further development for commercial leisure.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Property and Construction Services, private sector and other developers.

Policy RL7

Crawley athletics arena may be improved to form a town multi-sports stadium.

11.26 Crawley athletics arena provides good accommodation for athletics events and as such makes a useful contribution to the town's image and reputation. It is already used for some other recreation events. There is, however, scope to improve the arena's facilities to accommodate more spectators and a wider range of sports and events. Such improvements would not only widen the range of recreation facilities and opportunities available to all the community, but could also benefit those who use it for athletics. A modern, well-appointed town multi-sports stadium would enhance the town's image and reputation.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Planning and Environmental Services, and Leisure Services.

Recreation Facilities Serving Neighbourhoods

Policy RL8

Proposals for the development and improvement of both built and outdoor recreation and leisure facilities within neighbourhoods will normally be permitted provided that:

- (i) the development is so located to be accessible by cycling and walking and therefore able to provide for the recreation and leisure needs of the surrounding local community;**
- (ii) there is no adverse impact on the character, appearance and amenity of the surrounding residential area; and**

11.27 Many of Crawley's neighbourhood centres and neighbourhood facilities were designed when people had different social and recreation needs. Opportunities may arise to develop or redevelop facilities so that they provide for contemporary local needs. When considering proposals for new local facilities account must be taken of the particular character of the residential area and the needs of the local community. In this way variety and choice can be maintained in a high quality built environment.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Leisure Services.

Specific Sites

11.28 The Wickland Court site is underused land north of the existing allotments area. It has only limited potential for alternative use because it lacks separate vehicular access. However, certain small scale recreation uses may be appropriate for this area without giving rise to problems for adjacent houses and uses.

Implementation: CBC development control process, CBC Leisure Services.

11.29 Road), including their school playing fields, are no longer required for educational purposes and are allocated for housing development. Their playing fields, however,

11.33 Research by the South East England Tourist Board in 1988 showed that Tilgate Park was the third most popular visitor attraction in West Sussex. There may be scope within the park to extend its range of facilities and attractions. However, the park currently only has vehicular access through a residential area. The expansion of the park's attractions could create significant problems for the residents of Tilgate. The Borough Council is currently investigating alternative access options.

the neighbourhood. The general areas in question will be identified in the development brief to be drawn up for the sector.

Implementation: CBC development control process, private sector and other developers.

Specific Sites

Policy RL16

Land at Target Hill, Broadfield, is allocated for mainly outdoor recreation

11.35 Target Hill is a large undeveloped site, currently used by residents as informal open space. If properly laid out and landscaped it could provide a more valuable outdoor recreation facility for residents of the neighbourhood, the borough as a whole, or even people from outside Crawley. However, the site must be used in a manner in keeping with its location both on the urban-rural fringe and within a residential area.

Implementation: CBC development control purposes, CBC Leisure Services.

Small-Scale Outdoor Recreation and Leisure Facilities within Open Space

11.36 Proposals sometimes arise for amenity and recreation space to be partially developed for small- use is often increased through such an improvement. However, there may be instances where an area of open space has significant nature conservation value in terms of the flora and fauna it sustains. In 1991, the Borough Council produced its Green Space Strategy. It identified a number of sites throughout the borough worthy of protection or promotion for recreation purposes including the creation of new conservation and education areas.

Implementation: CBC development control processes.

Specific Sites

- 11.37 These sites can make a contribution to meeting some of the recreational needs within the borough. They are modest sized sites within or adjacent to existing open areas and are suitable for small-

and prevented. Crucially, the facility needs to be easily accessible to people who have minimal access to a motor car.

11.40 Sheltered accommodation for the elderly will normally only be required to provide open amenity space which can be enjoyed by its residents.

11.41 In most large developments the provision of the N.P.F.A requirements and the specific sub-divisions outlined in policy RL19 can be achieved. Some developments of over 0.4 hectares may, however, not be able to justify individually the provision of new play areas. In such instances, contributions may be sought from developers to a fund to enable play space to be provided in another suitable location nearby. To ensure that the N.P.F.A requirements and subsequent contributions are met by small developments guidance is set out in Appendix 2.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Leisure Services, private sector and other developers.

Policy RL20

The Borough Council will seek to retain all existing children's playspace, youth and teenage 'kickabout' playspace unless:

- (i) the playspace is both poorly used and unpopular; or**
- (ii) the playspace is obsolete or unsafe and cannot be brought up to a reasonable standard; or**
- (iii) replacement facilities will be provided in an appropriate, alternative location.**

Proposals to extend and improve areas used for children's, youth and teenage 'kickabout' playspace will normally be supported if it is a safe and appropriate location for play and any resulting increase in activity and use of the area will not adversely affect the character of the area or amenity of surrounding development.

11.42 Some play facilities within existing residential areas suffer from lack of use or vandalism. Other areas give rise to problems and disturbance to neighbours, especially when they are used by teenagers and youths rather than by young children. Frequently, this is because they are poorly sited or equipped, or because they do not appeal to the young population in the area. When such problems cannot be resolved in situ, it may be appropriate for the facilities to be located on a more appropriate site.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Leisure Services, private sector and other developers.

Policy RL21

Proposals for development involving the whole or partial loss of playing fields and open space, included as part of the N.P.F.A standard, within Crawley Borough, will not normally be permitted unless:

- (i) the facility is demonstrated to be surplus to requirements; or**
- (ii) shared use of the facility with other recreation or community activities is not possible; or**
- (iii) adequate replacement or alternative playing field provision, accessible by a variety of means of transport, can be made elsewhere within the neighbourhood;**
- (iv) the land is in private ownership and private use and the proposed development will allow for public access to and public use of any area to be retained for recreational use.**

Where proposals for the redevelopment of playing fields beyond the built up area is permitted, it must be for a use which is compatible with the countryside and strategic gap objectives.

11.43 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 'Sport and Recreation' advises that playing fields can often give a sense of place in the urban area. They are important tracts of recreation land and can ensure that there is appropriate provision of open space within a neighbourhood.

11.44 Some playing fields are located within the countryside or at the edge of the built-up area. Their open nature makes a considerable contribution to the character of the countryside and to ensuring a gap exists between Crawley and other built up areas. The development of such sites could have a detrimental effect upon the environment beyond the built up area and will therefore be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal complies with both countryside and strategic gap policies.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Policy RL22

Where proposals for the whole or partial redevelopment of playing fields is permitted, it will normally be required to be for a use compatible with a residential area such as:

- (i) local recreation or community services;**
- (ii) residential development, particularly social or affordable housing;**
- (iii) small-scale employment workshops, suitable for local residents.**

11.45 Most playing fields are within the built up area and within or adjacent to residential areas. Any new use for a playing field must therefore, be for the sort of activity that is well suited to a neighbourhood location both in terms of ensuring there is no detrimental impact upon the amenity of existing properties and by making a contribution to the opportunities and facilities available within the neighbourhood.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Specific Sites

Policy RL23

Land within Maidenbower is allocated for public playing fields and children's playspace.

11.46 In accordance with Crawley's neighbourhood principle, the Borough Council considers that all residential areas should have adequate facilities for recreation activities.

Implementation: CBC development control process, CBC Leisure Services.

LINEAR OPEN SPACE

Policy RL24

Proposals for small scale recreation and leisure developments which adjoin, incorporate or affect linear routeways may be permitted provided that;

- (i) the development adds to the amenity value and complements the function of the particular routeway;**
- (ii) the development does not generate extra traffic which might have an adverse impact on the character of the local area; and**
- (iii) the proposal is compatible with strategic gap and countryside policies.**

Where proposals for developments that adjoin, incorporate or affect linear routeways are permitted, the Borough Council may require assistance in the implementation or improvement of those routes affected by the development.

11.47 Linear routeways include cycleways, footpaths and bridleways. The provision of picnic sites and kiosks boost the potential of these routes. They will enable more people to use them for recreation purposes and to gain access to the countryside. Policies within the Countryside Chapter encourage the development of new routes and the improvement and maintenance of existing routes.

Implementation: CBC Planning and Environmental Services, Leisure Services, WSCC as highway authority, landowners.

these housing allocations is the provision of linear amenity routes, identified on the Proposals Map. Within Broadfield these routes exist adjacent to allocations 14 and 15A in Policy H3C and within Maidenbower the routes extend along the length of the Gatwick stream and Stanford Brook. In addition, circular routes extend into the neighbourhood. Proposals for the new neighbourhood are detailed in Chapter 13. These include a requirement for the development of a network of walking and cycling routes. Where possible these routes could also have an amenity route function.

Implementation: CBC Planning and Environmental Services, Leisure Services, WSCC as highway authority, landowners

ALLOTMENT SITES

Policy RL29

The Borough Council will seek to retain all allotment sites unless:

- (i) they can be clearly demonstrated to be permanently surplus to borough-wide requirements;**
- (ii) satisfactory alternative provision can be made available within the neighbourhood or another adjacent and accessible area.**

11.52 For many people, allotments provide an important outlet for relaxing recreation. Accordingly, there is generally a need to ensure their retention, particularly as Crawley has a slightly lower level of provision than that recommended by the Thorpe Report. However, allotment use varies considerably. In some cases, release for another purpose would be a better use of a scarce land resource.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, CBC Leisure Services and Property and Construction Services, private sector and other developers.

TOURISM

Policy RL30

Proposals for the development of tourism, exhibition and conference facilities beyond the built-up area will not be permitted unless:

- (i) there is no conflict with strategic gap and countryside interests; and**
- (ii) the proposal is for the sympathetic conversion of an existing building.**

11.53 Many elements of tourism are likely to expand over the next few years. Tourism can make a considerable contribution to the provision of jobs within the borough. Given the strategic location of Crawley, with the proximity of Gatwick Airport, a good supply of hotels, conference, shopping and entertainment facilities, the motorway and the Sussex Weald, Crawley could develop a strong tourism sector .

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Hotels

Policy RL31

Proposals for the development of, or extension to, hotels and guest houses within the built up area will normally be permitted. Proposals for the development of hotels and guest houses beyond the built-up area will not normally be permitted unless:

- (i) there is no conflict with strategic gap and countryside interests;**
- (ii) the proposal is for the sympathetic conversion of an existing building.**

11.54 There is a significant demand for hotel and guest house accommodation in the borough. Much of this is generated by airport passengers and airline employees. The provision of such facilities also adds to the range of leisure facilities available to residents of the borough as hotels often have health suites and restaurants. It is therefore important that hotels are accessible to all sectors of the community. However, hotels often operate on a twenty-four hour basis, particularly those with guests who use the airport. It is therefore important to ensure that their activities will not adversely affect neighbouring uses.

11.55 Strategic gap and countryside policies do not normally permit new development unless it is for specific countryside uses or involves the appropriate use of existing buildings.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Hotel Site

Policy RL32

Land at Haslett Avenue, known as the 'Squareabout', is allocated for hotel, or hotel and leisure uses. (Completed)

11.56 The Structure Plan envisages provision for hotel development being made in the built-up area. The Squareabout site lies between two railway stations on major bus routes. It is close to the town's major recreation and leisure facilities. Such a location is, therefore, suitable for hotel and leisure development. Compatible recreation and leisure uses should be small in scale and could include a sauna or health club. This particular site is constrained to a large extent by the nature of the highway network. Proposals for the development of the site will require a traffic impact assessment as part of any application. Development of the site for leisure uses has now been completed.

Implementation: CBC forward planning and development control processes, private sector and other developers.

Caravan and Camping Facilities

11.57 Within the South East, there is a deficit in the provision of caravan and camping facilities. This is particularly the case in the South East of the region, where there is a significant deficit in the provision of caravan and camping facilities. The deficit is particularly acute in the South East of the region, where there is a significant deficit in the provision of caravan and camping facilities.

- progress on problems and opportunities for footpaths, bridleway and cycleway routes (RL24 - 28);
- opportunities and instances of dual use (RL3);
- losses (other than through development) of allotment sites (RL29).