

COMMUNITY SPORT, PREMIER LEAGUE AND ELITE SPORT FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

POLICY OVERVIEW:

This Policy sets out the conditions that apply to community sport, premier level sport and elite sport across the City of Monash.

RESPONSIBILITIES:	Manager, Active Monash
RELATED MATERIAL:	Refer <i>Relevant Documents</i> Section
RELATED LEGISLATION:	Refer <i>Relevant Documents</i> Section
REVIEW:	The Chief Executive Officer will review this policy as required and in accordance with any legislative changes and/or requirements.

POLICY VERSION:	Version 2
POLICY DATE:	March 2022
REVIEW DATE:	Every 2 years

SUPERSEDED POLICY:	Premier and Elite Sports Framework Conditions
SUPERSEDED POLICY DATE:	26 May 2015

APPROVED BY:	Monash Council
MEETING DATE:	26 April 2022 Council Meeting

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SUMMARY

1. This Policy sets out the different conditions that apply to community, premier level and elite sport (including leagues/academies/clubs/teams) across the City of Monash

POLICY STATEMENT

2. Council will provide community sport facilities and infrastructure at community sport venues under the care, control and management of Council in accordance with current versions of relevant Council-adopted policies, plans and frameworks such as:
 - i. Active Reserves Facility Hierarchy
 - ii. Monash Sports Floodlighting Policy
 - iii. Cricket Wicket Policy
 - iv. Monash Football (Soccer) Plan
 - v. Active Monash Capital Works Priorities Framework
 - vi. Active Monash Sports Club Framework.
3. If a relevant Council policy does not exist, then Council will provide community sports facilities and infrastructure at venues under the care, control and management of Council in accordance with relevant State Sporting Association (SSA) community training and match level provision standards.
4. At venues where night matches are sanctioned, community match standards, appropriate for the level of sport being played will be provided by Council e.g. Jack Edwards Reserve (senior pitch), Princes Highway Reserve (west), W A Scammell Reserve and Ashwood Reserve (synthetic hockey pitch).

Night matches under floodlighting will only be permitted at venues where match lighting standards can be achieved and the Council approval has been granted. Approval to host night competition will be subject to a *Night Match Suitability Checklist*.
5. Generally, Council will not fund the provision of sport facilities and infrastructure over and above community sports provision standards as detailed in points 2, 3 & 4 (above).
6. If gaps in community sport provision standards are identified or State Sporting Associations make changes to their community training and/or match level provision standards then Council will aspire to remedy any gaps or meet new standards when renewing assets at the end of their useful life and/or subject to Council budget adoption and funding provision.
7. Generally, sport facilities and infrastructure required to accommodate elite level sport and/or elite sports team/clubs at venues under the care, control and management of Council, over and above community sport provision standards will not be provided by Council. Sport facilities and infrastructure specifically required to accommodate elite sport leagues and academies, teams and/or clubs over and above community sport provision standards shall be fully funded by the relevant sport, team and/or club.
8. For the purposes of this policy, any State or Federal Government grant that is provided directly to Council for the provision of sporting facilities and infrastructure at sport venues under the care, control and management of Council will constitute Council funding.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is:

- (a) To define community and elite sport.
- (b) To ensure community sports facilities and infrastructure are fit-for-purpose and appropriate for the level of sport being played.
- (c) To ensure junior, female and Monash-based community clubs are not disadvantaged or displaced by elite sport.
- (d) To ensure continued and sustainable investment into community sport as a priority to encourage active local communities and sports clubs.

CONTEXT

The need to build active communities through community sport is an important part of Council's approach to community development and Council supports community clubs by providing appropriate, fit-for-purpose sport facilities and infrastructure to support a diverse range of sustainable sport and recreation opportunities.

It is also important that Council continue to support grass roots, junior, women's and community-based sport in Monash and recognised that community sport should not be disadvantaged or displaced by elite teams or professional sport.

Council is committed to ensuring that priority access to sporting facilities (pavilions and sportsgrounds) is given to existing Monash-based community sporting clubs in accordance with the Active Monash Sports Club Framework. The introduction of any new professional team/academy/league over and above premier division community sport should align with this commitment and not adversely impact or displace existing community sport (especially junior and women's teams) nor impede their growth or add further burden to rate payers through increased costs associated with the provision of sport facilities and sporting infrastructure over and above Council's community provision standards as outlined in the policy.

It is expected that professional teams and/or academies and elite-level sport competitions such as AFL & VFL, AFLW & VFLW, A League Football (men & women) and State cricket (men & women), etc, will be required to fully fund any sport facility and infrastructure improvements required to meet their competition standards over and above Council's community provision standards.

DEFINITIONS

Council

Monash City Council

Community Sport

Community sport involves community organised sporting activities and competitions that follow traditional rules and structures. Community sport is typified by:

- Moderate flexibility and moderate structure
- Cost to play, free to spectate

- Membership-based participation
- Scheduled training and match times
- Monash community sports clubs and associations, such as tennis, lawn bowls, football, Aussie rules, cricket, rugby league, golf, archery, athletics, hockey, etc

Premier Division Sport

Premier Division is pinnacle or top tier of *community sport* that generally sits below the highest level of sport being played in the country. For example the National Premier Leagues (NPL) is a national premier division football competition in Australia which acts as the second tier of the sport in the country below the A-League (elite level). Premier level sport is generally typified by:

- Cost to play, generally free to spectate (except finals, NPL, EFL)
- Membership based participation
- Spectator seating
- Premier sporting venues may also be suitable for occasionally hosting regional and/or state level events.

Examples include:

- National Premier League (NPL)*
- Eastern Region Division (AFL)
- VAFA Division (AFL)
- Victorian Netball League (VNL)
- State league baseball/softball
- Premier division cricket, hockey etc.

Monash examples include:

- Oakleigh Cannons FC at Jack Edwards Reserve (NPL)*
- Eastern Lions FC at Gardiners Reserves (NPL)*
- Richmond Cricket Club at Central Reserve (Premier division cricket)
- Harlequin Rugby Club at Holmesglen Reserve (Premier division rugby)
- Waverley Hockey Club at Ashwood Reserve (Premier division hockey)
- Wilson Storage Southern Saints at Oakleigh Recreation Centre (VNL)
- Oakleigh Chargers FC at Warrawee Park (NAB League, Victorian premier under-18 competition)

***Notes:**

1. Football Australia (FA) and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) define NPL (1st grade) as a professional league. The FA and FIFA consider any league which has one or more professional players to be a professional league. As NPL Vic does have professional players it is considered a professional league in the eyes of FA & FIFA.
2. For the purposes of this policy and in accordance with the definition of premier sport herein, NPL is classified as Premier Sport being the top tier of *community sport* playing Monash that sits below the highest level of sport being played in the country (A-League).
3. Generally, whilst athletes playing premier level sport in Monash may receive some form of payment, they are not considered full-time professional athletes.
4. Monash has two designated NPL venues at Jack Edward Reserve (Oakleigh Cannons FC) and Gardiners Reserve (Eastern Lions FC). Council will not support any new applications for NPL licences within the municipality other than for women's NPL at the existing NPL venues. This is in accordance with the Monash Football (Soccer) Plan recommendation 3.4 which states *Jack Edwards Reserve and Gardiners Reserve to service the community as Monash's only two Senior NPL venues.*

Elite Sport

Elite sport is specific to professional sports, where athletes play at the highest levels of **professional competition** and are generally considered full-time professional athletes. Elite sport may also encompass semi-elite (or semi-professional sport) e.g. potential national football B-League competition (semi-elite) as opposed to national A-League competition (elite).

Elite sport represents the pinnacle of the professional athlete pathway and is typified by representation at national and international competitions and events. Elite sport is generally typified by:

- Low flexibility and high structure
- Professional players who are paid to play
- Spectator fee applies to watch matches
- Venues are generally suitable for hosting national and/or international level events with significant spectator capacity.

Examples include:

- Professional leagues over and above premier division sport
- AFL & VFL
- AFLW & VFLW
- A League Football (men & women)
- State cricket (men & women)

Monash examples include:

- Hawthorn Football Club (AFL) at Waverley Park
- Huntingdale, Metropolitan & Riversdale Golf Courses (host international golf events).

Elite (or professional) Sporting Activities

Elite or professional sporting activities may include any sport related activities such as training, matches, competition, events etc. that will be undertaken for the purpose of accommodating elite and/or professional athletes, teams or clubs.

SCOPE OF POLICY

9. The Policy **applies to** the following Council sport facilities:

- (a) Sport pavilions
- (b) Indoor highball courts
- (c) Sportsgrounds and playing surfaces including fields, ovals, pitches, courts and baseball/softball diamonds etc
- (d) Sporting infrastructure such as sports floodlighting, coaches' boxes, dugouts, scoreboards, boundary fencing, spectator shelters and grandstands etc

10. The Policy **does not apply to**:

- (a) Community and/or multi-use facilities where sport and recreation is not considered the primary or major focus e.g. neighbourhood houses, community centres, scout and guide halls, senior citizens centres, men's sheds, etc.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This policy proposes the conditions in which Council would support elite sport or professional teams or leagues within the municipality. Approval to accommodate elite or professional sport activities will generally be conditional upon:

1. A guarantee that there will not be any displacement of existing junior or female players/teams.
2. Funding requirements for all infrastructure improvements over and above Council's community-level provision standards will be at the cost of the sports club (venue licensee/lease), State Sporting Association (SSA) and/or National Sporting Association (NSA).
3. Any improvements to community sport facilities and infrastructure undertaken/funded by sports club (venue licensee/lease), State Sporting Association (SSA) or National Sporting Association (NSA) at community sport venues under the care, control and management of Council shall remain at the venue for the duration of the asset's life and the property of Council.
4. Prior written approval from Council is required for any application whereby a club/team is seeking elevation or licence to participate in an elite or state/national league
5. Monash-based community clubs will be given continued access to sporting facilities and sportsgrounds that are shared with a licenced club.

POLICY AUTHORITY

The authority for approval to host elite or professional sporting organisations and/or activities (incl. academies/training/matches/competition/events etc.) at venues under the care, control and management of Council lies with the Monash City Council and is subject to the conditions detailed in this Policy.

Notwithstanding an approval by the Council under this Policy, Council reserves the right to alter or rescind such approval by resolution of the Council.

REVIEW

Council's Active Monash Department will review this Policy every two years.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Current versions of the following Council policies, plans and frameworks affect the operation of this Policy:

- i. Active Reserves Facility Hierarchy
- ii. Monash Sports Floodlighting Policy
- iii. Cricket Wicket Policy
- iv. Monash Football (Soccer) Plan
- v. Active Monash Capital Works Priorities Framework
- vi. Active Monash Sports Club Framework