



THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

STAGE A REPORT: PREPARE AND TAILOR THE APPROACH

SEPTEMBER 2018

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION

Three of the South West Herts group of local authorities (Three Rivers District Council, Dacorum Borough Council and Hertsmere Borough Council) have jointly commissioned an Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study which includes production of a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for each of the local authority areas. The PPS forms one part of the inter-related project that also includes an Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (ISFS) for each of the local authority areas.

The studies will provide the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions on future strategic planning and any investment priorities for outdoor sports facilities across each of the areas. It will also inform the preparation of the individual Local Plans and inform the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan.

Why the strategies are being developed

The rationale for undertaking this study is to update current levels of provision within the three local authorities across the public, private, education, voluntary and commercial sectors and to compare this with current and likely future levels of demand.

Its primary purpose is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of indoor and outdoor sports facilities meet local and community needs of existing and future residents. The strategies will be produced in accordance with national planning guidance and provide robust and objective justification for future sporting provision throughout the three areas.

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Paragraph 96 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Paragraphs 96 and 97 of the NPPF discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. The strategies will provide the evidence required to help protect provision to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future requirements.

The approach to developing the strategies

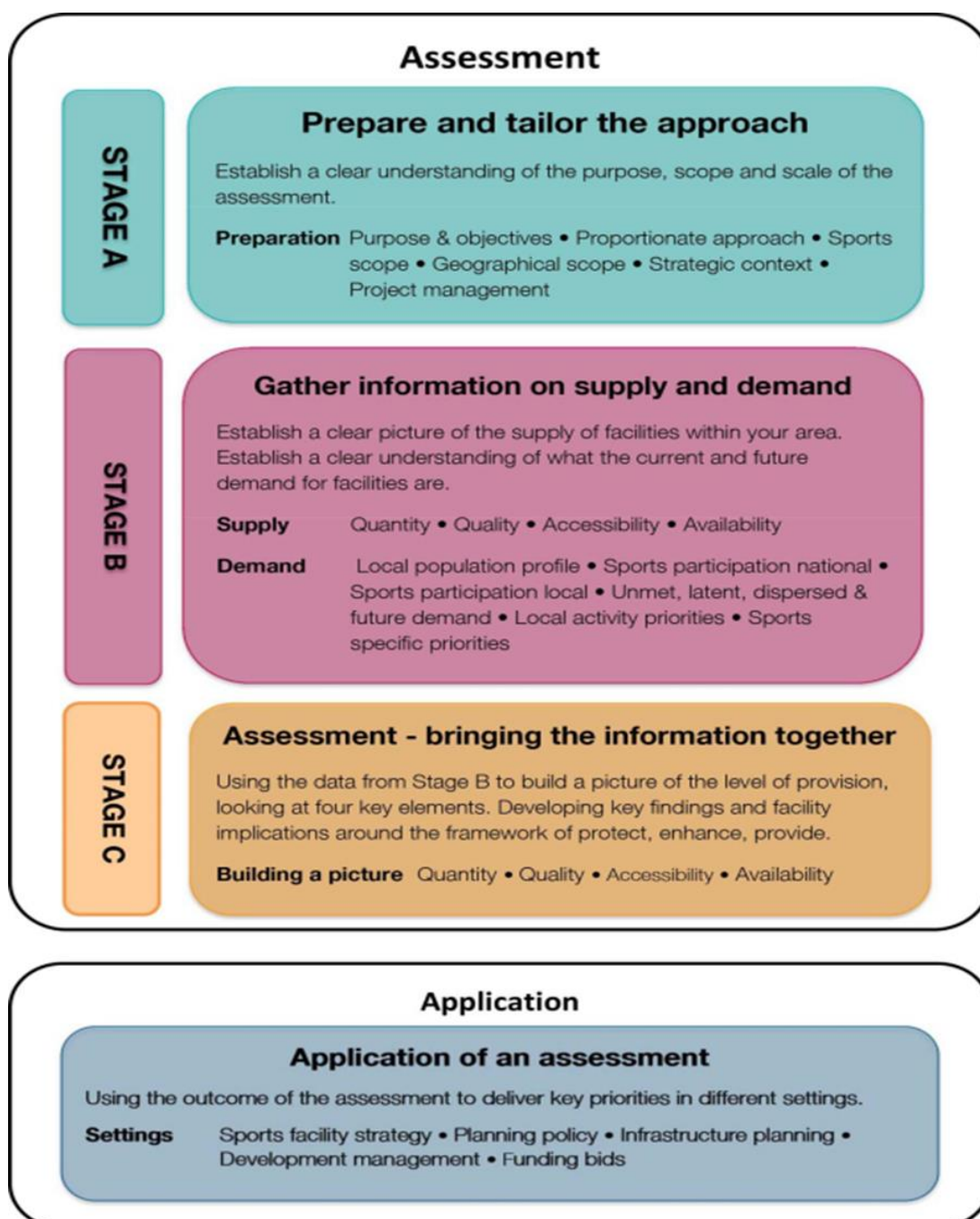
The playing pitch strategies will be prepared in accordance with Sport England’s PPS Guidance: An Approach to Developing and Delivering a PPS, published in October 2013 and updated in March 2014. It details a 13-step approach, as follows:

- ◀ **Stage A: Preparation**
 - ◀ Step 1: Clarify why the PPS is being developed
 - ◀ Step 2: Set up the management arrangements
 - ◀ Step 3: Tailor the approach
- ◀ **Stage B: Information Gathering**
 - ◀ Step 4: Develop an audit of playing pitches
 - ◀ Step 5: Develop a picture of demand
- ◀ **Stage C: Assessment**
 - ◀ Step 6: Understand how each site is being used
 - ◀ Step 7: Develop the current picture of provision
 - ◀ Step 8: Carry out scenario testing

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

- ◀ **Stage D: Key Findings & Issues**
 - ◀ Step 9: Identify key findings & issues
 - ◀ Step 10: Check and challenge key findings & issues
- ◀ **Stage E: Strategy Development & Implementation**
 - ◀ Step 11: Develop conclusions & recommendations
 - ◀ Step 12: Develop an action & implementation plan
 - ◀ Step 13: Adopt, monitor and review the PPS

The indoor sports facilities strategies (and some outdoor sports facilities not covered by the PPS Guidance) will be prepared in accordance with Sport England’s Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities. It has a similar staged approach as follows:



THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

Although this is a jointly commissioned project, please note that each local authority will receive its own playing pitch and indoor sports reports as part of Stage C and as part of Stage D.

The reports will be supported by comprehensive databases covering playing pitches with compatible GIS mapping. These will be supplied to the local authorities upon completion of the project (Stage E), with training offered so that the information can be kept up to date for ongoing monitoring purposes.

The PPS guidance checklist for this stage has been completed to date and appended to this report (Appendix one). The checklist provides details of how this project has been tailored and notes the progress to date.

Objectives

The objectives identified below specifically relate to the key steps of developing the studies and will help to ensure that a representative cross section of user views and opinions are collected and considered. They will also ensure that the assessment will satisfy national requirements and associated best practice:

- ◀ To consult with established user groups and key local stakeholders to identify current and likely future local needs.
- ◀ To achieve a minimum 75% response rate for all surveys distributed to sports clubs and schools, including face to face meetings.
- ◀ To consult with all relevant stakeholders and council departments as part of the assessment stages.
- ◀ To identify key issues from consulting with key clubs during face to face meetings.
- ◀ To undertake an objective assessment of the quantity, quality and accessibility of sports facilities and ancillary facilities across a range of sports, including those which are currently disused or lapsed, regardless of ownership or management.
- ◀ To take into account sports facilities provided in neighbouring local authorities that presently service the sporting and recreational needs of residents and vice versa in terms of cross-boundary demand issues.
- ◀ To identify future need arising from changes in participation, population growth and housing growth.
- ◀ To prepare scenario's that will help inform policy recommendations, action plan and strategy.

Local context

About Three Rivers

Three Rivers District is situated on the outer fringes of London and borders the London Boroughs of Hillingdon and Harrow, South Bucks and Chiltern District Councils, Dacorum, Hertsmere and Watford Borough Councils and St Albans City & District Councils. Three Rivers derives its name from the three main rivers which run through it: the River Chess in the west of the District, the River Gade in the north-east and the River Colne in the south-east. The three rivers meet in the town of Rickmansworth in the south of the District and then continue flowing south, as the River Colne, to join the River Thames. In addition to the three main rivers, the Grand Union Canal runs through the District beside the River Gade and then the lower River Colne.

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

Development Plan context

The Three Rivers Local Plan consists of the following documents:

- ◀ Core Strategy (Adopted October 2011)
- ◀ Development Management Policies Local Development Document (Adopted July 2013) and
- ◀ Site Allocations Local Development Document (Adopted November 2014).

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan that will replace the documents listed above. The new Local Plan will set out the vision and objectives for the District. It will reconsider housing and employment need and investigate ways of meeting that need. It will allocate sites for housing, employment and other forms of development and will set out development management policies for the District.

The Council's aim is to publish the Local Plan in December 2018. Timescales for the stages of production of the Local Plan are set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). The timetable is expected to be as follows:

- ◀ Issues and Options - June-July 2017
- ◀ Consultation – September/October 2018
- ◀ Publication – June 2019
- ◀ Submission – August 2019
- ◀ Adoption – Spring 2020

About Dacorum

Dacorum Borough covers 81 square miles (200 square kilometres) of West Hertfordshire extending almost from the outskirts of Watford, northwards to the Chilterns Hills. In 2017 it was home to about 153,000 people, making it the largest district in Hertfordshire. The majority of residents live in the principal town of Hemel Hempstead which will continue to be the focus for development and change within the borough. In addition to Hemel Hempstead, there are also two market towns (Berkhamsted and Tring) and a number of villages, all with their own distinctive character. All the towns are surrounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Development Plan Context

The Dacorum Local Plan consists of the following documents:

- ◀ Saved parts of the Dacorum Local Plan (Adopted April 2004)
- ◀ Core Strategy DPD (Adopted September 2013)
- ◀ Site Allocations DPD (Adopted July 2017)

Dacorum Borough Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan that will replace the documents listed above. This will provide a new planning framework for Dacorum up to 2036. The new Local Plan will set out the vision and objectives for the Borough. It will reconsider housing and employment need and investigate ways of meeting that need more fully. It will allocate sites for housing, employment and other forms of development and will set out development management policies for the Borough.

The anticipated Local Plan timetable is as follows:

- ◀ Publication – Summer 2019
- ◀ Submission – Spring 2020
- ◀ Adoption – Winter 2020

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

The Council has recently consulted on a draft (Issues & Options) Plan during November/December 2017.

About Hertsmere

Hertsmere is situated on the outer fringes of London and borders the London Boroughs of Barnet, Harrow and Enfield as well as Three Rivers, Watford, St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield Councils. The borough has a population of 103,000 and almost 80% of the area is designated Green Belt with the five principal settlements being Borehamwood (37,000), Bushey (28,000), Potters Bar (23,000), Radlett (8,000) and Shenley (4,000). Arsenal FC, Watford FC and Middlesex CCC all have training facilities in the Borough.

Development Plan Context

The Council's current planning policy framework comprises the Core Strategy (2013), Elstree Way Corridor Area Action Plan (2015) and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016). A review of the local plan was commenced in 2016 with an Issues and Options report published in late 2017 and a Potential Housing and Employment Sites report due to be published in the autumn of 2018.

South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP)

The Councils, together with St Albans and Watford Councils have also begun work on a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for the wider South West Hertfordshire area.

The JSP is intended to set the longer-term strategic framework and shared priorities within which future local plans will be prepared. A key aim will be to ensure that infrastructure such as transport, schools, health and utilities are properly co-ordinated and delivered alongside the need for new homes and jobs.

The Councils are working towards preparing the JSP by aligning expectations for the JSP initially within a Statement of Common Ground, which is expected to be published in the Summer of 2018.

Sport context

The National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) have sport specific drivers, as set out below:

National Governing Body (NGB)	Key drivers
The Football Association (FA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Working towards delivery of the FA Draft National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28) which identifies six areas of investment priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Improve 20,000 natural turf pitches. ◀ Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents' (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs). ◀ Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses. ◀ Support access to flexible indoor spaces. ◀ Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision. ◀ Support testing of technology and innovation. ◀ Working towards delivery of the FA: National Game Strategy (2018-2021) which has the following objects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

National Governing Body (NGB)	Key drivers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%. ◀ Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%. ◀ Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players. ◀ Production of Local Football Facility Plans over the next two years to 2020 for every local authority. The Hertfordshire authorities are due for LFFPs to be delivered in September 2019.
English Cricket Board (ECB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Working towards ECB Cricket Unleashed 5 Year Plan (2016-2021). ◀ Improve the quality of cricket pitches to achieve a greater capacity. ◀ Ensure there is access to education sites to accommodate cricket. ◀ Ensure there is enough provision for predicted growth. ◀ Enhancing opportunities for informal cricket e.g. Last Man Stands (LMS). ◀ To ensure sustainable assets which may be appropriate for community asset transfer.
England Hockey (EH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Working towards EH: A Nation Where Hockey Matters (2013) and the England Hockey Strategy. ◀ Ensure there is access to good quality artificial grass pitches (AGPs) and ancillary facilities both now and in the future. ◀ Ensure there is enough provision (including accessibility) for predicted growth to support priority clubs. ◀ Ensure access to school sites is maintained and secured through the appropriate community use agreements. ◀ Ensure any new hockey provision in the study area supports localised hockey demand and any hockey development programmes.
Rugby Football Union (RFU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Working towards the Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy. ◀ To protect and improve quality of pitches, ancillary facilities and floodlights as current and future demand requires. ◀ To improve access to training areas in order to preserve grass pitches for matches including provision of World Rugby 3G pitches. ◀ It is the intention of the RFU investment strategy into 3G pitches to invest in communities across the country where grass rugby pitches in the local community are over capacity and where the installation of a 3G pitch would support the growth of the game at the host site and for the local rugby partnership, including local rugby clubs and other organisations. ◀ The RFU is keen to work with partners such as councils and the FA to look at sites of mutual interest for future 3G pitch provision.
Rugby Football League (RFL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Working towards the RFL's Facilities Strategy which was published in 2011. ◀ To address improve pitch quality. ◀ To ensure there is access to good quality training and ancillary facilities. ◀ To seek opportunities to be less reliant upon public sector provision. ◀ To ensure sustainable assets which may be appropriate for community asset transfer. ◀ Delivery of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021'

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

National Governing Body (NGB)	Key drivers
	Legacy Programme.
Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Mission of the British Tennis Strategic Plan 2015-2018 is to 'Get more people playing tennis more often'. ▶ The LTA is working to improve accessibility to tennis courts in order to help deliver its strategy and is keen to encourage parks and clubs to make use of technology solutions, which includes online court bookings and fob access.
Bowls England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To ensure there is sustainable access to provision to satisfy demand. ▶ Ensure there is an appropriate maintenance in place. ▶ To protect and improve quality of greens and ancillary facilities as current and future demand requires.
England Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To grow and sustain participation levels in the sport. ▶ To improve the experiences of every participant in the sport. ▶ To improve performance levels and grow the next generation of senior athletic champions.
England Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Accelerate the participation growth. ▶ Increase the level of long-term participant retention through targeted programmes. ▶ Build a sustainable performance pathway and system built on the principles of purposeful practice and appropriate athlete-coach contact time. ▶ Develop sustainable revenue streams. ▶ Establish high standards of leadership and governance.
England Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reverse the decline in club membership. ▶ Increase the number of people who play golf at least once a week. ▶ Strengthen the talent development pathway from club to national level, leading to even more international success. ▶ Improve communications, governance and partnerships at all levels.

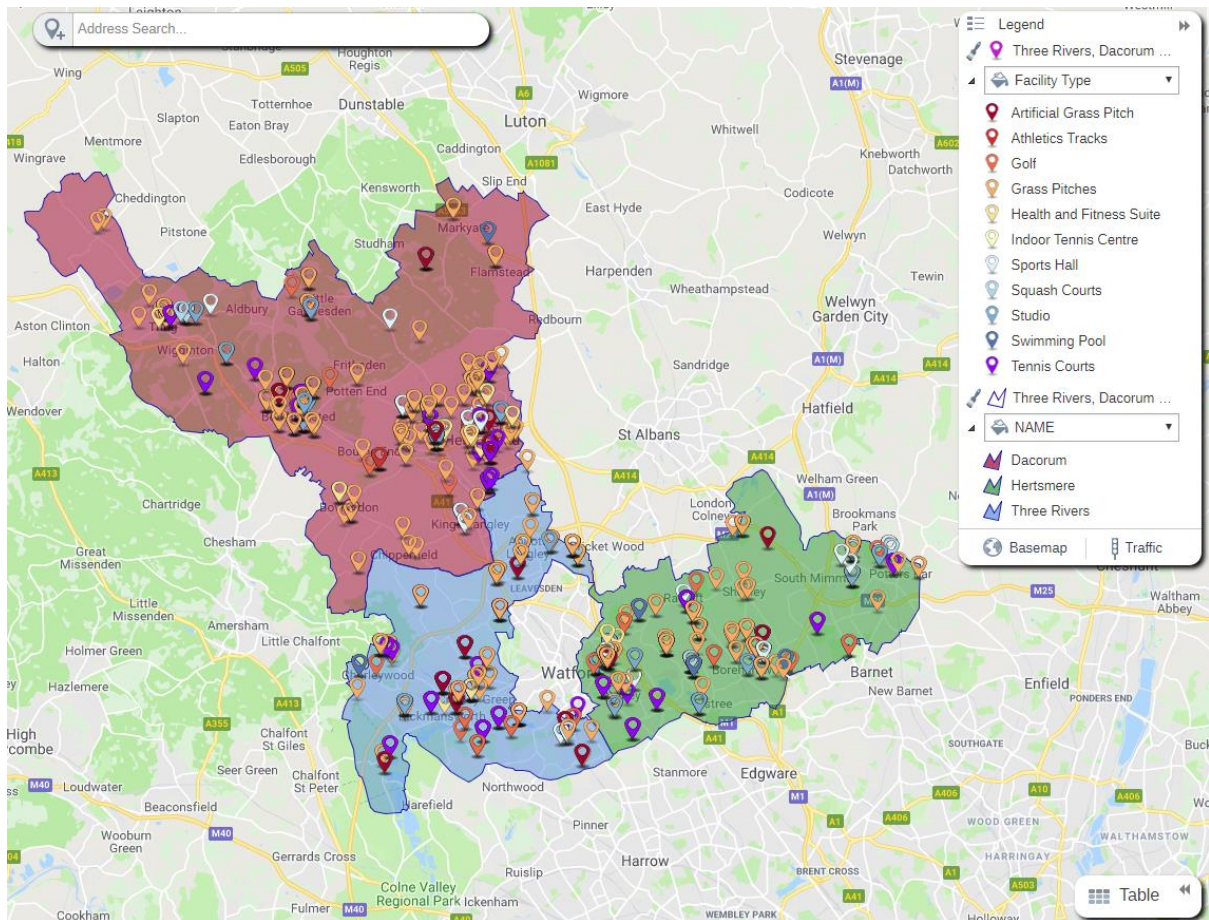
Study area

The study area will comprise of the whole of the administrative areas of Three Rivers, Dacorum and Hertsmere. As the project progresses, sub areas (otherwise known as analysis areas) may (as required) also be used within each local authority to allow for a more confined supply and demand analysis. These are generally based on ward boundaries and better reflect how the local authorities operate and how the relevant sports are played.

Furthermore, cross-boundary issues will be explored to determine the level of imported and exported demand. This applies to demand that migrates between the local authorities included and also demand that migrates to and from neighbouring local authorities such as Chilton, Watford and St Albans.

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

Below is a map showing the boundaries of the local authorities:



https://maps.esp.tl/maps/Three-Rivers%2C-Dacorum-and-Hertsmere-Active-Places/pages/map.jsp?geoMapId=533419&TENANT_ID=124419

Agreed scope

The following types of outdoor sports facilities have been identified by the councils for inclusion in the PPS:

- ◀ Football
- ◀ Rugby union
- ◀ Rugby league
- ◀ Hockey
- ◀ Cricket

The non-pitch outdoor sports facilities:

- ◀ Bowls
- ◀ Tennis
- ◀ Athletics (including road running)
- ◀ Netball
- ◀ Golf
- ◀ Others as appropriate i.e. water sports facilities, archery, cycling

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

Pitch sports (i.e. football, rugby union, rugby league, hockey and cricket) will be assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's PPS Guidance: An Approach to Developing and Delivering a PPS. In addition, any other grass sport pitches identified during the project will also be included. If applicable, this accounts for sports such as American football, Gaelic football and lacrosse.

Non-pitch sports (i.e. tennis, bowls, athletics, cycling, golf and parkour) will be assessed using Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) to ensure the process is compliant with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This requires a different methodology to assess supply and demand to that used for pitch sports and is generally less prescriptive.

The following types of indoor sports facilities have been identified by the councils for inclusion in the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy:

- ◀ Swimming
- ◀ Sports halls/studios
- ◀ Health and fitness facilities
- ◀ Gymnastics/trampoline
- ◀ Table tennis
- ◀ Bowls
- ◀ Basketball
- ◀ Badminton
- ◀ Tennis
- ◀ Netball
- ◀ Squash

Indoor sports will be assessed using Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) to ensure the process is compliant with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Management and delivery

The Project Team will comprise council officers including Claire May from Three Rivers District Council, Francis Whittaker from Dacorum Borough Council and Mark Silverman from Hertsmere Borough Council. This is in addition to Paul Hughes (PPS), Claire Fallon (PPS), Clare MacLeod (ISFS) and Rachel Burke (ISFS) from KKP who will be responsible for the day to day development of the work and ensuring tasks are completed in line with an agreed project plan.

Whilst the Project Team will cover elements of both the PPS and the ISFS, a dedicated steering group is necessary for the PPS to drive the Strategy forward during its development and also to ensure the delivery of its recommendations and actions. Membership of this should be balanced and representative of the different parties and key drivers behind the Strategy. It will comprise of Council officers from planning policy, leisure and education, Sport England, Herts Sports Partnership and the relevant NGBs.

Discussions and sign off will be welcomed by the Steering Group at the following key stages:

- ◀ Initial Steering Group Meeting (Stage A)
- ◀ Information gathering update (Stage B)
- ◀ Assessment Report (Stage C)
- ◀ Strategy development (Stage D)
- ◀ Strategy implementation (Stage E)

The Steering Group will be involved in, but not limited to, the following:

- ◀ Identifying who should be consulted in regards to supply and demand information.
- ◀ Helping to achieve club survey response rates.
- ◀ Establishing the approach to collecting quality data and agreeing quality ratings.
- ◀ Checking and challenging key findings within the Assessment Report.
- ◀ Defining the scenarios that need to be tested.

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

- ◀ Where unforeseen problems occur decide how to progress the PPS.
- ◀ Checking and challenging recommendations and actions within the Strategy.

Initially, steering group meetings are projected at the following times:

- ◀ Stage A – September 2018
- ◀ Stage B – November 2018
- ◀ Stage C – January 2019
- ◀ Stage D – March 2019

However, please note that due to the size of the Steering Group and covering three local authorities these meetings may be arranged to cover individual sports or groupings of sports covering summer and winter for example.

Project plan

A project plan has been developed to cover Stages A-D of the PPS methodology with the Indoor Sports Facilities running parallel and also due for completion in February 2019.

Given the need to cover summer sports assessments ideally by the end of September and for cricket by the end of August, Stage B is already underway with site assessments having been completed and consultation with clubs in progress. Stage for winter sports will commence in October with site assessments taking place throughout November.

For Stage C, the assessment reports will be produced by the end of December 2018 followed by finalisation of reports in January and development of Stage D with production of the strategies at the end of February.

See overleaf for a more detailed breakdown of the project plan.

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

APPENDIX ONE: STAGE A CHECKLIST

Stage A Checklist: Prepare and tailor the approach	Tick 	
	Yes	Requires Attention
Step 1: Prepare and tailor the approach		As set out in this report
1. Is it clear why the PPS is being developed (the drivers) and what it seeks to achieve (the benefits)?		
2. Has the level of support Sport England and each of the main pitch sport NGBs can provide to the particular project been agreed?		To be confirmed at initial steering group meeting
3. Has an initial scoping meeting been held including all relevant parties?		Between KKP and LAs on 22 August and Initial Steering Group 24 September
4. Has a steering group been established to lead the work and is it representative of the drivers behind the work and providers and users of pitches in the area?		With SE, NGBs and CSP confirmed
5. Has a partnership approach been developed and has it been confirmed what support, advice and/or resources each party can bring to the work?		To be confirmed at initial steering group meeting
6. Has the study area been defined and agreed by all relevant parties and have any known cross boundary issues been highlighted?		To be confirmed at initial steering group meeting
7. Has high level officer and political support been secured and are such relevant individuals part of the steering group?		LA officers will report back as appropriate
8. Has a vision for provision for the study area been developed alongside specific objectives and is there agreement on how far forward the PPS should look?		As presented in this report
9. Has a strong project team been established which is supported by adequate resources and has the necessary skills to develop the PPS?		KKP and LA officers
10. Has a realistic project plan been agreed by the steering group and the NGBs which sets out the overall timescale and when elements of the work will be undertaken?		Presented in this report
11. Has some thought been given to how the work will be structured and presented?		Individual reports for each authority
12. Have any features which make the study area different been identified along with the impact they may have on pitch provision and the approach to the PPS?		Range of providers including parishes
13. Has an understanding been developed of how the population participates in sport and what this may mean for pitch provision now and in the future?		In progress
14. Alongside the main pitch sports has the inclusion of other pitch sports been considered and is there agreement on which should be included in the PPS?		Non-pitch sports included
15. Is it clear how the sports to be included are governed in the area, what the league structure is and how this can help with developing the PPS?		In progress
16. Has an indication been provided on the potential nature of any sub areas, do they represent how the sports are played in the study area and will these be reviewed once relevant information is gathered during Stage B?		Analysis areas to be agreed during Stage B
17. Has a strong, locally specific and tailored brief been developed which builds		

THREE RIVERS, DACORUM AND HERTSMERE PLAYING PITCH & INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGIES

	in the work undertaken to prepare the approach to developing the PPS?		
18.	Have the project brief and project plan been signed off by the steering group?		To be achieved following this report
19.	If external consultancy support is to be procured is this to be done after Stage A is complete but before work on Stage B commences?		Stage B summer site visits carried out August 2018