

Sports Grounds Floodlighting Policy 2023

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1. POLICY OBJECTIVE (OR PURPOSE)

To enable outdoor sports grounds to have safe and appropriate levels of floodlighting in accordance with Council priorities for the provision of floodlighting and in line with current standards.

The aim is to maximise the use of reserves in a safe manner, to minimise unnecessary wear, and to ensure that the playing surfaces that require floodlighting can properly accommodate the most effective number of participants in accordance with the lighting requirements for competition or training.

2. BACKGROUND

There is an increasing demand for improved lighting from sports clubs seeking to maximise the use of sports grounds. This is coupled with new standards for the installation and maintenance of lighting equipment which requires Council to ensure that appropriate equipment is in operation at sporting reserves.

This policy was introduced as a result of the development of an Australian Standard for sports ground floodlighting and an assessment of the risk management factors in the existing floodlighting installations. This Policy makes provision for Council's on-going requirement to ensure that appropriate lighting equipment is in place at reserves with an expectation that sporting clubs contribute on an equitable basis towards the upgrade and maintenance of the equipment.

Historically Council has implemented lighting developments through their own resources, occasionally with financial assistance from State Government grants.

The following factors have been considered in the development of this policy:

- The existing floodlighting equipment is aging.
- There is an increased emphasis on the importance of technical inspections and proper maintenance.
- The current Australian Standard for sports ground floodlighting sets the requirement for the minimum appropriate levels of illumination.
- Community based sports clubs have not previously been able to meet the rising costs of new installations and of on-going maintenance in relation to standards; and
- Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that any equipment installed on Council property is appropriate for the purpose and is kept in a safe condition.

3. SCOPE

This policy covers the management of both seasonally allocated sports grounds, including ovals and soccer/hockey pitches and leased sports facilities, such as tennis courts and bowls clubs.

This policy does not include Council's Leisure Facilities, public lighting, security lighting, or car park lighting.

4. DEFINITIONS

Sports Grounds Floodlighting – is characterized by outdoor, weatherproof, elevated light fittings established to provide uniformity of illumination across a playing arena in accordance with appropriate standards.

The basic requirement of sports ground floodlighting is that the focus of play, most usually around the position of the ball, is adequately illuminated consistently across the entire field of play in accordance with appropriate standards.

The level of illumination required for competition is higher than that required for training purposes.

On Greater Dandenong Council properties sports grounds floodlighting is used on the seasonally allocated grounds that predominately accommodate the winter sports, such as soccer, hockey, Australian Rules Football and rugby league. In addition, floodlighting is provided for summer sports including cricket (Shepley Oval) and all-year round sports including baseball, tennis and lawn bowls. There is scope for sports ground floodlighting to be installed on non-Council properties, most typically schools, where the access by community-based sporting team is guaranteed by an appropriate shared use agreement.

Lux – The lux is the unit of illuminance, or luminous flux per area, in the International System of Units. It is equal to one lumen per square metre. Illuminance is a measure of how much luminous flux is spread over a given area. It is the measure used to determine the strength of floodlighting.

5. POLICY

5.1 FLOODLIGHTING

Council will provide and maintain sports lighting infrastructure at sports reserves to the appropriate standard and in line with the priorities for the provision of floodlighting as practically possible within financial budgeting and within the constraints of the existing infrastructure.

5.2 STANDARD OF LIGHTING

The cost of providing sports ground floodlighting suitable for competition purposes is much higher than the cost of training lights.

Council recognises that it is necessary to have some selected facilities that are suitable for use at higher levels of competition. The provision of competition standard lighting will be provided by Council dependent on the sports ground classification, as identified in the Sporting Grounds and Facility Classification Framework, as follows:

Classification	Maximum Standard
National / State	Competition
Regional	Competition
Community Premium	Training
Community Standard	Training

All tennis, lawn bowls and netball courts are to have a maximum standard for community-level competition as per the sport specific guidelines.

5.3 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As part of the Capital Improvement Program budget process Council will consider an allocation of capital funding for the installation of new or renewal of existing sports ground lights in line with the priorities contained within the Sports Facilities Plan. This plan will also consider upgrades to LED lighting, noting that upgrading to LED lighting will be standard for any new or renewed lighting projects.

5.4 INFRASTRUCTURE INSTALLATION

Council will manage the installation of all sports grounds floodlighting to ensure there is a standardised approach to the type and quality of floodlights.

Council may consider sports clubs contributing to and/or completing installation of sports ground floodlights, as per the Sporting Capital Contributions Policy under the following conditions where:

- All Council Occupational Health and Safety protocols are in place and adhered to.
- Clubs can demonstrate that they will meet all of Council's requirements for the provision of the floodlighting infrastructure and all associated works.
- Council can approve and monitor the works.

5.5 MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY AND ASSOCIATED COSTS

Council is responsible for the maintenance of sports grounds floodlighting. Tenant clubs are required to report any floodlighting problems. Tenant clubs must not service or alter any aspect of the floodlighting.

In cases where less than 50 per cent of globes on a specific lighting pole are out, provided there remains at least 75 per cent of all lights operating on that sporting ground, Council reserves the right to delay maintenance activities until further lights need repair. This will provide Council with improved value for money due to the expenses involved with maintenance. If the ground is normally illuminated for competition, with some lighting not operating, the ground is only to be used for training purposes, subject to evaluation by Council.

To recover a portion of the costs of maintaining sports ground floodlighting there is a requirement for a 50 per cent contribution from sporting clubs where maintenance is carried out. This contribution will be divided among the relevant allocated user groups at the facility receiving maintenance. This will include the cost of replacing lamps that have expired.

Should the age of a lighting unit and/or associated infrastructure reach the end of its service life and is not able to be maintained then Council will make every attempt within the available budget to replace the lighting unit as soon as possible. This may result in a drop in lighting output until works can be completed.

5.6 FLOODLIGHTS OWNERSHIP

Floodlights installed on Council owned and/or managed land remain the property of Council and may not be altered or removed without the prior written approval of Council. This is with the exception of land under a joint use agreement (JUA), where the JUA will provide clarity of ownership.

5.7 HOURS OF OPERATION

Floodlighting may only be used on the days and during the hours specified by Council when a club is allocated the use of the facilities or as per the scheduled agreed for each facility.

To minimise impacts to residents, clubs need to adhere to these hours of operation as per their agreement with Council (see 5.10 Penalties).

Further, all floodlights must comply with Australian Standards for obtrusive lighting, in consideration of nearby residents.

5.8 ELECTRICITY CHARGES

The sports clubs that use the floodlighting pay the electricity usage and supply costs for sports ground floodlighting. Should multiple users be in tenancy at a facility the associated utility costs will be pro-rated according to allocated usage.

5.9 LUX AUDITS

Where required by the sporting governing body/association the process of undertaking lighting audits to confirm the lux lighting levels will be undertaken by Council. 50 per cent of costs incurred for this process will be recouped by Council from relevant clubs utilising the specified ground. Should a club require a lighting audit be carried out and it is not a requirement of the sporting governing body/association then the club will incur 100 per cent of the costs.

5.10 PENALTIES

Sports clubs which deliberately breach the requirements of this Policy may be penalised, as per the Sports Hire Agreement.

Penalties may range from the use of the floodlights being suspended for a defined period to, for severe and/or persistent breaches, losing the use of the sports ground or leased sports facility.

6. RESPONSE TO THE OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020

Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles. These are:

- seeking the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations. In particular, the policy seeks to ensure that all residents are accorded respect, and that considerations of their needs, preference and circumstances influences the development of Council services.
- collaboration with other councils and governments and statutory bodies (S. 9f). This policy is based in part, upon an inspection of similar policies and plans among other councils.
- by the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted. The policy recommends capital improvement to LED technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured. This policy sets clear parameters around Council's responsibilities to ensure that the provision of facilities is financially viable.
- supporting transparency of council decisions, actions and information (S. 9h and S. 58). Transparency is reflected in the preparation and content of this policy, which has been formed after consultation with the community, written in plain English to improve its accessibility, and will be disseminated to residents through appropriate media and means.

7. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006 – COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

The *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* has been considered in relation to whether any human rights under the Charter are restricted or contrived by the enactment of any part of this policy.

It is considered that the policy is consistent with the rights outlined in the Charter, and in particular, that it advances the following rights, through its emphasis upon respect and consideration of social diversity in all aspects of Council conduct and in its consideration of engagement, inclusion and participation by all residents in our community:

- Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (S. 14)
- Freedom of expression (S. 15)
- Peaceful assembly and freedom of association (S. 16)
- Taking part in public life (S. 18)
- Cultural rights (S. 19).

8. RESPONSE TO THE GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires that Councils “...must consider and promote gender equality; and take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality.”

In addition, Part One, Section 1(a) of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires gender assessments when “...developing or revising any policy of, or program or service provided by, the entity that has a direct and significant impact upon the public” - a provision which takes effect on March 31, 2021.

Council’s Diversity, Access and Equity Policy and the *Gender Equality Act 2020* have been considered in the preparation of this policy but are not relevant to its contents. The policy is purely administrative in nature and does not benefit any one gender group over any other. The allocation of clubs to sporting grounds is administered by the Sporting Grounds and Pavilion Management Policy.

9. CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

This policy influences the generation of greenhouse emissions through the effective operation of sports grounds floodlighting. The policy supports Council’s Declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency, Council’s Climate Change Emergency Strategy 2020-2030, or Section 9C of the *Local Government Act 2020*, in relation to the overarching principle on climate change and sustainability, by recommending capital improvement to LED lighting technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility will rest with the Sport and Recreation Unit to inform sports clubs about the content and meaning of this policy. This may entail promotions through the Council website, emails, and presentations. The Sport and Recreation Unit and the Works Service Unit are responsible for the implementation of the Council responsibilities contained within the policy.

The sports clubs are responsible to adhere to the Policy.

11. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Sport and Recreation Unit will monitor the details and outcomes of this policy and report as required. The policy will be reviewed after four years, unless required to do so earlier, and will consider the following:

- The cost to Council for the provision of sports ground lighting.
- The impact that the policy will have on Council staff.
- Benchmarking against other municipalities.

12. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following policies, strategies or legislation relate to the implementation of this policy.

Legislation

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Related Council and Other Policies, Procedures, Strategies, Protocols, Guidelines

- Australian Standard: AS 2560 Sports Lighting
- Council Plan 2021-25
- Imagine 2030 Community Plan
- Make Your Move Greater Dandenong Physical Activity Strategy 2020-2030
- Sports Facilities Plan – Implementation Plan 2018
- Victorian Government’s Community Sporting Facility Lighting Guide for Australian Rules football, Football (Soccer) and Netball.