

Chapter 8: Sports Facilities

The DSIS Report

- 8.1 The DSIS Social Infrastructure report contains a section on the provision of sports facilities and the impact of the two development scenarios assessed. The report considered sports halls, swimming pools, health and fitness stations and synthetic turf pitches. These are the types of facilities for which the Sports Facility Calculator, provided by Sport England, has quantitative standards of provision. The report sets out the overall policy context, and for each type of sports facility it provides an assessment of existing provision and future demand. This is followed by a summary of the future infrastructure requirements arising from the two development scenarios and an estimate of the costs of provision.
- 8.2 Officers from Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and Sportspace fed into the DSIS report and their future plans for provision were considered in light of future requirements according to quantitative standards. The information in DSIS report is not repeated here, but is updated where circumstances have changed. This quantitative assessment has not been repeated for the level of development planned in the Core Strategy as it is considered that the outcomes in the DSIS remain an appropriate proxy.

Policy Update

- 8.3 The Council has completed a new sports and recreation study – Outdoor Leisure Facilities Assessment Report (2014) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2015) to replace that published in 2006. It concludes that there is a good supply of outdoor pitches for most sporting activities however these pitches are often associated with educational premises and are not subject to sufficient community use. There is pressure to convert a number of football pitches to smaller pitches to reflect the Football Associations model and push for junior size pitches. There are also some reported shortages around

cricket, rugby and hockey pitches and tennis courts. The full results of this study are incorporated into this update to the IDP – the highest priority actions identified within the Playing Pitch Strategy are replicated within the sports infrastructure schedule.

Infrastructure requirements not identified from the DSIS

- 8.4 The most pressing requirements for new sports facilities within the Borough are associated with the need to redevelopment and enhance facilities at Tring and Berkhamsted Sports Centres.
- 8.5 Tring Sports Centre is located on the site of Tring School and is used by the school for their educational needs. The existing facilities are in need of repair or rebuilding and do not meet the needs of the current population. As set out within the education chapter, the School has been approved funding under the governments Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP). The redevelopment of the school is expected to include the replacement of the existing sports hall and dry side changing facilities but will not extend to the replacement of the existing swimming pool and wet facilities. These facilities are covered by a dual use agreement between Dacorum Borough Council and the school and are managed by Dacorum Sports Trust (DST)/Sportspace. Dacorum Borough Council have allocated some £2.5m in the capital programme for improvements to Tring Sports Centre on the proviso that the existing dual use agreement is extended to allow community use of the new facilities outside school hours. The project is currently subject to a scoping exercise being undertaken by Sportspace with an expectation that any works will be carried out in conjunction with the schools wider rebuilding programme during 2016/17. The cost of replacing sports facilities on this site is estimated to be between £5m-£10m+ depending on the overall scope of the project.
- 8.6 Berkhamsted Sports Centre is in a poor state of repair and is in need of significant refurbishment. Dacorum Sports Trust/Sportspace do not have sufficient funding to refurbish the sport centre to current standards and are

considering funding the development of a new facility via the redevelopment of the existing site.

- 8.7 Planning permission was granted for the provision of a new sports hall at Ashlyns School, Berkhamsted during 2014 (4/02293/13/MFA) and this is subject to a planning condition regards community use. The works were completed in 2015 and provide a sports hall, fitness suite, dance studio and changing rooms for community use between 18:00 and 22:00 on week days during term time and between 09:00-22:00 (Mon-Fri) 09:00-20:00 (Sat) and 09:00-21:00 (Sun) This supplements the existing sports centre hall and improves the provision of indoor sports facilities accessible by the public in the town.
- 8.8 There have been similar dual use agreements required as part of planning permissions for the replacement of facilities at both Longdean school and at Kings Langley school.
- 8.9 Sportspace also operate Little Hay Golf Course and they have aspirations to deliver improvements to the course and functions facilities at the Golf Course. Permission was granted under 4/02206/13/FUL for the extension of the clubhouse to provide additional function facilities and works were implemented in 2015. These improvements do not address any demand for increased sporting activity but may support the long term use and viability of the course.
- 8.10 The Council is also in the process of considering planning application 4/00174/16/FUL for artificial grass pitches at Hemel Hempstead school. The project has been identified as a high priority by the Football Association and Hertfordshire County Football Association and benefits from some funding from these sources. This potentially meets the need for a full sized 3G pitch in Dacorum as identified in the Outdoor Leisure Facilities Study Assessment Report and Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan. These facilities would be subject to a dual use agreement.

Funding

- 8.11 Community sports facilities throughout the borough are provided by Dacorum Sports Trust (DST) Sportspace and through community use agreements for educational facilities. Sportspace has a number of contributory funding sources, although it is rare for any one source to entirely fund a project. Funding sources include various lottery funding pots, DBC, HCC and developer contributions.