

SG LSD7: Community facilities

We will approve new community facilities, comprising indoor or outdoor infrastructure, subject to other policies, where they are available to all community residents and in accessible locations within settlements. This may include, for example, halls, pavilions, playing fields, parks, public art and any other physical infrastructure to promote enjoyment and recreation within the community.

Where existing community facilities within settlements have become surplus to requirements, due to new or updated facilities being provided elsewhere, we will approve their re-use or redevelopment, subject to them being consistent with the terms of other policies contained within the Local Development Plan.

A legal agreement may be needed to ensure that new facilities are available to all members of the community for a reasonable amount of time on a regular basis.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage, where appropriate, the provision of new public and private services, facilities or infrastructure which help to support and enhance a community.

The social foundations of many communities rely on the facilities within them and they should be supported wherever possible. Otherwise, the role of some communities could be threatened, particularly in rural areas where meeting places are scarce. In recognition of this, contributions will be sought from developers for the provision of new facilities or the up-grading of existing facilities.

New private facilities will need to be made available to all of the community, at an affordable price, for a defined period of time and on a regular basis, to qualify as a community facility. Facilities that cannot meet this requirement are businesses and should be considered under the terms of that policy.

The provision of new community facilities, or the re-organisation of services, may result in existing community facilities becoming surplus to requirements. In these circumstances, where the facilities are located within settlements, the general policies in this plan provide the appropriate framework for considering specific proposals for their redevelopment or change of use. Where the facilities are outwith settlements, the particular circumstances both of the site, and of the proposed development, will be considered when assessing whether an exception to the normal presumption against development would be justified.

Consultation should take place with Aberdeenshire Council's Education, Leisure and Learning department and the Planning and Environment department regarding any community facilities development.