

Representer: Tring Sports Forum

Respondent reference: ID 489516

Hearing Session: Thursday 11 October 2012 14.00-17.00

Question: 8.1 Have the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities been appropriately assessed? Is the Council's evidence base (e.g. 2008 Open Space Study) sufficiently robust?

1. We would contend that the needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities have not been appropriately assessed and that the Council's evidence base (e.g. 2008 Open Space Study) is not sufficiently robust.

2. Our main argument turns around the inaccuracy of a key piece of evidence relied upon by Dacorum BC Strategic Planning in assessing leisure needs, a report delivered in October 2006 by a firm of consultants, Knight, Kavanagh and Page ("KKP"). This report provides the evidence base for a number of Dacorum's planning documents, including the 2008 Open Space Study. Our own survey evidence, submitted to Dacorum BC on 23 September 2010 (see Appendix A), clearly demonstrates that the KKP report vastly under-estimated playing numbers and the demand for sporting facilities in Tring, while significantly over-estimating the amount of sporting facilities available in the town.

Even if the Open Space Study figures were to be accepted, a deficiency of 8.9 hectares of leisure space exists in Tring. This is a substantial area, particularly since it is calculated on a lower figure of open space per 1000 population than Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted.

3. Responding to our original representations, Dacorum BC refuses to acknowledge the validity of our statistics or that they may cast doubt on its own evidence, simply re-affirming that "current technical information is considered to be adequate to support the Core Strategy" and that "the Council will consider when to update the sports facilities studies to support future planning documents".... (SUB 5, Report of Representations, Part 2, Table 2, Core Strategy Reference: Policy CS23).

The Council does however recognise that "the studies were completed at particular points in time, and some review or updating will be appropriate from time to time".... (SUB 5, Report of Representations, Part 2, Table 2, Core Strategy Reference: 15.18). In other words, the Council knows the evidence base on which the Core Strategy is founded requires revision but proposes to offer us no more than a vague promise of something in the future. It has had two years to react to the evidence supplied by us and should at least recognise that there is a significant need for additional space for sports facilities in Tring.

4. Conclusion

- Paragraph 15.18 (Delivering Leisure Needs) is "unsound".
- This paragraph fails the "justified" soundness criterion.
- The "deficiencies in leisure space" referred to in the paragraph have not been arrived at from a robust and credible evidence base.
- In order to be sound, the Core Strategy should acknowledge the need for increased sporting facilities in Tring and accept evidence provided by Tring Sports Forum, which uses data derived from a physical inspection of facilities and membership numbers obtained from the sports clubs.
- *Insert new paragraph after 15.18:* "Tring has a special need for space for sports facilities due to its high level of participation in sport and its acknowledged existing deficiency".

NB. Please see also our Statements dealing with Question 12.5

APPENDIX (A) - Summary

Comparison between DBC commissioned report...

Dacorom Sport & Recreation Study - Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy & Action Plan - by Knight, Kavanagh & Page Oct '06
and

Actual physical and club contact survey by Tring Sports Forum - April/May '10

Highlights -

Rugby - 50% less pitches than reported, playing numbers over 450 more than reported

Cricket - playing numbers almost 30% more than reported

Hockey - pitches only 40% of what was reported, playing numbers 30 more than reported

Mini/Junior football - playing numbers 58% more than reported

Tennis - 21% less courts, 39% more teams

Overall - over 750 more people playing than reported, 27% less playing facilities than reported

Available playing facilities summary (pitches and courts)									
	Senior Football	Junior Football	Mini Football	Senior Rugby	Junior Rugby	Mini Rugby	Cricket	Hockey	Tennis
DBC Report	11	4	n/a	6	4	n/a	5	5	14
Current Actual	8	5	0	3	2	n/a	5	2	11
Variance	-27%	+25%	n/a	-50%	-50%	n/a	no variance	-40%	-21%

Numbers of active teams - summary									
	Senior Football	Junior Football	Mini Football	Senior Rugby	Junior Rugby	Mini Rugby	Cricket	Hockey	Tennis
DBC Report	17	15	5	4	1	7	25	21	18
Current Actual	15	22	10	4	17	14	35	24	25
Variance %	-12%	+47%	+100%	no variance	+1700%	+100%	+29%	+13%	+39%
Variance player no's	-24	+84	+50	no variance	+352	+105	+120	+30	+42

NB Although there were increases in playing numbers in most sports between 2006 and 2010, the increase was nowhere near as large as the variances apparent above. Furthermore the numbers of facilities have hardly changed in this period. All of which would indicate that the commissioned report was wildly inaccurate and that DBC planners have been working with unreliable data.

APPENDIX (A) - DETAIL

Analysis of Tring Sports Facilities

Reviewing accuracy of:- Dacorum Sport & Recreation Study Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment and Strategy & Action Plan Oct. 06

Row No.

Reported '06

Known Actual '06

Current Actual Mar '10

Variance (reported v current actual)

Population - total

15659

12735

Variance (reported v current actual)

Area covered:
Tring Incl. Long Marston, Wigginton,
Aldbury & Cow Roast

Facilities/ Pitches	Reported figures for Pitches/Courts	Teams	Known Actual '06 Pitches	Teams	Current Actual Mar '10 Pitches	Teams	Variance (reported v current actual) Pitches	Teams
Facilities/ Pitches	KRP Report '06	Teams	Known Actual '06	Teams	Current Actual Mar '10	Teams	Variance (reported v current actual)	
Reported figures for	Pitches/Courts	Teams	Pitches	Teams	Pitches	Teams	Pitches	Teams
Football - Senior	11	17	9	8	8	15		
Football - Junior	4	15	5	22	2	10		
Football - Mini	0	5	2	10	0	10		
	15	37	16	16	16	47	7% more	27% more
Cricket - Senior	5	15	4	9	4	11		
Cricket - Junior	0	10	1	13	1	18		
Cricket - Mini	0	0	0	3	0	6		
	5	25	5	25	5	35	no change	40% more
Rugby - Senior	6	4	3	4	3	4		
Rugby - Junior	4	1	2	14	2	17		
Rugby - Mini	0	3 or 77	0	12	0	14		
	10	12	5	30	5	35	50% less	292% more
Hockey teams - senior	4	1	n/a	1	1	6		
Hockey teams - Junior	1	1	1	n/a	1	6		
Hockey pitches - grass	5	21	3	2	2	24	60% less	14% more
Hockey pitches - ATP	1	6	1	9	1	9		50% more
	14	18	11	25	11	25	22% less	39% more
Bowls - Greens	1	6	1	9	1	9		
Tennis	14	18	11	25	11	25	22% less	39% more
Netball	3	0	0	3	0	3	no change	>300%
Schools								
Tring School	2	2	0	2	2	2		
Football pitches senior	2	2	2	2	2	2		
Football pitches Junior	2	2	0	0	2	2		
Rugby pitches senior	2	2	2	2	2	2		
Rugby pitches Junior	1	1	1	1	0	0		
ATP	1	3	0	0	0	0		
Tennis courts	3	3	0	0	0	0		
Netball courts	3	3	0	0	0	0		
Primary schools								
Football pitches Junior	3	3	2	2	2	2		
Football pitches Mini	2	2	2	2	2	2		
Pitch provision summary								
Reported	Senior Football	Junior Fb	Sen Rugby	Jun Rugby	Cricket	Hockey		
	11	4	6	4	5	5		
Current Actual	8	5/8	3	2	5	2		
Teams summary								
Reported	Senior Football	Junior Fb	Mini Fb	Sen Rugby	Jun Rugby	Mini	Cricket	Hockey
	17	15	5	4	1	7	25	21
Current Actual	15	22	10	4	17	14	35	24

APPENDIX (A) - Notes

Notes part 1 - Pitches

15	Tring 11635	Tring Rural 1100	NB Dacorum SFDG Strategy document quotes Tring and villages at 16157
16			
17			
18			Pitches incl. Cow Roast x1, Icknield way x1, Miswell Lane x1, Mortimer Hill x1, Pendley x1 senior (T AFC), Pound Meadow x1, Aldbury x1, Wigginton x1
19			Pitches incl. Tring school x2 junior, TPCC x3, Pendley/Cow Lane x3 Junior
20			No playable pitches but appropriate space at Bishops Wood and Grove Schools may have been in use in 2006
21			
22			Includes TPCC x2, Long Marston x1, Aldbury x1, and no longer 1 at Cow Roast
23			Tring School Astro turf wicket in poor condition (school seeking to use TPCC)
24			
25			Tring RUFC Pendley/Cow Lane x3
26			Pitches incl Tring School x2 Junior
27			KKP Report contains conflicting data
28			
29			1 grass pitch still at Cow Roast used for Junior coaching only
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			incl Long Marston x2, Aldbury x1, TLTC x6, Pound meadow x2 (3 at Tring School no longer usable)
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37			Tring school 2x but not in safe playable condition
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48			2x not in safe playable condition
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51			Tring school x2
52			Space available at Grove and Bishops Wood - but not in use
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APPENDIX (A) - Notes (cont'd)

Notes Part 2 - Teams

- 15 Assumes 1 team for each village pitch, TAFC x 3, TCFC x2, 5 teams using public pitches (a.g. pub teams)
- 16 12 Tring Tornadoes teams - plus assumes 5 age group boys teams and 3 age group girls teams at Tring School plus 2 at Cornthorpe
- 17 Tornadoes 10 mini teams plus assumes 1 team per primary school
- 18
- 19 Incl. 6 mens (4 x Sat, 2 x Sun) at TPCC, 1 ladies at TPCC, 3 at LM, 1 at Aldbury
- 20 assumes 4 age group boys teams at Tring school, 9 at TPCC, 5 at LM,
- 21 assumes 6 at TPCC
- 22
- 23
- 24 11 at TRFC and 6 age group teams at Tring school
- 25 14 at TRFC
- 26
- 27 11 at Tring HC, 7 at Berko HC
- 28 3 at Tring school, 2 at Tring HC, assumes 1 at Berko HC
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33 9 leagues have teams entered by Tring Bowls club (i.e. not incl. friendlies)
- 34
- 35 Tring tennis senior x 9, plus assumes 6 Junior, Long Marston assumes 6 senior, Tring school assumes 2 each boys and girls
- 36
- 37 Assumes an average of 3 at Tring School - based on recent years activity