

# Quality Of Life

**80** The vision to 2015 for Bracknell Forest highlights that people in the Borough will have:

**...an excellent quality of life. Local people will be safe and healthy. They will have a home that meets their needs and be able to travel easily around the Borough, particularly by public transport. The distinctive, quality environment of Bracknell Forest will be enhanced and the community and learning will be valued throughout people's lives.**

(Bracknell Forest Sustainable Community Plan)

**81** Spatial planning can positively influence quality of life through the promotion and enforcement of sustainable development. Development which is truly sustainable ensures that the quality of life we enjoy today does not come at a cost to the quality of life for future generations.

## Limiting the Impact of Development

**82** Development can result in adverse impacts on existing infrastructure and local facilities, and to make development more sustainable, these local impacts need to be addressed by the development itself contributing towards related local improvements. National guidance<sup>5</sup> is clear that local planning authorities have a role not only in planning where sustainable development should occur, but in also how it must be implemented. Development must make provision to deal with the impacts arising from that development; measures either forming part of the development proposal or contributions towards measures which will address the cumulative impacts of development.

**83** These measures may be secured by planning condition; however where appropriate, provision will be secured by planning obligations (e.g. restrictions on the development or requiring parts of the site to be used in a specific way or for a specific purpose in perpetuity).

**84** Measures will be secured in a manner which ensures they are in place before adverse impacts are created, thereby ensuring the development

is not a burden on the locality. In some cases, measures to improve existing facilities will be sought to compensate for increased wear and tear likely to result from a nearby development. The Council will also secure, where appropriate, sums for future maintenance of related facilities and services. The following policy seeks the provision of related infrastructure and facilities either as part of the development or through contributions (by agreement) towards provision on a different site.

## Policy CS6 - Limiting the Impact of Development

**85** 1. Development alone or in-combination with other proposals, will contribute to the delivery of infrastructure needed to support growth in the Borough and will mitigate adverse impacts on communities, transport and the environment.

**86** 2. Where those occupying development would lead to increased pressure on local infrastructure, community facilities or resources, that impact is to be met by:  
(i) on-site provision prior to full occupation and maintained for the life of the development;  
or, in agreement with the Council:  
(ii) contributing to additional or expanded provision on a different site; or  
(iii) a mix of on-and off-site provision,

of infrastructure & facilities, reasonably related and needed to serve the development and which will make it more sustainable. The additional provision to be sufficient and in proportion to the scale and nature of the proposed development.

**87** 3. Where the Council agrees off-site mitigation is more practical and of greater value in creating sustainable communities, contributions towards provision on a different site will be secured by planning obligations.



## Implementation

**88** This Policy will be implemented through:

- Subsequent policies and guidance in further Local Development Documents;
- The determination of planning applications and appeals;
- The use of planning obligations in planning agreements.

## Design

**89** In its work to support Local Development Frameworks, The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) conclude that design, "... is not a subjective issue and decisions about it should be based on a clear policy framework..." (Making Design Policy Work p.4).

**90** The Council supports the CABE's four key roles that Development Plans should include with respect to design:

- to express a strategic spatial strategy for the authority;
- to set out the standard and quality of development the local authority requires and ensure that quality features centrally in all planning policies;
- as a basis for developing more extensive guidance such as development frameworks, masterplans and design codes;
- to control and maintain the quality of development (CABE. p.4)

**91** Policy CS7 sets out the framework for achieving the quality of development the Council requires. Detailed design policies and guidance will then be developed over time consistent with the Strategy. The Council believes that the design of buildings and spaces has a significant impact on local quality of life, including reducing crime and the fear of crime, and will therefore apply the policies and detailed guidance to ensure development quality is delivered.

**92** Development which makes a contribution towards Green Infrastructure can achieve the design criteria of building on rural character, enhancing the landscape, promoting biodiversity and aiding movement. This is in addition to a range of wider benefits, for

example improving health. Networks of good quality, accessible linear routes and connected landscapes are often referred to as Green Infrastructure. These networks can include natural and managed green areas in both urban and rural settings. Strategic connection of open green areas, which provide multiple benefits for people and wildlife, are a component of good design. The Council will seek opportunities to secure green infrastructure through the development of policies and proposals in subsequent Local Development Documents and through the determination of planning applications.

**93** The Council has a Major Application checklist which applicants for development will be expected to respond to. Design and Access statements will reflect national guidance<sup>6</sup>.

## Policy CS7: Design

**94** The Council will require high quality design for all development in Bracknell Forest.

**95** Development proposals will be permitted, which;

- build on the urban, suburban and rural local character, respecting local patterns of development and the historic environment;
- provide safe communities;
- enhance the landscape and promote biodiversity;
- aid movement through accessibility, connectivity, permeability and legibility;
- enable a mix of uses;
- provide high quality usable open spaces and public realm;
- provide innovative architecture; and
- provide well designed and integrated public art.

**96** Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the above criteria through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and streetscenes and where required site Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes.

**Implementation:**

**97** This policy will be implemented through:

- Subsequent policies and guidance in further Local Development Documents;
- The determination of planning applications and appeals.

**Recreation and Culture**

**98** Recreational Facilities are generically defined as including open space, sporting, leisure and cultural facilities and are of prime importance to improving and maintaining the quality of life in the Borough.

**99** Recreational Facilities can be summarised into the following categories;

1. Open Space of Public Value (OSPV) comprising;
  - Active OSPV (e.g. sports pitches, tennis courts, allotments, kick-about areas, children’s play areas, associated buildings, and other infrastructure).
  - Passive OSPV (e.g. natural and semi-natural open space, green corridors, country parks, and urban woodlands); and
2. Built Sports Facilities (e.g. sports halls, synthetic pitches and swimming pools); and
3. Leisure and Cultural Facilities (e.g. cinemas, theatres and art centres).

**100** Responsibility for providing and maintaining such facilities lies with a number of bodies including the Council, the Town and Parish Councils, the private sector, charitable organisations and voluntary groups. The Council prepares and updates a Cultural Strategy<sup>7</sup> which sets out a broad strategy for the provision and enhancement of such facilities. In accordance with national guidance, the Council has also prepared, and will keep under review, a Study of Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Leisure Facilities to provide up-to-date information on an assessment of the provision of open space, indoor facilities and outdoor sports provision in the Borough.

**101** The majority of new development will have an impact upon the provision of open space, sporting, recreational, leisure and cultural facilities. Existing facilities should be maintained and enhanced. The Council will seek to satisfy demand created by occupants of new development, by the provision of additional facilities. In some instances these facilities are also likely to bring benefits to the wider local population. The Council will be adopting a quality

standard principle which involves the achievable, realistic and progressive quality improvement of existing facilities.

**102** The Limiting the Impact of Development Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on how this will be implemented.

**103** The Council will also require where appropriate, the provision of new Recreational Facilities through on site provision or works in-kind on a different site, to its standards and thresholds as specified in the Limiting the Impact of Development SPD. The continued maintenance of new Recreational Facilities will also be required.

**104** In considering such provision, regard will be had to any environmental or transportation impacts that any new facility might create. Such considerations will include, for example, the means by which people will access and travel to the facility and any impact on nature conservation or landscapes.

**105** Inherent in the Council’s strategy is that existing Recreational Facilities are to be retained and that the Council will resist the loss of existing provision. Policy CS8 contains provisions that will protect existing Recreational Facilities from pressures from development that might result in their loss to the community. However, it may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances and where the Council agrees an improved quality of Recreational Facilities can be secured which would offset any loss.

**Policy CS8: Recreation and Culture**

**106** Development will be permitted which;

- i. retains, improves and maintains existing Recreational Facilities; and/or
- ii. provides and maintains new Recreational Facilities.

**Implementation:**

**107** This policy will be implemented through:

- The Limiting the Impact of Development Supplementary Planning Document;
- The determination and monitoring of planning applications and appeals;
- The use of planning obligations in planning agreements or planning conditions.