

Leisure and Recreation

Introduction

- 10.1 Leisure and recreational facilities in North Lincolnshire are important in maintaining quality of life and health for people living and working in the area. Such facilities accommodate a wide range of activities for people to participate in, watch events, or simply relax. Leisure facilities also act as a focal point for community activities, and in the case of recreational open space, contribute to the environmental quality of the area. The leisure sector is an important source of employment.
- 10.2 The Council promotes, finances and manages a wide range of leisure facilities and activities and is involved in facility provision, improving existing facilities, promoting increased participation, targeting various groups and promoting excellence. In its role of encouraging the growth of the local economy, the Council promotes the private sector leisure market as a major employer. This process includes the improvement of local tourist facilities, both as a source of additional employment and to attract visitors from outside the area. Parish and Town Councils and the voluntary sector also contribute to leisure facility provision.
- 10.3 The Local Plan has an important role to play in the Council's commitment to protecting and improving leisure and recreation opportunities in North Lincolnshire. Recreation policies in the Local Plan will seek to remedy deficiencies in provision, encourage new forms of provision and protect important existing recreation facilities from inappropriate development.

- 10.4 Government advice contained in PPG17 confirms that local plans are the appropriate context in which to assess local need for recreational facilities. It highlights the importance of sport and recreation, not just for the contribution it can make towards an individual's health, but also for the sense of pride of place and the important social and economic benefits which such activities can help generate. It also confirms that sport and recreation are land use considerations in their own right, no less important than other uses. In particular, open spaces or other land with recreational or amenity value should normally be protected from built development.

Recreational Open Space

- 10.5 Open space is important for its contribution to the quality of the environment of towns and settlements. Open space with recreational value should be protected from development. Identifying recreational land on the proposals map and considering its wider amenity importance will ensure that its value to the community is taken into account in determining development proposals. It is important to ensure that there is no loss of recreational open space where it is of value to a community.

Assessing Recreational Need

- 10.6 The Council will assess recreational need for open space by considering minimum acceptable standards of provision for different types of open space. The Playing Pitch Strategy (April 1991), recommends that local planning authorities take a three point approach to the assessment of the adequacy of local provision.
- a) The adoption of the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)

- minimum standard as a global measure of land available for a population.
- b) The undertaking of a detailed local assessment of facility requirements.
- c) On the basis of local research, the formulation of local standards of facility supply per 1,000 population.
- 10.7 The main types of NPFA recreational open space are identified as follows:
- i) Formal (Youth and Adult) Playing Space
- This category includes playing pitches as above, as well as ancillary training areas, and also provision for athletics, tennis and bowls. The NPFA standard is 1.6 ha (4 acres) per 1,000 population.
- ii) Informal Recreational Open Space
- Informal recreational open space is that which provides opportunities for more passive recreational pursuits such as walking, sitting and general relaxation, and may also have scope for informal play. It includes parks, linear open space, amenity space within housing areas, natural/informal open spaces, ornamental gardens and grassed sitting out areas. The NPFA standard is 0.4 ha (1acre) per 1,000 population.
- 10.8 The Playing Pitch Strategy recommends, however, that a separate standard be applied to playing pitch provision, due to particular concerns in relation to the pitch sports. This category of recreational open space includes
- pitch areas provided by Local Authorities, voluntary sports clubs and industrial/commercial employers, for soccer, rugby, hockey, lacrosse, cricket and American football. Education Authority playing fields are included as counting towards provision if they are available as a matter of practice and policy for public use. The Playing Pitch Strategy standard is 1.21 ha (3 acres) per 1,000 population.
- 10.9 In accordance with the recommendations of the Playing Pitch Strategy, the Council appointed Strategic Leisure Limited Consultants in 1998 to produce a Playing Pitch and Public Open Space Strategy for North Lincolnshire, including the formulation of a local standard for playing pitch provision. Based on determining the actual number of pitches required to meet the demand of clubs and teams over the Local Plan period, the study recommends that there are sufficient pitches to meet projected demands, pitch provision being in equilibrium with demand. The study recommends a local standard to maintain this level of provision, of 0.9 ha (2.2 acres) per 1,000 population. The Council has therefore resolved to adopt this local standard.
- Amenity Value**
- 10.10 Recreational open space may also have an important wider amenity value and be of landscape or nature conservation importance. In assessing all planning applications involving recreational open space, its wider amenity value as urban green space and its contribution to the North Lincolnshire Open Space Network will be taken into account.
- Adequacy of Local Provision**
- 10.11 The Playing Pitch and Public Open Space Strategy , advises the Council

to use NPFA standards to assess the adequacy of local children's play space and informal play space provision, and the adoption of a local standard to assess the adequacy of local playing pitch provision. The results show that while there are sufficient levels of pitch provision to accommodate demand over the Local Plan period, most areas of North Lincolnshire are underprovided in terms of children's play space. However, not all playing pitches are available at any one time for public use, and that the quality of some existing provision, in terms of maintenance and ancillary facilities such as changing accommodation is limiting the full utilisation of pitch resources. Policies in this plan will therefore aim to ensure that current levels of pitch provision are maintained, and where existing provision cannot meet the needs of residents of new housing, industrial and commercial developments, planning obligations will be entered into to secure the physical improvement of existing facilities and to secure improved community access.

10.12 It is intended that the Playing Pitch and Public Open Space Strategy will be used as the basis for Supplementary Planning Guidance on open space provision. This will give advice on the standards of open space provision expected in new developments, and where appropriate, how the system of developer contribution towards new and improved facilities will be administered.

R1 - Protecting Playing Fields

Planning permission will not be granted for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, a playing field unless:

- i) an assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport;**
- ii) the proposed development is ancillary to the use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity and quality of pitches or adversely affect their use;**
- iii) the proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch, a reduction in the size of, the playing area of, any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on the site;**
- iv) the playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by playing fields of an equivalent or better quantity and quality, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development;**
- v) the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of**

which would be of sufficient benefit to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing fields.

- 10.13 *The use of land as recreational open space is no less important than other uses and once built upon recreational open space is likely to be lost to the community forever. Consideration will be given to the long term impact of the loss of recreational open space, which will be protected from development if it serves an important recreational need.*
- 10.14 *Policy R1 reflects the guidance in PPG17 and Sport England's A sporting future for the playing fields in England - Policy on planning applications for development on playing fields (1997) which states that decisions on alternative use of recreational land and open space should be based on a long term perspective, and should take into account the needs of future generations.*
- 10.15 *Proposals will also be assessed against policy LC4 to ensure that any other amenity value which the open space has is properly taken into account.*

Children's Play

- 10.16 Children are great users of the outdoor environment and their needs must be fully respected. Play space is essential for children's healthy development. For supervision and safety reasons, play space should be situated close to home for the unrestricted use of children at play. Children's play space includes equipped children's playgrounds, adventure playgrounds and casual or informal play space within housing estates.

Adequacy of Local Provision

- 10.17 The level of provision of equipped children's playgrounds is below the NPFA minimum standards in all areas of North Lincolnshire. This under-provision has come about as a result of a steady flow of private house building and other development without accompanying funding for the public sector to provide play facilities and a lack of developer commitment to children's play provision. While the Council is committed to maintaining and improving play facilities in its ownership, it is appropriate that conditions and/or planning obligations are imposed on consents for residential development to secure new and improved play facilities. This will be achieved through the application of policies H9 and DS2.
- 10.18 It is important to protect and encourage provision for children's play whether these are informal areas of open space within housing areas or existing equipped children's play space.

R2 - Protecting Areas of Local Importance for Children's Play

Proposals that will:

- i) result in the supply of outdoor playgrounds in the Scunthorpe and Bottesford Urban Area or any settlement to fall below the Council's minimum standard of 0.2 ha (0.5 acres) per 1,000 population; and/or**
- ii) result in the supply of casual or informal play**

space within housing areas in the Scunthorpe and Bottesford Urban Area or any settlement to fall below the Council's minimum standard of 0.4 ha (1 acre) per 1,000 population.

Proposals will not be allowed unless the developer enhances an existing open space or provides a suitable replacement of equivalent quantity, quality, safety and amenity in the immediate locality.

10.19 *Local play space is important in meeting the recreational needs of children and will be protected from development. Play space will be considered to be of local importance if the development of the space would lead to a deficiency in play space provision, and/or where the site is identified by local people as being of importance for children's play.*

Indoor/Purpose Built Leisure Facilities

10.20 Some sporting and leisure activities require purpose built facilities. These range from indoor sporting facilities such as swimming pools, squash courts, indoor climbing walls and sports halls to outdoor facilities such as athletics tracks, synthetic surfaces and sports stadia. A local recreation strategy is being prepared which will assess current and future requirements for both community and specialist sports facilities. This will draw on the Sport England Facility Planning Model which provides guidance on major community sports facilities and on the national sports governing body facility strategies. This will be used as the basis for planning future facility provision.

10.21 The advent of the National Lottery and the Millennium Fund as potential sources of funding has recently considerably improved the feasibility of securing additional sporting and recreational facilities over the Local Plan period. Both the Council and the voluntary/educational sector have identified potential sites for facilities.

R3 - Built Sports Facilities

The Council will permit proposals which increase the provision of indoor/purpose built sports facilities or achieve an increase in the use of existing facilities. Additional provision will be secured through:-

- i) securing funding through bids and funding applications;**
- ii) permitting proposals that achieve increased use of existing facilities by providing new or improved lighting and the installation of Multi Use Games Areas and Synthetic Turf Pitches;**

Proposals that would result in the loss of existing built sports facilities will not be permitted unless an equivalent replacement facility is provided, or the developer can demonstrate that the facility is surplus to local recreational requirements.

10.22 *PPG17 confirms that local plans provide the appropriate context in which to assess local needs for sport and recreational facilities and to encourage the development of suitable sites. Such facilities are also important to attract tourism into the area.*

10.23 *Where proposals would result in a loss of existing facilities, the Council will*

require at least an equivalent replacement in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, if the loss of a facility is unavoidable, unless it can be proved that the facility is genuinely redundant and there is no demand for a replacement based on a thorough local assessment.

Entertainment and Cultural Facilities

- 10.24 North Lincolnshire provides an attractive range of cultural and entertainment facilities. A broad range of entertainment and performing arts are provided at the Baths Hall, Scunthorpe Screen and the Plowright Theatre in Scunthorpe. The only privately owned art venue is the Barn Theatre in Elsham Hall Country Park. There are five museums in the area, and two cinemas, both in Scunthorpe. The Frodingham Road/Doncaster Road area of Scunthorpe has two nightclubs, although there has been ongoing interest from the leisure industry in providing additional nightclubs in Scunthorpe town centre.
- 10.25 The increased availability of funding for entertainment and cultural facilities through sources such as the National Lottery, presents opportunities to further improve this sector of the local economy. Plans are under way for the development of St Johns Church, Scunthorpe and the surrounding area as a centre for the visual arts and crafts. The wider development of St Johns Square as an area with a leisure focus, including an outdoor performance/events area, is being considered. Opportunities have been identified for a number of museum related developments: the development of Baysgarth Museum in Barton to interpret the history of Baysgarth House, including part of the grounds in Baysgarth Park, and the development of an area within

Normanby Hall Country Park, to interpret life on a late 19th century estate.

- 10.26 In terms of private sector investment, there are opportunities to expand provision in the area. PPG6 recognises that sites in or on the edge of town centres are the most appropriate location for major leisure uses of this type. The provision of a new multi-screen cinema has been secured in the eastern area of Scunthorpe town centre as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of this area.
- 10.27 In relation to the provision of additional nightclubs, there are problems associated with locating facilities in the western area of Scunthorpe town centre due to the proximity of residential areas. The development of such facilities at the eastern end of the town centre is less likely to affect neighbouring amenity and would encourage the spread of night time economies (i.e. pubs and restaurants) towards this end of the town centre. The development of a new nightclub has been secured on land at Church Square, Scunthorpe, the surrounding area may offer the potential for further entertainment based schemes.

R4 - Entertainment and Cultural Facilities

Planning applications for development which increases the provision of cultural/entertainment facilities in the area will be permitted subject to there being no conflict with other policies within this Plan. Provision will be made for the development of a Visual Arts Centre at St Johns Church, Church Square, Scunthorpe.

- 10.28 *The development of museums, arts and entertainment facilities in the area offer opportunities to raise the overall image*

of North Lincolnshire and the quality of life for its residents. There are still opportunities to further develop cultural and entertainment facilities for heritage interpretation, performances, exhibitions and other activities. In particular there are opportunities for a multi-use gallery/arts centre and opportunities to expand the provision of cinemas and nightclubs as a commercial enterprise.

The Recreational Paths Network

- 10.29 Accessibility is a crucial element in allowing the public to enjoy fully the recreational opportunities of the countryside. The area contains a large number of individual footpaths, and there is some scope to link these together to improve access. It is also important to provide linkages from built up areas to open spaces, woodland, riverside and water areas and the wider countryside. The aim will be to promote circular routes of differing lengths to provide a variety of interesting walks which reflect the varying needs and abilities of users.
- 10.30 People are unlikely to make full use of the recreational paths network unless they are confident that they are following the correct route and that their walk will be unimpeded. It is therefore important when dealing with relevant planning applications, to seek to protect existing recreational paths, improve existing ones and negotiate new links in the network.
- 10.31 The Council will seek to cater for the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and people with disabilities within the recreational path network either on footpaths, cycleways and bridleways or on shared use paths where suitable. SPG4 provides guidance for public rights of way.

R5 - Recreational Paths Network

The creation of a strategic network of recreational paths to provide linkages from the built up areas of North Lincolnshire to open spaces, woodland, riverside and water areas and the wider countryside will actively be pursued. Additional footpath links are to be created over the Local Plan period.

In determining planning applications where development may either have implications for the maintenance of the recreational paths network, or offer opportunities to expand this network the following factors will be taken into account:

- i) favourable consideration will be given to development proposals which provide additional links to the recreational network;**
- ii) the Council will seek to negotiate additional linkages to the recreational paths network, where appropriate;**
- iii) favourable consideration will be given to development proposals which will improve the condition and appearance of existing links in the network;**
- iv) existing rights of way will be protected from development that would remove or restrict the right of way;**
- v) permission will not be granted for any development which**

would prejudice public access onto and through the recreational path network, unless specific arrangements are made for suitable alternative linkages;

vi) where necessary, the diversion of footpaths will be required.

- 10.32 *Policy R5 seeks to secure better access to the open countryside which will significantly enhance informal recreation opportunities. The Countryside Commission's Enjoying the Countryside initiatives, to put all formally designated rights of way into good condition by the year 2000 will also be reflected in the implementation of this policy. Any proposals for new rights of way will be considered in close liaison with landowners and managers, nature conservation organisations and other interested groups as appropriate.*

Water Based Leisure

- 10.33 The use of waterways and water areas for recreation, both on and alongside the water, and for recreational navigation has increased dramatically over the last 50 years and the potential for additional use and enjoyment is substantial. North Lincolnshire's rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs are a valuable resource for active and passive leisure pursuits.
- 10.34 The Rivers Ancholme, Trent and Humber form navigable links with the country's waterway network. Marinas provide permanent moorings for boats clear of the navigational channel. At present these resources are largely under-used and offer enormous potential for recreation. The northern area of Ashby Ville lagoon to the south east of the

Scunthorpe and Bottesford Urban Area offers a potential site for water based recreation which is currently undertaken on an informal basis. Proposals have been put forward to provide an additional boat house on the banks of the River Ancholme, adjacent to the leisure centre at Scawby Brook, Brigg. Potential also exists for water based recreation in the Ironstone Gulleys area to the north east of Scunthorpe, and at Barton Claypits.

- 10.35 In encouraging water based recreational activities the environment is an important concern. Some sporting activities, such as fishing, canoeing and wind surfing may be considered less damaging than power boating and water skiing, which cause noise disturbance, create wash that can damage banks and cause oil and petroleum pollution. A large number of users in an area can have an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside, due to increased traffic, litter generation, over-use of paths and banks, and habitat destruction.

R6 - Water Based Leisure

Planning permission will be granted for the development of recreational activities on the Rivers Ancholme, Trent and Humber and on inland lagoons and water areas providing the following criteria are met:

- i) the development does not prejudice important amenity, landscape or ecological characteristics of the waterway or water area and its environs. Proposals to extend recreational usage will need to be carefully balanced against the effect they may have on the ecology**

and wildlife of the waterway or water area;

ii) there is no adverse effect on the provision and improvement of access points and footpath links to the waterway or water area;

iii) recreational and leisure activities do not prejudice the operational requirements of rivers as commercial waterways.

10.36 *Waterways and water areas in North Lincolnshire are under-utilised as a recreational and tourism resource. The Council is therefore committed to protecting and enhancing the recreation and leisure potential of these areas. This will involve closely controlling adjacent development to ensure that it will not prejudice the recreational use and leisure potential of waterways and water areas. These areas are also important for their nature and wildlife value, provide links in the overall network of green spaces and recreational paths and hence need to be protected from inappropriate development.*

Golf Courses

10.37 Golf is a sport growing in popularity and there is likely to be a continued demand for new golf courses within the Local Plan period. North Lincolnshire has at present two municipal golf courses and six private courses. By their open nature, golf courses are generally visually attractive and if designed appropriately can also be nature and wildlife havens. On the periphery of urban areas, golf courses and similar recreational uses of an open nature can be beneficial in that they help to prevent the encroachment of

settlements and improve urban fringe landscapes which often suffer from neglect. New buildings to be provided as part of any development should be carefully designed and sited in order to respect the often open character of golf courses and surrounding areas.

R7 - Golf Courses

Planning permission will be granted for the improvement of existing golf facilities and the provision of new golf courses and facilities providing that the proposal:

i) is located, designed and landscaped so as to ensure harmony and good visual integration with the surrounding landscape and does not adversely affect the character and amenity of the area;

ii) makes provision for the retention and management of important landscape features and any landscaping reflects the area's character in form and choice of species;

iii) does not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a);

iv) does not adversely affect sites of nature conservation value or archaeological or historic importance;

v) does not require additional built development in the open countryside unrelated to the operational

requirements of the golf course; and

- vi) achieves a high standard of design for any new buildings and hard standings considered necessary and essential to the proper functioning of the golf course in accordance with criterion v) and a scale of development in keeping with the golfing facility.**

- 10.38 *Golf courses require substantial areas of land and inevitably involve changes in landscape character associated with the remodelling of topography and the introduction of artificial features and special maintenance regimes. Without due consideration, valuable wildlife habitats, historical and archaeological features and geological and physiographic features can be damaged or destroyed, either directly or indirectly, for example by drainage works. Conversely, a well designed proposal can enhance the nature conservation value of an area, and provide more diverse habitats and other environmental and landscape benefits. Golf course irrigation can also make substantial demands on local water supplies. Some habitats and landscape types can absorb golf courses without significant impact, and in degraded environments golf courses may offer a positive opportunity for environmental enhancement. Golf courses may also provide an important buffer between housing and agricultural land and between housing and areas of nature or archaeological importance.*
- 10.39 *Large scale built development, including housing, hotels, conference centres and sports facilities, is often proposed in association with golf courses, in locations where they would otherwise be refused, sometimes on the grounds that these facilities are required to maintain the viability of the*

course. Such built development will be strongly resisted in the open countryside.

Commercial Horse Riding Establishments

- 10.40 *Horse riding offers an attractive way of exploring the countryside, but attendant problems may arise in the case of commercial riding establishments and livery yards. These can potentially be substantial developments with stabling, flood-lit exercise areas and indoor riding schools and even demands for new housing to allow a 24 hour presence on site. In other cases, commercial establishments of this nature can be a positive force in maintaining traditional landscapes, especially where there is a commitment to pasture management and fence maintenance.*

R8 - Commercial Horse Riding Establishments

Development of commercial horse riding facilities and livery stables will be permitted, subject to proposals meeting the following criteria:

- i) a minimum of 0.6 ha (1.5 acres) of grazing land per horse or pony is available; and**
- ii) the proposal is of a scale and nature appropriate to the character of the site and the ability of the local environment to absorb the development; and**
- iii) the proposal does not adversely affect sites of nature conservation value or archaeological**

**or historic importance;
and**

- iv) the proposal uses existing buildings or where new buildings are proposed they are of a high standard of design and are sited next to existing buildings or otherwise visually form an integral part of the overall development; and**
- v) the proposal is accompanied by an integrated landscaping scheme and a scheme of boundary treatment; and**
- vi) the site is accessible and adequate off-road trails and bridleways are available.**

10.41 *Commercial horse riding facilities are a type of land use that will most often be sited in open countryside, and are one of a number of uses that will in principle be suitable in these areas. This will be subject to the proposed development being of an appropriate scale and of a design in keeping with the locality; taking advantage of existing screening and well integrated with existing buildings; being based on a compact building layout; taking account of sites of archaeological importance, in particular upstanding earthwork remains which may be preserved under grazing or pasture land; there being sufficient suitable routes or land for riding in the vicinity without exacerbating pressure on already over-used areas; and incorporating sufficient grazing land as part of the overall development to allow for good pasture management and rotational grazing.*

Allotments

10.42 Allotments play an important recreational role, especially for those people with small gardens or no gardens at all. They may also have an amenity and nature conservation value. The Council is committed to protecting and maintaining an adequate supply of allotments. However, there are situations where allotments are in poor condition and the land could be better used for other purposes.

R9 - Allotments

The Council will not grant planning permission for development that would result in the loss of allotments unless:

- i) the allotment is badly located and a suitable replacement is provided nearby of at least equal size and quality but to a higher visual amenity standard; and**
- ii) the allotment is under-used and no longer meets an important local need and there is unlikely to be a future rise in demand for allotment plots; and**
- iii) the enhancement of nearby existing allotments by a developer may be acceptable, instead of the provision of new replacement allotments.**

10.43 *An adequate supply of allotments will be maintained to meet existing and likely future demand, and their development will not be permitted unless the allotment is no longer*

required to meet a local need, or the condition of the allotment has deteriorated to such a degree that its refurbishment is not feasible.

Potentially Disruptive Sports

10.44 There are a number of sporting activities which because of noise generation, landscape erosion, and/or general disturbance, can be particularly disruptive to residential and local amenity and the enjoyment of the countryside, and cause harm to features of acknowledged importance such as nature conservation and archaeological sites. This type of activity includes off-road motor sports, target and clay pigeon shooting, paintball, war games and live action role playing, certain aerial sports such as microlight aircraft flying and parachuting, and some water sports including jet-skiing and power boating.

10.45 Consideration will be given to permitting year round facilities for such activities where there is a proven local demand.

R10 - Potentially Disruptive Sports

The development of noisy sport or recreational uses will not be permitted within or adjacent to nature reserves, other important sites of wildlife habitat, archaeology or nature conservation interest, unless where, in exceptional circumstances;

- i) it can be developed so that the character, appearance and quiet enjoyment of the locality remains unharmed;**
- ii) the nature conservation or archaeological**

importance of the site will be unaffected.

Within close proximity to residential areas and elsewhere, such a use will be permitted provided:

- iii) it is adjacent to existing higher than normal noise generating uses and does not raise the ambient noise levels; and**
- iv) it is located where the existing topography or landscape forms an effective noise barrier; and**
- v) noise attenuation measures are incorporated to reduce ambient noise levels to an acceptable level; and**
- vi) it does not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties.**

10.46 PPG17 advises that where there is demand for noisy sport activities, it is important that local planning authorities should seek to identify sites which will minimise conflicts with other users, and that criteria be established for the selection of sites for regular use including those relating to the mitigation of potential adverse impacts of the activity on the site, on adjacent land uses and on the amenity of nearby residents. An off-road motorcycling facility is proposed for the north east area of Scunthorpe (see Policy IG6). Bagmoor Gullet to the north east of Scunthorpe is proposed for motorised and active water based leisure (See policy IG3).

10.47 The use of land for such activities can take place as temporary land uses for 28 days a year, or 14 days if motor sports, under the Town and Country

Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (GPDO). Where this type of temporary use would result in serious amenity or environmental damage, consideration will be given to the use of directions under Article 4 of the GPDO to remove these rights or control these activities.

Camping and Caravan Sites

10.48 Camping and caravan sites can make a valuable contribution towards providing inexpensive visitor accommodation in the area. Such facilities can however be a particularly intrusive element in the open countryside. A distinction must also be made between static caravan sites and chalets (which can be highly intrusive), and touring caravan sites, which are generally of a smaller scale with caravans removed during the winter and problems of off-season storage being largely avoided. Touring caravan sites tend not to be intrusive in the landscape.

10.49 Static holiday caravan and chalet sites are an all year round feature in the countryside, and place demands on infrastructure and services. They do, however, have a generally higher standard and wider range of facilities than touring sites and can contribute to the development of tourism and the rural economy. By directing the development of these sites mainly to principal recreational attractions, their environmental impact on the countryside can be minimised. Sporadic development, however, can cause uncertainty in infrastructure provision and place undue pressure on the surrounding locality and rural communities.

10.50 Transit and touring camping or caravan facilities are generally a less damaging feature on the open countryside than sites for static holiday caravans and chalets. The

need for on-site facilities and in some instances warden's accommodation, is recognised but these should be restricted to the site's immediate needs. A touring site should not be seen as a reason for erecting new dwellings or additional facilities such as shops, cafés and petrol stations in the countryside which would not be permitted under other policies in this Local Plan.

R11 - Camping and Caravan Sites

A change of use of existing transit and touring caravan and camping facilities to static holiday caravans or chalets will not be permitted unless the site is:

- i) closely associated with a major existing or proposed recreational and tourist attraction; and**
- ii) the development is of an appropriate scale in relation to its setting and there is no material adverse impact upon the amenity and character of the locality; and**
- iii) existing sewerage facilities are capable of being upgraded to accommodate the intensified use of the site. Conditions will be imposed requiring such improvements in landscaping and screening as are necessitated by the intensified use of the site.**

R12 - New Caravan and Camping Facilities

New caravan and camping facilities (both touring and static) will be granted planning permission provided:

- i) the development is closely associated with existing or proposed recreational and tourist attractions and is of an appropriate scale having regard to the size and type of attraction with which it is associated; and**
- ii) the site can be suitably screened by existing land forms and/or the provision of a scheme of landscaping; and**
- iii) the provision of any built development is restricted to those essential facilities which are required to service the site.**

In granting planning permission conditions will be imposed, where necessary, restricting the use of the site to holiday lettings.

- 10.51 *The environmental criteria against which new caravan sites will be judged will require the avoidance of development on sensitive landscapes and areas with already adequate provision of camping facilities. The Local Plan aims to provide for a variety of sites to improve recreational and tourist facilities in the area, while avoiding detriment to landscape and countryside amenity.*

Tourism

- 10.52 The development of tourism in North Lincolnshire is important in providing economic support for local people and for reinforcing local culture and local distinctiveness. Tourism can also provide a strong impetus for environmental enhancement, including the restoration of historic buildings, the interpretation of archaeological sites, the conservation of past industrial areas, and the enhancement of the countryside and water environment. If insensitively handled, however, it can lead to a rapid dilution of local character, cause damage to sensitive areas and threaten local qualities that attract visitors in the first place.

- 10.53 North Lincolnshire Council is committed to the principle that green or sustainable tourism should lie at the heart of a local tourism strategy. Local tourism should develop at a pace and scale which ensures that the assets of the area (both natural and cultural) are not diminished in the long term. Such a strategy should be socially and environmentally considerate, drawing on the natural beauty and character of the North Lincolnshire area, supporting the local economy and employing local people, and bringing conservation, regeneration and recreational benefits.

R13 - Tourism

Development proposals for tourism uses will be permitted where they:

- i) reinforce existing or provide new visitor facilities at a locally appropriate scale; and**

- ii) **have due regard to protecting the area's natural and heritage assets and the amenities of local communities; and**
- iii) **provide for visitor enjoyment of the countryside.**

10.54 PPG21 confirms that local plans should contain policies aimed at facilitating tourism development, and should also seek to protect the tourist industry by ensuring that other land uses are distributed in a way that respect the qualities that underpin the tourist industry. Policy R14, and other policies in this Local Plan seek to ensure that tourism development takes place in harmony with the protection of interests of acknowledged importance and fully benefits from the countryside and heritage assets that North Lincolnshire has to offer.

Visitor Accommodation

- 10.55 To encourage a broad range of visitors in addition to day trippers, and to meet the accommodation needs of businesses in the area, it is necessary to offer a wide range of visitor accommodation including hotels, bed and breakfasts and self catering facilities. Guest houses are distinguished from Houses in Multiple Occupation (see policy H14) in that guests are assumed to be staying on the premises under licence, and have no security of tenure.
- 10.56 In terms of existing provision, Scunthorpe in particular lacks hotel accommodation of the size and quality to fully capitalise on the market for accommodating local business visitors. The North Lincolnshire area as a whole acts as both a visitor attraction in itself and as a touring base for the wider

Lincolnshire and North Humber Bank area, and as such, offers wide opportunities for expanding accommodation.

R14 - Hotel and Guest House Accommodation

Within defined settlement boundaries new hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfast accommodation will be permitted provided that the development proposed is compatible with its surroundings in terms of siting, scale, design, materials and landscaping, and neighbouring residential amenity will not be detrimentally affected.

In the open countryside outside defined settlement boundaries planning permission will be granted for:-

- i) **the extension of existing hotels, guest houses, public houses and farmhouse/bed and breakfast accommodation;**
 - ii) **the provision of visitor accommodation within the curtilage of existing public houses and restaurants;**
 - iii) **the change of use of residential premises; and**
 - iv) **the conversion of rural buildings; including those of architectural or historic merit.**
- provided that the development proposed;**
- a) **is compatible with its surroundings in**

**terms of siting,
scale, design
materials and
landscaping;**

- b) does not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the open countryside;**
- c) would not be harmful to highway safety or have a detrimental impact on the free flow of traffic on the adjacent highway network; and**
- d) does not harm neighbouring residential amenity.**

10.57 *Policy R14 reflects emphasis in PPG21 for a general improvement and upgrading of all types of tourist accommodation in the UK. Annex A of the guidance emphasises how hotel development can bring economic and employment benefits for the local community. In line with this guidance, policy R14 will be applied to secure improved quantity and quality in hotel provision.*