# FLOODLIGHTING POLICY - OUTDOOR SPORTS AND RECREATION

## 1. PURPOSE

To provide a consistent approach for the use and management of floodlights at Council outdoor sports and recreation venues to support community participation and consider the residential amenity of adjoining properties and the surrounding area.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

a) Address the use of floodlights by sporting clubs on Council sports fields and associated facilities including hours of use, permitted activities and process of approval.
b) Address the use of floodlights for events or recreational activities on sports fields, public outdoor courts and skate parks.
c) Define Council's level of provision of floodlighting for different sport and recreational activities and factors that determine its upgrade and renewal program.
d) Outline ongoing responsibilities for the ownership, operation, maintenance and associated costs related to floodlighting.

## 3. SCOPE

### *3.1 Inclusions*

This policy applies to outdoor sports and recreation venues including:

- Sports fields managed by Council's seasonal allocation process as governed by the *Sporting Facilities Guide – Seasonal and Casual Users (SFG)*;
- Batting cages and other similar practice facilities (as commonly used by cricket and baseball);
- Public outdoor courts; and
- Skate parks.

### *3.2 Exclusions*

This policy does not apply to:

- Floodlit outdoor sport and recreation venues managed by site-specific lease agreements such as athletics tracks, lawn bowls rinks and tennis courts;
- Council managed leisure facilities (Sportlink, Aqualink Box Hill and Nunawading) and associated sports courts; and
- Areas in Council reserves with lighting outside of sports fields, public outdoor courts and skate parks as defined by the Whitehorse Open Space Strategy (e.g. lit walking paths in parks).

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Amateur** – level of competition referenced in Australian Standards and Sporting Association guidelines that is typically delivered at a local level (e.g. Eastern Football Netball League junior and senior competitions, Football Victoria community competitions).

**Australian Standards** - published documents setting out specifications and procedures designed to ensure floodlighting systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform the way they are intended to. They establish a set of requirements which define quality and safety criteria.

**Light spill** – light that falls onto surrounding areas outside of the facility surface to be illuminated.

**Lux** – unit of measurement for illuminance. The total amount of visible light illuminating a point on a surface from all directions above the surface.

**Night competition –** any match requiring the use of floodlighting to facilitate activity including both twilight and night fixtures.

**Outdoor sports and recreation venue** – any area of open space (e.g. sports field, public outdoor court, skate park) provided for the purpose of conducting both formal or informal outdoor sports and recreation activity.

**Professional** - an elite level of senior competition played by full-time players referenced in Australian Standards and Sporting Association guidelines that is typically delivered at a state or national level (e.g. Australian Football League – Australian Rules Football, A-League - soccer).

**Seasonal allocations** – the use of Council outdoor sport and recreation venues by sporting clubs as per the defined times listed in the seasonal licence agreement with Council.

**Semi-professional** – an advanced level of senior competition referenced in Australian Standards and Sporting Association guidelines that is typically delivered at a regional or state level (e.g. National Premier League soccer).

**Sporting Association guidelines** – sport-specific guidelines for floodlighting developed by regional, state, national and international sporting organisations in the absence of, to complement or to provide additional requirements to the relevant Australian Standards for sporting club activity in their respective sports.

**Sporting club** – user groups allocated on a seasonal basis (typically summer or winter) to Council outdoor sport and recreation venues.

**User groups** – any sporting club, group, Sporting Association or school that has Council approval to use any outdoor sport and recreation venue on either a seasonal or casual basis.

## 5. POLICY

### *5.1 Council's provision of floodlighting*

*5.1.1 Ownership and responsibilities for the provision of floodlighting*

a) Council is responsible for the provision of floodlights for outdoor sport and recreation venues within the scope of this policy and manages the upgrade and installation of such systems to ensure that there is a standardised approach to the type and quality of floodlighting provided.

b) All floodlighting infrastructure at Council outdoor sport and recreation venues is the sole property of Council and cannot be removed or altered by any third party.

c) The ongoing maintenance of floodlighting systems is the responsibility of Council (excluding user group-funded batting cages and other practice facilities – see 5.5.2.d).

d) User groups will be responsible for the payment of utility bills for their use of floodlighting and will be appropriated pro-rata power costs by Council based on this usage at its absolute discretion.

*5.1.2 Levels of provision of floodlighting*

a) Council will provide and fund the development and renewal of floodlighting infrastructure to the following lux levels as guided by the Australian Standards and relevant Sporting Association guidelines of the sports undertaken at Council's outdoor sports and recreation venues (as per Appendix A).

b) Council will review this policy and the capital works program against amendments to the Australian Standards and relevant Sporting Association guidelines as required.

c) The levels that Council will provide have been determined to best utilise its resources for the greatest amount of community participation and benefit. Consideration has been given to the nature of winter sport and its reliance on floodlighting to enable evening training activity to occur.

d) Council will fund and provide future projects to the following floodlighting lux levels:

   i. Sports fields – 100 lux;

   ii. Public outdoor courts - 100 lux; and

   iii. Skate parks - 100 lux.

e) Sporting clubs wishing to conduct sporting activities requiring levels of lighting above what Council provides at an outdoor sport and recreation venue will need to fund or source external contributions for lighting upgrade projects as per the following section.

*5.1.3 Sporting club contributions to projects*

a) Council will consider floodlighting project proposals funded by sporting clubs and/or other external contributions for new sites or higher levels of floodlighting provision on a case-by-case basis.

b) Community consultation and/or project feasibility assessment work may be required to be undertaken by Council if projects are to deliver a higher level of floodlighting than what Council provides or if sites have additional considerations to address (e.g. land ownership, environmental factors and sites with no existing floodlighting).

c) Any such approved project will be managed by Council and will not proceed without evidence of external funding streams to cover any financial commitment.

d) Council will maintain club-funded infrastructure as part of its annual program – see 5.1.1.c

e) Council will only fund the renewal of floodlighting to the levels provided for as specified by section 5.1.2 of this policy. Sporting clubs will be responsible to fund any renewal costs to sustain any additional lighting levels.

f) Once installed, all floodlighting infrastructure becomes and will remain the sole property of Council (whether partly or fully funded by external sporting clubs to Council).

*5.1.4 Council's capital works program*

a) Council's capital works program will prioritise the delivery of projects that address safety and risk factors at its outdoor sport and recreation venues (systems at the end of their physical life cycle, compliance with Australian Standards etc.).

b) Following consideration of safety and risk factors, Council will inform its capital works program and its priorities using the following factors to provide the largest amount of benefit to the Whitehorse community including, but not limited to:

   i. community utilisation of outdoor sport and recreation venues (participants, frequency of use, nature of activity particularly training);

   ii. reliance on systems to facilitate activity (e.g. reduced daylight hours in winter);

   iii. sports field classification (as per the *SFG*);

   iv. cost-benefit factors (e.g. design and project efficiencies, availability of funding);

   v. residential amenity considerations; and

   vi. Sporting Association outdoor sport and recreation venue classification.

c) When making infrastructure decisions for capital works upgrades technologies such as LED will be preferred to return an increased range of long term benefits for Council over an asset's projected life cycle (20+ years). The capital works program considers;

   i. resource costs (initial installation, ongoing maintenance, renewal and utilities);

ii. performance elements (functionality, colour, light spill etc.); and

iii. environmental impact (carbon footprint, impact of light spill on surrounding bushland etc.).

### *5.2 Sports fields*

#### *5.2.1 Permitted use of floodlighting*

Council will permit the use of floodlights on sports fields for sporting clubs under the following conditions:

a) Training under floodlights (including intra-club training matches) is permitted in the evening up until 9:00pm for sporting clubs in their competition season, managed under Council's *SFG*.

b) Night competition matches under lights are permitted under the conditions that the matches:

   i. are played at a level of competition that meets the relevant Australian Standard and/or Sporting Association guidelines for the lighting provided (as per Appendix A);

   ii. are scheduled to conclude by 9:30pm (including periods of added/extra time);

   iii. must have a City of Whitehorse team participating unless approved based on demonstrated need and community benefit at Council's absolute discretion (e.g. Association finals); and

   iv. may be played at an outdoor sport and recreation venue up to two nights a week. For venues which are home to sporting clubs with a large number of teams, a third night will be permitted.

c) The use of floodlighting on sports fields for pre-season activities is not permitted.

d) Sporting clubs that require higher levels of floodlighting than what has been provided at Council's outdoor sport and recreation venues are not permitted to use lighting systems to supplement twilight or poor light conditions due to risk considerations.

e) As part of the seasonal allocation process sporting clubs must advise Council of intended use of floodlights for club activities such as Auskick, NetSetGo etc., pre-game/training ground inspections, oval/facility setup, pack up/clean up, family nights. Events requiring floodlight use such as fetes and markets are to be referred to Council's Arts and Cultural Services Department – refer to Clause 5.2.2.a.

f) Council reserves the right to withdraw permission or adjust span of times for floodlighting use at its sole discretion as per the *Protection of the Sports Field* section contained in the *SFG* or for other reasons.

g) Sanctions for non-compliance will apply to sporting clubs found to be in breach of the provisions of this policy as per the *Club Sanctions* section of the *SFG*.

h) Council will consider floodlighting of outdoor sport and recreation venues outside of seasonal allocations for wider community participation on a case-by-case basis for activities including:

   i. recreational use for the general public (e.g. walking);

   ii. Council activities; and

   iii. events that return significant benefit to the community (e.g. charity events).

i) The use of floodlighting at Council outdoor sports and recreation venues by health and fitness providers is determined by the terms and conditions of the *Guidelines for Use of Open Space by Health and Fitness Providers*.

j) The use of floodlighting at Council sports fields by casual users is determined by the terms and conditions of the *SFG*.

#### *5.2.2 Procedure of approval for floodlighting use*

a) The procedure of approval for floodlighting use for community events as defined by Council's *Event Permit Guide* is managed by the Arts and Cultural Services Department of Council.

b) The procedure of approval of floodlighting use for sporting clubs and casual users is as per the *SFG*'s Seasonal Sports Permit process managed by the Leisure and Recreation Services Department of Council.

To assess seasonal tenancy and casual usage applications, Council requires:

i. The scope of intended seasonal usage requiring floodlights to be provided.

ii. For larger scale activities that bring an increased amount of participants and/or spectators, sporting clubs may be required to undertake additional requirements such as:

- risk, event or traffic management plans; or
- direct notification to the community by letter outlining scope of seasonal night activities to be distributed to neighbours residing next to outdoor sports and recreation venues.

iii. No activity under lighting is to be publicly advertised or carried out until permission is provided in writing by Council.

### *5.3 Public outdoor courts*

a) Council will provide, fund and maintain 100 lux floodlighting on public outdoor courts determined at its discretion.

b) Council's outdoor sports court facilities can be floodlit up to 9:00pm throughout the year.

### *5.4 Skate parks*

a) Council will provide, fund and maintain 100 lux floodlighting on skate parks determined at its discretion.

b) Council's skate parks can be floodlit up to 10:00pm throughout the year.

### *5.5 Batting cages and other practice facilities*

#### *5.5.1 Permitted use of lighting*

a) Approved use under lights is permitted on an as-needs basis in the evening up until 9:00pm as per the *SFG* and sporting club seasonal allocations.

b) Lighting which meets the required standards of the sport (refer to Appendix A) may be used year-round at practice facilities as assessed and approved by Council.

#### *5.5.2 Provision of lighting for practice facilities*

a) Floodlighting for batting cages and other practice facilities is to be entirely funded by sporting clubs due to exclusive nature of use.

b) Lighting projects are to be assessed and approved by Council and depending on complexity may require Council project management. Residents living in immediate proximity of these facilities are to be consulted with should an upgrade be proposed.

c) Once affixed, lighting becomes the property of Council.

d) Sporting clubs are fully responsible for maintenance and must ensure that club-installed infrastructure is at all times safe, meeting Australian Standards and Sporting Association guidelines for match practice (or equivalent) usage.

e) Council may provide direction to clubs to conduct works at club cost to ensure compliance or conduct works itself at the full cost of the responsible sporting club if required for safety reasons.

## 6 RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

Australian Football League Preferred Facility Guidelines - State, Regional, Local, School and Remote Facilities (2019)

Australian Standard 4282-1997 – Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting

Australian Standard 2560.2 – Series: Sports lighting – specific applications

Baseball Victoria Lighting Standards Policy

Bicycle Motocross Australia Lighting Policy 2014

Community Cricket Facility Guidelines – Cricket Australia

Community Sporting Facility Lighting Guide for Australian Rules Football, Football (Soccer) and Netball – 2012 - Sport & Recreation Victoria

Environment Protection (Residential Noise) Regulations 2018

Event Permit - Terms and Conditions - July 2019 – Whitehorse City Council

Football Lighting – Effective Lighting Guide 2019 – Football Victoria

International Basketball Federation Guide to Basketball Facilities

National Rugby League Preferred Facility Guidelines

Netball Victoria Facilities Manual

Rugby Australia – National Facility Guidelines

Sporting Facilities Guide – Seasonal and Casual Users

Whitehorse Open Space Strategy

Whitehorse Recreation Strategy 2015-2024

## 7 APPENDICES

As follows

## *Appendix A: Summary of Australian Standards and Sporting Association Guidelines for floodlighting lux levels (December 2020)*

| Level | Activity | Australian Rules Football | Rugby Union and League | Soccer | Outdoor Netball | Outdoor Basketball | Skate-boarding* | BMX Riding | Ultimate Frisbee | Archery | Baseball* | Lacrosse | Cricket* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amateur | Recreational Level/Ball and Physical Training* | 50 | 50 | 100* | 100 | 100 | 100* | 100* | 50* | As per Association advice* | 100^ | As per Association advice* | 100^ |
| | Match Practice | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | As per Association advice^ | 100* | 100* | | 200 / as below~ | | 200~ |
| | Competition | 100* | 100 | 100 | 200* | 100/200* | | 100* | 100* | | 300 (infield)/ 200 (outfield) | | 300 (square)/ 200 (outfield) |
| Semi-professional | Match Practice | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 200^ | As per Association advice^ | As per Association advice^ | N/A^ | As per Association advice* | 300 (infield)/ 200 (outfield) | As per Association advice* | 500 (square)/ 300 (outfield) |
| | Competition | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200^ | | | N/A^ | | 500 (infield)/ 300 (outfield) | | |
| Professional | Match Practice | 200^~ | 200 | 200 | 100 | 500^ | As per Association advice^ | As per Association advice* | N/A^ | As per Association advice* | 300 (infield)/ 200 (outfield) | As per Association advice* | 750 (square)/ 500 (outfield) |
| | Competition | 500^~ | 500 | 500 | 500^ | 500^ | | | N/A^ | | 750 (infield)/ 500 (outfield | | |
| Footnotes | *Recreational level of activity refers to unstructured, non-competitive play.<br><br>Ball and physical training refers to controlled activity with few participants (typically 2-4) moving in predictable paths | *AFL Victoria guidelines recommend night competition venues to be designed to 150 lux for spectator viewing<br><br>^Australian Standards lux levels<br><br>~professional level activity also requires case-by-case advice from AFL Victoria or relevant peak body (VFL/AFL teams) | | * As per Football Victoria Lighting Guide | *As per Netball Victoria Facilities Manual<br><br>^Netball Victoria guidelines advise that professional netball is undertaken under lights on outdoor courts rarely (if at all) at the present time | *Competition with few spectators may be played under 100 lux, while competition with large spectator galleries requires 200 lux (Australian Standard)<br><br>^as per international governing body guidelines | *no defined standard, Skate Australia advice is that 100 lux is sufficient. Previous projects and common industry practice outline 100 lux.<br><br>^high-level activity would require case-by-case advice from peak bodies | *As per BMX Australia Lighting Policy 2014<br><br>^high-level activity would require case-by-case advice from peak bodies | *Ultimate Victoria have advised that they have no defined standards and that the Australian Standard for football - all codes at the Amateur level is appropriate for the sport<br><br>^as per Association advice | *No defined standard, venue lighting would require case-by-case advice from peak bodies. | *All taken from Baseball Victoria Standards<br>^100 lux is for 'non-body contact training'.<br>~200 lux for match practice is for shared multi-purpose facilities, dedicated baseball venues are required to have at least amateur competition standard lighting (Class 111) for training purposes (300/200 lux) | No current standards are adopted, venue lighting requires case-by-case advice from peak bodies. | *All taken from Cricket Australia Facility Guidelines 2015)<br><br>^Ball and physical training in this context includes foundation level cricket (Junior Blast, In2Cricket).<br><br>~Junior and Senior cricket training is defined as match practice. |