



# Penrith Town Council

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Dear Councillor

## **Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan Comments about Inspectors Report**

At the meeting of Penrith Town Council's Planning Committee on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June, members considered the Inspectors comments relating to the Neighbourhood Development Plan and agreed the following response.

Although disappointed by some of the comments relating to the Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Town Council's Working Group which looked to develop the Neighbourhood Plan from the initial consultation responses provided by residents, always knew that some of the policies were going to be challenging however it was felt that some proposed policies, such as the one on sustainable development were important to challenge developers to think about incorporating measures to help reduce climate change.

Having considered the Inspectors comments, the Town Council could accept the comments on Policies 1 to 7 and 10 – 14.

The Town Council however feels that the Inspectors comments on Policy 8 (Identifying and Protecting Local Green Space) and Policy 9 (Protecting and Enhancing Sport, Leisure and Recreation Facilities, which he considers together, are fundamentally flawed.



In his report in Para 93 he states that 'it appears to him that the Town Council had chosen to identify local green space not based on the relative importance of the spaces to the local community but on whether the spaces are used for passive or active leisure pursuits, he goes on to say in para 95 that he is not sure we demonstrated that the community placed greater value on the protection of undeveloped informal open space eg around Macadam Way housing Estate that it would on say protecting the grounds of Penrith Cricket Club.

Para 102b in the NPPF states b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, **recreational value (including as a playing field)** tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.

All the sites that we included within these policies were put forward by residents in close proximity to them and assessed in Appendix 8. The residents adjoining these sites, should you ask them again, would be adamant that to them these green spaces were as important as the Cricket Club. When asked to state how they were important we specified how the community used them for recreational value – this was their importance. Just as the cricket pitch is important to those who play cricket, these additional places were as equally important to residents, we don't believe we are stating that one or the other is of greater importance. We were just trying to ensure all respondents views were incorporated and the importance of these areas to them were included. Castle Park is for more formal recreation but many of these spaces allow residents to step out of their doors and use them informally for; play, kicking a ball about, walking dogs, taking a stroll, sitting, and meeting friends and in some areas tending to plants and creating small gardening areas. Over the last two years especially these spaces, some relatively small, have become Penrith's 'green lungs' and people have stated how they have benefited their physical and mental health.

When Penrith Town Council responded to the Inspector's consultation on the Beacon Hill Policy, we said that we would much rather that Beacon Hill was removed from the list of green spaces along with other areas already classed as COM2 in the ELP, with the remaining areas retained in policies for protecting local green space and protecting and enhancing sport, leisure and recreation facilities. This is still something that the Town Council would like to see retained within the NDP to respect the wishes of residents who put them forward and who explained passionately during the consultations why these spaces were important.



It is not felt that the COM2 of the Eden Local Plan affords these areas of open space adequate protection. COM2 of the Eden Local Plan states

'Development proposals that result in the loss of open space, sport, leisure, allotments, recreational and cultural facilities will not be permitted. The exception to this will be where the benefits of the development outweigh the loss. Proposals must satisfy each of the following criteria:

- There is a strong social or economic justification for the development.
- There is no longer a need for the facility in the area, or if a need remains, alternative provision will be provided nearby.

Any replacement facility must provide an equivalent or greater net benefit to the community, in terms of quality, availability and accessibility of open space or recreational opportunities.

Where development of a small area of the site would enable investment to improve the rest of the site this may be taken into account as a circumstance under which benefits may outweigh the loss of a site or facility.'

Each of these areas were justified within Appendix 8 of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and are important due to their close proximity to the houses and residents that use them in a variety of ways. Replacement facilities outside these areas would not benefit the communities that currently use them.

Penrith Town Council strongly requests Eden District Council to re-consult on these areas.

A revised Policy 8 would therefore include:

C2	Land between rugby pitches and houses on Carleton Road
PE8	The additional bit of land missed between Brentfield Way and Meadowcroft
PN18	Field on Beacon Edge next to field already allocated under COM2
PN24	Fell Lane Pinfold
PN27	Cockell House Gardens / Drovers Lane
PN28	Cockell House Gardens / Macadam Gardens
PN29	Voreda Park Central Space
PN30	Head of Macadam Way
PN31	Pembroke Place
PN32	Land in Voreda Park



PN33	Plimsoll Close
PN34	Cambridge Drive
PN36	St Catherine's Churchyard
PN40	Coronation Gardens
PN42	Bowscar
PN43	Friends Meeting House Allotment Gardens
PW45	Nichol Hill Nature Reserve
PW48	Brunswick Square Gardens
PP66	Thacka Glen (the half not already protected under Com2)
PP67	Pategill Back Field
PP70	Open space to the south of Eden Housing Association
PP71	Open space to the north of Eden Housing Association
PP72	Open space to the north of Greengarth site

A revised policy 9 would include:

C1	Carleton Heights Play Area (the remaining part not already covered by COM2)
C2	Part of C2 (field between Rugby pitches and houses on Carleton Rd)
C4	Hunter Hall School Playing Field
C5	Frenchfield Sports Centre including Penrith Football Club
PE11	Beaconside School Playing Field
PN19	Penrith Golf Course (the early holes not covered in COM2)
PN22	St Catherine's School Field
PN41	Bowscar Play Area
PS54	The Crescent Playing Fields
PS55	In part – Ullswater CC Playing Fields (the area to the south is already designated in COM2 the field between the cricket ground and Bridge Lane is not)
PS59	North Lakes School Playing Field
PS60	Land between Wetheriggs Lane and Astro turf at Leisure Centre
PS62	QEGS Playing Field (part already designated under COM2)
PW51	Castletown Recreation area (some already designated)
	The car park of Penrith Leisure Centre to ensure it can be used (the LC is already designated under COM2)



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line crossing through the middle of the name.

Councillor Scott Jackson  
Chair of Planning Committee

