

Neighbourhood Plan – Kinver  
20/02/23 by Email

Thank you for consulting Sport England on Kinver's Neighbourhood Plan.

Government planning policy, within the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, identifies how the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Encouraging communities to become more physically active through walking, cycling, informal recreation and formal sport plays an important part in this process. Providing enough sports facilities of the right quality and type in the right places is vital to achieving this aim. This means that positive planning for sport, protection from the unnecessary loss of sports facilities, along with an integrated approach to providing new housing and employment land with community facilities is important.

Kinver Neighbourhood Plan Policy KN03: Community Facilities sets out when new community facilities will be supported and when they will be lost. The supporting text for the policy provides a definition for community facilities which includes recreation and sports (including pitches). The supporting text continues to state that to demonstrate facilities are no longer viable, evidence should be provided, including economic information, and it would normally be expected that the facility had been placed on the open market at a realistic price and for a period of 12 months. It is noted that since the previous consultation document there has been the addition of text which states "In the case of outdoors pitches and sports facilities, any loss would need to be based on clear evidence of local need."

Whilst noting the change, Sport England objects to the policy as the wording for the replacement provision part of the policy and loss of provision (in relation to sports and recreation facilities buildings and land, including playing fields) as the policy does not set out that the replacement provision should be equivalent quantity and quality in line with NPPF paragraph 99b. With regards to any loss needing to be based on clear evidence of local need, the policy wording should reflect NPPF paragraph 99a " an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements".

*(Please note: this response relates to Sport England's planning function only. It is not associated with our funding role or any grant application/award that may relate to the site.)*

If you need any further advice, please do not hesitate to contact Sport England using the contact details below.

Yours sincerely

**Rajvir Bahey**  
Planning Manager