

Central Lancashire

Supplementary Planning Document

Open Space and Playing Pitch

Final Version: August 2013



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A. Introduction

1. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) were introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as part of the reforms to the planning system. Although not forming part of the statutory development plan, one of the functions of an SPD is to provide further detail on policies and proposals within the Local Plan. SPDs must be consistent with national planning policies as well as the policies set out in the Local Plan.
2. The Central Lancashire SPDs have been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), conforming and responding to all relevant local and national policies and are based on a robust and up-to-date evidence base. SPDs do not contain policies nor do they seek to allocate land but are to be considered alongside policies in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Local Plan Documents. Their guidance should therefore be taken into consideration from the earliest stages of the development process of any site, including any purchase negotiations.
3. The purpose of this SPD is to provide advice on how the Councils' open space and playing pitch policies, as set out in the Local Plans, are to be implemented. This includes guidance on provision standards and how they will be applied.
4. Once adopted, this document should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

B. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

5. Guidance on planning policy is issued by central Government in the form of the Framework. Local Planning Authorities have to take the contents of the Framework into account as a material consideration when determining planning applications and when preparing their Local Plans.
6. The requirements of the Framework in relation to open space are set out in section 8: Promoting Healthy Communities. These are as follows:
 - Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
 - Existing open space, sports and recreational land and buildings, including playing fields should not be built on unless:
 - An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations

7. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 set out limitations for the use of planning obligations (s106 Agreements). These limitations are set out below along with how this SPD meets them:
 - a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms

Paragraph 73 of the Framework highlights the importance of access to open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation as they make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities. This SPD requires new residential developments to contribute towards open space and playing pitch provision where there are existing deficiencies in provision or where the development would lead to a deficiency in relation to the proposed standard. This is considered necessary to ensure that the residents of the new development have access to sufficient open space and playing pitch provision.
 - b) Directly related to the development

This SPD only requires open space and playing pitch contributions from a development where there are deficiencies in the area which would result in residents of the new development not having access to sufficient open space and playing pitch provision.
 - c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development

The amount of contribution required from a new residential development by this SPD is based on the number of dwellings proposed. The approach is therefore reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

Local Policy

8. The adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy is the key policy document as it sets the overarching vision for the area. It will be underpinned by Local Plans for each of the three Local Authorities. These documents will include policies and proposals allocating some land for development whilst protecting other areas from inappropriate development. The Local Plans will conform to the Core Strategy and will supersede, respectively, the adopted Preston Local Plan 2004, South Ribble Local Plan 2000 and Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003.
9. The Central Lancashire Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012. Core Strategy Policy 24: Sport and Recreation sets out ways of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access good sport, physical activity and recreation facilities. Of particular relevance to this SPD is:
 - Devising robust minimum local standards based on quantified needs, accessibility and qualitative factors, and seeking developer contributions where new development would result in a shortfall in provision.
10. This SPD sets out the minimum local standards and how they will be applied, along with the accessibility and qualitative assessments, to determine the amount of new open space and playing pitch provision or appropriate financial contributions required from new residential developments.

11. Core Strategy Policies 18: Green Infrastructure and 19: Areas of Separation and Major Open Space are also relevant to this SPD.

C. Evidence Base

12. The Framework requires planning policies to be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.

13. In May and June 2012 a Central Lancashire Open Space Study and Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy were published respectively. Both documents were produced in accordance with the companion guide to Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities'. Although PPG17 has been superseded by the Framework, its companion guide has not been withdrawn. The approach taken is also consistent with the Framework.

Open Space Study

14. The Open Space Study is an assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space provision in the three Central Lancashire Local Authority areas. The Study covers the following typologies:

PPG17 Typology	Primary Purpose
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events. Does not include Country Parks due to their more natural characteristics. They are included in natural and semi-natural greenspaces.
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Includes urban woodland and Country Parks.
Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.
Green corridors/green wedges	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration.
Cemeteries/churchyards	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.
Civic spaces	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

15. The Study sets new quantity standards for the provision of open space for Chorley, Preston and South Ribble authorities and applies the standards on a settlement or ward basis to identify where there are deficiencies in provision in relation to quantity.

16. An assessment of the quality and value of each area of open space is also included within the Study. The quality assessment includes criteria such as access, equipment and facilities, parking, site problems and maintenance. The assessment of value includes criteria such as the level of use and ecological, educational, economic, health and amenity benefits.

A threshold was applied to the results to identify whether the site is of high or low quality and value.

17. The Study sets accessibility standards for the different typologies of open space in order to identify areas that are not currently served by existing facilities. They are based on distances residents would be willing to travel to access different types of open space.

Playing Pitch Strategy

18. The Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy assesses existing pitch provision and is a demand led assessment. It also provides a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities between 2012 and 2026. It covers the sports of football, rugby, cricket and artificial grass pitches. It also sets out an approach to securing new outdoor sports facilities through new housing development.
19. The Strategy identifies how future provision of playing pitches should be secured and where new provision is needed. It also includes an Action Plan which identifies any surpluses or deficiencies in playing pitch provision for each individual authority and recommends actions relating to individual sites that are identified as having issues e.g. the pitch is overplayed, is of poor quality or changing facilities are required.
20. These documents form part of the evidence base for the Local Plans and have informed the relevant policies within them as well as this SPD, which supplements these policies and provides further guidance on how they will be implemented.

D. Open Space and Playing Pitch Standards

21. The Open Space Study and Playing Pitch Strategy set standards of provision for each Local Authority. These quantity standards are a guideline as to how much open space, sport and recreation provision per 1,000 people is needed to strategically serve the area. The standards are as follows:

Typology	Standard: Hectares per 1,000 population		
	Preston	South Ribble	Chorley
Amenity greenspace	0.54	1.33	0.73
Provision for children and young people	0.02	0.06	0.08
Parks and gardens	1.81	0.66	1.91
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	1.78	1.98	4.64
Allotments	0.17	0.08	0.07
Playing pitches	1.01	1.14	1.21

22. The Open Space Study does not set quantity standards for cemeteries/churchyards or civic spaces as the need for cemeteries/churchyards is determined by the demand for burial space and civic spaces are normally provided on an opportunistic and design led basis. Residential developments will therefore not be required to contribute towards the provision of these typologies.
23. The Study also does not set a quantity standard for green corridors/green wedges due to their linear nature, however residential developments will be required to provide new green corridors/green wedges where appropriate.

24. These standards are included in policies within the emerging Local Plans. The next section of this SPD provides further guidance on how these standards will be applied to new residential developments and how the level of contribution towards open space and playing pitch provision will be determined.

E. Applying the Standards

25. All new residential development will be required to contribute towards open space and playing pitch provision with the exception of the following:

- Nursing/rest homes
- Sheltered accommodation
- Replacement dwellings

26. In South Ribble, open space and playing pitch provision or a financial contribution will only be required on residential developments resulting in a net gain of five or more dwellings. Elsewhere such provision or financial contribution will be required from all dwellings.

(i) Deciding whether open space and playing pitch contributions are required from the development

27. In accordance with the Framework, and the recommendations in the Open Space Study and Playing Pitch Strategy, contributions towards new provision or improvements to existing sites will be required where there are identified local deficiencies in the quantity, accessibility or quality and/or value of open space and recreational facilities.

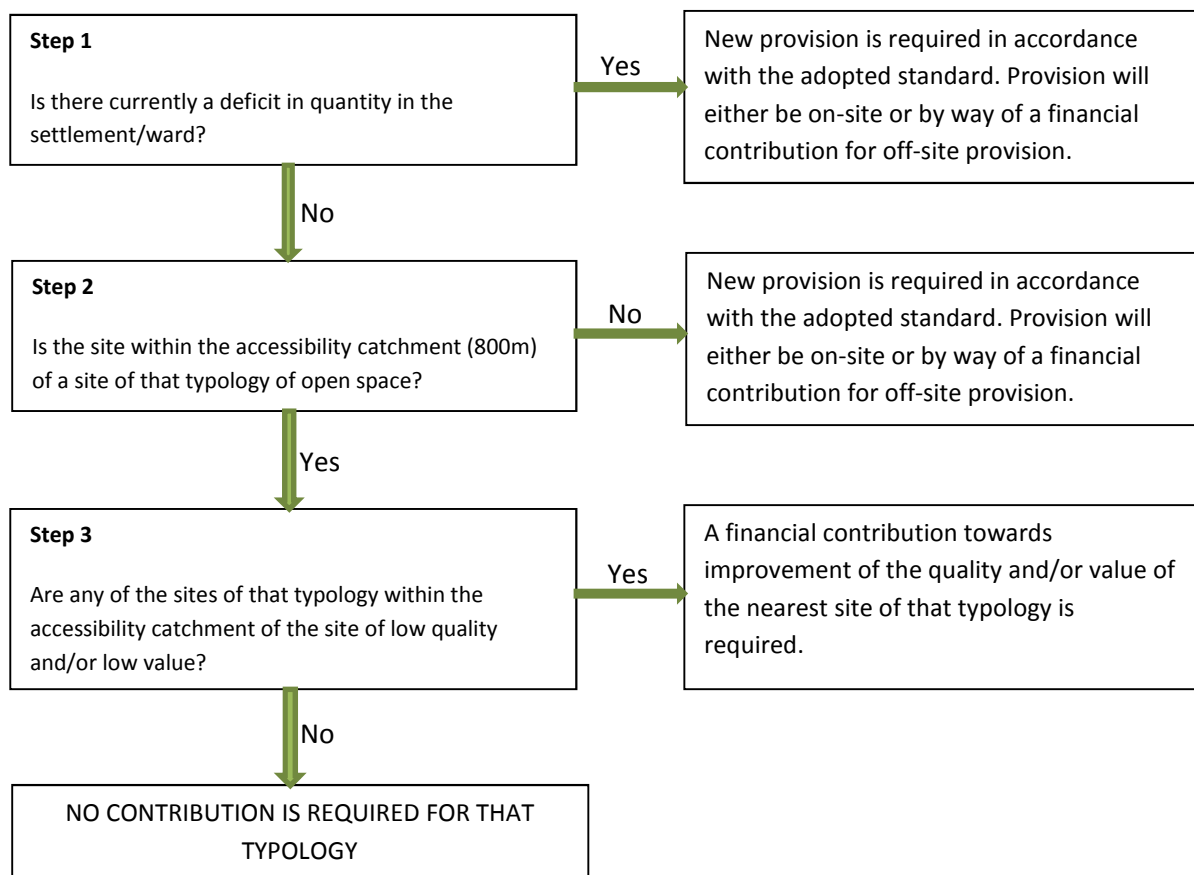
28. The approach to determining whether a contribution is required varies for each typology. The approach for each typology is set out below.

Amenity greenspace

Residential developments will be required to contribute towards the provision of amenity greenspace if there is an identified local deficiency in quantity, accessibility or quality/value.

29. The process for determining whether a residential development is required to contribute towards the provision of amenity greenspace is set out in Diagram 1. The process for determining whether a contribution towards provision for children/young people is required is the same, therefore Diagram 1 and the explanatory text is also applicable to this typology.

Diagram 1: Process for determining amenity greenspace and provision for children/young people contributions.



Step 1

30. The first step in determining whether a contribution is required is to identify whether there is a deficit in quantity of that typology in the settlement or ward as identified in the Open Space Study. In Preston and South Ribble quantity is assessed on a ward basis whereas in Chorley it is assessed on a settlement basis. Due to the nature of Chorley Borough, it is considered more appropriate to assess provision on a settlement basis. For residential developments in Chorley Borough falling outside of the defined settlements and in the Green Belt, the quantity for the ward will be used. Where there is an existing deficit in quantity in the settlement/ward in relation to the proposed standards, new provision will be required in accordance with the proposed standards. Section (ii) identifies how this provision is to be made i.e. on-site or a financial contribution for off-site provision. If provision is on-site, section (iii) identifies how the amount of provision will be calculated.

Step 2

31. If there is no deficit in quantity in the settlement/ward then Step 2 applies and involves assessing the accessibility of existing provision. The Open Space Study sets accessibility standards of 800 metres (10 minutes' walk time) for both typologies. If there is existing provision of both typologies within 800 metres of the proposed development then new provision will not be required. If not then new provision will be required in accordance with the proposed standards. Section (ii) identifies how this provision is to be made i.e. on-site or a financial contribution for off-site provision. If provision is on-site, section (iii) identifies how the amount of provision will be calculated.

Step 3

32. If there is no deficit in quantity and accessibility then Step 3 applies. If any of the sites within the accessibility catchment are identified as being of low quality and/or low value for each typology then a financial contribution will be required for the improvement of those sites. Section (iv) sets out the amount of financial contribution required per dwelling.

Provision for children/young people

Residential developments will be required to contribute towards the provision for children/young people if there is an identified local deficiency in quantity, accessibility or quality/value.

33. The process for determining whether a residential development is required to contribute towards the provision for children/young people is the same as the approach for amenity greenspace as set out in Diagram 1.

Parks and gardens

New residential developments will not be required to contribute towards the provision of new parks and gardens unless new provision is proposed within the accessibility catchment (1,000m) of the development. Instead, financial contributions will be required to improve the quality and/or value of existing provision if there is a park/garden within the accessibility catchment (1,000m) of the development that is identified as being low quality and/or low value in the Open Space Study.

34. The Open Space Study does not consider it appropriate for new provision of parks and gardens to be provided on-site within new residential developments. Instead it is more appropriate to seek to enhance the existing quality of provision and/or improve access to existing provision.
35. If a new park or garden is proposed within the accessibility catchment of a new residential development then a financial contribution towards its provision will be secured from the development. If not a financial contribution will be secured to improve the quality and value of parks and gardens identified as being low quality and/or low value in the Open Space Study. Financial contributions will only be required from residential developments that fall within the accessibility catchment of a park/garden identified as being low quality and/or low value.
36. The Open Space Study sets an accessibility catchment of 1,000 metres (12 minutes' walk time) for parks and gardens in urban areas and 15 minutes' drive time for rural areas. As the accessibility catchment for rural areas covers a wide area, it is considered more appropriate to apply the accessibility catchment for urban areas to all developments when determining whether a contribution towards improvements is required.
37. Section (iv) sets out the amount of financial contribution required per dwelling for improvements.

Natural/semi-natural greenspace

New residential developments will not be required to contribute towards the provision of new natural/semi-natural greenspace unless new provision is proposed within the accessibility catchment (800m) of the proposed development. Instead, on-site provision of features associated with this typology will be required in accordance with Core Strategy Policy 17: Design of New Buildings. Financial contributions will be required to improve the quality and/or value of existing provision if there is a natural/semi-natural greenspace within the accessibility catchment (800m) of the development that is identified as being low quality and/or low value in the Open Space Study.

38. The Open Space Study does not consider it appropriate for new provision of natural/semi-natural greenspace to be provided on-site within new residential developments. Instead it considers it more appropriate to require some on-site provision of features associated with natural/semi-natural greenspace i.e. trees and hedgerows where appropriate and seek to enhance the existing quality of provision and/or improve access to existing provision. Core Strategy Policy 17: Design of New Buildings requires landscaping to be provided as an integral part of the development, which will include features such as trees and hedgerows.
39. If a new natural/semi-natural greenspace is proposed within the accessibility catchment of a new residential development then a financial contribution towards its provision will be secured from the development. If not a financial contribution will be secured to improve the quality and value of natural/semi-natural greenspaces identified as being low quality and/or low value in the Open Space Study. Financial contributions will only be required from residential developments that fall within the accessibility catchment of a natural/semi-natural greenspace identified as being low quality and/or low value.
40. The Open Space Study sets an accessibility catchment of 800 metres (10 minutes' walk time) for natural/semi-natural greenspaces in all areas apart from the Preston urban area where the accessibility catchment is 15 minutes' drive time. As the accessibility catchment for the Preston urban area covers a wide area, it is considered more appropriate to apply the 10 minute walk time accessibility catchment to all developments when determining whether a contribution towards improvements is required.
41. Section (iv) sets out the amount of financial contribution required per dwelling for improvements.

Allotments

All new residential developments within the accessibility catchment (10 minutes' drive time) of an allotment site of low quality and/or low value or a proposed new allotment site will be required to pay a financial contribution towards either new allotment provision or improvements to existing allotments.

42. The Open Space Study sets an accessibility catchment of 10 minutes' drive time for allotments. All residential developments within the accessibility catchment of an allotment identified as being of low quality and/or low value will be required to pay a financial contribution towards improvements to existing allotments.

- 43. The Open Space Study identifies areas in Central Lancashire where new allotment provision should be located. In those areas, sites have been allocated for new provision in the relevant authority's Local Plan. Residential developments within the accessibility catchment of a proposed allotment site will be required to pay a financial contribution which will be used to bring these sites forward.
- 44. Section (iv) sets out the amount of financial contribution required per dwelling for both improvements and new provision.

Green corridors/green wedges

New residential developments will be required to incorporate green corridors/green wedges into the design of the development where appropriate to link the site to existing green corridors/green wedges, open spaces, cycle routes, community facilities, employment etc.

- 45. The Open Space Study does not set a quantity standard for green corridors/green wedges due to their linear nature. Residential developments will therefore not be required to provide a set amount of green corridors/green wedges in the development. Instead the use of green corridors/green wedges will be promoted in the design of new residential developments to link the site to existing green corridors/green wedges, cycle routes and other facilities.

Playing pitches

All new residential developments will be required to pay a financial contribution towards either new playing pitch provision or improvements to existing playing pitches identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan.

- 46. All residential developments will be required to contribute towards playing pitch provision. The Playing Pitch Strategy does not identify deficiencies on a settlement or ward basis as it is not considered appropriate. Rather it assesses provision on a Borough basis and identifies that there is a deficit of provision in all three Borough's. The level of deficit identified for each Borough does not necessarily equate to new provision being required and can be addressed through improvements to existing playing pitches. The Strategy identifies where new provision is needed based on demand and in those areas sites have been allocated in the relevant authority's Local Plan. The Strategy also includes an Action Plan which identifies sites where improvements/facilities are needed to improve capacity. Financial contributions will be used to bring forward sites allocated for new provision and to improve the sites identified in the Action Plan, which will be reviewed continually.
- 47. Section (iv) sets out the amount of financial contribution required per dwelling for both improvements and new provision.

(ii) Determining whether provision should be on-site or off-site

48. The only typologies that a developer may be required to provide on-site are amenity greenspace and provision for children/young people.

The following thresholds for on-site provision will be used:

- Amenity greenspace - all residential developments of 10 or more dwellings.
- Provision for children/young people - all residential developments of 100 or more dwellings.

Residential developments below these thresholds will be required to pay a financial contribution for off-site provision.

49. The Open Space Study recommends a minimum size of 0.04 hectares for provision for children/young people. However, the Councils acknowledge that play areas can cause some nuisance to residents. Only providing play areas on developments of 100 or more dwellings will allow schemes to be designed in such a way to allow the play area to have a degree of separation from the nearest houses. In certain circumstances it may be acceptable to include provision for children/young people on-site on residential developments of less than 100 dwellings subject to a satisfactory layout which prevents nuisance to residents.

50. Where a contribution is required for any of the other typologies, this will be by way of a financial contribution for off-site provision or improvements to existing provision. The amount of financial contribution required is set out in section (iv).

(iii) Calculating the amount of on-site provision required

51. The only typologies that a developer may be required to provide on-site are amenity greenspace and provision for children/young people.

52. If on-site provision is required then the following calculation should be used for each typology:

$$\text{Number of dwellings} \times \text{Local standard} / 1000 = \text{Hectares required for proposed development}$$

x 2.4*

*2.4 is the average household occupancy in the 2011 Census. Multiplying this by the number of dwellings gives the estimated population of the proposed development.

(iv) Financial contributions for off-site provision or improvements

53. The same amount of financial contribution will be required for both off-site provision and improvements.

54. A separate financial contribution schedule has been published which sets out the financial contribution required per dwelling for each typology. This will be updated annually in line with inflation.

55. The financial contribution will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement and is in addition to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges as CIL does not apply to open space contributions.
56. Where a financial contribution is required for off-site provision the first priority will be to provide new provision within the accessibility catchment of the proposed development. If this is not possible then the next priority will be to spend the money on improving or expanding existing provision in the accessibility catchment. If this is also not possible then the money will be spent on new provision or improvements elsewhere in the settlement or ward.

(v) Maintenance costs

57. Where provision is made on-site, a financial contribution towards maintenance will be required unless private maintenance is proposed (a private maintenance agreement will normally be required in South Ribble).
58. A separate financial contribution schedule has been published which sets out the financial contribution required for maintenance per dwelling for a 10 year period (20 years in Preston). This will be updated annually in line with inflation.

F. Viability

59. In exceptional cases, there may be site specific circumstances where the required open space contributions will affect the viability of a development. If there are any concerns about viability on a particular site, it is the responsibility of the developer to make a case that applying the Councils open space requirements will make the scheme unviable. This will need to be demonstrated by the submission of a suitable financial appraisal. The Councils will adopt an 'open book' approach to this assessment and the developer/landowner will be expected to provide all relevant financial and other information behind the appraisal to enable the Councils and/or independent valuers on their behalf to assess the nature, extent and impact of the constraints on the viability of the scheme.

G. Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

60. Given the relationship between this SPD, the Core Strategy and the Local Plans and the level of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) that these documents have undergone together with the anticipated absence of any significant environmental effects arising from this proposal, an independent SA of this SPD is not required as initial screening shows it is not necessary due to the nature of the document and the wider SA of the Core Strategy and Local Plans.
61. A SA and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Document was prepared for all the Central Lancashire SPDs to establish whether there are any impacts arising from the SPDs that have not been covered in higher level SA/SEAs. The Screening Document concluded that it is unlikely that there will be any significant negative impacts arising from the SPDs that were not covered in the SA of the Core Strategy and the SA of each of the Council's Local Plans.

62. In addition, the Core Strategy underwent a Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment to determine the likely significant effects of the plan on sites of international nature conservation value. Given the SPD is in conformity with the policies contained within the Core Strategy, a full Screening Assessment of this SPD is not required.

H. Monitoring and Review

63. The Councils will monitor the effectiveness of this guidance including Core Strategy and Local Plan key indicators and review as appropriate in the light of its performance and future changes in planning law and policy guidance.

I. Further Information

64. The SPD will primarily be implemented through the development management process and the determination of planning applications. Charges may apply for pre-application consultations, please see websites for details. Planning Officers will be pleased to provide advice and guidance on planning matters regarding open space and playing pitch provision. They can be contacted on:

Local Authority	Website	Telephone	Email
Preston City Council	www.preston.gov.uk	01772 906949	planningpolicy@preston.gov.uk
Chorley Council	www.chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk
South Ribble Borough Council	www.southribble.gov.uk	01772 625400	forwardplanning@southribble.gov.uk

J. References

65. The following documents form the evidence base for this SPD and are available to view at www.centrallancashire.com:

- Central Lancashire Core Strategy – July 2012.
- Central Lancashire Open Space Study, Policy Implications and Recommendations – May 2012.
- Central Lancashire Open Space Study, Final Open Space Audit Report – May 2012.
- Central Lancashire Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan - June 2012.
- Central Lancashire Final Playing Pitch Assessment Report - June 2012.