

APPENDIX 1 – SPORT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations – Football

Grass Pitches

- Protect existing quantity of pitches until all shortfalls are met (unless replacement provision meets Sport England Playing Field Policy requirements).
- Sustain pitch quality and seek improvements where necessary, focusing on poor quality and overplayed sites.
- Look at reinstating unmarked pitches in order to help alleviate future shortfalls.
- Reconfigure pitches from adult to youth 11v11 provision at those sites which have spare capacity.
- Look to work with clubs with their strategic ambitions to develop football provision for example Blackley FC (Plant Hill Park), Kingsway Athletic FC (Cringle Fields) and Wythenshawe Amateurs FC (Hollyhedge Park).
- Work to accommodate future demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites not currently available for community use.
- Improve ancillary facilities where there is a clear need to do so.
- Ensure clubs playing within, or with aspirations to play within, the National League System can meet Ground Grading requirements to progress.
- Undertake PitchPower technical quality assessment of Council managed sites as part of the Football Foundation local authority pitch improvement pilot programme. Review PitchPower evidenced quality at Stage E and review and update PPOSS action plan where required.
- Support non-local authority providers to undertake PitchPower assessment and to access and implement measures to improve pitch quality.
- Update the Local Football Facility Plan following completion of the PPOSS.

3G pitches - Recommendations

- Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- Ensure the pitch at The Manchester College (Nicholls Community Football Centre) is suitably replaced by a new pitch at The Manchester College Openshaw Campus in mitigation for its loss.
- Look to refurbish the 3G pitches at end of life.
- Deliver new 3G pitch provision within the South Area, proposed at Hough End Playing Fields, to meet current and future shortfalls.
- Develop a co-ordinated approach, with Trafford Council, regarding the development of new 3G pitch provision to address cross boundary issues in the Wythenshawe Analysis Area. Suitable sites should include, but not be limited to, Wythenshawe Park. Furthermore, this should factor in potential refurbishment of the pitch at disused site Newall Green High School.
- Ensure any potential future 3G pitch aspirations are strategically assessed by the PPOSS Steering Group to safeguard the long-term viability of current provision.

- Explore increasing the utilisation of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches for rugby union training demand.
- Encourage more match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches to alleviate overuse of grass pitches where appropriate.
- Ensure all current and future providers have in place a sinking fund to ensure long-term sustainability, repairs, and resurfacing.
- Ensure all pitches remain on the relevant NGB registers and retested as required.
- Look to move youth 9v9 demand away from Council grass pitches and onto 3G pitches in a phased approach.
- Look to explore options to prevent the unsolicited conversion of artificial grass surfaces including, but not limited to, the removal of permitted development rights.
- Aim to strategically and sustainably transfer football demand from hockey suitable AGPs, particularly within the South Analysis Area, to 3G pitches to release capacity for the growth of hockey. This should not be done to the detriment of either sport.
- In line with Sport England guidance, Manchester City Council Planning Authority requires a planning application where any playing pitch surface is being changed from one type to another, such as sand based to 3G as this would constitute an engineering operation (there are some exceptions to this, but the advice would always be to check with the Local Planning Authority first.) This is to enable consideration of potential issues including those relating to surface drainage, noise, lighting, and to allow consultation to take place with Sport England to ensure that any impact on sports provision is assessed.
- In line with Manchester City Council guidelines where a playing pitch surface is being replaced with the same type i.e., sand based to sand based or 3G to 3G, this would be considered maintenance and no planning application would be required.
- Establish a PPOSS Task and Finish Group as part of the Stage E process in order to monitor and examine ongoing developments in more depth.
- The Stage E process should look to understand the following regarding supply and demand for 3G and AGPs including but not limited to; levels of community access and utilisation on all provision at the Armitage Sports Centre, re-evaluate the aspirations from Manchester Metropolitan University to develop hockey suitable provision at Platt Lane Sports Complex and understanding the impact of the conversion of the hockey suitable AGP to 3G at Armitage Sports Centre on the overall supply and demand for each sport.

Recommendations – Cricket

- Protect existing quantity of cricket squares.
- Improve all poor and standard quality grass squares to good quality through enhanced levels of maintenance.
- Sustain and maintain the provision of community available NTPs, particularly from the significant issue of vandalism, within parks sites to support the growing demand of midweek and recreational cricket.

- In the longer term, explore the feasibility of installing hybrid wickets on sites which are overplayed and have limited capacity, particularly at Didsbury Cricket Club and Whalley Range Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club.
- Work with clubs and grounds staff to review quality issues on squares to ensure appropriate quality is achieved/sustained.
- Work with clubs to improve the quality of their ancillary provision where there is a clear need to do so.
- Assist clubs in developing/refurbishing their training facilities where there is a clear need to do so.
- Continue to support the development of cricket with the engagement of ECB initiatives such as All Stars, Dynamos and Softball cricket.
- Ensure that any developments nearby to existing cricket sites do not prejudice the use of the provision (e.g. through ball-strike issues).

Recommendations – Rugby League

- Maintain access to RFL Community Standard 3G pitch at Belle Vue Sports Village and use of grass pitches at Painswick Park.
- As part of RFL location look establish use of grass infield area at Manchester Regional Arena for Rugby League use if required.
- Continue the developing of provision at Our League Life Nation Centre.
- Support the creation of a CUA at East Manchester Academy and look to increase community engagement.
- Look to develop further grass pitches, based on levels of demand, within the North and/or Central analysis area.

Recommendations – Rugby Union

- Existing quantity of rugby union pitches to be protected.
- Improve the levels of maintenance by either one or two increments at Didsbury Sports Ground, Fletcher Moss Park, North Manchester Rugby Club, Old Bedians Sports Club, Painswick Park and Hough End Playing Fields (pitches leased by Broughton Park RUFC).
- If maintenance can be enhanced at North Manchester Rugby Club, Old Bedians Sports Club and Hough End Playing Fields, as required, look to disperse demand more evenly across the pitches. This may require additional sports lighting.
- Explore the feasibility of improving drainage at Painswick Park and Fletcher Moss Park.
- Look to improve relevant accompanying ancillary provision as required.
- Seek to establish greater utilisation of current World Rugby compliant 3G pitch stock to transfer training demand away from overplayed grass pitches.
- Continue to develop strong relationships between rugby clubs and schools through curricular and extracurricular programmes in order to increase levels of mini and junior participation.
- Explore the feasibility of relocating a manhole cover on the disused pitch at Didsbury Sports Ground and reinstating the pitch in order to alleviate overplay.

Recommendations – Hockey

- Protect all current full-size hockey suitable AGPs and retain for hockey demand.
- Aim to relocate football demand, strategically and sustainably off hockey suitable AGPs, particularly within the South Analysis Area, in order to provide additional capacity for the growth of hockey. This should not be done to the detriment of either sport and should also be in the partnership with the FF/MFA.
- Work to ensure that community use is secured long term at Brantingham Road and Chorlton High School South.
- Look to refurbish the pitch at William Hulme Grammar School as a hockey suitable surface and secure long term community use.
- Once a pitch is refurbished ensure that a condition of funding is that an appropriate sinking fund is in put in place.
- To agree secured usage, in consultation with the Hockey User Group and relevant stakeholders, on the remaining hockey suitable AGPs at the Armitage Sports Centre to ensure there are suitable levels of capacity to meet demand.
- Establish a PPOSS Task and Finish Group as part of the Stage E process in order to monitor and examine on going developments in more depth.
- The Stage E process should look to understand the following regarding supply and demand for 3G and AGPs including but not limited to; levels of community access and utilisation on all provision at the Armitage Sports Centre, re-evaluate the aspirations from Manchester Metropolitan University to develop hockey suitable provision at Platts Lane Sports Complex and understanding the impact of the conversion of the hockey suitable AGP to 3G at Armitage Sports Centre on the overall supply and demand for each sport.
- In line with Manchester City Council guidelines where a playing pitch surface is being replaced with the same type i.e. sand based to sand based or 3G to 3G, this would be considered maintenance and no planning application would be required.

Recommendations – Tennis

- Retain and sustain quality of club courts for competitive play through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- Examine potential options on how to alleviate shortfalls at Whalley Range Cricket and Lawn Tennis Club including enhancing/developing on site provision.
- Monitor levels of play and play demand at Fallowfield Bowling & Tennis Club as part of the Stage E process to understand if additional provision is required.
- As a priority, look at establishing a bespoke package of investment between the Council and LTA to improve the quality and accessibility of identified park sites particularly within the North Analysis Area.
- If successful with the above recommendation monitor levels of demand and examine the feasibility of creating dedicated indoor tennis provision in partnership with established tennis clubs in the City.

- Where applicable, assist clubs in enhancing their ancillary provision (Whalley Range Lawn TC and Fallowfield Lawn TC).
- Consider the feasibility of operating LTA programmes such as Tennis for Kids, Tennis for Free and Great British Tennis Weekend in the City to attract new players to the sport.

Recommendations – Athletics

- As a priority look to refurbish the athletics tracks at Boggart Hole Clough and Wythenshawe Park and ensure the provision is protected to accommodate current and future athletics demand.
- Look to improve accompanying ancillary where appropriate.
- Consider the feasibility of operating additional athletic programmes such as Park Runs, Couch to 5K.

Recommendations – Golf

- Retain all current, in-use affiliated golf facilities.
- Sustain course quality and seek improvements where necessary through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- Support clubs in membership retention and potential growth.
- Encourage clubs and providers to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways for existing and new players.

Recommendations - Other Playing Pitch Sports and Outdoor Facilities

American football

- Current demand for American football in Manchester can be accommodated with no known requirement for additional access to provision.
- There is a need for development of the 3G pitch inside the speedway track at Belle Vue Sports Village to meet requirements and guidelines for the 2023 season.

Bowls

- Retain existing quantity of greens.
- Ensure that any potential development of greens considered as disused are mitigated in line with Sport England NPPF.
- Assist clubs, where possible, with any future ancillary provision improvements
- Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.

Lacrosse

- Current quantitative supply of lacrosse pitch provision is considered sufficient to meet both current and future demand for lacrosse match play.
- There is a need for access to better quality training facilities for community clubs in the City (i.e. 3G and AGP surfaces).

Gaelic sports

- Existing supply of Gaelic sports pitches in Manchester is insufficient to meet current and anticipated future demand for Gaelic sports.

- There are issues with quality, pitch specification and compliancy which require addressing in order to meet current, future and presently exported demand.

Softball and baseball

- Current supply of baseball and softball pitch provision is considered sufficient to meet both current and future demand for the sports.

Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGA) and Outdoor (3X3) Basketball

- There is an insufficient supply of MUGAs and basketball courts across the City. This predominately relates to poor quality.
- There is a need to develop a dedicated outdoor basketball venue suitable to host outdoor 3X3 competitions.