

## CHAPTER 12 - LEISURE AND TOURISM

### 12.1. POLICY 73: LAND FOR LEISURE

#### Objections

<u>Rep No</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rep No</u>	<u>Name</u>
431	East of England Tourist Board	3201*	Sport England
1204	Mr C Andrews	3226	Pendley Sports Centre Ltd
1960	Cougar Enterprises Ltd	3228	Tring Rugby Union Football Club

#### Supports

138	Mr & Mrs W G Brittain	341	Mr F J W Morris
142	Mrs Jeanne Gunn	345	Mr & Mrs Page
146	Mr Bill Taylor	615	Mr J Shotton
172	Mr A T Sexton	628	Mrs M Pearce
176	Mr D G L Brown	632	A & F Furlong
180	E G Challis	730	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
184	Mr E W Goldsmith	1092	D R Sandford
188	Mr & Mrs D G Hobbs	1349	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
192	Mr & Mrs Saunders	1862	Countryside Agency
196	Mr E Millar	2686	Mr P Jackson
200	Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis and Squash Rackets Club	2690	Mr & Mrs G Marshall
204	Mrs Mary Clarke	2692	Mr L J Brown
208	Mr & Mrs J Webb	2924	Mr B Hough
212	Mrs L M Brown	2928	Mr J Burnell
224	Mr & Mrs J B Cameron	2934	Mrs S McHugh
232	Mr & Mrs A K Parsons	2938	Mrs C Fryer
242	Mr C J Long	2942	Mr & Mrs P Reynolds
261	Kevin & Julia Clarke	2946	Mr B Rook
268	Mr J R Low	2950	Mr & Mrs P J Ogie
272	Mr T J Kenyon	2960	Mrs Lofty
303	Mrs S J Dunn	2964	Mr Butterfield
307	Mr J M Lee	3868	Mr & Mrs D Grant
311	Mr & Mrs F T Cutting	4125	Mr & Mrs K J Lee
315	Mr L G Scott	4154	Mr & Mrs B Cockfield
319	Mr A R Dann	4268	Tring & District Residents’ Association
325	Mr I Duckworth	4291	Mrs B Lea
330	Tring Society	4333	Mrs A J Nobbs
333	Mr & Mrs E Cavanagh	4731	Mr K Owens
337	Mr & Mrs Forbes		

#### Support for pre-inquiry change

For pre-inquiry change 125  
5444PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

### Key Issues

- (a) Whether the Sports Council is the correct title to use. (3201)
- (b) Does Policy 73 fail to identify sufficient leisure proposals. (1204, 3226, 3228)
- (c) Whether criterion (a) is appropriately worded. (1960)
- (d) Should the reference to hotel development in the background text be amended. (431)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Correct title for national sports authority*

12.1.1. The Deposit Draft Plan refers to the national organisation with responsibility for sport as the Sports Council. Following a recent change in name the correct title is Sport England. PIC125 proposes this change of name, and the objection has been conditionally withdrawn. I recommend that Policy 73 be amended in accordance with PIC125.

**(b) Identification of sufficient leisure proposals**

- 12.1.2. The objectors contend that Policy 73 fails to identify sufficient land for sport and leisure facilities, and each proposes an additional site within the Tring area for such a purpose. The function of Policy 73, however, is to establish the broad framework for leisure provision. It gives a high priority to meeting the leisure needs of all sections of the community and sets out criteria for assessing the appropriateness of particular locations. Rather than identifying specific areas of deficiency, the Plan includes a variety of standards and seeks the provision (or retention) of sport and leisure facilities to meet these standards. A detailed analysis of the supply of facilities and the demand for them appears in other documents, notably the Leisure and Open Land Technical Report (CD58) and the Playing Pitch Strategy (CD117).
- 12.1.3. In my view the Council has taken a pragmatic approach to sport and leisure provision, for a methodology based largely on standards and criteria is flexible, remaining relevant irrespective of changes in either the supply of land or the demand for facilities. It would not therefore be appropriate, in my view, for Policy 73 to identify particular deficiencies or sites for provision. The Policy does, however, refer to the proposal sites listed in the schedule at the end of the section, and I deal with the site-specific matters raised by the objectors at this point. Furthermore, the facilities promoted by the objectors are broadly addressed in other policies, for the provision of sports pitches is one element of the leisure space standard proposed by Policy 74, and the recreation potential of the Grand Union Canal is recognised by Policy 84. In these circumstances I recommend no change to Policy 73 in response to these objections.

**(c) Wording of criterion (a)**

- 12.1.4. The objector considers that the requirement for ‘appropriate locations’ for leisure activities to be within a *reasonable distance* of the homes of likely participants is irrelevant and unhelpful in relation to some low and medium intensity leisure uses. Because many of the resources which provide opportunities for leisure (such as the Grand Union Canal or the AONB) are not always close to peoples’ homes, it is argued that the interpretation of *reasonable distance* depends upon the activity in question and the availability of transport. The objector suggests that the policy should focus upon the general issue of accessibility, with the greatest intensity of use being promoted at locations that are accessible by alternative methods of transport. In addition, the use of the word “*normally*” in the phrase preceding criterion (a) is thought to be contrary to current advice on development plan policies.
- 12.1.5. It seems to me that when Policy 73 is read with the associated background text, it is clear that the locational criteria are intended to reflect broad social, environmental and sustainability objectives. High intensity, built leisure attractions are encouraged in town centres, whilst low intensity, low impact activities are considered suitable for rural locations. Consequently I do not believe that there is a significant difference between the aims of the objector and those of the Council. I accept that the phrase *reasonable distance* can be interpreted in many ways, but as leisure provision is so wide-ranging in nature I am not convinced that a more focused criterion would retain the flexibility that is desirable. Moreover the Policy does not, in my view, preclude appropriate leisure activities taking place in sensitive locations such as the Chilterns AONB, but requires accessibility to be considered along with other impacts.

12.1.6. As to the use of the word “normally”, by FC72 the Council proposes to replace this with “subject to other policies of this plan”. I regard this as a helpful change, for it removes the uncertainty that is inherent in the use of *normally* and replaces it with a clause that relates the locational criteria to the wider objectives of the Plan, including for example the transport strategy. It also helps to address the concern of the objector about the over-prescriptive nature of the background text, for it makes it clear that the locational criteria need to be applied in the context of the substantive policies governing particular land uses. In any event, I do not believe that the schedule at paragraph 12.5 of CD52 should be taken too literally, for it is merely using examples to illustrate the general principle that Policy 73 seeks to promote.

12.1.7. I recommend that Policy 73 be amended in accordance with FC72, but that no other modifications are made in response to this objection.

**(d) Reference to hotel development**

12.1.8. The schedule at paragraph 12.5 of CD52 lists hotels as a high intensity activity that should generally be located in town centres with good accessibility. The Tourist Board argues that this is not always the case, for budget hotels serving the business market often require edge or out of town locations that are easily accessible by car. I acknowledge that different types of hotel require different locations, and these matters are addressed in Policies 90 and 91 that deal with hotels directly. As I indicate in paragraph 12.1.6 above, I do not believe that paragraph 12.5 should be taken too literally, for the activities mentioned are merely examples that are intended to demonstrate the general principle advocated in Policy 73. I also consider that the amendment proposed by FC72 is helpful, for this indicates that the locational criteria do not override the other policies of the Plan. Consequently I do not believe that it is necessary to amend the background text in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.1.9. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PIC125 and FC72.**

**12.2. POLICY 74: PROVISION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LEISURE SPACE IN TOWNS AND LARGE VILLAGES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1680	Mr P Witt & Ms S Wareham	4733	Mr K Owens
3202*	Sport England		

**Supports**

139	Mr & Mrs W G Brittain	342	Mr F J W Morris
143	Ms Jeanne Gunn	346	Mr & Mrs Page
147	Mr Bill Taylor	606	Ms V Lockett
173	Mr A T Sexton	616	Mr J Shotton
177	Mr D G L Brown	629	Mrs M Pearce
181	E G Challis	633	A & F Furlong
185	Mr E W Goldsmith	985	Mr C H Gray
189	Mr & Mrs D G Hobbs	1093	D R Sandford

193	Mr & Mrs Saunders	1350	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
197	Mr E Millar	1863	Countryside Agency
201	Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis and Squash Rackets Club	2687	Mr P Jackson
205	Mrs Mary Clarke	2925	Mr B Hough
209	Mr & Mrs J Webb	2929	Mr J Burnell
213	Mrs L M Brown	2935	Mrs S McHugh
225	Mr & Mrs J B Cameron	2939	Mrs C Fryer
233	Mr & Mrs A K Parsons	2943	Mr & Mrs P Reynolds
262	Kevin & Julia Clarke	2947	Mr B Rook
269	M J R Low	2951	Mr & Mrs P J Ogie
273	Mr T K Kenyon	2954	Kathleen Williams
304	Mrs S J Dunn	2961	Mrs Lofty
308	Mr J M Lee	2965	Mr Butterfield
312	Mr & Mrs F T Cutting	3869	Mr & Mrs D Grant
316	Mr L G Scott	4126	Mr & Mrs K J Lee
320	Mr A R Dunn	4155	Mr & Mrs B Cockfield
326	Mr I Duckworth	4269	Tring and District Residents’ Association
331	Tring Society	4292	Mrs B Lea
334	Mr & Mrs E Cavanagh	4334	Mrs A J Nobbs
338	Mr & Mrs Forbes	4732	Mr K Owens

### **Support for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 126

5445PC CPRE- The Hertfordshire Society

## **Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the Sports Council is the correct title to use. (3202)
- (b) Should Policy 74 identify the extent of land proposed for open space. (1680)
- (c) Whether Policy 74 is a credible policy. (4733)

## **Inspector’s Conclusions**

### ***(a) Correct title for national sports authority***

12.2.1. I have dealt with this matter in paragraph 12.1.1 above. PIC126 proposes that the organisation formerly known as the Sports Council should be referred to by its current title, which is Sport England. I recommend that Policy 74 be amended in accordance with PIC126.

### ***(b) Extent of land proposed for open space***

12.2.2. The objector supports the provision of additional open space at Rectory Farm on the periphery of Kings Langley, but objects to the extent of the land proposed. As this is primarily a site-specific matter rather than an objection to Policy 74, I deal with it in my consideration of Proposal Site L11 (see paragraphs 12.29.1 to 12.29.7).

### ***(c) Credibility of Policy 74***

12.2.3. Because Policy 74 and the schedule of proposal sites was drawn up in advance of the Catchment Area Study that is referred to in the supporting text, the objector argues that the credibility of the policy is undermined. Whilst I accept that it is desirable for policies and proposals to be based on the most up-to-date information, in my view it is inevitable that there will be occasions when it is inappropriate to delay the publication of a Plan pending the completion of a particular study. In this instance the Council’s Playing Pitch strategy has now been published (CD117) and provides an analysis of sport and recreation space against which the specific leisure proposals can be examined. Indeed, it is one of the factors that I have taken into account in my

consideration of the principal concern of the objector, which is the failure to identify land at Hastoe Lane/Park Road, Tring, as a leisure proposal site. I deal with this matter later in this chapter, at paragraphs 12.33.19 to 12.33.23.

12.2.4. As to the credibility of Policy 74, the Council seeks to provide leisure space according to defined standards and criteria. Provided the standards are reasonable, which to my mind they are, this approach has the advantage that it remains relevant whatever the supply of space or the demand for it. I appreciate that the application of the policy is improved by having better or more up-to-date information (as in CD117), but I do not consider that the policy itself is undermined by the quality of the data used. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

12.2.5. I note that through FC3 an addition is proposed to the text that indicates that the Council has adopted the NPFA standards for children’s play facilities, and points to Part 5 of the Plan for further details. I regard this as a helpful cross-reference to the standards currently used by the authority, and I support the Further Change.

**Recommendation**

12.2.6. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PIC126 and FC3.**

**12.3. POLICY 75: PROVISION OF LEISURE SPACE IN OTHER VILLAGES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1351*	CPRE – The Hertfordshire Society	1864	Countryside Agency

**Support**

4156 Mr & Mrs B Cockfield

**Support for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 127  
5446PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issue**

- (a) Does Policy 75 make adequate provision for play areas and informal open space in villages. (1351, 1864)

**Inspector’s Conclusion**

- (a) *Provision of play areas and informal open space*

12.3.1. Both objectors question the presumptions that small villages generally have adequate leisure space, and that the surrounding countryside is always a source of opportunities for informal recreation. The Council addresses these matters through PIC127, which amends the reasoning to indicate that the space for team games and children’s play is generally adequate, but that village appraisals and Local Agenda 21 initiatives may identify community needs for informal open space. The CPRE has conditionally withdrawn its objection in response to these changes.

12.3.2. While I agree with the Council that the standards approach is less appropriate in small villages, PPG17 makes it clear that people living in the countryside have no less a need for recreation than people in towns. I welcome the reference to village appraisals and other initiatives in PIC127 for it is important that the Plan recognises that local deficiencies may exist and identifies a mechanism for overcoming them. I am not entirely sure, however, that the changes proposed by PIC127 are fully consistent with the policy, which indicates that new leisure space in villages will only be created where special needs and opportunities arise. This implies a presumption against new provision unless some ‘special’ circumstance exists, and it may be argued that an identified need for, say, a kick-about area is not special. In my view the policy would be improved if the word ‘identified’ were substituted for ‘special’.

**Recommendation**

12.3.3. The Plan be modified as follows:

- (a) the word ‘special’ in Policy 75 be replaced with the word ‘identified’;
- (b) paragraph 12.8 be modified in accordance with PIC127.

**12.4. POLICY 76: RETENTION OF LEISURE SPACE**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
3203*	Sport England	4113	Lucas Aerospace

**Counter Objection**

To pre-inquiry change 128	
5705PC	Lucas Aerospace

**Supports**

226	Mr & Mrs J B Cameron	2940	Mrs C Fryer
327	Mr I Duckworth	2944	Mr & Mrs P Reynolds
332	Tring Society	2948	Mr B Rook
335	Mr & Mrs E Cavanagh	2952	Mr & Mrs P J Ogie
339	Mr & Mrs Forbes	2962	Mrs Lofty
343	Mr F J W Morris	2966	Mr Butterfield
347	Mr & Mrs Page	3870	Mr & Mrs D Grant
1352	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	4270	Tring & District Residents’ Association
2926	Mr B Hough	4293	Mrs B Lea
2930	Mr J Burnell	4335	Mrs A J Nobbs
2936	Mrs sS McHugh		

**Supports for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 128			
5252PC	English Nature	5447	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the retention of playing fields should be treated separately from leisure space. (3203)
- (b) Whether Policy 76 should take account of private and commercially unviable sports facilities. (4113, 5705PC)
- (c) Whether the proposed changes are excessive in relation to the requirements of PPG17. (5705PC)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Separate treatment of playing fields*

- 12.4.1. Sport England considers that the Deposit Draft policy does not deal adequately with the retention of playing fields. It suggests that the policy is either rewritten or a new policy introduced which seeks to prevent building on playing fields except in certain stated circumstances. The Council has substantially revised the policy in response to the three objections, and that from Sport England is conditionally withdrawn.
- 12.4.2. Dealing with the specific point about the separate treatment of playing fields, I agree with the Council that the retention of all leisure space, both formal and informal, is important in circumstances where the overall supply is either inadequate or only just adequate. There is support for this approach in PPG17, for whilst the guidance focuses on the need to retain playing fields, the final element of paragraph 42 indicates that an exception may exist where there is an excess of sports pitch provision and public open space in an area. Consequently I do not believe that it is necessary for playing fields to be separately identified for protection.

### (b) *Unviable private sports facilities*

- 12.4.3. Lucas Aerospace seek an exemption from the provisions of Policy 76 in circumstances where private sports facilities are no longer required or where commercial facilities are no longer viable. This would be contrary to the advice in PPG17, however. Paragraph 41 makes it clear that all playing fields are important for both their recreational and amenity value and for their contribution to the green space of an urban environment. When not required for their original purpose, it advises that they may be able to meet the growing need for recreational land in the wider community. The limited circumstances in which exceptions to the protection of playing fields may be acceptable are outlined in paragraph 42. These comprise the redevelopment of a small part of the site as the best means of retaining and enhancing the sports facilities, making alternative provision of equivalent community benefit, or demonstrating an excess of sports pitch and public open space in an area. In my opinion the objector does not provide any compelling reason for departing from this advice.

### (c) *Proposed changes*

- 12.4.4. The Council proposes to substantially modify the Deposit Draft policy by PIC128 and FC160. These changes seek to strengthen the protection for all leisure space, and in the process they aim to address the concerns of Sport England. However, it seems to me that the policy as now drafted takes a far stricter approach than PPG17, to the extent that it is difficult to envisage circumstances in which any building on leisure space could be permitted.
- 12.4.5. The problem arises from the fact that, whilst the five criteria to be satisfied broadly reflect the circumstances defined in PPG17 or those advised by Sport England, the policy requires them all to be met. This contrasts with the advice they purport to follow, which only requires one of the criteria to be satisfied. Consequently, although I support the changes to the extent that the criteria are more compatible with national advice, the “and” at the end of criterion (d) needs to be changed to “or” so that they become mutually exclusive. In this way the criticism that the Council is seeking to



better the existing situation would no longer apply, as the criterion that seeks an overall benefit to sport would only be one of the possible options.

**Recommendation**

12.4.6. Policy 76 be modified in accordance with PIC128 and FC160, apart from the proposed change to criterion (d), where the “and” at the end of the clause be replaced by “or” so that the clauses become mutually exclusive.

**12.5. POLICY 77: LEISURE SPACE IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
596	The House Builders’ Federation	3204	Sport England
1551	Linden Homes South-East	4032	HCC Environment Department
1712	McCarthy & Stone (Developments) Ltd	4544	John Dickinson Stationery

**Supports**

1353	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	4294	Mrs B Lea
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**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the policy should provide a formula approach to leisure space provision, with a minimum threshold below 50 dwellings or 2ha. (3204)
- (b) Whether the standards proposed are appropriate. (1551, 3204)
- (c) Whether major developments should be expected to contribute to other recreational needs. (596)
- (d) Whether the requirement to provide public open space should apply to sheltered accommodation for the elderly. (1712)
- (e) Whether the references to maintenance requirements are appropriate. (596, 4032)
- (f) Whether the policy should refer to the role of planning briefs. (4544)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Formula approach and threshold**

12.5.1. Sport England would prefer all developments, including single dwellings, to contribute to leisure space provision, either on-site where the development is sufficiently large, or in a central location otherwise. The Council agrees that all residential development will generate open space needs, and accepts that in some areas small housing schemes will incrementally increase the deficiencies in provision. It argues, however, that extensive research is needed before a revised approach can be devised that would satisfy the advice in Circular 1/97, particularly in respect of contributions to off-site provision. It regards this as a matter for the next review of the Plan.

12.5.2. I agree that a well researched and robust methodology is required if leisure space contributions from very small residential developments are to be sought, particularly



in parts of the Borough where existing provision meets the desired standards. Nevertheless it is regrettable, in my view, that the Council has chosen not to prepare a revised approach to open space provision for this review of the Plan, especially as it appears to accept that a revision is justified. I have considered whether it would be appropriate to recommend that this work be carried out at the modifications stage, but I am reluctant to precipitate a study that could further delay the adoption of the Plan.

- 12.5.3. Turning to the current approach to leisure space provision, it does seem to me that the Council’s minimum threshold of 50 dwellings or 2 hectares is very high. Many housing schemes below this size are likely to generate a requirement for some form of on-site leisure space to meet the needs of residents. I find it difficult to accept the authority’s argument that only developments of 50 dwellings or more are physically capable of accommodating leisure space within the site. Indeed, the adoption of the NPFA standards for children’s play facilities (as proposed by FC3) will inevitably mean that a small unequipped play area (LAP) will be required on many sites below the current threshold, as they are designed to operate down to a minimum size of 0.4ha/15 houses (paragraph 3.3.8, CD58).
- 12.5.4. Consequently, as an interim measure, I believe that the threshold for on-site leisure space provision should be significantly reduced, probably by about half. In determining the new threshold the Council should consider the implications of the standards included in the Policy (see the following sub-section), and other factors such as the NPFA standards. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

**(b) *Appropriateness of standards***

- 12.5.5. Sport England points out that the 1.2ha/1000 population standard does not equate with the overall minimum standard of 2.8ha set out in Policy 74, and is unclear as to whether the leisure space required is for sports pitches, children’s play or informal use. It believes that the standard should be based on the overall requirement of 2.8ha. Linden Homes considers that the provision of a minimum area of 0.3ha is arbitrary and has not been justified.
- 12.5.6. I share the objectors’ doubts about the standards set out in Policy 77, for I am not at all clear about the purpose of the provision or the relationship between the different elements of the policy. I acknowledge that the 1.2ha standard is intended to relate to children’s play space and informal use (ie excluding the outdoor sport element of the 2.8ha standard), and at average densities this equates to roughly 5% of the site area. I cannot understand, however, how the minimum area of 0.3ha can be justified, for it is three times the size of open space that would be required when applying the 5% standard to a 2 hectare site. The Council contends that this is the minimum usable area that could accommodate children’s play facilities, an informal kickabout area and an informal ‘leisure’ area. Even if this were the case, which I doubt, I fail to see why all three types of space would be needed within a housing development of, say, 50 dwellings. I consider that the minimum area requirement is both unreasonable and not the best use of land for sites at or close to the threshold, and should be deleted.
- 12.5.7. The final sentence of the Policy indicates that major developments may also be required to contribute to other recreational needs of the development. The Council explains that this is intended to refer to the sports pitch element of provision, and would be used for off-site provision or the enhancement of existing parks and playing

fields. It is designed to ensure that schemes that make substantial demands on existing facilities should make provision that is equivalent to the full 2.8ha standard. Whilst this is a reasonable requirement, in my view, the Plan does not make this intention clear. I consider that this sentence should provide greater clarity and precision about the nature and extent of the recreational needs that are to be met.

- 12.5.8. Finally, I am totally confused by one of the changes proposed in FC176A. I can comprehend the changes introduced by the words that are underlined in the conventional way, for they provide helpful clarification to the Policy. But I cannot understand the addition of the words *2.8 hectares (7 acres)*, which are not underlined, to criterion (a). The resulting sentence reads “meet a standard of at least 1.2 hectares (3 acres) *2.8 hectares (7 acres)* per 1000 population.....”. Clearly this does not make sense. I indicate above that the overall 2.8ha standard might usefully be mentioned in the final sentence of the Policy, and I wonder whether the Council has mistakenly inserted these words in the wrong place. In any event, they should be removed from criterion (a), because for relatively small developments it is not appropriate for the entire leisure space requirement to be provided on site.
- 12.5.9. To summarise, I recommend that criterion (b) be deleted from Policy 77, and that the final sentence be revised to provide greater clarity and precision about the nature and extent of the recreational needs that major developments should meet. I endorse FC176A apart from the words “*2.8 hectares (7 acres)*”, which should be deleted.

**(c) *Major developments***

- 12.5.10. The House Builders Federation is concerned that major developments will be expected to meet recreational needs over and above those directly created by the development itself, and argues that this would be contrary to Government guidance. I agree that, as drafted, the Policy could be interpreted in this way, and I have already indicated that greater clarity and precision is needed about the nature and extent of the recreational needs that major developments should meet. I recommend no further change in response to this objection.

**(d) *Sheltered accommodation for the elderly***

- 12.5.11. McCarthy & Stone contend that, because of the particular needs of the elderly, large areas of open space are not appropriate within a sheltered housing development. There is little requirement for active open space for recreation, and for security reasons it is not desirable to allow public use of any space that is provided. The Council points out that Section 9 of the Environmental Guidelines refers to possible variations in leisure space needs for different groups, with elderly persons dwellings having a need for sitting out areas.
- 12.5.12. I note that part of FC176A adds to Policy 77 a cross-reference to the Environmental Guidelines, but I am not convinced that this satisfactorily addresses the concern of the objector. In particular, it is not clear whether the Policy 77 criterion (a) requirement for 1.2ha per 1000 population can be reduced for elderly persons dwellings, for the Environmental Guidelines reference at paragraph 9.3.7 is to the type of open space and not to its quantity. It is arguable that sheltered housing might only be expected to provide the “other” type of leisure space, to a standard of 0.4ha per 1000 population, but this would conflict with criterion (a) of the policy. I believe that those instances in

which a lower standard than 1.2ha per 1000 population would be acceptable should be stated in the Plan, especially in the reasoning at paragraph 12.12. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

**(e) Maintenance requirements**

12.5.13. The House Builders Federation is concerned that maintenance agreements should only be sought for open space that is provided within the terms of Government advice in Circular 1/97. The County Council suggests that low maintenance implications or “sustainability” should be included within criterion (c). I share the Council’s view that neither objection warrants a change to the Plan. Maintenance agreements are invariably the subject of planning obligations that, as the background to Policy 11 makes clear, should be consistent with Government advice; further repetition is unnecessary. As to the implications for future maintenance, this is a matter of detailed design that goes beyond the scope of Policy 77. I recommend no change in response to these objections.

**(f) Planning briefs**

12.5.14. The objector suggests that the Plan should state that specific leisure space provision for major projects will be defined in planning briefs. Again I am not convinced that this is necessary. As the Council points out, the “planning requirements” for the major housing proposal sites indicate the general requirement for leisure space, and this is to be expressed in more detail in development briefs. As the Plan is to be read as a whole, I see no reason for it to be repeated in Policy 77. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.5.15. **The Plan be modified as follows:**

- (a) Policy 77 be amended in accordance with FC176A apart from the words “2.8 hectares (7 acres)”, which should be deleted;**
- (b) the threshold for on-site leisure space provision required by Policy 77 be significantly reduced, probably by about half. In determining the new threshold the Council should consider the implications of the standards included in the Policy, and other factors such as the NPFA standards;**
- (c) criterion (b) be deleted from the Policy;**
- (d) the final sentence of the Policy be revised to provide greater clarity and precision about the nature and extent of the recreational needs that major developments should meet;**
- (e) the circumstances in which a lower standard than 1.2ha per 1000 population would be acceptable should be stated in the Plan at paragraph 12.12.**

## 12.6. POLICY 78: ALLOTMENTS

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
644*	HCC Environment Department	4951L*	English Nature
1354	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	5107	Tring Environmental Forum
1771	Berkhamsted Town Council		

### Support

731 Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

### Supports for pre-inquiry changes

For pre-inquiry change 129			
5253PC	English Nature	5448PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
For pre-inquiry change 130			
5254PC	English Nature	5449PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
For pre-inquiry change 131			
5450PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society		

### Key Issues

- (a) Whether the Plan should recognise the ecological value of allotments, and their value for growing food. (644)
- (b) Whether wildlife habitat creation and community orchards or woodland should be added to the list of alternative uses. (1354, 4951L)
- (c) Whether the policy should go beyond the statutory obligations, particularly regarding Berkhamsted. (1771)
- (d) Whether provision should be made for new allotments. (5107)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Ecological value and food growing*

12.6.1. The County Council considers that the reasoning that follows the policy should mention the ecological value that allotments can provide, particularly for reptiles, and the wider environmental benefits that are gained by local people growing their own food. The Council proposes to add these elements to the text through PIC130, and the objection has been conditionally withdrawn. I support the recognition given to these factors by PIC130.

#### (b) *Habitat creation and woodland*

12.6.2. The CPRE believes that the policy should give support for a scheme that promotes the conversion of redundant allotments in villages to community orchards or woodland, thereby contributing to additional and attractive leisure space. English Nature considers that disused allotments can be ideal sites for habitat creation, and suggests that nature conservation be added as alternative after-use. Both suggestions are appropriate alternative uses for surplus allotments, and the Council proposes to add them to the policy by means of FC94 and PIC129. I support these changes.

#### (c) *More than statutory obligations*

12.6.3. Berkhamsted Town Council argues that the policy does no more than reiterate the statutory obligations, and urges the Council to translate the policy into practice in Berkhamsted. There is no indication of the reasoning behind the Town Council’s

concern, and as the policy seems to me to be both appropriate and reasonable, it should be capable of implementation throughout the Borough. I also believe that the policy goes significantly beyond the statutory obligations. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(d) Provision for new allotments**

12.6.4. The objector suggests that, as well as protecting existing allotments, the policy should seek the provision of new sites where there is excess demand or where there is a recognised shortfall. It is also argued that the policy should have regard to the House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs report on the future of allotments. The Council acknowledges that there may be occasions when new allotment sites are justified, and proposes PIC129 to encourage new provision in the circumstances suggested by the objector. It also proposes to add to the reasoning a clause that refers to the House of Commons report, and an indication that guidance on allotments may be included in a revision of PPG17 (PIC131). I agree that the policy should allow for new allotment provision, and I support both pre-inquiry changes.

**Recommendation**

12.6.5. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PICs 129-131 and FC94.**

**12.7. POLICY 79: GOLF COURSES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
360	Great Gaddesden Parish Council	1772	Berkhamsted Town Council
733	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust	1803	Water End/Upper Gade Valley Cons.Soc
1250	The Chiltern Society	3205*	Sport England
1355*	CPRE – The Hertfordshire Society	5108	Tring Environmental Forum

**Supports**

732	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust	1865	Countryside Agency
1060	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food	4952L	English Nature

**Supports for pre-inquiry changes**

For pre-inquiry change 132			
5255PC	English Nature	5451PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
5307PC	HCC Environment Department		
For pre-inquiry change 133			
5452PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society		

**Key Issues**

- (a) Should the policy be strengthened to better control the environmental, ecological and visual impact of golf courses. (360, 733, 1355, 1803, 5108)
- (b) Whether stricter control over earth moving and the extraction or importation of material is necessary. (360, 733, 1250, 1355, 1803)
- (c) Should the statistical base for the assessment of provision be updated. (1772)
- (d) Whether the reference to the Sports Council is correct. (3205)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Control over environmental and other impacts*

12.7.1. The objectors are concerned that golf courses can result in a substantial change to the landscape, and suggest that the visual impact of buildings, car parks and floodlighting, and the impact on landscape and ecology, should be specifically addressed in Policy 79. The Wildlife Trust suggests that an environmental assessment should be required for all applications. The Council acknowledges these concerns and proposes to strengthen the policy by means of PIC132 and FC84, which address all the matters raised by the objectors. I agree that it is desirable to identify the environmental factors in detail, and I accept that it is only appropriate to require an environmental impact assessment for proposed 18 hole courses, as suggested in Circular 2/99. I support the proposed changes.

### (b) *Control over movement of material*

12.7.2. As a result of a problem regarding earthmoving and landfill on a nearby site in St Albans District, a number of objectors suggest that proposals which involve significant alterations to ground levels through the extraction or importation of material should not be permitted. The Council accepts that the policy should be strengthened, and includes a phrase to address this matter in PIC132. I agree with the suggested change.

### (c) *Updated statistics*

12.7.3. The Town Council considers that the statistics for golf courses, which date from 1991, should be updated. This date refers to the most recent review of standards of provision, however, and more recent information about the supply of courses is used to carry out the assessment of provision in the Leisure and Open Land Technical Report (CD58). I am satisfied that the conclusions on golf course provision are based on appropriate information, and I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

### (d) *Reference to Sports Council*

12.7.4. As with other objections, the governing body for sport requests that all references to the Sports Council should use its current name, Sport England. In this instance, however, the reference in paragraph 12.15 of CD52 is to a 1991 publication by the Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation. The Council proposes to amend the text by inserting the words “the former” in front of the organisation’s name (PIC133). The objection has been conditionally withdrawn, and I agree that this change satisfactorily resolves the matter.

### **Recommendation**

12.7.5. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PICs 132 & 133 and FC84.**

## 12.8. POLICY 80: FOOTPATH NETWORK

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
361	Great Gaddesden Parish Council	1804	Water End/Upper Gade Valley Cons.Soc
1211	British Horse Society – Hertfordshire	3218	Mr C Beney
1221	Mr J Rowe	3219	Mr C Beney
1356*	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	3220	Mr C Beney
1773	Berkhamsted Town Council		

### Supports

432	East of England Tourist Board	1866	Countryside Agency
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### Support for pre-inquiry change

For pre-inquiry change 134  
5453PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

### Key Issues

- (a) Should the interests of landowners and nearby residents be taken into account when considering improvements to the footpath network. (361, 1356, 1804)
- (b) Whether the policy should include a reference to the voluntary sector. (1211, 3218)
- (c) Should the policy state that there will be no net loss, or a net public benefit, from improvements to the footpath network. (1211, 1221, 1356, 3219)
- (d) Whether the policy should refer to detailed ways of increasing accessibility to footpaths through measures such as better crossing points, a reduction in road-walking between footpaths, and surveys of unsealed unclassified roads. (1221, 3220)
- (e) Should the policy require additional footbridges across the A41. (1773)
- (f) Should a reference to the opportunities presented by planning gain be included in the sentence dealing with footpath diversions resulting from development. (3220)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Interests of landowners and residents*

12.8.1. The objectors argue that improvements to the footpath network can result in some paths passing close to residential property, causing inconvenience particularly from the parking of vehicles on the roadside near the start of a route. The Council accepts this point and proposes by FC97 to amend the policy to state that an improvement should not give rise to an adverse effect on residential amenity. The authority contends that it is not necessary to specifically mention landowners because any changes to the network would have to be carried out in consultation with them. I endorse the Further Change, for it recognises that it is sometimes necessary to balance the needs of footpath users with those of local residents. I agree that as landowners would be involved in the statutory processes of footpath closure, diversion and creation, their interests would be taken into account.

#### (b) *Reference to voluntary sector*

12.8.2. The objectors believe that the reference to “other agencies” in the list of partners to the joint action that is sought to protect and improve the public footpath network, does not



adequately recognise the role played by the voluntary sector. The Council considers that the term includes the voluntary sector, and that an additional phrase is therefore unnecessary. To my mind, however, an agency implies a particular type of organisation or body, and is a word that is not immediately associated with the voluntary sector organisations that are often involved in footpath matters. Whilst I accept that it is not necessary to specifically identify the voluntary sector in the policy, I believe that a more all-encompassing word such as “organisation” would be better than “agency”. I recommend that Policy 80 be amended accordingly.

**(c) *Improvements to network***

- 12.8.3. There is concern that the requirement for changes to the footpath network not to inconvenience walkers is inadequate, with the objectors variously seeking no net reduction in the extent or quality of the network, or a net benefit, or a substantial benefit. It seems to me, however, that the reference to footpath closure or diversion should be read in the context of the broad thrust of Policy 80, which is to protect, improve and promote the footpath network. It is not reasonable, in my view, for the policy to require every alteration to the network to produce a zero net effect, for in some cases this may not be feasible. I regard the objective of not inconveniencing walkers to be appropriate, and recommend no change in response to these objections.

**(d) *Increased accessibility***

- 12.8.4. One objector believes that there are too many stiles on footpaths in the Borough, which act as an impediment to the disabled or mothers with pushchairs, and another seeks the adoption of a Code of Practice on crossing points. It is also considered that the policy should seek to reduce the amount of road walking necessary between footpaths. It is further suggested that not all unsealed unclassified roads are identified on the definitive map, and a survey is recommended so that these green lanes can be made fully available to the public.
- 12.8.5. The Council accepts the first two points, and proposes to amend the policy to seek improved access to the countryside for the mobility impaired, and to require efforts to be made to reduce road walking between adjoining paths (PIC134). I agree that the important mobility objective should form part of the policy, but I do not consider that it is necessary to refer to a Code of Practice. I also accept that the linking of adjoining paths is desirable. As to identifying potential green lane routes, it seems to me that this is just one example of the ways in which the footpath network could be improved, and does not warrant a specific mention. I am satisfied that the policy is sufficiently positive and promotional in seeking to improve the network, as recognised by the support from the Countryside Commission. I recommend that Policy 80 be amended in accordance with PIC134.

**(e) *Footbridges across A41***

- 12.8.6. Berkhamsted Town Council wishes further attention to be given to the provision of footbridges to maintain footpath links across the A41 by-pass. I note the concern of the Ramblers’ Association about the at-grade crossings of the by-pass, and although there have been no accidents involving walkers, I acknowledge that the high speed of some vehicles along this road is a potential threat to users of these paths. However this is a detailed matter relating to a few specific routes, and is not the sort of issue that

warrants a specific mention in a general policy relating to footpaths. If it is considered necessary to improve these by-pass crossings in the future, I believe that Policy 80 establishes an appropriate framework against which any alterations to the routes could be judged. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(f) Opportunities from planning gain**

12.8.7. The objector considers that the final part of Policy 80, which deals with footpath diversions as a result of development proposals, should reflect the opportunities for enhancement that might arise through planning gain. To my mind it is neither appropriate nor necessary to refer to opportunities for enhancement in this way, for the matter is already covered by the general phrase that recognises that ‘significant planning advantages’ could be sufficient to justify footpath diversions. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.8.8. **Policy 80 be modified in accordance with PIC134 and FC97, and the word “agencies” be replaced by “organisations”.**

**12.9. POLICY 81: BRIDLEWAY NETWORK**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
362	Great Gaddesden Parish Council	1774	Berkhamsted Town Council
433	East of England Tourist Board	1805	Water End/Upper Gade Valley Cons. Soc
1212	British Horse Society - Hertfordshire	3221	Mr C Beney
1222	Mr J Rowe	3222	Mr C Beney
1357*	CPRE – The Hertfordshire Society		

**Support**

1867	Countryside Agency	3223	Mr C Beney
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**Supports for pre-inquiry changes**

For pre-inquiry change 135			
5353PC	British Horse Society - Hertfordshire	5454PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
For pre-inquiry change 136			
5354PC	British Horse Society - Hertfordshire		

**Key Issues**

- (a) Should the interests of landowners and nearby residents be taken into account when considering improvements to the bridleway network. (362, 1805)
- (b) Whether the policy should include a reference to the voluntary sector. (1212, 3221)
- (c) Should the policy state that there will be no net loss, or a net public benefit, from improvements to the bridleway network. (1212, 1222, 1357, 3222)
- (d) Whether the policy should refer to detailed ways of improving the bridleway network through measures such as a reduction in road walking and riding between routes, and surveys of unsealed unclassified roads. (1222)
- (e) Should the policy require additional footbridges across the A41. (1774)

- (f) Should the policy refer to the potential benefits of recreational cycling. (433)
- (g) Should the policy include criteria for supporting the diversion of bridleways affected by development, and should a reference to the opportunities presented by planning gain be added. (3222)
- (h) Is it appropriate to refer to horses often making bridleways impassable to other users. (1212)

## **Inspector’s Conclusions**

### **(a) *Interests of landowners and residents***

12.9.1. The objectors argue that improvements to the bridleway network can result in some paths passing close to residential property, causing inconvenience particularly from the parking of horse-boxes on the roadside near the start of a route. The Council accepts this point and proposes by FC98 to amend Policy 81 to state that an improvement should not give rise to an adverse effect on residential amenity. The authority contends that it is not necessary to specifically mention landowners because any changes to the network would have to be carried out in consultation with them. I endorse the Further Change, for it recognises that it is sometimes necessary to balance the needs of bridleway users with those of local residents. I agree that as landowners would be involved in the statutory processes of bridleway closure, diversion and creation, their interests would be taken into account.

### **(b) *Reference to voluntary sector***

12.9.2. As with Policy 80, the objectors believe that the reference to “other agencies” in the list of partners to the joint action that is sought to protect and improve the public bridleway network does not adequately recognise the role played by the voluntary sector. The Council considers that the term includes the voluntary sector, and that an additional phrase is therefore unnecessary. To my mind, however, an agency implies a particular type of organisation or body, and is a word that is not immediately associated with the voluntary sector organisations that are often involved in rights of way matters. Whilst I accept that it is not necessary to specifically identify the voluntary sector in the policy, I believe that a more all-encompassing word such as “organisation” would be better than “agency”. I recommend that Policy 81 be amended accordingly.

### **(c) *Improvements to network***

12.9.3. There is concern that the requirement for changes to the bridleway network not to inconvenience users is inadequate, with the objectors variously seeking no net reduction in the extent or quality of the network, or a net benefit, or a substantial benefit. It seems to me, however, that the reference to bridleway closure or diversion should be read in the context of the broad thrust of Policy 81, which is to protect, improve and promote the bridleway network. It is not reasonable, in my view, for the policy to require every alteration to the network to produce a zero net effect, for in some cases this may not be feasible. I regard the objective of not inconveniencing users to be appropriate, and recommend no change in response to these objections.

**(d) Increased accessibility**

12.9.4. The objector believes that Policy 81 should commit the Council to improving the rights of way network for all users, particularly by seeking to reduce the amount of road walking and riding necessary between bridleways. It is further suggested that not all unsealed unclassified roads are identified on the definitive map, and a survey is recommended so that these green lanes can be made fully available to the public. The Council accepts the first point, and proposes to amend the policy to require efforts to be made to reduce the stretches of road between adjoining paths (PIC135). This seems to me to be a desirable amendment. As to identifying potential green lane routes, I regard this as just one example of the ways in which the bridleway network could be improved, and in my view it does not warrant a specific mention. I am satisfied that the policy is sufficiently positive and promotional in seeking to improve the network, as recognised by the support from the Countryside Commission. I recommend that Policy 81 be amended in accordance with PIC135.

**(e) Bridges across A41**

12.9.5. As with Policy 80, Berkhamsted Town Council wishes further attention to be given to the provision of footbridges to maintain footpath and bridleway links across the A41 by-pass. There is no evidence, however, that the three crossings that currently exist are in any way inadequate or problematic. In any event, I do not consider that a general policy relating to bridleways would be the appropriate vehicle for dealing with such a specific matter. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(f) Recreational cycling**

12.9.6. The Tourist Board considers that Policy 81 makes little reference to the potential offered by recreational cycling as a sustainable activity for visitors and the local community. I do not believe that this is a justifiable criticism of the Deposit Draft version of the Plan, for the different types of user are not identified in the policy, and the reasoning makes it clear that cyclists are among those who can use bridleways. However the two pre-inquiry changes proposed by the Council (PICs 135 and 136) refer to riding/riders and walking/walkers, but omit any reference to cycling/cyclists. By highlighting the use of bridleways for riding and walking it does seem to me that these changes do not properly recognise their potential as routes for recreational cycling. I have already indicated in sub-sections (d) and (f) above that I support both these pre-inquiry changes. Consequently I recommend that “, cycling” and “, cyclists” be inserted before the word “and” in PICs 135 and 136 respectively.

**(g) Bridleways affected by development**

12.9.7. The objector considers that the policy should include a reference to bridleways affected by development proposals, similar to that in Policy 80 which sets out criteria to be satisfied before diversions will be supported. It is also suggested that the policy should reflect the opportunities for enhancement that might arise through planning gain. The Council accepts the first of these points, and proposes through PIC136 to add a similar sentence to that in Policy 80. I agree that this change is necessary, for there is no reason why bridleway diversions should be treated differently to those relating to footpaths. As to opportunities for enhancement through planning gain, to my mind it is neither appropriate nor necessary to refer to the matter in this way. In

my view it is already covered by the general phrase that recognises that ‘significant planning advantages’ could be sufficient to justify bridleway diversions. I therefore recommend that Policy 81 be amended in accordance with PIC136.

**(h) Impact of horses on bridleways**

12.9.8. The British Horse Society considers that the statement in the reasoning that horses often make bridleways impassable to other users unfairly puts all the blame for muddy paths at the feet of horses. In its view the highway authority is largely responsible, as proper drainage and maintenance can provide a good surface for all lawful users. The Council argues that, because of their weight and the nature of their movement, horses are more likely than other users to erode bridleway surfaces, even when they have been improved.

12.9.9. To my mind there is probably some justification for both points of view, though I have no evidence of the extent of the problem in Dacorum. I wonder whether the use of the word “often” is appropriate, for this does imply a substantial level of damage on many routes. I recommend that the Council look again at this phrase, perhaps with a view to altering it along the lines of “*but on some routes horses have a tendency to make surfaces difficult for other users*”.

**Recommendation**

12.9.10. **The Plan be modified as follows:**

- (a) the word “agencies” in Policy 81 be replaced by “organisations”;
- (b) the Policy be amended in accordance with PICs 135 and 136, subject to “, cycling” and “, cyclists” respectively being inserted before the word “and”;
- (c) the Policy be amended in accordance with FC98;
- (d) the Council review the phrase within paragraph 12.17 which relates to the impact of horses on bridleways.

**12.10. POLICY 82: EQUESTRIAN ACTIVITIES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
645*	HCC Environment Department	1358	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
1213	British Horse Society - Hertfordshire	5109	Tring Environmental Forum

**Supports for pre-inquiry changes**

For pre-inquiry change 137

5256PC	English Nature	5456PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
5455PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society		

**Key Issues**

- (a) Should there be a reference to the potentially damaging impacts of maneges. (645)
- (b) Should the policy refer to all routes used by horse riders, not just bridleways. (1213)

- (c) Whether the policy should safeguard pastures for their nature conservation interest. (1358)
- (d) Whether equestrian developments should be controlled to prevent overuse and damage to bridleways. (5109)

## **Inspector’s Conclusions**

### **(a) *Impact of maneges***

12.10.1. The County Council considers that the reasoning should mention the potentially damaging impact of maneges, particularly their floodlighting, where adjacent to sites of ecological importance. The Council proposes to add a sentence to paragraph 12.19 of CD52 to reflect this concern (PIC137), and the objection has been conditionally withdrawn. I agree that in some locations maneges can have a significant impact on both the landscape and wildlife, and I support the proposed amendment.

### **(b) *Routes used by horse riders***

12.10.2. The British Horse Society suggests that locating equestrian activities close to the local bridleway network fails to recognise that horse riders can use many other routes, such as Roads Used as Public Paths, Byways and minor roads. The Council acknowledges that the term “bridleway” could be somewhat restrictive, and proposes to replace it with “existing and proposed rights of way for equestrians” (FC95). It is reasonable that the policy should allow for a location close to any existing or planned route used by horses, and I support this Further Change.

### **(c) *Safeguard pastures***

12.10.3. The CPRE is concerned about the safeguarding and care of pastures, arguing that badly managed paddocks are unsightly and detract from the rural landscape, whereas well managed horse-grazed pastures can support important wildlife communities. This is largely a matter of management, in my view, for there is often little that the planning system can do to prevent over-grazing. Policy 82 does address this matter by seeking to ensure that sufficient grazing is available in relation to the number of loose boxes and stable units, by requiring the scale of the equestrian activity to respect the countryside setting, and by indicating that the subdivision of fields into small paddocks is not appropriate. Furthermore, specific protection for recognised wildlife sites is provided by Policy 103.

12.10.4. It seems to me that Policy 82 and the associated reasoning seek to discourage the intense forms of equestrian use that would have an adverse effect on the countryside. In my opinion the policy gives appropriate guidance on equestrian activities, and I do not believe that further controls are necessary. In the absence of any indication from the objector as to how the policy might be improved, I recommend no change in response to this objection.

### **(d) *Control of equestrian developments***

12.10.5. The objector contends that the policy takes no account of the need to control equestrian developments in order to prevent over-use and damage to the bridleway network. As I note in the preceding sub-section, however, the policy is designed to

prevent large-scale equestrian activities and to ensure that any development is of a scale and intensity that respects its surroundings. In my view the controls set out in Policy 82 are adequate, and the matter of conflict between different users of bridleways is more specifically addressed in Policy 81. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.10.6. The Plan be modified in accordance with PIC137 and FC95.

**12.11. POLICY 83: NOISY COUNTRYSIDE SPORTS**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
646*	HCC Environment Department	3206	Sport England
1214*	British Horse Society - Hertfordshire		

**Supports**

734	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust	4953L	English Nature
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**Support for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 138  
5457PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether greater control over noisy activities is needed in sensitive locations and adjacent to public rights of way. (646, 1214)
- (b) Whether the policy should be positively worded to give greater encouragement to noisy sports. (3206)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Greater control in sensitive locations**

12.11.1. The County Council contends that Policy 83 should be strengthened to ensure that the impact of noisy countryside sports on sensitive areas such as wildlife sites or the AONB is fully considered. A similar concern is expressed by the British Horse Society, who suggests that the policy should ensure that there is no disturbance to equestrians using adjacent rights of way. The Council acknowledges that these concerns are justified, and proposes amendments to the policy through PIC138. As a consequence, both objections have been conditionally withdrawn. I agree that the policy should fully take into account the potential for disturbance and danger from noisy sports on all adjacent sensitive locations, and I support the changes proposed in PIC138.

**(b) Positive wording**

12.11.2. Sport England argues that Policy 83 is negative and unhelpful toward the accommodation of noise-generating sports. It seeks policies that assess the supply of



and demand for such sites; that include positively worded criteria for site selection without undue restrictions on operational activity; and that identify suitable locations where the impact of noise generating sports can be minimised. Government advice in PPG17 is rather more cautious, however, recognising that some noise-generating sports can cause concern, and recommending that sensitive areas should be protected from such activities if there would be an adverse impact. Where there is a clear demand for noisy sports activities, the guidance urges planning authorities to seek sites that will minimise conflict with other uses.

12.11.3. I note that there are already sites in Dacorum for motorcycle scrambling, banger racing, shooting, model aircraft flying and clay pigeon shooting, and there is no evidence of a clear demand for additional sites for noisy sports activities. I also accept that much of the rural part of the Borough lies within the Chilterns AONB, where the main recreational value lies in the quiet enjoyment of the countryside. In these circumstances I believe that the generally restrictive nature of the policy is appropriate, and I consider it to be broadly consistent with the advice in PPG17. I recommend no change to the policy in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.11.4. **Policy 83 be modified in accordance with PIC138.**

**12.12. POLICY 84: RECREATION ALONG THE GRAND UNION CANAL**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
647*	HCC Environment Department	2973	English Heritage
1775	Berkhamsted Town Council		

**Counter Objection**

To pre-inquiry change 139  
5616PC Berkhamsted Town Council

**Supports**

735	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust	2870	British Waterways
1203	Mr C Andrews	4954L	English Nature
1868	Countryside Agency		

**Support for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 139  
5458PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the environs of the canal merit protection under the policy. (647)
- (b) Whether the policy should be amended to refer to residential moorings. (1775, 5616PC)
- (c) Should the historic character of the canal be explicitly mentioned. (2973)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Environs of the canal**

12.12.1. The County Council believes that the protection and promotion of the canal should extend to its environs, thereby including canal-side banks and hedges which can be important for wildlife. In response the Council proposes to add the words “and its environs” after the reference to the canal (PIC139), and the objection has been conditionally withdrawn. It is important that the policy should clearly include the towpath and other land associated with the canal, not just the water body, and I support the pre-inquiry change.

**(b) Residential moorings**

12.12.2. Although supporting the policy, Berkhamsted Town Council objects to on-line residential moorings and considers that there is an inconsistency between this policy and that relating to residential moorings. The purpose of Policy 84, however, is to recognise the value of the canal as a recreational and environmental resource. The matter of moorings is specifically addressed by Policy 113, as the associated text (paragraph 12.24 of CD52) indicates. These objections are primarily to the moorings policy, a matter that is considered later in the report (*see section 13.19*). It would not be appropriate to include any reference to moorings within Policy 84, and I recommend no change in response to these objections.

**(c) Historic character of canal**

12.12.3. Whilst welcoming the policy, English Heritage consider that the historic character of the canal should be explicitly mentioned. The Council has chosen to add a reference to this historic character under Policy 112, which specifically deals with the canalside environment, and thinks it unnecessary to duplicate a similar reference here. I note that the text accompanying Policy 84 cross-refers to Policy 112, and as the provisions of that policy would also apply to any development envisaged under Policy 84, I agree that a further mention of the canal’s historic character is not essential. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.12.4. **Policy 84 be modified in accordance with PIC139.**

**12.13. POLICY 85: INDOOR LEISURE FACILITIES IN TOWNS**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1359	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	3207*	Sport England

**Counter Objection**

To pre-inquiry change 141  
5289PC      Tring Town Council

**Support for pre-inquiry changes**

For pre-inquiry change 140

5459PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

For pre-inquiry change 141

5460PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the policy should require facilities to conform to high environmental standards. (1359)
- (b) Whether the reference to the Sports Council is correct. (3207)
- (c) Whether the policy should refer to “sports” or “leisure” facilities. (5289PC)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) High environmental standards**

12.13.1. The objector suggests that a paragraph be added to the policy requiring indoor leisure facilities to conform to the highest environmental standards for noise, appearance and light pollution, and to incorporate measures to discourage crime. To my mind these are detailed matters of design that apply to many different forms of development, not just indoor leisure facilities, and are more properly addressed by the general development control policies 9 and 10. Policy 9, in particular, seeks a high standard in all development proposals and has many criteria dealing with visual impact, while criterion (j) deals with noise and light pollution. As all the matters of concern to the objector are covered elsewhere, I see no need for an amendment to Policy 85.

**(b) Correct title for national sports authority**

12.13.2. I have dealt with this matter on number of previous occasions. PIC141 proposes that the organisation formerly known as the Sports Council should be referred to by its current title, which is Sport England. I agree, and I recommend that the Plan be amended accordingly.

**(c) “Sports” or “leisure” facilities**

12.13.3. Tring Town Council points out that as PIC140 makes a distinction between indoor leisure facilities and indoor sports facilities, a similar distinction is needed in the first sentence of the reasons. The Council agrees, and proposes an alteration to the reasons by FC99, which I support. I also endorse FC93, which reverts to defining land in Policy 85 as leisure space rather than sports space; as a consequence, FC6 should not be adopted.

<p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>12.13.4. <b>The Plan be modified in accordance with PICs 140 &amp; 141 and FCs 93 &amp; 99 and, as a consequence, FC6 be not adopted.</b></p>
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## 12.14. POLICY 86: INDOOR LEISURE FACILITIES SERVING LARGE VILLAGES AND SETTLEMENTS IN THE GREEN BELT AND THE RURAL AREA

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
363	Great Gaddesden Parish Council	1806	Water End/Upper Gade Valley Cons. Soc
1360	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	3208*	Sport England

### Support for pre-inquiry changes

For pre-inquiry change 142

5461PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

For pre-inquiry change 143

5462PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

### Key Issues

- (a) Whether the policy should require facilities to conform to high environmental standards. (363, 1360, 1806)
- (b) Whether the reference to the Sports Council is correct. (3208)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *High environmental standards*

12.14.1. The objectors suggest that a paragraph be added to the policy requiring indoor leisure facilities to conform to the highest environmental standards for noise, appearance and light pollution, and to incorporate measures to discourage crime. To my mind these are detailed matters of design that apply to many different forms of development, not just indoor leisure facilities, and are more properly addressed by the general development control policies 9 and 10. Policy 9, in particular, seeks a high standard in all development proposals and has many criteria dealing with visual impact, while criterion (j) deals with noise and light pollution. As all the matters of concern to the objectors are covered elsewhere, I see no need for an amendment to Policy 86.

#### (b) *Correct title for national sports authority*

12.14.2. As with other objections, the governing body for sport requests that all references to the Sports Council should use its current name, Sport England. In this instance, however, the reference in paragraph 12.31 of CD52 correctly refers to the former Eastern Council for Sport and Recreation. The Council proposes to amend the text to indicate that the programmes of this organisation have been embraced by Sport England (PIC143). The objection has been conditionally withdrawn, and I agree that this change satisfactorily resolves the matter.

#### (c) *Consequential amendment*

12.14.3. As a consequence of the proposed addition of Policy 84A relating to major indoor leisure facilities (PIC144), the Council proposes that the scope of Policy 86 be amended by PIC142 to relate to indoor sports (rather than leisure) facilities. The Council provides no explanation of the need for this change, however, and I find it rather puzzling in the context of Section 9 as a whole, in which the term “leisure” is in general use. Moreover it seems to me that there could be circumstances in which small-scale (as opposed to major) facilities are proposed which are not sports related

but which would be embraced by the term “leisure”. Unless there is a good reason for choosing to narrow the definition to “sports”, I recommend that the Council look again at PIC142 and consider whether the use of the more inclusive “leisure facilities” term would not be more appropriate.

**Recommendation**

12.14.4. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PIC143.**

12.14.5. **The Council re-examines PIC142 and considers whether it is an appropriate amendment to make to Policy 86.**

**12.15. POLICY 87: ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1776	Berkhamsted Town Council

**Support**

1361	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
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**Key Issue**

(a) Whether the policy could be applied to a specific site in Berkhamsted. (1776)

**Inspector’s Conclusion**

(a) *Application of policy*

12.15.1. The Town Council considers that the policy should be applied to the reinstatement of the Rex cinema in Berkhamsted for the specified uses. It is not suggested that the policy should be changed, however, and there is no evidence that it would not apply to this specific case. In my view this objection relates to the application of the policy rather than the policy itself. I find no reason to question the broad aim of Policy 87, which is to protect and promote arts and entertainment facilities, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.15.2. **No modification be made in response to this objection.**

**12.16. POLICY 88: DUAL USE AND JOINT PROVISION OF LEISURE FACILITIES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
4955L	English Nature	5110	Tring Environmental Forum

**Support**

1362 CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the policy gives sufficient encouragement to dual use and requires clearer guidelines. (5110)
- (b) Whether floodlighting of outdoor facilities should be restricted. (4995)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Encouragement to dual use**

12.16.1. The objector considers that the policy does not go far enough towards encouraging dual use, and suggests that a clearer set of guidelines is needed, particularly in relation to partnership opportunities with the private sector. No such guidelines are suggested, however, and I am uncertain how a local plan policy could provide clearer guidance without straying beyond the remit of land use planning. Government advice in PPG17 welcomes the opportunities presented by dual use, but falls short of requiring such provision through local plan policies. Indeed the strongest advice on dual use concerns the potential loss of surplus school playing fields, a matter that has already been addressed in the Plan as part of Policy 76. In my view the encouragement to dual use and joint provision given by Policy 88 is broadly consistent with the advice in PPG17, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(b) Outdoor floodlighting**

12.16.2. Whilst supporting the principle of maximising the use of leisure facilities, English Nature is concerned that the increased use of outdoor facilities often includes floodlighting, to which it is generally opposed. I appreciate that floodlighting can be disruptive, both to nearby residents and to wildlife, but I regard this as a detailed matter that is more properly addressed by general development control Policy 9. A specific matter such as this would not be appropriate as part of a policy that seeks to encourage different forms of leisure provision, in my view, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.16.3. **No modification be made in response to these objections.**

**12.17. POLICY 89: TOURISM**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
434	East of England Tourist Board	4734	Mr K Owens
2871	British Waterways	5111	Tring Environmental Forum

**Supports**

1083	The Boxmoor Trust	1777	Berkhamsted Town Council
1363	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society		

## Key Issues

- (a) Whether there is sufficient emphasis on sites adjoining transport routes. (434)
- (b) Should the economic importance of the Grand Union Canal be acknowledged. (2871)
- (c) Whether the encouragement given to heritage facilities should be restricted to those of small scale. (4734)
- (d) Whether the policy takes sufficient account of sustainability and transport issues. (5111)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Emphasis on transport routes*

12.17.1. Whilst generally supportive of the positive approach taken to tourism land uses, the Tourist Board considers that insufficient emphasis is given to the preference for sites adjoining transport routes. The Council recognises that there should be a reference in the policy to sustainability and transport considerations, and proposes to add a sentence seeking tourist facilities that are accessible by a number of transport methods as part of FC107. Although this is a more wide-ranging statement than that suggested by the objector, I regard it as appropriate for a policy that establishes the overall context for tourist development throughout the Borough. I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with this element of FC107.

### (b) *Grand Union Canal*

12.17.2. British Waterways suggests that the economic importance of the Grand Union Canal to the Borough, in terms of visitor expenditure and canal related jobs, merits a mention in the Plan. I share the Council’s view, however, that the importance of the canal is already recognised through other policies of the Plan, particularly Policies 84, 112 and 113. In any event, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to highlight any one specific tourist resource in a policy that establishes the Plan’s overall framework towards tourism. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

### (c) *Heritage facilities*

12.17.3. The objector is concerned that the emphasis given to small-scale heritage facilities in the final paragraph of the policy implies that larger scale projects which do not have an interpretative function would not satisfy the policy. It is also argued that the use of the word “normally” gives rise to uncertainty, and should be replaced by criteria against which proposals can be assessed. The Council accepts that heritage facilities need not necessarily be small in scale, and proposes to delete these words from the policy. It also agrees that the word “normally” is imprecise, and proposes instead to require proposals to accord with the Development Strategy (Policies 1-6) and the provisions of Policy 9. These changes are included as part of FC107. I consider that both changes improve the Plan, for it is reasonable that the policy should refer to all heritage facilities, and it is more appropriate to cross-refer to other policies of the Plan than to attempt to consider whether an exception should be made in a particular case. I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with these elements of FC107.



**(d) Sustainability and transport issues**

12.17.4. The objector argues that the policy takes no account of sustainability and transport issues, and believes it to be too focused on enabling development rather than establishing needs and capacity. It is suggested that there should be a general requirement for tourist facilities to be served by public transport, and that the local planning authority should draw up a Code of Practice for sustainable tourism. The Council has, as I indicate in sub-section (a) above, accepted that the policy should seek facilities that are accessible by a number of transport methods, and this goes some way towards meeting the objection. I do not believe, however, that it would be appropriate to require all tourist facilities to be served by public transport, for this could unreasonably prejudice many small-scale rural and farm-based schemes. Nor do I consider that the policy contains an over-emphasis on enabling tourism development, for it recognises the balance that needs to be struck between economic prosperity and protection of the environment. As to the suggestion of a Code of Practice on sustainable tourism, to be applied through planning conditions, many of the matters to which the objector refers go beyond what could normally be controlled by this means.

12.17.5. Nevertheless I do have some sympathy with the views of the objector, for I have already concluded that the issue of sustainability needs to be given greater priority in the Plan, as I recommend in Chapter 6 paragraph 6.8.15. The Plan must be read as a whole, and I believe that the appropriate place to focus upon sustainability is in the general chapters at the beginning. If this is achieved then I consider that this introductory policy on tourism, which links to other policies controlling more specific areas of provision, does not require additional references to sustainability or transport. I recommend no further amendment other than that proposed as part of FC107.

**Recommendation**

12.17.6. **Policy 89 be modified in accordance with FC107.**

**12.18. POLICY 90: HOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES IN TOWNS AND LARGE VILLAGES**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
435	East of England Tourist Board	1364	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether it is appropriate to define a ‘small hotel’ in the Reasons. (435)
- (b) Whether the policy should refer to hotels in or close to employment areas. (1364)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Definition of small hotel**

12.18.1. As the policy differentiates between large and small hotels, the Tourist Board suggests that it might be appropriate to define a small hotel in the reasoning. Although the objector does not provide any guidance, the Council suggests that a small hotel will generally be below 15-20 bedrooms. It seems to me that it would not be desirable to include a specific figure in the reasoning, however, because an appropriate scale of development will invariably depend upon the nature of the surroundings, as the policy recognises. In my view the general thrust of the policy is both reasonable and capable of interpretation, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(b) Hotels in employment areas**

12.18.2. The CPRE contends that as most town hotels depend to a large extent on business customers, consideration should be given to hotels in or close to employment areas. I share the Council’s view that this objective has already been met, for the policy specifically states that large hotels will be acceptable in certain general employment areas. Moreover, new hotels are specifically mentioned as an appropriate use within the existing employment area at Maylands Avenue (Policy 31) and at the proposed employment sites at North East Hemel Hempstead (Site E4) and London Road, Apsley (Site TWA10). In my view these opportunities fully satisfy the objection, and no change to the policy is necessary.

**(c) Consequential amendment**

12.18.3. Later in this chapter I deal with an objection from the Tourist Board which questions whether the Plan makes adequate provision for hotel development (see paragraphs 12.23.1 to 12.23.3). In my reasoning I suggest that it would be helpful if there was some reference in the Plan to the totality of the opportunities that are available for hotel development. I consider that the most appropriate point would be following Policy 90, the main policy relating to hotel provision, where this could be added as background text. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

**Recommendation**

12.18.4. **The Plan be modified by the addition of background text to Policy 90 indicating the opportunities that are available in the Plan for hotel development.**

**12.19. POLICY 91: HOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES IN THE GREEN BELT AND THE RURAL AREA**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
371	Three Valleys Water plc

**Supports**

436	East of England Tourist Board	1365	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
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**Key Issue**

- (a) Should Policy 91 refer to a new hotel proposal site at Piccott’s End Pumping Station. (371)

**Inspector’s Conclusion**

**(a) Hotel at Piccott’s End Pumping Station**

12.19.1. The objector considers that the water utility site at Piccott’s End is a brownfield opportunity that is ideally located for hotel development, and should therefore be identified under Policy 91 as a possible future hotel site. A similar objection is made to the omission of this site from the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposals Sites, and I deal in detail with the matter at this point in the Chapter (see paragraphs 12.33.1 to 12.33.4). The purpose of Policy 91 is to establish the framework for hotels in the Green Belt and rural area, and it contains no reference to specific sites. Consequently, regardless of the merits of this case, it would be inappropriate to refer to the objection site. I recommend no change to Policy 91 in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.19.2. **No modification be made in response to this objection.**

**12.20. POLICY 93: EXTENSIONS TO PUBLIC HOUSES AND RESTAURANTS IN THE GREEN BELT AND THE RURAL AREA**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
438	East of England Tourist Board

**Support**

1367	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
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**Key Issue**

- (a) Whether it is appropriate to refer to annexes in the policy. (438)

**Inspector’s Conclusion**

12.20.1. The Tourist Board supports the policy, but suggests that the position regarding annexes should be clarified. Although the Council believes that the likelihood of proposals for free-standing annexes to public houses or restaurants is limited, it accepts that the policy should be clarified. FC109 proposes the addition of “or annexes” after “extensions” in the policy. I agree that this change provides greater clarity, particularly in relation to the presumption against such development in the Green Belt, and I endorse it.

**Recommendation**

12.20.2. Policy 93 be modified in accordance with FC109.

## 12.21. POLICY 94: CAMPING AND CARAVANNING

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
439	East of England Tourist Board	5112	Tring Environmental Forum
2872	British Waterways		

### Support

1368	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
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### **Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the restriction on new buildings should apply to the Rural Area. (439)
- (b) Should the policy include a reference to floating hostels. (2872)
- (c) Whether the policy over emphasises permanent sites. (5112)

### **Inspector’s Conclusions**

#### **(a) Restriction on new buildings**

12.21.1. The Tourist Board believes that the need for high quality facilities as part of any new camping and caravanning site is likely to require additional buildings, and argues that the restriction on new buildings in the Rural Area will strongly discourage the creation of new sites. The Council accepts that there should be different degrees of restriction between the Green Belt and the Rural Area, and acknowledges that the criteria of Policy 94 would prevent intrusive development. It therefore proposes that the restriction on new building should only apply to the Green Belt (FC108).

12.21.2. Insofar as it relates to the Rural Area, I regard this as an appropriate amendment, for there is no reason why sites with new buildings, which satisfy the criteria, should not be acceptable in the countryside. The resultant sentence would state that the construction of new buildings on touring caravan or camping sites in the Green Belt will be refused. I am not convinced, however, that this blanket prohibition on all new buildings in the Green Belt is an accurate reflection of either the advice in PPG2 or Policy 3 of the Plan. In particular, the statement that applications “will be refused” is not consistent with the advice at paragraph 3.4 of PPG2. This would allow essential small-scale buildings required in connection with a use that would not, in itself, be inappropriate in the Green Belt. The statement also makes no allowance for the possibility that very special circumstances might exist to justify a larger scale of development.

12.21.3. Furthermore the sentence conflicts directly with Proposal Site L2 (as amended in the Composite Draft), which would allow ancillary small-scale built development in association with a proposed replacement Caravan Club site in the Green Belt. The Council argued at the inquiry that the prohibition on new buildings in the Green Belt was not intended to apply to replacement provision, but in my view that is not how Policy 94 reads. In this case I can find no justification for a specific land-use policy pursuing a different approach to a particular area than would derive from the general policies for that area. Indeed, as the aim of the policy is to encourage new camping and caravanning provision, a restrictive approach is likely to be counter-productive.

12.21.4. In these circumstances I believe that the last sentence of Policy 94 needs to be looked at afresh. I accept that it should not refer to the Rural Area, but I also consider that the

reference to the Green Belt should more closely reflect the general policy approach to such areas. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

**(b) Floating hostels**

12.21.5. British Waterways wishes to promote camping facilities in the Borough and wonders whether the possibility of floating youth hostels has been considered. The objector provides no guidance on how it would wish to see the policy amended, however, and I am not convinced that the suggestion is appropriate to a policy that deals with camping and caravanning, which is essentially a land-based activity. It is more likely, in my opinion, that any proposals for floating hostels would be considered against the parameters of Policy 113, which deals with moorings on the Grand Union Canal. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(c) Emphasis on permanent sites**

12.21.6. The objector contends that the policy provides too much emphasis on permanent sites. Instead, to encourage the diversification of local farming businesses, it is suggested that the development of short term and seasonal camping facilities should be considered. I question whether the policy does favour permanent facilities, however, for there is no mention of different types of site or periods of use. The policy seems to me to be equally applicable to seasonal development, and arguably the small scale, farm-based schemes promoted by the objector are those most likely to satisfy the criteria for new sites. It should also be borne in mind that a limited amount of camping can be carried out as permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Furthermore, farms are frequently used as certified location sites, where up to 5 touring caravans or tents can be occupied by members of certain organisations. I am satisfied that the policy does not prejudice small-scale, seasonal facilities, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

**12.21.7. The Plan be modified in accordance with FC108, and the final sentence of Policy 94 be amended so as to be consistent with the general approach to development in the Green Belt.**

**12.22. LEISURE AND TOURISM: SUGGESTED NEW POLICY**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
2174	The British Film Institute	3759	Government Office for East of England

**Support**

For pre-inquiry change 144	
5463PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

## Key Issues

- (a) Whether an additional policy to address matters of film and television heritage is appropriate. (2174)
- (b) Whether an additional policy is necessary to control intensive leisure uses. (3759)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Film and television heritage*

- 12.22.1. The British Film Institute (BFI) is concerned that Policy 87, which deals with arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, does not include any reference to its activities at Berkhamsted, where the national film archive is housed. It proposes an additional policy that would encourage the consolidation or expansion of activities relating to national film and television heritage, taking into account the effect of such proposals on environmental and transport objectives. The Council considers that the issues raised by such a policy are already addressed elsewhere in the Plan, and it believes that a policy aimed at a particular site is inappropriate and would set a precedent for other specific users. It is also concerned that a policy that seeks to encourage development on a site in the Green Belt would be in conflict with other parts of the Plan.
- 12.22.2. The objection is one of a number of related objections from the BFI which are aimed at securing some form of policy backing for additional (more than small-scale) facilities on its Berkhamsted site. In my opinion, however, the site is predominantly in employment use, for the contribution it makes as a leisure facility (as opposed to creating a leisure product) is relatively limited. Indeed, the BFI’s Objection 2173 to Policy 34 acknowledges that the site is an established employment generating use. Consequently I do not consider it appropriate to have a policy in the leisure and tourism section of the Plan that would primarily address an employment issue.
- 12.22.3. I also agree with the Council that it is neither necessary nor desirable to have a specific policy to deal with this one site, particularly in the light of my recommendation in Chapter 4 that the site should remain in the Green Belt. Furthermore, I believe that those parts of the BFI’s activities that do provide arts or cultural facilities are adequately addressed by Policy 87, which seeks to encourage them. Taking all these factors into account, I do not consider that an additional policy is justified.

### (b) *Intensive leisure uses*

- 12.22.4. The Government Office is concerned that the Plan does not contain any policies to control intensive leisure uses such as multiplex cinemas, indoor bowling alleys and other forms of major indoor sport and recreation. It recommends a new policy that would provide for such uses in a flexible manner that is capable of adapting to new types of development as trends and fashions change. The policy should make proposals subject to the sequential test of PPG6 and other key proposals of the Plan such as car parking restraint, green transport plans, and so on. The Council accepts that a policy is needed, and considers that any facilities should be directed towards Hemel Hempstead because the other settlements are too small to accommodate them. Policy 84A and its associated reasoning are proposed by PIC144.

12.22.5. I agree that the Policies 85 and 86, which are aimed at the conventional types of indoor sport and leisure facility, do not give adequate guidance for the kinds of major indoor leisure attractions commonly provided by the commercial sector. The Council’s proposed Policy 84A introduces the appropriate controls, as suggested by the objector, and is consistent with the advice in PPG6. I recommend that the Plan be amended accordingly.

**Recommendation**

12.22.6. **The Plan be modified in accordance with PIC144.**

**12.23. SCHEDULE OF LEISURE & TOURISM PROPOSAL SITES: GENERAL**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
440	East of England Tourist Board

**Key Issue**

(a) Whether the Council should have identified further hotel sites. (440)

**Inspector’s Conclusion**

12.23.1. The Tourist Board is disappointed that the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites contains only one site (TWA23) that does not have an existing business or a planning permission. I deal with this one “new” site for an hotel, on land between Two Waters Way and Two Waters Road, in Part 4 of the Plan, where I conclude that this proposal should be deleted (see Chapter 17 paragraph 7.38.15). It is also necessary to delete this site from the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. As a consequence FC110, which refers to other opportunities for hotel development in the Plan, becomes irrelevant and should not be adopted. I do think, however, that the Plan should make some reference to the totality of the opportunities that are available for hotel development. In my view the most appropriate point would be as background text to Policy 90, for this is the main policy relating to the provision of hotels. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

12.23.2. Turning to the question of whether further hotel sites should be identified, this is again a matter that I address in my consideration of Site TWA23. To my mind there is conflicting evidence about the need for more hotels in Dacorum. The Council’s Economic Development Unit indicates that it has frequent complaints from local businesses about the inadequacy of accommodation in the Borough, and there is support for an hotel on the objection site from a potential operator. On the other hand three budget hotels have been developed in recent years, and sites for new provision are proposed at Jarman’s Park, within the Maylands Avenue GEA, at North East Hemel Hempstead (Site E4), and as part of the mixed use development at London Road, Apsley (Site TWA10). Moreover the first two opportunities for new provision were included within the Adopted Plan (CD39) but have remained undeveloped, and an extant permission exists for additional accommodation at the Bourne End service



area. Taking all these factors into account, I do not believe that the case for additional hotel allocations in Dacorum is compelling. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.23.3. **The Plan be modified as follows:**

- (a) **FC110 be not adopted;**
- (b) **background text be added to Policy 90 indicating the opportunities that are identified in the Plan for hotel development.**

**12.24. PROPOSAL SITE L1: SHOOTERSWAY, BERKHAMSTED**

**Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1488	HCC Environment Department	1952	Taywood Homes Ltd

**Support**

736	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
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**Key Issues**

- (a) Would an alternative site for Leisure Proposal L1, as part of a larger development package, be more appropriate. (1952)
- (b) Should the proposal be brought forward to be developed within the Plan period. (1952)
- (c) Whether an adjacent grassland wildlife site should be considered as part of the planning requirements. (1488)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) *Alternative site as part of larger development package***

12.24.1. The objector supports the provision of new leisure space in this general area, but initially argued that it should be located on land to the north-west so that the objection site could become part of a larger area of housing. Shortly before the close of the inquiry the objector submitted a revised scheme which generally accords with the Council’s proposals for the area. In this scheme the field east of the junction between Shootersway and Durrants Lane would be laid out as playing fields to serve the adjacent school and the wider community on a dual use basis, and a smaller area of public open space would be provided along the north-eastern boundary of the site.

12.24.2. The revised scheme is broadly welcomed by the Council and, in relation to the provision of leisure space, it fulfils the requirements of Site L1. I agree that it would make a useful contribution to the supply of playing pitches, in particular, helping to reduce a long-standing shortage in Berkhamsted. I have dealt with the wider issue of the scale of housing development in this locality in Chapter 7, where I conclude that the size of the housing allocation is appropriate (see section 7.45). I consider whether

the leisure space allocation should be combined with that for a new school, Site C1, in Chapter 11, concluding that the flexibility arising from the dual allocation might be advantageous (see paragraphs 11.7.1 to 11.7.3). In these circumstances I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

**(b) *Development within Plan period***

12.24.3. The provision of the leisure space would be linked to the development of Housing Site H52, which is included as part of the housing land reserve for implementation after the Plan period. The objector considers that the housing site should be brought forward in the Plan so that the benefits of playing pitches and informal recreation provision can be achieved at an early date. I have considered this matter at length in Chapter 7. For the reasons I give in section 7.45 I consider that it would be sensible for H52 to be brought forward into Part II of the housing programme.

12.24.4. My view is strengthened in this case by the long-standing nature of the L1 allocation, which is included in the Adopted Plan, albeit on the south-eastern part of the combined C1/L1 site. The significant shortfall of both playing pitches and informal open space in Berkhamsted, and the fact that the site is well-located and physically suited to meeting these needs also reinforce my conclusions that development of this site during the Plan period would be appropriate. Nevertheless, as Proposal L1 does not specifically mention the timing of its development I see no need to make any amendment to the Plan in direct response to this objection. Consequential amendments to the requirements will be necessary, however, to reflect the changes I have recommended in respect of Housing Proposal Site H52. I therefore recommend that the Proposal L1 be modified to reflect the changes to Proposal H52.

**(c) *Adjacent Wildlife Site***

12.24.5. The County Council believes that the planning requirements for Site L1 should recognise the proximity of the site to an adjacent grassland wildlife site. The small meadow in question lies on the south-western side of Shootersway and has a relatively short frontage to the road. As this site is separated from the C1/L1 Site by the road, I do not consider that the development of either the leisure space or the school would have any material impact on its nature conservation interest. I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

**Recommendation**

12.24.6. **Proposal L1 be modified as necessary to ensure consistency with the amended requirements specified in respect of Housing Proposal Site H52 and Social and Community Facilities Proposal Site C1.**

12.24.7. **No modification be made in response to objection 1488.**

## 12.25. PROPOSAL SITE L2: BUNKERS LANE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

### Counter Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
To pre-inquiry change 145			
5365PC	Mrs G Cox	5725PC	English Partnerships
5673PC	Apsley Developments Ltd	5751PC	Felden Park Farms Ltd
5709PC	Leverstock Green Village Association		

### Support

5165 Mr Tony McWalter MP

### Support for pre-inquiry change

For pre-inquiry change 145  
5464PC CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

### Key Issues

- (a) Whether Site L2 is suitable for the provision of a site for the Caravan Club. (5365PC, 5673PC, 5709PC, 5751PC)
- (b) Whether the provision of a Caravan Club site at Bunkers Park should be a firm proposal of the Plan or an option. (5725PC)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Suitability of site for Caravan Club*

- 12.25.1. The objectors argue that the relocation of the Caravan Club site from Buncefield Lane would be visually intrusive, detracting from the rural environment of Bunkers Park and affecting both the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt. There is concern that the site could be occupied by travellers, particularly during the winter months, which might cause nuisance to people living nearby. Strong objections are raised to the increase in traffic through Leverstock Green, which it is feared would create increased congestion, pollution and noise disturbance, and potential hazards to highway safety. It is also considered that the scheme would unacceptably reduce the area of land available for playing fields in Hemel Hempstead, thereby leading to a shortfall in provision.
- 12.25.2. The area of land identified for the Caravan Club facility is in the eastern corner of Proposal Site L2, at the junction of Bunkers Lane and Bedmond Road. It is a mainly flat area of scrub and grassland that lies behind a mature tree belt along the Bedmond Road frontage. Apart from an intermittent hedgerow along Bunkers Lane, the remaining boundaries are not defined by vegetation, and there are views to the edge of Leverstock Green and across the countryside to the west and south. The introduction of a touring caravan site into this relatively open landscape would undoubtedly change the appearance of the locality. The Council indicates that substantial woodland planting and landscaping would be required to soften the impact of the development, and in my view this would be essential. Although in time this would screen the caravans and associated facilities from view, as occurs at the existing Buncefield Lane site, part of the open expanse of countryside would be lost.
- 12.25.3. I do not believe, however, that such a change would necessarily be harmful. Many well-designed touring caravan sites have been successfully assimilated into more sensitive landscapes than this, in my experience, and the outward signs of a block of woodland would not be uncharacteristic of the wider area. The facility would

undoubtedly be more conspicuous in the early years, before the planting has had time to mature, but caravans are relatively small structures and the site would be little used during the winter months. Moreover there is sufficient land to enable the caravans to be well dispersed around the site, thereby avoiding undue accumulations of development or concentrations of activity. I also share the Council’s view that a touring caravan site fits in well with the country park concept, and tourists using the site would benefit from the walks and other amenities available.

12.25.4. As to the implications of a Green Belt location, there is no policy presumption against such a use in PPG2 or Annex B to PPG21, and a touring caravan site would, in principle, be appropriate to a rural area (paragraph 5.16 of PPG21). Any built facilities would be subject to the strict control over new buildings in the Green Belt, and would have to be both essential and small in scale. Although the presence of caravans on the site would constitute some interruption to the openness of the Green Belt, this would mainly be temporary in nature, and the five purposes of Green Belt designation would not be contravened. Taking all these factors into account, I consider that a sensitively designed touring caravan site would be acceptable in policy and landscape terms.

12.25.5. Turning now to the effect of traffic through Leverstock Green, about half of the route from the A414 would be along the A4147, the main distributor road through the settlement, and the remainder along Bedmond Road, a secondary distributor road. Both roads appear to me to be capable of accommodating cars towing caravans, and there is no evidence that they are substandard in terms of width or alignment. Furthermore, the number of additional daily movements generated by the facility is likely to be relatively small. Based on information about the usage of the Buncefield Lane site, it is reasonable to assume a daily flow of 20 caravans to and from the site during the peak season, with perhaps up to 30 over busy weekends. These movements would normally be spread throughout the day, and should have very little impact on peak hour congestion in Leverstock Green. There is also no reason to suppose that they would have any material impact on pollution, noise disturbance or road safety. I recognise that there is a potentially shorter route to the site from the A414 via Green Lane, but given the existence of traffic calming measures along this road, I think it is unlikely to prove attractive to caravans. I conclude that the traffic implications of the Caravan Club site are acceptable.

12.25.6. The final matters of concern are the occupation of the site by travellers, and the potential loss of space for playing pitches. The issue of unauthorised access by travellers is primarily one of design and subsequent management. The Council indicates that it would expect the site to be properly secured and managed, with appropriate boundary treatment to deter unauthorised encampments. I believe that such measures should ensure that the objectors’ fears are unfounded. I deal with the question of playing field provision in some detail under Proposal Site L14. The available land in that analysis does not include the site reserved for the Caravan Club at Bunkers Park, and I conclude that the overall supply of sports pitches is acceptable. Consequently I find no overriding need for the site to be retained for playing fields.

12.25.7. In my view Proposal Site L2 is an appropriate location for a touring caravan site if the existing Caravan Club facility at Buncefield Road has to be moved. I address the question of whether it should remain a specific proposal of the Plan in the following sub-section.

**(b) Caravan site – firm proposal or option**

12.25.8. The objector argues that the ‘planning requirements’ element of the proposal should provide flexibility by facilitating a new Caravan Club site only if it is required. In the Council’s view the requirement is justified because the existing site at Buncefield Lane makes an important contribution to tourism in the Borough, and should be replaced if it is lost to other development. Policy 94 provides the context for requiring replacement provision to be made, and the Bedmond Road site has been accepted by the Caravan Club as a suitable alternative.

12.25.9. I accept that, in principle, it is appropriate for the Council to seek to ensure that this important tourist facility is not lost to the Borough if the existing site is no longer available to the Caravan Club. It seems to me, however, that this principle is already satisfactorily addressed by Policy 94. I recognise that, in the event that Proposal Site H15A were to proceed, the most likely alternative location for the facility is within Site L2. But there is nothing to prevent the Club from searching for another nearby site should it so choose, and it seems to me that the degree of prescription proposed by PIC145 is unnecessary and potentially restrictive. To my mind the proposed change recommended by the objector would maintain flexibility and has much to commend it.

12.25.10. Notwithstanding this conclusion, however, one of the consequences of my recommendation to delete Housing Site H15A is that the existing Caravan Club site is no longer needed for development, at least in the short term. This being the case, there would seem to be no reason for identifying an alternative site in the Plan. I recognise that there may still be a desire, either from the Club or from their landlord, for the relocation to take place, but the absence of a specific allocation in Proposal Site L2 would not preclude this – as I have already indicated, the context is provided by Policy 94. In circumstances where the proposals of the Plan do not require such a relocation, and the likelihood of an unforced move is unknown, the proposal should not in my view form part of Site L2.

12.25.11. Although PIC145 deals primarily with the Caravan Club site, it also includes references to additional landscaping, and so on. There is no objection to these other matters, and whilst I do not regard them as essential, there is no reason why they should not remain if the Council so chooses. I therefore recommend that the parts of PIC145 which refer to the Caravan Club site be deleted.

<p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>12.25.12. <b>Proposal Site L2 be modified in accordance with PIC145, subject to all references to the Caravan Club site being deleted.</b></p>
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## 12.26. PROPOSAL SITE L4: DUNDALE, TRING

### Objections

<u>Rep No</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rep No</u>	<u>Name</u>
1489*	HCC Environment Department	4159	Mr R Mildred
1570*	Tring Town Council		

### Supports

50	Mr P W Higginson	560	Mrs V Gibbs
51	Mr & Mrs R C Whiston	561	Mrs C Evans
52	Mr & Mrs S F Rayner	562	Mrs A Wright
53	Mr D Griffiths	563	Mr R T Hill
54	Mrs S Clark	564	Mr M J Claxton
55	Mr J L Richardson	565	Mr S Wright
56	Mr J C Lummis	566	Mr R Mann
228	Mr & Mrs M D Quincey	567	D & S Smart
241	Mr C J Long	568	Tracy Reynolds
279	Mr K Parslow	569	Mrs J Rotheroe
280	J & B Yeomans	570	Mr M Skarratts
281	Mr J Wright	571	Mr B M D Evans
282	Mr & Mrs A S Bellis	572	Mr & Mrs P R Beeson
283	D & L Watson	573	M B & J Kemp
284	Mr s K Floyd	574	T & P Roberts
285	Mr & Mrs P Bennett	575	Mrs P Hennessy
286	Mr G Garwood	576	Mr & Mrs D & E Guy
287	Mrs S Savage	577	Maria McDonald
288	Dr J R Sharp	578	Alice McDonald
289	Mr N Lewis	579	Mr & Mrs R Little
290	Mr D R Dean	580	Miss S McKenna
291	Mr & Mrs White	581	Mrs L Hiskey
292	Mrs K J Briggs	582	Mr & Mrs T E O’Higgins
293	Mr A Hovey	583	Mrs M Murphy
294	Mr & Mrs P Kirby	584	Mr & Mrs E Taylor
295	Mrs L Wright	605	Ms V Lockett
296	E Jones	737	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
297	Michael J King	986	Mr C H Gray
298	Kevin Chiles	1914	Anne Noel
299	Susan & Roy Gore	1923	Caroline Hogarth
300	Mr J Savage	2691	Mr & Mrs G Marshall
556	Mr S Butterworth	2693	Mr L J Brown
557	Mr & Mrs G A Poole	3865L	Mr D Woodhall
558	Mr & Mrs M Jennings	4271	Tring & District Residents’ Association
559	Mrs A Williams	4336	Mrs A J Nobbs

### Supports for pre-inquiry changes

For pre-inquiry change 146

5257PC	English Nature	5381PC	Mr J Savage
5290PC	Tring Town Council	5465PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
5379PC	Mrs S Savage		

For pre-inquiry change 147

5258PC	English Nature	5466PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
5291PC	Tring Town Council		

### **Key Issues**

- (a) Whether Site L4 should be identified as a Wildlife Site and/or nature reserve. (1489, 1570)
- (b) Whether Site L4 should be amended to allow a mixed use development for residential and open space. (4159)

### **Inspector’s Conclusions**

#### **(a) *Wildlife Site and nature reserve***

12.26.1. The objectors argue that the Plan should recognise the status of the site as a Wildlife Site, and that the proposal should be phrased in terms of an ecological park or nature reserve rather than a leisure space. The Council agrees, and proposes PICs 146 and 147 to effect these changes. I support the Pre Inquiry Changes.

**(b) Residential and open space development**

- 12.26.2. The objector opposes the designation of all the land at Dundale as an ecological park/nature reserve. He argues that the area of least ecological value should be allocated for market and social housing in return for the rest of the site being managed as a wildlife garden run by a Trust, with limited public access, educational and interpretative functions and support facilities. Discussions held with the Council since the objection was lodged have resulted in broad agreement between the parties about an acceptable package of proposals, though some important details remain to be resolved. This has led the Council to propose FC48, which recognises that the provision of a public ecological park will be achieved by the development of part of the site for housing.
- 12.26.3. I have dealt with the principles behind this changed approach in my consideration of Housing Site H40A (see Chapter 7 section 7.62). In this section I shall address the implications of such an approach on the wildlife and leisure resource. Dundale was created as a 19<sup>th</sup> Century pleasure garden and provides four main habitats – a marl lake, a woodland containing some exotic trees, and areas of scrub and open grassland. Although none of these individually has a high ecological value, it is the mosaic of habitats that brings about its Wildlife Site status. This designation is borderline, however, largely as a result of a lack of management during the past 30 years or so. In time it is likely that continued neglect of the site would reduce the diversity of habitats, though it would still have value as a wildlife resource. Dundale is also important for its historic association with the Rothschild family, and in amenity terms as the largest block of woodland within Tring.
- 12.26.4. The Council’s willingness since the 1980s to purchase the site has not met with success. The objector, who is the present owner, is unwilling to co-operate with the authority’s proposals for an ecological park unless this is part of a package that includes some housing development. The option of compulsory purchase has been considered by the Council but discounted on grounds of cost and uncertainty about the outcome. Two choices therefore remain – to accept that the site will remain as it is, thereby continuing the neglect of recent years, or to agree to a package that would secure public ownership, management and access in return for the loss of part of the site for housing.
- 12.26.5. If the site were to remain as it is, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to continue to allocate it as Proposals Site L4. Although the ecological and amenity value would remain, these interests would be protected by its designation as a Wildlife Site and as open land. However, as a leisure resource the site has little value, for the small amount of public access that currently occurs is unauthorised, and without any lawful public access the site could not function as informal leisure space. Because the owner is unwilling to develop the ecological park himself, and the Council is unable to secure it by other means, there could be no realistic prospect of implementation during the Plan period. In these circumstances there would be little justification for retaining the allocation in the Plan.
- 12.26.6. Turning to the development package option, the evidence to the inquiry suggests that, on ecological grounds, its merits are finely balanced. The advantages of securing the long term protection of the resource and the opportunities for enhancement through

careful management have to be set against the loss of the open grassland habitat and increased disturbance for the rest of the Wildlife Site. Overall the Council’s advisers, the HBRC, support the scheme, albeit with some reluctance. Other aspects of the scheme, however, point to a more beneficial outcome. Most significant is the creation of an informal leisure facility available to the general public. Whilst the ecological interest would limit the capacity of the site, it would nonetheless make an important contribution to the shortage of public open space in Tring. Proper management would also enable Dundale to realise its potential as an historic and educational resource.

12.26.7. Taking all these factors into account, I share the Council’s view that the development package option represents the best solution, for without it there is no realistic prospect of Dundale becoming a managed ecological park. As I indicate in my consideration of Site H40A, it would be preferable for the leisure and housing sites to be separately identified in the Plan, as this would give certainty to all interested parties.

12.26.8. I also consider that the area of land proposed by the objector as the housing site is too extensive, for I do not believe that the 20m corridor that would be left along the south-eastern side of the lake is sufficiently wide to maintain its woodland character. I leave it to the Council to define a more appropriate area for development; it follows that the remainder of the land would comprise the Site L4 allocation, and the site area in FC48 could be accurately stated. If the Council is unable to define the housing site, then the dual reference to the entire site that was proposed at the inquiry (H40A/L4) will have to suffice, and FC48 should be adopted in its entirety. I recommend that the Plan be amended accordingly.

### Recommendation

12.26.9. **Proposal Site L4 be modified in accordance with PICs 146, 147 and FC48, subject to the site area being amended to take account of my recommendations in paragraph 7.62.58**

## 12.27. PROPOSAL SITE L5: MISWELL LANE, TRING

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
323	Mr & Mrs B Empson	3872	Mr D G Machin
1733	Mrs M Pugh, Mr J Hooton and Mr T Hooton	3873	R & J Shaddock
1934	Beverly Morrow	4157	Mr & Mrs B Cockfield
2963	Mrs Lofty	4272*	Tring & District Residents’ Association
2968	Mr & Mrs D & E Guy	4296*	Mrs B Lea
3871	Mr & Mrs D Grant		

### Supports

227	Mr & Mrs J B Camerson	1880	G M Horrell
321	Mr I Adams	1926	Mrs M Pearson
322	Mrs Y Clifton	2927	Mr B Hough
324	Mr & Mrs T Judd	2931	Mr J Burnell
328	Mr I Duckworth	2932	A & R Bennett
329	Tring Society	2933	Mrs H J Frost
336	Mr & Mrs E Cavanagh	2937	Mr S McHugh
340	Mr & Mrs Forbes	2941	Mrs C Fryer
344	Mr F J W Morris	2945	Mr & Mrs P Reynolds
348	Mr & Mrs Page	2949	Mr B Rook



987	Mr C H Gray	2953	Mr & Mrs P J Ogie
1643	Ms A Fincher	2955	Kathleen Williams
1644	Mr Simon Wastling	2967	Mr Butterfield
1645	Mrs E Wastling	4127	Mr & Mrs K J Lee
1729	Ms Maureen Parnell	4295	Mrs B Lea
1730	Mr G Eldridge	4337	Mrs A J Nobbs
1739	Mrs M Wilson	4886L	Mrs R A Rouse
1842	Mrs N M Lovell	4890L	Mr J Draper

**Supports for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 148

5259PC	English Nature	5601PC	Mrs B Lea
5467PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	5736PC	Tring & District Residents’ Association

**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether the whole of Proposal Site L5 should be protected from future development. (1733)
- (b) Whether reference should be made in the planning requirements to the trees and hedgerow on the border of Proposal Site L5. (323, 1934, 2963, 2968, 3871, 3872, 3873, 4157, 4272, 4296)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) Protection of whole site**

- 12.27.1. This is one of a series of objections which seeks to identify part of Site L5 for housing. Although I have dealt briefly with most of the substantive matters in my consideration of the suggested new housing site, in this sub-section I shall consider in more detail the case for the allocation of the land as leisure space.
- 12.27.2. The site has a long and complex planning history, culminating in 1998 when the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions dismissed an appeal by the objectors under the Land Compensation Act 1961 and confirmed a Certificate of Appropriate Alternative Development (CAAD) issued by the Council. The CAAD effectively states that planning permission would have been granted for public or private open space, but not for any other purpose. The objectors argue that, with 5.5 acres of open space per 1000 population, Tring is comparatively well provided with open space. In their view the identified shortage of informal open space in Tring, as stated in the Deposit Draft Plan, does not apply to the Miswell Lane area, and the site is not required for formal sports pitch provision. They contend that the site is wasted land that is not being put to full and effective use, as required by Government guidance, and that low level residential (or educational) use would not cause harm to any recognised interest of acknowledged importance.
- 12.27.3. The arguments in favour of open space use on the whole of the objection site have been well rehearsed. The land has been allocated for public open space for some 50 years, and recent studies (CD58 and CD117) have confirmed that there remains an overall deficiency of informal leisure space, whilst overuse of the adjacent football pitch points to the need for a further youth pitch. Although the site is not in a part of the town with the greatest need, there are few alternative options available. In addition, development of the site would seriously detract from the value of the Miswell Lane Recreation Area (MLRA) by dividing it into two smaller areas with only a narrow connecting link. Views across the town would be curtailed, areas for walking would be restricted, and the pleasure that many people derive from experiencing a sizeable area of open space within the town would be substantially diminished.

12.27.4. There would unquestionably be less harm from the limited development of an approximately 30m wide strip along the eastern edge of the site, as identified in Appendix 1 of the objectors’ written evidence. However this matter was considered at the CAAD appeal in 1997/98, when the Inspector found that there would be a risk of the loss of some of the large forest trees which border the site, which would detract from the wooded character of the area. The buildings would also create a hard edge to the MLRA, concealing the natural and attractive border that the trees currently provide. Furthermore, the development would take at least one third of Site L5, reducing the area available for leisure space and diminishing the potential of the site to meet an identified deficiency. I am satisfied that there is a more pressing need in Tring for open space than for new housing, and I consider that the objection site is ideally placed to meet part of this need.

12.27.5. The only question that remains to be answered is the likelihood of implementation during the Plan period. It would not be reasonable, in my view, to continue with an open space allocation that has persisted for 50 years unless there was a clear indication that the proposal can be realised. The Council is adamant that there is now no obstacle to its intended acquisition of the site. The objectors have withdrawn their High Court challenge to the CAAD, and the authority has resolved to purchase the site by agreement. If acquisition cannot be achieved by negotiation, the authority indicates that it would pursue compulsory purchase. In these circumstances I am satisfied that there is a realistic prospect of the land becoming public open space in the near future. I conclude that the whole of the allocation should be retained in the Plan, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(b) Reference to trees and hedgerow**

12.27.6. The objectors fully support the open space designation, but are concerned that the Plan does not recognise the importance of the trees and hedgerow on the eastern boundary of the site. The Council accepts that these trees and hedgerow should be retained because of their amenity value, and proposes PIC148 to address this matter. I support the Pre Inquiry Change.

**Recommendation**

12.27.7. **Proposal Site L5 be modified in accordance with PIC148.**

**12.28. PROPOSAL SITE L9: BUNCEFIELD LANE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
4192	English Partnerships

**Counter Objections**

<small>To pre-inquiry change 149</small>			
5328PC	Wilcon Development Group Ltd	5752PC	Felden Park Farms Ltd
5672PC	Apsley Developments Ltd		

**Support**

<small>For pre-inquiry change 149</small>	
5486PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

## Key Issues

- (a) Whether Proposal Site L9 should be deleted. (4192, 5328PC, 5672PC, 5752PC)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Deletion of Site L9*

- 12.28.1. The proposed deletion of the Caravan Club site at Buncefield Lane (PIC149) is wholly consequent upon the allocation of the land for residential development as part of Site H15A. I conclude in Chapter 7 that this is not an appropriate location for housing, and recommend that PIC57 be deleted. In the light of this recommendation I find that PIC149 is no longer relevant.
- 12.28.2. The purpose of Proposal Site L9 is to safeguard the existing caravan site because of the important contribution it makes to tourism in the Borough. Whilst I support this objective, it is debatable whether the proposal is necessary in the light of Policy 94, which has an almost identical aim. Moreover the statement in Site L9 that the land be safeguarded is more restrictive than Policy 94, which would at least allow alternative development if a replacement facility were provided. It is clear that the possibility of the Caravan Club relocating to an alternative site has been given serious consideration (see Proposal Site L2), and it may be that the momentum for such a relocation remains, irrespective of whether the existing site is needed for some other purpose. In my view this is potentially made more difficult by the wording of Proposal Site L9 in the Deposit Draft.
- 12.28.3. This is one of a number of instances in the Plan where the Council seeks to safeguard a specific existing facility whose loss would otherwise be prevented by a general policy. The situation appears to be directly comparable to the relationship between Policy 61 and Proposal Site T11, for example, where both general and site-specific elements safeguard land for lorry parking. Although I doubt whether both elements are strictly necessary, I recognise that the site-specific proposals do at least identify the main areas of land to which the general provision relates. For this reason I am not going to recommend that the approach be abandoned in the current Plan, though the unnecessary duplication is something that the Council could usefully address in the next review.
- 12.28.4. I do believe, however, that there would be a inconsistency of approach within the current Plan. I note that Proposal Site T11 requires the Maylands Avenue lorry park to be safeguarded ‘*unless a satisfactory alternative is available (see Policy 61)*’. Policy 61 sets out in more detail the circumstances in which safeguarding would not be necessary. In my view this final clause applies equally to Proposal Site L9, and should include a cross-reference to the provisions of Policy 94. I recommend that the Plan be modified accordingly.

### **Recommendation**

- 12.28.5. **Proposal Site L9 be modified by adding the words “unless a satisfactory alternative is available (see Policy 94)” to the end of the proposal.**

12.28.6. PIC149 should not be proceeded with.

## 12.29. PROPOSAL SITE L11: RECTORY FARM, HEMPSTEAD ROAD, KINGS LANGLEY

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1521	Kings Langley & District Residents’ Association	1719	Kings Langley Parish Council
1600*	Mrs A Johnson	1957*	White Associates
1681	Mr P Witt & Ms S Wareham	2874	British Waterways

### Counter Objections

To pre-inquiry change 150

5469PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	5691PC	Kings Langley & District Residents’ Association
5599PC	Mr P Witt & Ms S Wareham		

### Supports

79	Mrs Sheila Ashman	3841	Mr J Buekett
738	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust		

### Key Issues

- (a) Whether Proposal Site L11 should be deleted. (1957, 5469PC, 5599PC, 5691PC)
- (b) Whether Site L11 should be extended to cover part or all of H55 or reduced to allow H55 to expand. (1521, 1600, 1681, 1719, 5599PC, 5691PC)
- (c) If Site L11 is retained, whether the Planning Requirements should be amended. (1681, 2874)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Deletion of Site L11*

12.29.1. Proposal Site L11 was intended to be a substantial area of informal open space that would have been developed in association with Housing Proposal H55. As well as meeting the open space needs of the occupiers of the new housing, the leisure space was intended to provide a setting for the development and to create a strong boundary in the narrow countryside gap which separates Kings Langley village from Hemel Hempstead. The Council considers that the deletion of Site H55 (which I support) removes both the reasons for bringing forward Site L11 and the means by which it was to be implemented. Site L11 is therefore proposed to be deleted by PIC150.

12.29.2. I acknowledge that Site L11 would have functioned as part of the open gap between neighbouring settlements, but this gap already exists because the land is currently in agricultural use. Consequently the setting of the settlement, and a suitable boundary to the countryside, do not require the development of this leisure space. There is a stronger case for the proposal, in my view, when the need for leisure space is considered. Aside from the small amount of open space that would have been required to serve Site H55, there is a current open space deficiency in Kings Langley of 2.16ha when assessed against the Council’s standard of 2.8ha per 1,000 population. As most of the shortfall relates to informal open space, there is some justification for the view that Site L11 should remain in the Plan to overcome this deficiency. The site extends to 6.0ha, however, so it is difficult to argue that there is a need for the leisure space to be implemented in its entirety. In these circumstances I support PIC150.

**(b) Extension or reduction of Site L11**

- 12.29.3. Many objectors believe that Site L11 should be increased in size by incorporating the land that comprised Housing Site H55 in the Deposit Draft Plan. Although I recognise the benefits of such a proposal, it is unrealistic to argue that there is a strong case for an enlarged site when I have concluded in sub-section (a) above that the retention of L11 itself cannot be supported on the basis of need.
- 12.29.4. Another objector contends that the proposed area of open space is far larger than is needed for the housing development, and should be significantly reduced to enable the housing site to be expanded. I acknowledge that the size of the leisure space allocation bears little relation to the relatively small amount of land that would be needed for the occupiers of the housing site, based on the Council’s standards. Nevertheless, in view of my endorsement of PIC53, which deletes Site H55 from the Plan, I do not support the replacement of part of Site L11 by an enlarged housing allocation.
- 12.29.5. There is greater justification for the allocation of a reduced Site L11 to meet the current leisure space deficiency in Kings Langley. It would not be appropriate for such an allocation to be made, however, unless there was a realistic prospect of the open space being implemented during the Plan period. The Council argues that without Site H55 there is no identifiable means by which the open space could be secured, for there is little prospect of public funding being available. Consequently, and notwithstanding the strength of the case for a reduced allocation to meet an identified need, I do not consider that a scaled-down Site L11 should be included in the Plan. In reaching this conclusion I have taken into account the fact that the existing policy framework would enable open space to be provided on the site should circumstances change during the Plan period. I recommend no change in response to these objections.

**(c) Planning requirements**

- 12.29.6. British Waterways supports the provision of the leisure space, but suggests that because of its proximity to the canal, a picnic site should be included. I accept that a picnic site might be appropriate, but I regard it as a matter for the detailed design of the open space, rather than a specific requirement that necessitates a mention in the Plan. The other objector appears to support the principle of a canal-side wildlife corridor, but is concerned at what might be required to achieve the ecological treatment of the canal frontage. To my mind these two aspects are complementary, and I see no reason to oppose the inclusion of a phrase that aims to treat the canal frontage in an ecologically sensitive manner. Notwithstanding my conclusion that Site L11 should not be retained in the Plan, I do not believe that either objection would have warranted a change to the planning requirements. I recommend no change in response to these objections.

**Recommendation**

- 12.29.7. **Proposal Site L11 be deleted in accordance with PIC150.**

## 12.30. PROPOSAL SITE L12: LAND AT WEST HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
1491*	HCC Environment Department	2567	The Boxmoor Trust
1830	Wilcon Development Group Ltd	2774	Mr F R Borrás
2007	Mrs K Warden	2784	Sally Prue
2325	R Williams	2788	Mr Duncan Worrell
2338	The Executors of the late Mr I Chamberlain	2793	Mrs M Edwards
2343	Mrs K Worrell	2797	Mrs J Worker
2361	Mr G Edwards	2814	Friends of Shrubhill Common
2366	Mr J Selkirk	2824	Mr Christopher Halls
2373	Mr Brian Worrell	2834	Mr & Mrs S Taylor
2473	P & G Silver	2997	Mr & Mrs D Brasier
2498	Mr S T West	4839	Mr P Deacon
2507	Mrs E Boyle		

### Support

739 Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

### Supports for pre-inquiry change

For pre-inquiry change 151

5260PC	English Nature	5470PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society
5357PC	Mrs M G Marshall		

### Key Issues

- (a) Is the leisure space of Proposal Site L12 required in principle. (2007, 2325, 2338, 2343, 2361, 2366, 2373, 2473, 2498, 2507, 2567, 2774, 2784, 2793, 2797, 2814, 2824, 2834, 2997, 4839)
- (b) Whether the detailed requirements of Site L12 are satisfactory. (1830, 2325, 2343, 2373, 2473, 2507, 2784, 2788, 2797, 2814, 2834)
- (c) Whether PIC151 is appropriate. (1491)

### Inspector’s Conclusions

#### (a) *Principle of leisure space provision*

12.30.1. The large area of informal open space proposed for West Hemel Hempstead is required wholly in association with the major housing development that forms Proposals Sites H34, H51 and H54. The objectors oppose the principle of this development, and object to the inclusion of Site L12 as part of the overall scheme. I agree with all parties that the principle of the leisure space provision depends solely upon the decision on the housing proposals. I recommend in Chapter 7 that site H54 should be omitted as proposed and that consideration should also be given to deleting sites H34 and H51. It follows, that if these sites are deleted there would be no justification for retaining Site L12. Accordingly, I recommend that it should also be considered for deletion.

#### (b) *Detailed requirements*

12.30.2. There are various objections to the nature and extent of the leisure space proposed for West Hemel Hempstead. Many are concerned that the wildlife corridor would be too narrow for wild animals to use, and that as a consequence the Shrubhill Common Nature Reserve would decline. Some believe that Site H34 would provide a better corridor to the open countryside. A few argue that the open space on the western edge of the site would be isolated and that the provision of sports pitches would harm the landscape, particularly as it is close to a Landscape Conservation Area. There is also

concern about the adequacy of the proposed provision, and its phasing in relation to the housing development.

- 12.30.3. I recognise that a development of the scale proposed would have some impact on the ease with which wildlife could move between the Shrubhill Common Nature Reserve and the open countryside. I note, however, that the existing wildlife corridor is punctuated at its north-western end by the large fenced compound of the Chaulden Adventure Playground, leaving narrow routes along the footpaths to either side. The proposed route would be substantially wider, and given the lack of objection from the local Wildlife Trust and the County Council, I am not persuaded that it would have a significantly detrimental effect on the Nature Reserve. As to the direction of the wildlife corridor, the westerly route would have the advantage of being shorter than the alternative to the north, and would not require wildlife to cross any more roads than at present. I appreciate that there is an existing route alongside the footpath that currently extends northwards to Fields End, but provided this was enhanced and its treed margins were retained (as shown on Diagram 4), it would still function as an alternative route for some wildlife.
- 12.30.4. It seems to me that the quantity of leisure space in Site L12 is more than sufficient for the total number of houses proposed, for it far exceeds the provision that would be required to meet the Council’s standard of 2.8ha per 1,000 population. I accept that the leisure space on the western edge of the site would be somewhat isolated from the housing development, but given its prominence in the landscape I believe that it would be better if it remained predominantly open rather than have houses built on it. Even if it were partially developed for playing pitches, it would still provide a buffer between the built development and the adjacent Landscape Conservation Area.
- 12.30.5. I agree that the provision of the leisure space would need to be phased in association with the development of the housing, and that this would be best addressed through a development brief. The Council argues that the cross-reference in Proposal L12 to the greater detail that is provided under Proposals H34, H51 and H54 is adequate for this purpose. In my view, however, there is an ambiguity in the way that the proposal is phrased, in that the link to the housing sites could be taken to relate only to the sports pitches, with the implication that the ecological open space might not be connected with the housing development. I consider that the Plan would be improved if the link to the housing development, and the need for a comprehensive development brief, were made more explicit, along the lines suggested by the objector.
- 12.30.6. Notwithstanding this conclusion, because I have recommended that Site L12 should be considered for deletion from the Plan as a consequence of my concerns about major housing expansion at West Hemel Hempstead no further modifications are required.

**(c) Pre Inquiry Change 151**

- 12.30.7. The County Council considers that the policy should not only require the provision of measures which benefit ecology, but should also require the subsequent management of such measures. The Council agrees, and proposes FC162 to address this matter. Were I minded to accept the expansion of West Hemel Hempstead, I would endorse this Further Change.



**Recommendation**

12.30.8. **The Council gives consideration to the deletion of Proposal Site L12 as part of the review of the housing development at West Hemel Hempstead.**

**12.31. PROPOSAL SITE L14: LUCAS SPORTS GROUND, BREAKSPEAR WAY, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD**

**Objection**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
4114*	Lucas Aerospace	4193	English Partnerships

**Counter Objections**

To pre-inquiry change 152

5329PC	Wilcon Developments Group Ltd	5716PC	Sport England
5671PC	Apsley Developments Ltd	5753PC	Felden Park Farms Ltd

**Supports**

For pre-inquiry change 152

5471PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society	5703PC	Lucas Aerospace
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**Key Issues**

- (a) Whether there is a need to retain the sports pitches provided on Proposal Site L14. (4193, 5329PC, 5671PC, 5716PC, 5753PC)
- (b) Whether the site should be reserved for a future town stadium. (4114, 4193, 5671PC, 5716PC, 5753PC)

**Inspector’s Conclusions**

**(a) *Retention of sports pitches***

12.31.1. Proposal Site L14 comprises most of the 8.26 ha private sports ground belonging to the adjacent Lucas Aerospace enterprise. A number of objectors point out that the development of this site would result in an overall level of sports pitch provision for Hemel Hempstead that is below the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) minimum standard of 1.6 ha of outdoor sports facilities per 1000 population. Because of this deficiency, they argue that the loss of the pitches would be contrary to the advice at paragraph 42 of PPG17, which seeks to protect playing fields from development unless the existing facilities would be enhanced or alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available. Sport England objects on similar grounds, and indicates that the loss of playing pitches would also be contrary to its Playing Field Policy.

12.31.2. The NPFA minimum standard for outdoor sport is expressed as a range of between 1.6 and 1.8 ha per 1000 population, and the Council uses both figures in its calculations. The flexibility in the standard is mirrored in the other component that goes to make up the total playing space standard of 2.4 ha per 1000 population, which is the element for children’s playing space and informal space within housing areas. In Hemel Hempstead the supply of children’s play space (taken from CD58) is towards the



upper end of the 0.6-0.8 ha range. Consequently to achieve the overall NPFA target it is reasonable, in my view, to base the figure for outdoor sports facilities at the lower end of the range, and I regard the 1.6 ha standard as an appropriate minimum. The existing supply of outdoor playing space in Hemel Hempstead is 121.5 ha. Based on a population for the town of 83,630 (ONS mid 1999 estimate), the NPFA standard suggests that 133.8 ha should be available, indicating a current shortfall of 12.3 ha.

- 12.31.3. About 7 ha of land within the “Top Field” at Bunkers Park (part of Site L2) is presently available to replace pitches previously lost elsewhere in Hemel Hempstead. Four pitches were lost when land to the north of Wood End Lane was developed for employment purposes during the 1990s, and at about the same time another four pitches were displaced by the leisure development at Jarman Fields. Whether the Top Field was intended merely to replace the former (as English Partnerships maintains) or to include the latter (as the Council suggests) is largely academic, in my view. On the evidence available it seems that in practice the Top Field is the only area of land to be provided for sports pitch use as a result of these developments. It is anticipated that four pitches will be provided on this land; once this occurs, the shortfall against the NPFA standard will be about 5.3 ha.
- 12.31.4. As part of the proposed housing development (Site H15A) on the objection site, English Partnerships are prepared to provide compensatory sports pitch provision, if required, on land it owns at the Bedmond Road end of Bunkers Park. The area shown is approximately 8 ha, depending on the precise land-take for the possible replacement caravan site (see Site L2 above). A minimum of four pitches would be provided, though it appears that the land is capable of being developed for up to seven pitches if this number were needed. The replacement pitches would be available for public use, whereas the existing sports ground is privately controlled, so it is argued that there would be a qualitative improvement in the supply of sports pitches as a result of the development.
- 12.31.5. Notwithstanding my conclusion on the appropriateness of residential development on this land (see Chapter 7), I broadly concur with the principles behind this analysis. There is no question in my mind that replacement facilities would be needed to compensate for the loss of the Lucas sports ground, and I believe that the Bedmond Road site is a reasonably convenient location for this provision. Moreover the site is on the edge of Leverstock Green, which is identified in CD 130 as an area that is relatively lacking in public open space. I also agree that the provision of public rather than private pitches would be a significant benefit to the community.
- 12.31.6. The objectors argue that the land at Bedmond Road has been allocated for some time, to make up for shortfalls arising from the past development of open space land elsewhere in Hemel Hempstead. I acknowledge that the land is part of the larger Bunkers Park allocation, but there is no indication that it would become available for sports use during the Plan period unless it was part of a package of future development proposals. Whilst it might notionally have been intended to replace facilities already lost, because there appears to be no agreement which requires such provision, I consider that this argument carries little weight. Consequently the principle that the loss of playing pitches on Site L14 could be satisfactorily addressed by replacement provision on Site L2 accords with paragraph 42 of PPG17. It also satisfies one of the exceptions to Sport England’s Playing Field Policy.

- 12.31.7. I note that some objectors argue that provision should also be made to replace the former Kodak sports ground on the adjoining land (Site E2). I presume, however, that these private facilities closed through lack of sufficient demand from within the company, and as they have not been operational for well in excess of five years, I do not consider that direct replacement is necessary. Five years is the period after which, under The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order 1996, Sport England is not required to be consulted on playing field loss, and I note that this governing body did not lodge an objection to the development of Site E2. In any event, there is sufficient space at Bedmond Road to replace the total number of pitches lost on both the Lucas and Kodak sites.
- 12.31.8. In these circumstances the question of whether or not the development of Site L14 would improve or worsen the overall provision of playing pitches in Hemel Hempstead compared to the NPFA standard assumes less significance, in my view. Nonetheless, it is appropriate to briefly examine the likely total supply at the end of the Plan period. Apart from Site L2, the Plan proposes additional leisure space provision in the town on Sites L3, L12 and L13, totalling 12.7 ha. The Council assumes that approximately 60% of this space would be formal space, and calculates that an additional 7.62 ha would thereby contribute to the NPFA playing pitch standard. One objector argues that this assumes too high a proportion of formal space from Site L12, for the Plan states that this is mainly intended as informal space. As an overall figure I consider that 60% of formal provision is reasonable, for the other two sites are likely to be fairly intensively used for this purpose, and I believe that a significant part of Site L12 could be used for sports pitches without prejudicing its ecological value.
- 12.31.9. The situation changes if the housing allocations at West Hemel Hempstead are deleted as I have suggested, for Site L12 would no longer be required. It could, however, be replaced by alternative provision elsewhere, most notably at the replacement Marchmont Farm site and at North East Hemel Hempstead through an enlarged Site H27. A sizeable area of leisure space would be required at Marchmont Farm, based on similar principles to those governing the West Hemel Hempstead allocation. At North East Hemel Hempstead, a commensurate increase in leisure space to the 50% rise in the number of houses would result in the L13 allocation of 1 ha becoming 1.5 ha. Whilst it is not possible to be precise about the total area of leisure space that would be made available if the alternative housing sites are accepted by the Council, I see no reason why the 7.62 ha of playing field provision proposed in the Composite Draft should not be found.
- 12.31.10. The total provision for Hemel Hempstead at the end of the Plan period is therefore 121.5 ha plus this 7.62 ha and 15 ha at Bunkers Park, minus the 8.26 ha of Site L14, making 135.86 ha. The Council estimates that the population of the town at 2011 will range between 86,647 and 88,378, giving a shortfall of between 2.78 ha and 5.54 ha against the 1.6 ha per 1000 population standard. Whilst a deficiency remains, it is significantly less than the current shortfall of 12.3 ha. Even if the 7.0 ha that is already available at Top Field is subtracted from the existing deficiency, the shortfall is broadly the same on the higher population estimate, and less on the lower figure. Furthermore, a greater proportion of the provision will be available to the general public, and should therefore meet a considerable part of the demand for pitches identified in the Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy (CD117). In conclusion, I do not consider that the argument against the loss of the pitches on Site L14 because of an

overall lack of playing space in Hemel Hempstead can be sustained in circumstances where the planned increase in supply should improve the current situation.

**(b) *Future town stadium site***

- 12.31.11. There are two main aspects to this objection - the suitability of the site for a town stadium for Hemel Hempstead, and the prospect of the land being needed for such a purpose. Dealing first with the suitability of the site, one objector contends that a town stadium would be incompatible with the adjacent Hales Park residential area as a result of the noise and disturbance that would arise at unsocial hours in the evenings and at weekends. It is thought that the floodlighting of the site, the need for substantial car parking and public transport infrastructure, and the overall attraction of large numbers of people could be disruptive to nearby residents. It is also argued that the visual impact of tall spectator stands and floodlights would be incompatible with the promotion of a ‘green gateway’ on an important approach to the town.
- 12.31.12. There is little evidence to support the contention that the stadium proposal would cause unacceptable noise and disturbance to Hales Park residents. I recognise that there is the potential for harm, in that the residential area abuts the northern boundary of the site, but the impact would largely be determined by the position of the stadium within the site and detailed matters of design. Evidence submitted on behalf of another objector demonstrates that there is ample land to ensure that a stadium could be located some distance from the nearest dwellings. I accept that floodlighting can be disruptive, but the use of modern lamp technology should ensure that overspill and glare would be minimal given a reasonable separation distance. And if it was necessary to provide parking areas in closer proximity, I do not believe that these should cause significant disturbance. It is pertinent, in my view, that none of the residents of Hales Park have objected to Proposal L14.
- 12.31.13. As to the visual impact of a stadium, I appreciate that it would not be possible to fully screen such a structure behind peripheral landscaping. Nonetheless the size of stadium likely to evolve is relatively modest, and there is scope for planting along the main road frontage to significantly soften its impact. Moreover the built elements of a stadium development would occupy a fairly small proportion of the site, leaving sizeable areas of open land around the structure. Whilst some of this is likely to be required for car parking, I share the Council’s view that there are a number of potential off-site parking options, including the proposed park and ride site to the east of Buncefield Lane (part of Proposal Txiv). In these circumstances I believe that it should be possible to design a stadium that would not undermine the concept of a green corridor approach to Hemel Hempstead.
- 12.31.14. Turning now to the prospect of a stadium being required in Hemel Hempstead, the Council indicates that the proposal was not a response to a clearly identified need, and it was never intended that the scheme would be completed within the Plan period. Instead it is a longer-term vision, recognising that the facilities for spectator sport are very limited at present, and that the opportunity for the town’s main football and rugby clubs to progress to higher leagues is constrained by inadequate grounds. The authority believes that the population of Hemel Hempstead is capable of sustaining a higher ranking sporting club (or clubs), and that one of the factors necessary to reach such a position is a stadium capable of holding, in the first instance, up to 4000 spectators. Proposal L14 was intended to facilitate the development of spectator

facilities over time, in line with local sporting success, as well as meeting a variety of sporting needs. It would also have potential for entertainment and business uses.

12.31.15. Two clubs are thought to have particular aspirations to move up their leagues, Hemel Hempstead Town Football Club and Hemel Hempstead Amateur Rugby League Club. The latter has recently proposed a significant covered spectator facility and other improvements to its site at Pennine Way. There is no evidence that it wishes to relocate from this site, which would seem to be able to meet its requirements for the foreseeable future. The football club has perhaps a greater problem, for its site off Vauxhall Road is close to a residential area and has poor access and limited parking. Improvements have taken place in recent years, however, which would allow the club to progress at least two divisions above its present league. There is some evidence that the club favours the town stadium concept, though it did not make any representations in support of Proposal L14.

12.31.16. In some cases an element of visionary thinking in a Local Plan is necessary to ensure that important long-term projects are not prejudiced. In this instance, however, it seems to me that the town stadium concept is very much an aspiration, based more on hope than expectation. PPG12 advises that planning authorities should ensure that provisions in development plans are realistic, and have regard to the likely availability of resources. Had there been substantial support for a new stadium from one or more of the clubs likely to occupy the facility, and some realistic indication as to how the development would be funded, then the case for safeguarding the land in the Plan would be much stronger. In the absence of any serious intent to develop a town stadium, however, I do not consider it an appropriate matter for inclusion as a specific proposal of the Plan.

12.31.17. As the Council points out, Proposal L14 is a two-stage proposal, the first stage being to retain the existing sports use, and the second being the longer-term stadium reservation. The consequence of my recommendation to delete Proposal H15A effectively means that the sports use is likely to remain, at least in the short term. As this does not represent any change to the current land use, I do not consider that it merits a specific proposal of the Plan. I therefore endorse PIC152, albeit for entirely different reasons to the Council.

**Recommendation**

12.31.18. **Proposal Site L14 be deleted in accordance with PIC152.**

**12.32. SCHEDULE OF LEISURE AND TOURISM PROPOSAL SITES: TWO WATERS & APSLEY**

**Counter Objections**

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
To pre-inquiry change 153			
5670PC	Apsley Developments Ltd	5754PC	Felden Park Farms Ltd

**Support for pre-inquiry change**

For pre-inquiry change 153	
5472PC	CPRE - The Hertfordshire Society

## Key Issue

- (a) Whether proposals for new informal leisure space and retention of woodland with public access on land adjoining Featherbed Lane, including Home Wood east and west (Proposals TWA24 and TWA25) should be retained in the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (5754PC, 5670PC)

## Inspector’s Conclusion

12.32.1. As I indicate in Chapter 17, these proposals are wholly reliant upon the substantial expansion proposed for the Manor Estate in the Deposit Draft Plan, and stand or fall with Proposal Sites TWA6 and TWA7. As I have concluded that these housing sites should be retained in the Plan, it follows that Sites TWA24 and TWA25 should also remain. I therefore recommend that PIC153, which proposes their deletion, should not be adopted.

### Recommendation

12.32.2. **PIC153 be not adopted and Proposals Sites TWA24 and TWA25 remain in the Plan.**

## 12.33. LEISURE AND TOURISM: SUGGESTED NEW PROPOSAL SITES

### Objections

<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Rep No</i>	<i>Name</i>
372	Three Valleys Water plc	3229	Tring Rugby Union Football Club
1019	Berkhamsted Citizens’ Association	3721	Silvermere Developments
1205	Mr C Andrews	4735	Mr K Owens
1571	Tring Town Council	4779	Felden Park Farms Ltd
1572	Tring Town Council	5815	Captain I V Baker
3227	Pendley Sports Centre Ltd		

## Key Issues

- (a) Whether land at Piccotts End Pumping Station should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (372)
- (b) Whether the Rex Cinema at Berkhamsted should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (1019)
- (c) Whether land west of Longbridge Close, Tring should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Sites. (1205)
- (d) Whether there is a shortage of leisure space at the western end of Tring which justifies an addition to the Schedule. (1571, 1572)
- (e) Whether part of Streamside Walk north of New Road, Tring should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (1571, 1572)
- (f) Whether land east of Cow Lane, Tring should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (3227)
- (g) Whether land west of Cow Lane, Tring should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Sites. (3229)

- (h) Whether land at Dunsley and Cow Lane Farms, Tring should be designated for a mix of uses including leisure. (3721)
- (i) Whether land at Hastoe Lane/Park Road, Tring should be added to the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (4735)
- (j) Whether Proposal TWA24 for informal leisure space, pedestrian routes, the retention of Home Wood East and environmental improvements should be renumbered L17 for inclusion in the Schedule of Leisure and Tourism Proposal Sites. (4779)
- (k) Whether additional leisure proposal sites should be identified in Berkhamsted. (5815)

## Inspector’s Conclusions

### (a) *Piccotts End Pumping Station*

- 12.33.1. The objector contends that a pumping station site to the north of Hemel Hempstead, adjacent to the A4146, would be an excellent location for an hotel and should be allocated for such a purpose. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is within the Green Belt, it is argued that there are few alternative sites for hotels within the Hemel Hempstead area, and that such a location may be the only option to overcome the deficiency in hotel supply. The site is regarded as a brownfield location within a small cluster of development, and it is believed that a hotel would not materially affect the openness of the surrounding countryside.
- 12.33.2. I have already addressed the matter of the adequacy of hotel provision in the Plan, concluding that the case for allocating additional hotel sites in Dacorum is not compelling (see paragraph 12.23.2). Even if there was a strong need for additional provision, I think it highly unlikely that the pumping station site would be acceptable. Apart from site-specific allocations, the Plan already identifies a range of potentially acceptable locations for new hotel development within the built-up area of Hemel Hempstead.
- 12.33.3. By contrast, a new hotel on the objection site would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as defined by PPG2. I find it difficult to envisage how the very special circumstances necessary to overcome the harm to the Green Belt could be demonstrated. Moreover, although the existing pumping station is a relatively large building that is prominent from the road, the limited activity around the site means that it does not have an undue impact on the visual amenity of either the Green Belt or the Landscape Conservation Area. Even a small hotel that did not increase the mass of built development on the site would be likely to have a greater impact through increased activity, the provision of parking areas and so on.
- 12.33.4. I note that residential development has been allowed on the former Piccotts End Mill site on the opposite side of the A4146, but the Council argues that there were special circumstances that justified this development despite its Green Belt location. Whilst I am not aware of the details of this case, I see no reason why it should set a precedent for further inappropriate development in this locality. Taking all these factors into account, I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

**(b) *Rex Cinema, Berkhamsted***

- 12.33.5. The Rex Cinema is a Grade II listed building that has been closed since 1989, and the Citizens Association believes that it should be identified as a specific proposal site. The Council points out that there are no firm proposals for the site, despite recent planning applications, and that as the cinema is not viable it is unrealistic to expect it to be returned to its original use.
- 12.33.6. Without a specific allocation, proposals for the cinema site would be assessed against Policy 115, which seeks to preserve listed buildings, and policy 87, which promotes arts and entertainment facilities. In the absence of any firm proposal for the site I share the Council’s view that the existing policy framework is appropriate. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(c) *Land west of Longbridge Close, Tring***

- 12.33.7. The objector contends that a small parcel of land adjacent to the Grand Union Canal should be allocated for low-key recreational use associated with the canal, or alternatively for canal boat moorings. The site was formerly occupied by a joinery workshop, though the buildings burnt down in a fire and it now appears to be used for the storage of building materials, pallets and so on.
- 12.33.8. Although the site is in the Green Belt and a Landscape Conservation Area, it is unlikely that the low-key recreational use suggested by the objector would conflict with these policy designations. Indeed, I share the Council’s view that the present untidy appearance of the site could be improved by such development. There are no firm proposals for the site, however, and even if there were, it would not be necessary for the Plan to identify such a small-scale proposal by a site-specific allocation. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(d) *Shortage of leisure space in western Tring***

- 12.33.9. Tring Town Council contends that there is a shortage of open space at the western end of Tring, though it has not identified a site to meet this deficiency or otherwise indicated how it might be overcome. The Council’s own assessment of open space availability (CD130) confirms that a relatively small number of houses on the western periphery of Tring lie more than 400m from a public open space, and therefore fall outside the accessibility criteria used by the authority.
- 12.33.10. Whilst there is an indication that there may be a need for additional open space in this locality, it does not follow that there should automatically be a new allocation to resolve the matter. The Miswell Lane playing fields are easily accessible from the residential streets to the west, and provide areas for both formal sport and informal play. It is also proposed that the area of land available at Miswell Lane will be increased by the addition of Site L5, making this a sizeable and attractive public open space. There are many residential areas of the Borough where access to open space is far more difficult than from the western part of Tring, and whilst the proposals of the Plan will address some of these deficiencies, others will remain unresolved. I acknowledge that criterion (b) of Policy 74 seeks to provide accessible leisure space to all residential areas, but the fulfilment of the policy requires specific proposals that are achievable during the Plan period.

12.33.11. Comparison against the quantitative standard for the settlement as a whole reveals sufficient formal open space in Tring, whereas there is an overall shortage of informal leisure space (CD58 Appendix A). This would largely be met by the ecological park proposed at Dundale (Site L4), though it has to be recognised that this area is not suitable for intensive use. Nevertheless the provision of this site and the additional land at Miswell Lane should ensure that, in quantitative terms, the supply of leisure space in Tring is broadly adequate. I also consider that the availability of Tring Park on the southern edge of the town should be taken into account, for public accessibility to this vast area of parkland has recently been increased. In these circumstances I do not consider that it is necessary for additional land to be allocated for leisure space use in the western part of Tring. I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

**(e) *Streamside Walk, Tring***

12.33.12. Tring Town Council suggests that a part of Streamside Walk south of New Road should be included as a proposal site. This small triangular area of waste land between a public footpath and the stream is heavily overgrown with trees, climbing shrubs and weeds. It forms part of a narrow green chain alongside the watercourse that is designated Open Land under Policy 110, and is also within a green corridor of nature conservation interest that Policy 103 seeks to enhance. It appears that there are no specific proposals to make this land publicly accessible informal leisure space, though clearly the policy framework would allow this to occur. Whilst the site has the potential to add marginally to the supply of leisure space, in my view it is too small to warrant a specific allocation in the Plan. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(f) *Land east of Cow Lane, Tring***

12.33.13. Tring RUFC is one of the users of the private sports facilities to the east of Cow Lane, and has plans to improve its facilities by extending the clubhouse and floodlighting the first team pitch. To establish an appropriate planning context in which this development can take place, it considers that the site should be identified in the Plan. It points out that specific provision has been made for the Hemel Hempstead RFC site at Pennine Way (Site L15), and seeks a similar treatment.

12.33.14. The site is in the Green Belt and the Chilterns AONB, and I share the Council’s view that it would be unwise to allocate a site for any significant built development. The policy framework would enable minor development or redevelopment to take place in association with the sports use, in much the same way as other clubs nearby have been permitted to improve and extend their facilities. It seems to me that there is a significant difference between this site and L15, for Hemel Hempstead RFC has proposals for a larger scale of development, including spectator accommodation, and their site is within the urban area. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(g) *Land west of Cow Lane, Tring***

12.33.15. The company which represents the interests of the private clubs which use the sports pitches and associated facilities to the east of Cow Lane proposes that a large area of



farmland to the west of Cow Lane should be allocated in the Plan as a site for future leisure use. The clubs require additional pitches and an expanded parking area, and it is possible that they may have to vacate their present site at a future date when the lease expires. Tring is acknowledged to be deficient in leisure space, and it is argued that the allocation of additional land west of Cow Lane would remedy this deficiency, in line with the advice in PPG17.

12.33.16. The objection site extends to approximately 40ha, which would seem to be far in excess of what would be required for a few additional pitches, and even for the relocation of the entire facility. As the land is within the Green Belt, the provision of sports pitches and associated facilities is one of the few categories of development that would accord with the advice in PPG2 and the policies of the Plan. In these circumstances, and in the absence of realistic and firm proposals for expansion or relocation, it would not be appropriate to allocate a large area of land for a development that is unlikely to occur during the Plan period. I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(h) *Dunsley and Cow Lane Farms, Tring***

12.33.17. This is one of a number of related objections that contend that land at Dunsley and Cow Lane Farms should be designated for a mix of residential, employment generating and leisure uses. I have already dealt with the housing and employment aspects in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively, where I conclude that Tring has reached its natural development capacity and that the need for further large land releases, especially on Green Belt land, cannot be justified (see paragraphs 7.62.20-22 and 8.20.8).

12.33.18. The objector does not indicate the proportion of the site that is proposed for leisure uses, or the nature of the facilities proposed. Furthermore it is not clear whether the leisure element is merely intended to meet the needs of the proposed housing and employment development, or to serve a wider catchment. If it is the former, then the proposal clearly falls with my rejection of the mixed use scheme. Even if some of the leisure provision is intended to overcome existing deficiencies in Tring, in the absence of firm proposals I do not believe that a specific allocation would be appropriate. Moreover, as I have indicated in the sub-section above, facilities such as sports pitches or other open uses are likely to be appropriate in this location under the existing policy regime. I recommend no change to the Plan in response to this objection.

**(i) *Land at Hastoe Lane/ Park Road, Tring***

12.33.19. The objector considers that land north of Park Road and east of Hastoe Lane should be allocated for leisure space to meet an acknowledged deficiency in the southern part of Tring. Two-thirds of the site is allocated for such a use in the Adopted Plan (Site L6), and a planning application in 1998 for leisure development of the entire area suggests that the site is capable of being brought forward. Both the Catchment Area Study (CD130) and the Playing Pitch Strategy (CD117) indicate that further leisure provision is necessary in Tring, and it is believed that the allocations now proposed are unlikely to fully address either the qualitative or the quantitative shortfalls. As there are no material circumstances which justify the removal of the site as a leisure allocation, it is argued that it should be reinstated.

- 12.33.20. I accept that the land is well located to meet the needs of the southern part of Tring, for all those living south of High Street/Western Road can easily reach it. Although it is located in the Green Belt and the Chilterns AONB, the policy framework would allow the development of a variety of outdoor leisure uses, including informal leisure space, playing pitches and children’s play facilities. I therefore agree that the site is capable of meeting the open space deficiency identified in CD130, and it could also improve the quality of provision by adding to the supply of playing pitches.
- 12.33.21. Whether these factors are so compelling as to require the site to be allocated, however, is a different matter. I have already discussed the adequacy of the provision of leisure space in Tring in sub-section (d) above, where I conclude that in quantitative terms the supply is broadly adequate. Furthermore the Council’s studies suggest that the greatest need in Tring is for informal leisure space, which for many in the southern part of the town is likely to be resolved by the vast area of Tring Park that is within easy walking distance. I appreciate that the objection site would serve a residential area that is more than 400m from the nearest formal facility, thereby satisfying criterion (b) of Policy 74. Nevertheless, whilst this is an important objective of the Plan, there are many parts of the Borough that will remain deficient in this respect. In my view the fact that a particular area fails to meet the accessibility criterion is not sufficient reason to require a leisure space allocation to overcome the deficiency.
- 12.33.22. In circumstances where a development is desirable but not essential, I believe that the decision on whether to allocate comes down to a question of implementation. If the objector, either independently or in association with the Council or some other body, is seriously intent on developing the site for the type of leisure space facilities that would accord with the policy framework, then I believe that the proposal would merit a specific allocation in the Plan. On the other hand, if there is no realistic prospect of such a scheme being implemented during the Plan period, it would not be appropriate to allocate the site.
- 12.33.23. The evidence on this matter is not clear – the objector fails to indicate how and when the leisure space would be developed, whilst the Council suggests that it is only likely to occur in association with some other form of development that would be contrary to its policies. Though I suspect that the Council is correct, I believe that this matter should be established before a final decision is taken. I therefore recommend that the Council discusses with the objector the means by which leisure space might be provided on the objection site, and that the Plan be modified if there is a realistic prospect of implementation during the Plan period.

**(j) Correct policy label**

- 12.33.24. The objector considers that Proposal Site TWA24 should be identified instead as Site L17. For the sake of consistency the proposal is introduced in the Leisure chapter, but in common with the other proposals in the Two Waters and Apsley inset, the detail is provided in Part 4 of the Plan. I see no good reason why this one site should be re-labelled in the way suggested, and I recommend no change in response to this objection.

**(k) Additional sites in Berkhamsted**

- 12.33.25. For many years the Council has acknowledged that there is a significant deficiency of recreation space in Berkhamsted and Northchurch when assessed against the standard of 2.8ha per 1,000 population and the 400m accessibility criterion. The objector is concerned that proposals to use land in the Green Belt and/or the Chilterns AONB for new housing development fail to address this matter, and points out that once land is built upon it ceases to become available for any other purpose. It is argued that if the minimum open space requirements are to be met, the provision of leisure space should take priority over the need for housing.
- 12.33.26. It is clear from the Leisure and Open Land Technical Report (CD58) that Berkhamsted has a far greater deficiency in leisure space provision, particularly informal open space, than other settlements in Dacorum. The Council argues that it is extremely difficult to identify sites for leisure space in a heavily built up valley town, and that acquisition would be expensive. It points out that the town has a substantial supply of allotment land that provides a potential leisure space resource. In addition, appropriate leisure space provision is sought within new housing developments, and it is anticipated that Site L1 will alleviate the deficiency in the south of the town.
- 12.33.27. I have considerable sympathy with the views of the objector, for it does seem as though the provision of leisure space in Berkhamsted has not been accorded a particularly high priority in the Plan, contrary to the objectives of Policy 74. Indeed, the opportunity to secure additional leisure space is one of the main reasons behind my acceptance of the Sites H52/C1/L1 package at Durrants Lane/ Shootersway, for this should go a long way towards meeting the shortage of sports pitches identified in both CD 58 and CD117. Nevertheless I also recognise the physical difficulties of providing additional leisure space within a tightly built up area. The potential for increasing provision is most likely to come from sites on the edge of the settlement, as the objector suggests, and in policy terms there is no reason why leisure space should not be appropriate in the Green Belt or AONB.
- 12.33.28. The objector does not propose any specific sites for leisure use, though there is an implied suggestion that the Bank Mill Lane site (H1) would be more suitable as leisure space than for housing. Whilst I accept that this land would be an appropriate location for leisure space, it is also a highly sustainable site for residential development. As I have indicated in Chapter 7, I am satisfied that Site H1 should be allocated for housing (*see section 7.17*). In the absence of other suggested sites in Berkhamsted or Northchurch I am unable to put forward realistic or achievable proposals for alleviating the significant deficiencies in provision. However I do recommend that the Council give serious consideration to how this matter might be addressed in the next review of the Plan.

**Recommendation**

- 12.33.29. **The Council discusses with the objector the means by which leisure space might be provided on land at Hastoe Lane/ Park Road, Tring, and that the Plan be modified if there is a realistic prospect of implementation during the Plan period.**

**12.33.30. The Council gives consideration in the next review of the Plan to alleviating the significant deficiencies in leisure space provision in Berkhamsted and Northchurch.**

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END OF CHAPTER 12