



Spencer's Wood, Wokingham

Sport and Leisure Strategy

Final Report

March 2025

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**SPORTS FACILITY
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**SPORTS
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**PLAYING PITCH AND
OUTDOOR SPORT
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1.0 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 Richborough have prepared an outline planning application for residential development of up to 420 dwellings, an 80 bed care home, employment land, primary school, local centre, GP Surgery, sports facilities and ancillary provision, public open space, SANG provision and associated infrastructure. The development land is located at Spencer's Wood, in the parish of Shinfield and falls within the Wokingham Council area.
- 1.2 A development framework plan has been developed for the site and as set out, it is anticipated that this will include 420 dwellings, as well as significant infrastructure.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework notes that sport and recreation play a fundamental part in peoples' lives and the provision of the right facilities in the right place is in turn central to this. Directly referencing open space and sport, paragraph 103 of the NPPF states:

'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.'
- 1.4 Recognising the above, and in order to contribute positively to the development framework and inform decision making in relation to the site, Richborough Estates commissioned Sports Planning Consultants (SPC) to prepare an assessment of local need for sports facilities, to ensure the sports facilities and ancillary provision meets current and future needs. This assessment has evaluated the current sporting landscape alongside the impact of the new development and proposes a package of benefits that responds to local need and provides an exemplar development for sport and health.
- 1.5 This report sets out the evidence available in relation to supply and demand for indoor and outdoor sports facilities and evaluates how effectively the existing provision meets current and projected future demand. Specifically, it considers the impact that the proposed development will have and sets out options to create a sport and leisure strategy to address this.
- 1.6 Sport England have been consulted on the proposals and a response was received on 29th November 2024, which stated *'I have gone through your submission a couple of times , which seems fairly comprehensive. I have to admit there is a lot of the scheme I really like, as it does seem to have really embraced informal activity.'* Sport England also commented on the 3G proposal and questioned whether off-site investment may be more appropriate. Detailed comments have been built into this report and the Design and Access Statement (DAS) as appropriate.
- 1.7 The report does not deal with wider open space issues, which are subject to other studies. An amount of informal open space, will be delivered as part of the development framework, as set out overleaf. This will add to the recreational and health benefits that will be delivered as part of the scheme and have been developed with Active Design principles in mind.
- 1.8 Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of the development framework for the site. This has been prepared taking into account the findings of this report and the work to date.

Figure 1.1 –Concept Development Framework for Land at Spencer's Wood, Sinfield, Wokingham (Attached separately)



2.0 Policy Context

Introduction

- 2.1 This section considers the policy context for the proposed new development in relation to the potential provision of sport and leisure facilities.
- 2.2 The context is set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 103 (in Section 1) notes the importance of understanding the evidence base to determine what is required and then positively and proactively planning to ensure that the required infrastructure is provided.
- 2.3 This paper seeks to respond to this and to ensure that a strategy is in place to meet the sporting needs of the residents of the new development.

Government Sport Strategy 2023- Get Active – A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity,

- 2.4 The Government's Sport Strategy was produced under the previous Government. It seeks to build a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity. It sets out three core priorities specifically:
- Making the nation more active
 - Making sport and physical activity more inclusive
 - Moving towards a sustainable sector that is financially resilient and robust.
- 2.5 The provision of an effective network of facilities will be critical to achieving these objectives.

Towards an Active Nation – Sport England

- 2.6 At a national level, Sport England's strategy '*Uniting the Movement*' was published in January 2021. The strategy sets a vision of '*a nation of equal, inclusive and connected communities and a country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives*' and highlights that being active is one of the most effective and sustainable ways of achieving this.
- 2.7 The strategy seeks to ensure that sport and physical activity is to be recognised as essential to help overcome national challenges. It highlights that before the Covid 19 pandemic, record levels of activity were being achieved in England it is important to both get that momentum back, but also to reach people who have traditionally been excluded.
- 2.8 The strategy sets three objectives:
- Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity
 - Joining forces on five big issues
 - Creating the catalysts for change.
- 2.9 Within the Strategy, Sport England highlight five big issues that need to be addressed.

2.10 These include:

- Recover and reinvent – responding to the short, medium and long term challenges of Covid 19 and supporting organisations and people to return to activity that's stronger, more relevant and more inclusive than before
- Connecting communities – working in collaboration with communities - local people and organisations. This will include investing in clubs and charities and collaborating on local solutions, helping to deliver the outcomes that are needed through sport
- Positive experiences for children and young people – working to ensure that every child / young person experiences the enjoyment and benefits that being active can bring.
- Connecting with health and wellbeing – ensuring that sport and physical activity is at the heart of health and well-being both in terms of stopping health problems arising in the first place, but also supporting people to manage problems when they do arise.
- Active Environments – the strategy recognises a range of environments, from dedicated leisure facilities and playing fields, other community spaces (parks / open spaces / community centres and schools) through to the built environment (streets / housing estates etc). The strategy focuses upon making activity easier for everyone and focuses upon the protection and improvement of sport and leisure facilities (as well as the innovation of new designs and operational models), the creation of opportunities around community spaces and the creation of better places to live through an influence on design.

2.11 It is clear that traditional facilities, whilst still an important part of the provision jigsaw, are no longer the panacea. Over several years, there has been a trend of individual based activities that require little organisation or the development of skills. So, less team based indoor sports or individual sports and much more individual health and fitness activities, plus exercise and dance classes. This means that there is a need to think differently and look at more flexible forms of local provision to meet new participation needs.

2.12 To reflect these aims and objectives to promote the role of sport and physical activity in creating healthy and sustainable communities in 2015 Sport England published guidance on *Active Design (updated in 2023)*. Active Design is a key guidance document intended to unify health, design and planning agendas by providing guidance on how to create the right conditions and environments for individuals and communities to lead active and healthy lifestyles. It looks at opportunities to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through design and layout of the built environment. It now also embraces the requirements of Active Travel England.

2.13 The creation of healthy places, which embrace the principles of Active Design, is a key driver of Sport England and a concept that they strive to see in all residential developments.

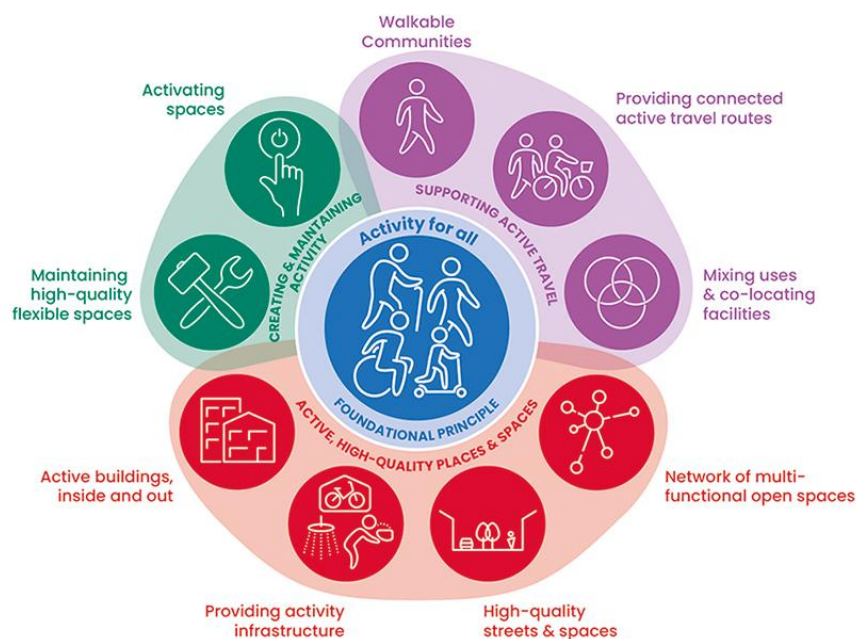
2.14 Sport England is a statutory consultee for any planning application that affects playing pitches. Their playing field policy also requires that they are consulted on developments of 300 houses or more. Consequently, Sport England will be an important consultee on this planning application, hence the pre-application request.

2.15 Sport England will wish to ensure that residents of the new development have access to 'traditional' sports facilities, but also that the development is designed in a way that promotes and facilitates physical activity as part of everyday life, ensuring the key principles are part of the development framework for the site. The detail of Active Design measures across the site will be addressed under separate cover.

2.16 Active Design takes a fresh look at the opportunities to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through the design and layout of our built environment to support a step change towards healthier and more active lifestyles. The creation of healthy places, which promote and enable participation in sport and physical activity, requires the collaborative input of many different partners through many disciplines including planning, design, transport and health, along with developers working with local communities.

- 2.17 The Principles of Active Design, set out below, are identified by drawing from urban design practice and practical examples to promote environments that offer individuals and communities the greatest potential to lead active and healthy lifestyles.
- 2.18 Sport England's Active Design looks at the opportunities to encourage sport and physical activity through the built environment in order to support healthier and more active lifestyles. It sets out ten principles that should be considered during urban design to promote environments that offer individuals and communities the greatest potential to lead active and healthy lifestyles.

Figure 2.1 – Active Design Principles



- 2.19 All these principles link to values associated with the Spencer's Wood proposals. The principles of, Co-location of Community Facilities, Connected Walking & Cycling Routes, Walking Communities, Network of multifunctional open space, and appropriate infra-structure are at the heart of the proposals. Sport England have commented positively on these aspects of the scheme.

Active Travel England

- 2.20 Active Travel England are also consulted on any development of over 150 dwellings. They help to deliver walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure on new development. In a similar vein to Sport England above, they seek to enable more people to make healthier, greener and cheaper travel choices.

Wokingham Council Community Vision

- 2.21 Wokingham Borough Council has approved an ambitious *Community Vision 2035* that has been produced by partners from across the borough. Representatives from local businesses, community organisations, the Youth Council, educational institutions, and healthcare worked together to gather community views and aspirations in order to agree the long-term vision. This collective effort ensures that the vision is holistic and reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of the entire community.

- 2.22 The Wokingham Community Vision 2035 aims to improve residents' quality of life through six ambitions:
- Living happy, healthy and independent lives; community wellbeing focuses on enhancing healthcare, recreational facilities, and support programs
 - Protecting and improving our places; sustainable development ensures environmentally sustainable growth via energy efficiency, recycling, and better public transport
 - Economic success that everyone is part of; economic growth supports local businesses and job creation, business hubs, and workforce development
 - Making it easy for people to access the things they want and need; through innovative services that improve public services through technology and initiatives
 - Building and maintaining great communities; inclusive communities promote social integration, affordable housing, and volunteerism
 - Providing fair opportunities for everyone; with education and lifelong learning provide excellent education and ongoing learning opportunities.

- 2.23 These ambitions aim to create, '*a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive Wokingham by 2035.*'

Wokingham Local Plan

- 2.24 Wokingham Borough Council are currently updating their Local Plan. Once adopted, this document will replace the current Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Local Plans.
- 2.25 Policy HC4 in the proposed submission plan consultation focuses in the first instance on the protection of existing open space, play space and sport and recreation facilities.
- 2.26 Points 3 to 6 consider the provision of new sports facilities. Those points within the policy that relate specifically to the provision of sport and recreation facilities are:
- Development proposals for open space, sport and recreation and play facilities will be encouraged and supported, in line with other policies in the Local Plan Update. New open space, sports, recreation and play facilities should be well related to the communities they serve and should, where possible, promote their dual use by being co-located with other community uses, such as schools
 - Development proposals should contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation in line with a series of standards set out in the policy document. For outdoor sport, a standard of 1.44ha per 1000 population is set. Standards are also set for the provision of sports hall, swimming pool and activity halls
 - Policy notes that open space, sport and recreation facilities should be provided on site. Where this is not possible, financial contributions towards off site provision will be required
 - Clear arrangements for management and maintenance of facilities should be provided as part of the application.
- 2.27 Text relating to the policy confirms that recent and up to date Council studies should be used to inform development proposals.
- 2.28 Policy C3 also sets out the Council's requirement that development proposals must promote sustainable transport by prioritising active travel, including walking, wheeling and cycling.

- 2.29 The above therefore suggests that on site provision will be required unless demonstrated that this is not possible, and that the Council will be looking for standards equivalent to 1.44ha per 1000 population to be achieved.
- 2.30 The proposed submission plan however also refers to the open space, sports and recreation strategy, or any successor document. It references that these studies should be used by applicants to inform their development proposals.
- 2.31 Until the new Local Plan is adopted, planning applications will be measured against the existing Local Plan. This comprises a series of policy and strategy documents.

Wokingham Core Strategy (2010 – 2026)

- 2.32 The Core Strategy forms part of the Development Plan, and sets out the vision for how the borough will develop in the period to 2026.
- 2.33 This document states that access to suitable sport, leisure and cultural facilities (in addition to appropriate open spaces) will be central to the achievement of the vision of the core strategy.
- 2.34 It notes that:

'New development is likely to create additional demand for facilities such as sports pitches, play areas, swimming pools, libraries and for access to borough-wide resources such as the country parks. Where local provision of facilities cannot be accommodated, contributions will be used to support investment in larger facilities or, in the case of country parks, facilities which cater for a borough-wide need.'

- 2.35 There are no policies in the core strategy that directly deal with sports facility provision, how several policies reference facilities for sport, specifically:
- CP2 – creating inclusive communities – this seeks to ensure that new development contributes towards the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities (which include the provision of community facilities)
 - CP3 – General principles of development – suggests that planning permission will be granted for proposals that provide a framework of open space in secure community use achieving at least 4.65ha per 1000 population, together with recreational sporting facilities in addition to private amenity space. Developments must also contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities. Appendix 4 confirms that a standard of 1.67ha per 1000 population is set in relation to playing pitches.
 - CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements – confirms that planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure, services, community and other facilities for the development are agreed.

Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery (2014)

- 2.36 The Managing Development Delivery is also part of the Development Plan. This sets out the detailed policies that the Council will use to manage development.
- 2.37 Policy TB08 provides detail to support policy CP3 of the Core Strategy and sets out the standards relating to open space, sport and recreation facilities for residential development. Paragraph 2 confirms that it is expected that these are delivered on site.
- 2.38 For outdoor sport, the policy sets a standard of 1.66ha per 1000 population. Paragraph 3.34 confirms that new development can provide opportunities to provide, protect and enhance new and existing public open space (including cemeteries/burial grounds), indoor and outdoor play, sport and recreational facilities either through on site measures or by contributing to off-site facilities. Paragraph 3.37 clarifies that off-site contributions will be accepted where on site provision cannot be physically or appropriately accommodated.

Shinfield Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.39 The Shinfield neighbourhood plan seeks to shape new development in the area. It was adopted in 2017 and covers the period from 2016 – 2026.
- 2.40 Sports and community provision is a key component of the strategy document. Policies and recommendations are based on a comprehensive audit exercise that was undertaken in 2013 to evaluate current and projected future sporting needs for the Parish.
- 2.41 Policy 9 seeks to protect existing community assets. Policy 10 requires that:
- 'All qualifying developments shall contribute towards formal and informal sport and leisure activities and recreation and social facilities within the parish, either through the provision of on-site or off-site facilities or through financial contributions towards sports, leisure and recreation projects, where they are required to mitigate the impact of the development.'*
- 2.42 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore endorses the importance of the provision of sport and leisure facilities that meet the needs of local communities, and emphasises the requirement on new development to contribute to the provision of these facilities.

Summary

- 2.43 Adopted local planning policy therefore explicitly requires consideration of on-site indoor and outdoor sports facilities in new development, it is clear that there is a recognition of the benefits that such facilities can bring. Where on site provision is not possible, or deemed to be required, off site contributions will be required.
- 2.44 Policy TB08 (Management Development Delivery Plan) confirms this, requiring on site provision in line with a series of local standards.
- 2.45 Policy in the new Local Plan sets out a similar requirement, and maintains the use of a local standard per 1,000 population (*albeit slightly lower than the standard in the existing Local Plan*). It should be noted however that the submission plan also reports that relevant studies should be used by applicants to inform their development proposals, and additional up to date guidance on sports facility provision across Wokingham Borough should therefore also be considered. This would therefore appear to supersede the standards approach.
- 2.46 The creation of this sports strategy therefore ensures that the requirements of these policies are addressed, and that proactive planning for sport is central to the creation of the development.

3.0 Approach

Introduction

3.1 The assessment has been prepared using the following approach:

- Review of local and national policy to understand the key requirements
- Review and update of the existing evidence base for sport and leisure, particularly the Wokingham Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy
- Interpretation of additional data provided during the process:
 - Sport England New Development and Playing Fields Calculator. *(this will be subject to formal verification by Sport England but it provides an indication of potential on and off-site issues to aid discussions around options).*

3.2 We have also benefitted from consultations with the following:

- Andy Glencross, Head of Environmental Services, Wokingham Borough Council
- Bruce Winton, Chief Executive and Clerk, Shinfield Parish Council and Ian Clark, Head of Facility Committee
- Jonathon Wood, Berks and Bucks FA
- Harry Ash, Delivery Manager LTA
- Debbie Spindlow, Netball Development Officer, Berkshire and South Team Leader.

On-going discussions with Sport England and the NGBs, will help to further refine the proposals further as the scheme evolves.

3.3 The above consultations have helped to update the existing position statement, as well as to understand key issues and priorities for each sport in 2024.

3.4 Specifically, this assessment seeks to assess:

- The adequacy of existing provision to meet demand and the opportunities for Spencer's Wood
- The additional demand that will arise as a result of the proposed development
- The adequacy of the existing infrastructure to meet the demand that will be generated by the new development.

3.5 It translates the findings of the above assessment in order to provide evidence to support the development plan for the site and to highlight where off site investment may be required, as well as where on site provision may be of benefit. It considers the requirements that arise directly from the demand generated by the proposed development, as well as opportunities to add value to the local community.

3.6 The assessment draws upon the existing evidence base for sport and recreation in Wokingham Borough. Specifically, this evidence base includes:

- Wokingham Borough Leisure Strategy (2021-2025)
- Wokingham Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Assessment Report and Action Plan (2023).

3.7 The PPS has not yet been formally approved by the Council, it does however represent an up-to-date and robust evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. As such, it is important to ensure that proposals at Spencer's Wood are in line with the findings and priorities set out in the PPS.

- 3.8 To supplement the review of the existing evidence base, we have also sought to qualify the findings with relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport (on-going) in order to understand what has changed, and whether the findings of the 2023 documents remain representative of the position today. This future proofs the findings of this sports strategy.
- 3.9 Sections 4 and 5 of this report evaluate the implications of the evidence base documents for Spencer's Wood, as well as set out the key messages arising from the additional information supplied and the findings of consultations. They provide evidence to enable us to determine:
- Whether there are any requirements for facilities on site
 - The need for any contributions towards off site provision.
- 3.10 Section 4 evaluates the current position for indoor sport and leisure facilities, whilst section 5 reviews supply and demand for outdoor sports facilities.
- 3.11 Section 6 brings all of the analysis together. It considers the demand that will be generated by the proposed new development and then evaluates whether the likely increase in demand can be met by the existing infrastructure, drawing on the findings of Sections 4 and 5. It summarises the options, and the preferred option that has been built into the development framework.

4.0 Indoor Sports Facilities

Understanding the Current Position

4.1 This section considers the evidence available in relation to indoor sports facilities and uses it to provide a statement on the current position. This is then used to determine whether the demand generated by the proposed development can be met, whether on-site provision is required and the implications for the sports strategy in terms of the proposed development.

4.2 There is no detailed evidence base for indoor / built facilities for Wokingham. *The Wokingham Borough Leisure Strategy (2021-2025)* deals with these issues at a high level.

4.3 The Vision set out in the Leisure Strategy is:

'Wokingham Borough is renowned as one of the most 'active' and best places to live in the whole of the UK. A place where everyone can easily access high quality indoor and outdoor spaces for active leisure pursuits and do so in increasing numbers; decreasing health inequalities and enhancing health & wellbeing across all our communities and particularly benefiting the more vulnerable.'

4.4 The key priorities and outcomes in the Leisure Strategy include:

- Promoting Health and Wellbeing (General)
- Raising participation and reducing levels of inactivity (targeted)
- **Maintaining and extending accessibility to indoor leisure facilities**
- Maintaining and extending accessibility to outdoor spaces
- Fostering enjoyment and sporting excellence (pathways)
- Raising levels of active travel
- Ensuring financial sustainability.

4.5 In terms of **indoor leisure facilities** the Leisure Strategy aims to:

- Provide high quality facilities maintained to a high standard.
- Flexible new and established facilities that meet growing and changing demand over time
- Increasing footfall and levels of use
- Identifying and addressing barriers to accessing activity.

4.6 In order to achieve these aims the Strategy set out £52.9m worth of investment plans in leisure, over the 5-year period, including:

- £14.5m investment in Bulmershe Leisure Centre
- £4.9m investment in Ryeish Green and Arborfield Leisure facilities
- £2.2m investment in Loddon Valley Leisure Centre refurbishment
- £23m investment in Carnival Pool Leisure Centre.

- 4.7 By and large the investment plans have been realised and Wokingham now boasts a modern *fit for purpose* leisure portfolio. Wokingham Leisure Centre, formerly known as Carnival Pool, was opened in 2022 and includes top of the range facilities, including a state of the art swimming pool, gym, workout classes and children's activities. The Ryeish Green Sports Hub has also been realised, featuring a gym, sports halls and outdoor 3G pitches. Bulmershe now also has a new leisure centre in Woodley, offering a large state of the art gym, main pool, teaching pool with movable floor, 4 court sports hall, 2 workout studios, and a group cycling studio.
- 4.8 Given the significant indoor leisure provision investment, consultation with *Andy Glencross, Head of Environmental Services at Wokingham Borough Council* revealed there was no anticipated requirement for on-site indoor sports facility provision as part of the Spencer's Wood development, as there were no significant gaps in provision and capacity within the existing infrastructure to meet the impacts of growth from the development.
- 4.9 In order to understand this we have applied both the local plan standards and the Sport England facility calculator to evidence the consultation findings. Table 4.1 (below) applies the existing and emerging local plan standards for indoor sports facilities to the Spencer's Wood site.

Table 4.1 – Indoor sports facilities standards

Document	Policy	Policy Requirement	Requirement for 420 dwellings	Comments
Existing Policy				
DPD	TB08 Indoor Facilities – Sports halls / Health and Fitness / Indoor Bowls	- 65.43m2 per 1000 population	67.52m2	- Small requirement across a range of indoor provision e.g. modern day sports hall = 690m2 (less than 10%) - Off-site investment (in-line with SFC, see below)
DPD	TB08 Indoor Facilities – Swimming Pools	8.26m2 per 1000 population	8.52m2	- Very small requirement not sufficient for on-site provision - Less than 10% of a 4-lane 25m pool - Off-site investment (in-line with SFC, see below)
DPD	TB08 Indoor Facilities - Activity Halls	41.31m2 per 1000	42.63m2	- Small requirement a third of an activity hall - Off-site investment (in-line with SFC, see below)
Emerging Policy				
Submission Local Plan	HC4 Indoor Sports Facilities	Same as TB08	Requirements same as existing DPD (TB08)	As above

- 4.10 Application of the local plan standards confirms the consultation findings that on-site provision is not required. Instead off-site investment is proposed in-line with the Sport England sports facility calculator. This is set out below.

Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)

- 4.11 The SFC covers Swimming pools, Sports halls, Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and Indoor bowls centres. It helps to quantify the demand for these facilities, providing an understanding of the additional demand that the population is likely to generate. It does not take into account the existing supply of facilities – this means that the results must then be considered in the context of the findings set out previously, the adequacy of current provision.
- 4.12 The calculator can also be used to inform decision making in relation to the cost of off-site contributions (where these are identified as being required) as well as to understand where on site provision is required. This will be part of the negotiation process in relation to S106 agreements.
- 4.13 The results of the application of the Sports Facility Calculator for the proposed new development are set out below, it demonstrates that the new development will generate relatively little demand in terms of indoor sports facilities. This accords with the local plan findings. It is based upon the provision of 420 new dwellings, 2.3 multiplier giving 989 people.

Swimming Pools

- 10.87 sqm
- 0.2 lanes
- 0.05 pools
- **£252,171 off-site contribution**

Sports Halls

- 0.28 courts
- 0.07 halls
- **£226,830 off-site contribution**

Indoor Bowls

- £7,536 off-site contribution

The findings of the SFC accord with the local plan standards, and reiterate there is no need for on-site provision. They provide a *starting point* for negotiating *off-site* contributions.

- 4.14 The SFC therefore helps to quantify the level of off-site investment. At present there is no up to date Built Facility Strategy (BFS), with which to identify projects for investment, where qualitative issues have been identified. Consultation has suggested that a review of the BFS is planned and it is anticipated this will be produced and should be used as the tool to identify where off-site investment in indoor sports facilities, in-line with the SFC findings should be targeted.

Summary

- 4.15 There is good existing infrastructure with no gaps and sufficient capacity to meet the impacts of the Spencer's Wood development, which as set out are minimal. The finding so the SFC accord with the local plan standards, and reiterate there is no need for on-site provision. They provide a starting point for negotiating any potential off-site contributions.

- 4.16 It is therefore clear that there is no evidence of a requirement for additional indoor facilities as part of the on-site requirements at Spencer's Wood, although the demand that will be generated by new development is recognised. On the whole, it is considered that both current and projected future use can be sustained by the existing infrastructure.
- 4.17 Instead, focus should be on maintaining the quality and capacity of existing provision, and maximising opportunities for participation through effective programming, as set out in the Leisure Strategy.
- 4.18 The SFC therefore helps to quantify the level of off-site investment. At present there is no up to date Built Facility Strategy (BFS), with which to identify projects for investment, where qualitative issues have been identified. Consultation has suggested that a review of the BFS is planned and it is anticipated this will be produced and should be used as the tool to identify where off-site investment in indoor sports facilities, in-line with the SFC findings should be targeted.
- 4.19 Section 5 considers the position relating to outdoor sports.

5.0 Outdoor Sports Facilities

Introduction

- 5.1 This section considers the evidence provided in relation to outdoor sports facilities. It sets out the key findings of the Playing Pitch Assessment and Action Plan (PPS), and provides an updated position based on consultation undertaken with Wokingham Borough Council, Shinfield Parish Council and some National Governing Bodies (NGBs).
- 5.2 Table 5.1 summarises the key issues identified in the PPS (2023) and the facility recommendations that were set for each sport, as well as any site specific recommendations within the vicinity of Spencer's Wood, the Shinfield North and Shinfield South wards, which are located in the Urban West and Southern Areas. As the PPS is robust and up-to-date it provides a good evidence base on which to develop issues and options.
- 5.3 The Wokingham Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is an assessment of the supply and demand for sports pitches and how that may change over time from the present day to 2040. It has been undertaken in line with Sport's England's '*Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering playing pitch provision*', which included comprehensive consultation with National Governing Bodies (NGB) and sports clubs.
- 5.4 The PPS will be the key document that can be used by all stakeholders, including the council, to focus and prioritise investment in sports provision to both existing residents and to communities that will form as a result of development, including sites like Spencer's Wood, in this context it is important.
- 5.5 The main conclusions are:
- The PPS confirmed that football is by far the most popular sport within Wokingham Borough with 70 football clubs having 654 teams between them. Cricket is the next most popular sport with 20 cricket clubs having 192 teams. Rugby and Hockey currently only have 4 and 3 clubs respectively having 46 and 93 teams respectively
 - The likely need for all playing pitch types appear to be driven by demographic change with projections suggesting a 15% reduction in numbers of under 16 years of age (under sixteens) and a small rise in the number of adults between now and 2040 despite the projected increase in the number of households in this period
 - It is worth noting that participation levels remain lower for women and girls both within Wokingham borough and nationally, despite some high-profile campaigns (such as This Girl Can). The reasons for this inequality are complex but ensuring that our outdoor sports facilities have adequate facilities for women and girls is an essential part of addressing this issue.

Football

- The PPS shows that the most significant demand is for 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) to allow all teams within the borough to meet the Football Associations aspiration for each team to have at least 1hr/week of training. There are currently 654 football teams in Wokingham Borough meaning there is currently a requirement for 17 full size 3G AGPs. Given that there are already 8 full size 3G AGPs and two smaller sized 3G AGPs within the borough, the current shortfall is 8 3G AGPs. Due to the expected demographic change, this need remains unchanged in 2040 rather than increasing
- A modest demand for grass pitches, there being a small shortfall of around 9 pitches for adults and sufficient provision for under sixteens. Whilst the shortfall for adult pitches remains in 2040, there is predicted to be a surplus of under sixteens pitches by this date.

Cricket

- The PPS shows that there is currently very limited spare capacity for additional cricket teams even with a significant number of sites overplayed. However there are 3 new cricket facility either under construction or planned within the borough (two in Shinfield parish and one in Arborfield and Newlands parish) that should meet any additional needs and reduce levels of overplay. It is also worth noting that the demand for adult cricket shows a very modest increase by 2040, with demand for under sixteens forecast to reduce substantially.

Hockey

- Whilst the PPS shows that there is currently a small demand for an additional hockey AGP, the action plan suggests could be met through freeing up space on the dedicated hockey sites by migrating some football training sessions to the new facilities within the borough. It should be noted that the demand for hockey appears to be reduced in 2040, especially with regards to under sixteens.

Rugby

- The PPS currently shows a small demand for circa 6 grass rugby pitches across the borough which remains unchanged in 2040. The action plan suggests that this need could be met through improvements to the condition of existing grass pitches rather than the delivery of new facilities.

Football Action Plan

- The key need identified is for an additional 8 Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) to meet the requirements of borough football teams. Whilst there are needs identified for the other sports these are modest by comparison
- The PPS action plan recommends that the majority of the need for new AGPs should be delivered through a number of key development funded projects such as Grays Fruit Farm, Hogwood Farm and potentially the Hall Farm strategic development proposed
- The PPS action plan identifies the following suggested delivery strategy for the key football need for 8 additional AGPs and up to 9 adult grass pitches:
 - 3 x 3G AGPs and 4 adult grass pitches at Gray's Fruit Farm, adjacent to the South Wokingham strategic development location
 - 1 x 3G AGPs and 1 adult grass pitch at Hogwood Farm as part of the Arborfield Garrison strategic development location
 - 1 x 3G AGPs at Woodley most likely on an existing grass pitch – a feasibility study is required in order to identify an acceptable sites
 - 1 x 3G AGPs at Earley most likely on an existing grass pitch – a feasibility study is required in order to identify an acceptable sites
 - 2 x 3G AGPs and 4 adult grass pitches as part of the potential Hall Farm strategic development location.
- The Action Plan notes that it is important to note that that the suggestion of additional pitches in the Woodley and Earley area are subject to suitable sites being available and that further investigation and engagement is required to consider achievability. In this context, it is accepted that not all elements of the strategy will be delivered and given the 3G deficiencies that other opportunities should be considered as they arise. This is important in the context of Spencer's Wood and a potential on-site 3G.

Table 5.1 – Understanding the Current Position – Outdoor Sports Facilities

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Recommendations	Strategy	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
Football	- In total there are currently 70 football clubs playing in Wokingham Borough who between them have 654 teams. A total 23 clubs responded to the consultation which equates to 540 teams and a team response rate of 81%. The Berkshire Youth Development League were also consulted with. There are also 42 Wokingham Borough teams who are displaced outside of the Borough - There are currently 72 sites in the Borough that provide grass football pitches, this equates to 202 pitches in total. There are 152 pitches that are available for community use across 48 sites - Security of tenure is deemed to be an issue at 11 sites used by football clubs in the Brough. These are predominantly education sites, 9 in total. Goals (Reading) which is used by the Berkshire Youth Development League is also deemed to be unsecured - The majority of football pitches in the Borough were assessed as standard, 76% (112) in total. 16% (24) of pitches were assessed as poor and 8% (11) of pitches were assessed as good - There are currently 12 sites in the Borough containing ancillary provision rated as good. There are 13 sites with ancillary provision assessed as standard and 5 as poor. Sites containing poor ancillary provision are, Bearwood Recreation Ground, Hatch Ride Primary School, Laurel Park, Millworth Lane Recreation Ground and Stanlake Meadow. There are also 18 sites that don't have ancillary provision - There are currently 556 male teams playing in the Borough. The Urban Western Area currently accounts for 44% of male team demand in the Borough. This is largely due to the Berkshire Youth Development League having three of its central venues operating in this area at Goals (Reading), Woodford Park Leisure Centre and Sol Joel Park. There are also 98 female teams playing in the Borough. The Northern Area currently accounts for 44% of all female team demand 64 teams are accessing football pitch provision in the Borough who come from outside the study area. The majority of demand (53%) comes from West Berkshire, this equates to 34 teams. There are 27 teams from Reading (42%) and 3 teams (5%) from Bracknell. This is largely due to teams accessing central venue league provision in the Berkshire Youth Development. This equates to 52 teams at present (81%), 47 of these teams are play mini soccer (73%) 47 Wokingham Borough teams are accessing pitch provision outside of the Borough. The majority of this demand (48%) is being exported to Reading, this equates to 23	- Look at improving pitch quality on key sites for football through improved maintenance. Sites should be encouraged to access the Pitch Power app to gain support on how to better maintain pitches and consider appropriate funding opportunities, including funding available through the Football Foundation - Protect existing football sites, unless provision can be adequately re-provided as per Sport England guidance - Provide sufficient 3G AGP provision in suitable locations to meet the shortfalls that have been identified - Where new 3G AGPs are provided, ensure that they are constructed to the correct standard so they can be included on the FA 3G register. It may also be appropriate to explore opportunities to deliver pitches that are also compliant with RFU specifications, to cater for any rugby training demand that exists - Ensure any existing 3G AGPs that appear on the FA 3G Register remain there and continue to cater for affiliated matches. Also ensure these pitches are resurfaced to the appropriate standard when required		The figures set out relate to the current and future (2040) position Urban West Area Adult Pitches – 13.5 MES shortfalls both current and future Junior 11 v 11 – 0.5 MES shortfalls, 2 MES spare capacity 9 v 9 – 7 MES shortfalls, 4 MES shortfalls 7 v 7 – 3 MES shortfalls, 1 MES spare capacity 5 v 5 – 1 MES shortfall, 1 MES spare capacity Southern Area Adult Pitches – 5.5 MES shortfalls both current and future Junior 11 v 11 – 5 MES shortfalls, 2 MES spare capacity

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Recommendations	Strategy	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	teams in total. Woodley United reported during the consultation that they are accessing the Rivermoor Stadium in Reading for their men's first team as there aren't suitable stadia facilities in Wokingham Borough to meet their ground grading requirements for the league that they play in. The club would prefer to play within the Borough if a suitable facility was available 16 clubs in the Borough reported latent demand. Fifteen of these clubs reported latent demand for both playing and training facilities. One club reported latent demand for just playing facilities. Five clubs also reported that they currently have unmet demand - Consultation with local clubs identified that there could be up to 110 new teams created in the Borough in the future across all age groups - In total there is actual spare capacity of all pitch types amounting to 67.5 MES in Wokingham Borough. The highest amount of actual spare capacity is located in the Northern Area, this equates to 18.5 MES. There is 9 MES of actual spare capacity in the Southern Area. There is no actual spare capacity in the Urban Western Area and 5 MES in the Wokingham Town Area. Actual spare capacity doesn't mean that there is an oversupply of pitches available, it just identifies which pitches have capacity at peak periods - The greatest amount of overplay exists in the Urban Western Area, this equates to 32.5 MES. There is overplay equating to 17 MES in the Southern Area, 14 MES in the Wokingham Town Area and 12.75 in the Northern Area. In terms of pitch types, the greatest amount of overplay exists on adult pitches, this equates to 33 MES. There is 15.25 MES of overplay on junior football 11v11 pitches, 12 MES on junior football 9v9, 14 MES on mini soccer 7v7 pitches and 2MES on mini soccer 5v5 pitches - There are current shortfalls on adult, junior football 11v11 and junior football 9v9 pitches in the Borough. Future shortfalls on junior football 11v11 and junior football 9v9 pitches are reduced when future demand is considered, whilst shortfalls on adult pitches remain. Future demand reducing is due to the future population predictions showing a reduction in the population at the relevant age groups, despite the overall population in the Borough growing. This shouldn't be looked at in isolation, especially when significant future demand has been identified by local clubs through the consultation.	- Ensure that any 3G pitches have a sinking fund in place which enables the pitch to be resurfaced when required - Ensure that any new 3G AGPs have appropriate pricing policies in place to make them accessible to grass roots clubs. This should include a specific match play rate at weekends that is benchmarked against comparable facilities - Assess the potential impact on 3G AGP demand, should a new pitch be delivered at the University of Reading that caters for demand from football clubs within Wokingham Borough - Where appropriate, support clubs and sites to provide suitable ancillary provision to cater for demand - Look at options to bring exported demand back in to the Borough, this could include providing appropriate stadia facilities for clubs within the National League System - Look at how future proposals can meet existing shortfalls on grass pitches and 3G AGPs. This could include the development of hub sites such as Arborfield Garrison, Gray's Farm and Hogwood Farm. This may also potentially include the provision of an additional Sports Hub within one of the new Strategic development Locations identified with the WBC Local Plan Update		9 v 9 – 3.5 MES shortfalls, 1 MES shortfalls 7 v 7 – 2.5 MES spare capacity, 5.5 spare capacity 5 v 5 – 6.5 spare capacity, 8.5 spare capacity The biggest shortfalls in terms of football are in the Urban West Area. The largest deficiencies are for adult pitches in both the Urban West and Southern areas, suggesting any on-site provision should focus on adult provision. There is spare capacity in terms of 7 v 7 and 5 v 5 provision.

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Strategy Recommendations	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
		Look at securing tenure on sites that are deemed to be unsecured. This should be done an appropriate lease or license agreement. Typically for clubs to obtain funding for sites a 25 years lease is required.	
3G AGP	- There are currently 24 3G AGPs in the Borough across 13 sites. Seven of these 3G AGPs are deemed to be full size (pitches measuring over 94 x 55 metres exclusive of run offs. Six of them are available for community use. The only full size 3G AGP in the Borough currently unavailable for community use is the pitch at Reading FC (Bearwood Park). This is exclusively used by Reading FC's academy; - There are 17 smaller sized 3G AGPs in the Borough. The only smaller sized 3G AGP that isn't available for community use is the pitch at Chiltern Way Academy (Wokingham). The smaller sized 3G AGP at the Forest School (Winnersh) is an indoor pitch, whilst this is listed as being available for community use, it is understood that that this is extremely limited due to Reading FC academies use of the pitch; - There is a future proposal to develop a new 3G AGP at Berkshire County Sports Club that was also identified in the LFFP. This pitch should be completed for the 2023/24 season subjected to a successful funding application - Five out of six full size 3G AGPs in the Borough that are available for community use are currently on the 3G Pitch Register 65% of football club who took part in the consultation identified that access to a 3G AGP for training was a barrier to them growing their club - Five of the full size 3G AGPs in the Borough were assessed as good and one as standard - There has also been 23 hours a week of availability during peak times identified on full size 3G AGPs across the Borough. This could increase if the 3G AGP at Farley Hill Primary School is made available for community use at weekends - All full size 3G AGPs available for community use provide ancillary provision. Three sites were assessed as providing good quality ancillary provision and threes sites as providing standard quality ancillary provision	See above.	Urban West Area <i>Largest shortfall in 3G provision. 6 short (see 3G Strategy)</i> Southern Area <i>Shortfall on one 3G.</i> Whilst Spencer's Wood is not noted as a site in current 3G Strategy, it is evident that it is in the catchment with the greatest 3G deficiency. Potential for on-site provision, subject to consultation.

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Recommendations	Strategy	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	There are currently 654 football teams in the Borough meaning there is a requirement for 17 full size 3G AGPs in the Borough. At present there are 7 full size 3G AGPs which leaves a shortfall of 10 pitches. Given that the demand that is catered for by the two smaller sized 3G AGPs at Floreat Montague Park School and Woodford Park Leisure Centre, this shortfall has been revised to 9 3G AGPs. Should the proposed 3G AGP be delivered at Berkshire County Sports Club, this shortfall would then reduce to 8 pitches. To meet current shortfalls, there would need to be two 3G AGPs provided in the Northern Area, one in the Southern Area, six in the Urban Western Area and none delivered in the Wokingham Town Area. In some instances it might not be possible to deliver all of the required 3G AGP demand within the sub analysis area that it is generated in. This may result in 3G AGPs being delivered in a different sub analysis area to where the demand is generated.			
Cricket	- There are currently 33 grass cricket pitches in Wokingham Borough across 22 sites, 28 of these pitches are available for community use - There are 10 sites in Wokingham Borough that provide artificial practise nets - There are currently future proposals to develop three new cricket sites in the Borough. Two of these are in Shinfield, which are both being delivered by Reading University and will be leased to Shinfield Parish Council. The other proposal is located in Arborfield - There are currently 3 disused cricket pitches in the Borough and 3 lapsed pitches - There are currently 12 NTPs in the Borough across 11 sites, of which 9 are available for community use - Security of use is deemed to be an issue at 5 sites in the Borough. Two of these site are club sites who didn't respond to the consultation. The remaining 3 sites are educational sites - There were 25 cricket pitches assessed as good in the Borough, 17 as standard and 1 as poor - There were 23 sites recorded as providing good quality ancillary provision, 12 as standard and 1 as poor. Wargrave CC, Finchampstead CC and Sonning CC are all looking to develop new pavilions at their respective sites - There are currently 20 cricket clubs playing in the Borough who between them have 192 teams	- Protect existing cricket sites, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - Look at improving the quality of club sites where possible - Work to secure provision on any sites used by club where provision is currently deemed unsecured - Look at greater use of NTPs for fixtures and training to help alleviate capacity issues on certain sites and across the Borough - Support Emmbrook & Bearwood CC and Sonning CC develop a new NTP at their respective sites - Support Finchampstead CC, Sonning CC and Wargrave CC to develop new pavilions at their respective sites		There are large deficiencies in cricket in both the Urban West and Southern Areas, ranging from 120 MES shortfalls per season to 160. Potential for on-site provision subject to consultation.

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Strategy Recommendations	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	- In total there are 7 cricket teams worth of imported demand into the Borough. All of this demand currently comes from Reading - In total there are 19 cricket teams worth of exported demand out of the Borough. The majority of this demand (13 teams) takes place in South Oxfordshire - If future demand identified by clubs was realised, there would be 11 additional cricket teams created in the Borough - Team Generation Rates show that there will be 2 additional senior men's teams created in the Borough by 2040 - There is currently no actual spare capacity for Saturday cricket in the Borough. There is actual spare capacity amounting to 1 team for both Sunday and midweek cricket - There are 15 sites in the Borough that contain overplayed cricket pitches, this equates to 778 MES per season. The majority of overplay currently exists in the Northern Area, this equates to 470 MES (60%). There are 122 MES (16%) of overplay in the Southern Area, 161 MES (21%) of overplay in the Urban Western Area and 25 MES (3%) of overplay in the Wokingham Town Area. Overplay on cricket pitch sites used by clubs in the Borough equates to 279 MES (39%) per season - There are currently future shortfalls in all sub areas across all peak times for cricket in the Borough.	- Support Reading CC to develop new cricket nets at their site - Ensure use of the cricket pitch and pavilion at the new Manor Sports Ground site and High Copse Pavilion and Pitches site are secured for Shinfield CC through an appropriate lease agreement - Support Waingels College to develop a new cricket pitch and ensure that use is secured for Sonning CC through an appropriate agreement.	
Rugby Union	- There are currently 4 rugby clubs in Wokingham Borough with a total of 45 teams - There are currently 41 rugby pitches identified within Wokingham Borough across 14 sites - There are 18 pitches provided in the Northern Area, 10 in the Southern Area, 11 in the Urban Western Area and 2 in the Wokingham Town Area - There are currently 20 rugby pitches available for community use in the Borough, 7 of which are provided on club sites, the remaining pitches are all located on education sites. All four rugby clubs in the Borough play in the Northern Area - All sites used by rugby clubs are deemed to have secured community use. Neither Berkshire Shire Hall RFC nor Reading Renegades RFC have any lease arrangements in place at Berkshire County Sports Club, although they are both members of the sports club and represented on the committee - There were 3 rugby pitches assessed as good in the Borough, these were all located at Redingensians Rams Rugby Club. There were 20 pitches assessed as standard, this includes the pitches at Reading RFC and there were 18 pitches assessed as	- Protect existing rugby sites, unless provision can be adequately re-provided as per Sport England and RFU guidance - Support rugby clubs to improve their pitch maintenance to improve quality and alleviate overplay - Support Rams RFC to develop a World Rugby Compliant 3G AGP to help alleviate overplay from training and match play - Support Rams RFC develop their existing site sufficiently to cater for demand or relocate to a new site should a suitable location be identified. Ensure	The biggest rugby shortfalls are noted in the North Area, where the clubs are located. These are significant at 23.5 MES. Only very small shortfalls are noted in the Urban West (0.5 MES) and Southern Areas (1.5 MES) suggesting no requirement for on-site provision but off-site investment in the club

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Recommendations	Strategy	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	poor. This included the senior rugby pitch at Berkshire County Sports Club that is used by Berkshire Shire Hall RFC and Reading Renegades RFC - The ancillary facilities used by Berkshire Shire Hall RFC and Reading Renegades at Berkshire County Sports Club were assessed as good, as were those at Redingensians Rams Rugby Club, which are used by Rams RFC. The ancillary facilities at Reading RFC were assessed as standard. The club have future have proposals to redevelop the ancillary provision at their site. This will include six new changing rooms with self-contained showers and toilets, along with two officials changing rooms that will also have self-contained showers and toilets. The development is planned via a phasing approach over the coming seasons - Reading RFC reported plans to develop a second senior women's team. Rams RFC reported that due to their site being at capacity, they can't increase their existing team numbers. Team Generation Rates (TGR) don't predict any future growth for rugby teams in the Borough - There aren't any rugby pitch sites in Wokingham Borough that currently have actual spare capacity. All rugby pitch sites with potential spare capacity are on education sites where community use is deemed unsecured, or the pitches are unavailable. All three sites used by rugby clubs in the Borough are currently overplayed - There is overplay totalling 27.75 MES in the Borough. The highest amount of overplay on rugby pitches is located in the Northern Area (23.5 MES), which accounts for 84% of all overplay on rugby pitches in the Borough. This is a result of all rugby clubs in the Borough being located in the Northern Area and all rugby pitches used by clubs being overplayed. Overplay on rugby pitches used by clubs equates to 23 MES, which is 82% of all overplay on rugby pitches in the Borough - There are current shortfalls of 27.25 MES on senior rugby pitches in the Borough, these don't increase when future demand is taken into account. The Northern Area has the greatest future shortfalls predicted; this equates to 23.5 MES.	that any reprovision enables the club to progress through the league system - Support Reading RFC with the development of new ancillary provision on site to enable them to grow female rugby - Where appropriate, support clubs to access 3G AGP provision for training, to help alleviate capacity issues on club sites.		infra-structure, subject to consultation.
Hockey	- There are currently 5 full size AGPs suitable for hockey in the Borough, 4 of these AGPs are available for community use. There are also 11 smaller sized AGPs, 8 of which are available for community use - There are currently 16 AGPs in the Borough across 14 sites. One full size AGP in the Borough meets Category 1 status as shown above. This is the water based AGP at Reading Cricket and Hockey Club. There are no full size AGPs that meet category 2 status. There are five full size AGPs that meet Category 3 status	- Protect existing hockey sites, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - Ensure that existing hockey AGPs are appropriately maintained and		No demand is identified for hockey in the Urban West and South. Off-site investment in-line with Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC). To be

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Recommendations	Strategy	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	- There are no future proposals to develop new hockey AGPs. There is a proposal to develop a new 3G AGP at Berkshire County Sports Club. The existing AGP on the site is predominantly used for hockey but does cater for some mid-week football training. It is anticipated that once the 3G AGP is delivered at the site the football clubs who use the hockey AGP for training will move to the 3G AGP, which will create some availability for mid-week hockey training - There were 4 AGPs assessed as being of good quality and 11 as being standard. No AGPs were assessed as being poor. The AGP at Move HQ wasn't assessed as the site was only identified after the assessments had been completed. The AGP used by Sonning Hockey Club at Berkshire County Sport Club was assessed as good, whilst the AGPs at Reading Cricket & Hockey Club, which are used by Reading Hockey Club and the AGP and Cantley Park used by South Berkshire Hockey Club were both assessed as standard - During the consultation hockey clubs in the borough reported potential future growth of up to 15 teams in total - TGRs show that there won't be any additional senior men's or women's hockey teams created in the Borough up to 2040 based on TGRs. There is a reduction of two teams forecast in both junior boy's and girl's teams up to 2040 - There are 4 full size AGPs in the Borough that are suitable for Hockey and available for community use. There is currently 4 hours per week of mid-week training capacity available across all AGPs. Capacity analysis suggests that there is currently no spare capacity for match play at any AGPs in the Brough with 3 AGPs currently overplayed.	- resurfaced to the appropriate standard when required - Ensure that the lease is processed for South Berkshire Hockey at Cantley Park - Where hockey clubs have existing leases in place, ensure that these are renewed in advance of the current lease expiring - Support South Berkshire Hockey Club refurbish their pavilion at Cantley Park - Support hockey club to upgrade their sports lighting to LED where appropriate - Ensure that there is sufficient capacity to allow for junior programmes, as well as training and match play - Identify where demand from overplay on existing hockey AGPs can be met.		agreed following consultation.
Bowls	- There are 10 bowling greens (flat greens) in Wokingham Borough across 9 sites. Wokingham Bowls Club provide 2 greens at their site - There are no bowling greens in the Borough that have been identified as lapsed or disused. At the time of writing this report it is unknown what will happen to Farley Hill Bowls Club now that the club have folded - No clubs who took part in the consultation identified any issues with security of community use at their sites - There were 7 bowling greens assessed as good in the Borough and 3 assessed as standard. No bowling greens were assessed as poor - All bowling greens have access to some form of ancillary provision. Ancillary provision was assessed as good at 5 sites and as standard at 4 sites	- Protect existing bowls greens, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - Support clubs to maintain the quality of their greens - Support Hurst Bowls clubs develop a new pavilion. This should include provision for refreshments, storage and be accessible for people with disabilities as a minimum		Current demand is being met.

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Strategy Recommendations	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	- For the 2022 outdoor bowls season there were 9 bowls clubs in the Borough. Farley Hill Bowls Club folded in October 2022 due to a lack of members and volunteers - Based on clubs who responded to the consultation, there are currently 687 adult bowls members in the Borough and 7 junior members. With planned club growth this could increase to 712 adult members. Junior members would remain the same - Sport England's Market Segmentation tool currently identifies demand for 210 people wanting to take up bowls in the Borough - If future demand did materialise, it's not anticipated that this will create any issue at bowls clubs in the Borough.	Encourage bowls clubs to sign up to the new Play Bowls and Bowls Bash programmes. The aim is for this to help the sport become much more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience. Currently there are no bowls clubs in Wokingham signed up to either of these programmes.	
Tennis	- There are currently 29 sites in Wokingham Borough that provide outdoor tennis courts. This equates to 126 tennis courts in total, of which 110 are available for community use - Of the 110 tennis courts available for community use in the Borough the majority are a macadam surface (104 in total). There are 6 AGP tennis courts and 5 concrete - In total there are 61 tennis courts that have sports lighting in the Borough that are available for community use. There are currently proposals at Berkshire County Sports Club to resurface the tennis courts and provide sports lighting. Twyford Tennis Club are also looking to provide an additional courts with sports lighting. Should these progress, it would result in there being 5 more tennis courts with sports lighting - Security of use isn't deemed to be an issue on any tennis club sites in the Borough, although Twyford Tennis Club and Sonning Lawn Tennis Club both only have annual rental agreements in place with their respective Parish Councils - There were 60 tennis courts assessed as being good quality, 40 as standard and 4 as poor. The Southern Area has the greatest number of good quality tennis courts (21) - In total there are currently 2,342 adult members at tennis clubs in the Borough and 1,527 junior members - Six clubs in the Borough reported plans to increase their current membership numbers by a total 223 adult members and 143 junior members, although Twyford Tennis Club stated that they didn't currently have enough capacity to cater for this demand	- Protect existing tennis courts, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - Look at resurfacing poor quality courts to improve quality and increase capacity - Look at providing sports lights for tennis courts where demand exists to increase capacity - Support clubs upgrade their existing sports lights to LED - Look at the provision of new tennis courts at Arborfield Garrison Pitches as part of the development proposals on site - Support Berkshire County Sports – Tennis Club resurface their courts and provide floodlight subject to their being demand - Support Twyford Tennis Club develop an additional tennis court at King George Recreation Ground (Twyford) and develop a new pavilion	In-sufficient capacity to meet demand. Potential for on-site provision, subject to consultation and local priorities.

Facility Type	Outdoor Facilities Assessment Key Findings	Outdoor Facilities Strategy Recommendations	Site Specific Recommendations – Urban West, Southern Area
	- Insight provided by the LTA suggests that there is demand for an additional 7,725 tennis players in the Borough, the penetration rate is 618 tennis players (8% of demand) - Wokingham Tennis club reported that they currently have a waiting list of 100 adult members that they can't currently cater for due to capacity on site 60% of sites used by tennis clubs are over capacity. In total sites used by tennis clubs are over capacity by 1,129 members. The Wokingham Town Area currently has the greatest amount of overcapacity, this is due to the membership demand at Cantley Park, although it is worth noting that this also takes in to account Chestnut Park which is located in the Urban Western Area.	- Support Wargrave Tennis Club resurface their courts to an all-weather surface - Support Wokingham Tennis to meet their unmet demand - Look at providing gate access at sites that don't currently provide this service to improve access. Linked to the LTA Play programme.	
Netball	- There are currently two netball leagues that operate on outdoor courts in the Borough. The Leagues 4U Bracknell & Wokingham Netball League has 12 teams in it with fixtures played at St Crispin's School. The Play Netball Wokingham League is also based at St Crispin's School and has 18 teams in it. Play Netball Wokingham stated they are looking to increase the number of teams in their league to 24 teams. Neither of these leagues are England Netball member leagues. The Berkshire Prem Netball League is an England Netball member league. This used to take place on the outdoor netball courts at St Crispin's School but has now become an indoor league - There are currently 9 sites in Wokingham Borough that provide outdoor netball courts. This equates to 35 courts in total. All 9 sites that provide netball courts in the Borough are available for community use - Of the 35 netball courts available for community use, the majority are a macadam surface (22 in total). There are 6 AGP netball courts and 7 AGP - There are 16 netball courts with sports lighting in the Borough - There were 8 netball courts assessed as being good quality, 27 assessed as being standard quality and 0 that were assessed as being poor quality - There are Walking Netball and Back to Netball sessions currently being delivered in the Borough. Both sessions take place on the indoor netball courts at Wokingham Leisure.	- Protect existing netball courts, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - Support the provision of a netball court at Berkshire County Sports Club and look at how this can be utilised - Look at bringing the disused courts at Chalfont Park back in to use to support recreational netball programmes and to potentially bring Laurel Park Netball Club back to the site where they were previously based - Work to secure use on sites currently deemed unsecured for netball clubs.	No demand identified.

- 5.6 Table 5.1 therefore indicates that there are pressures on the existing infrastructure, and indeed, the PPS states that there are shortfalls now, and in the future, particularly in terms of football, 3G and cricket, in respect of the Spencer's Wood catchment.
- 5.7 Given the PPS is robust and up-to-date this provides a good starting point for the Sports Strategy. This has been built on with initial consultation.
- 5.8 The remainder of this section therefore draws upon the findings of the consultation undertaken to date, as well as additional research to provide a series of issues and options, which have helped to shape the current development framework.
- 5.9 Consultation with **Andy Glencross, Head of Environmental Services at Wokingham Borough Council** revealed that:
- The PPS identified needs for football, 3G provision and cricket
 - The 3G Strategy set out the delivery of 3G needs across the borough, but it is recognised that not all projects may be delivered
 - Spencer's Wood has the potential to meet 3G needs identified for Earley and Woodley, which may not be deliverable
 - Considered to be modest demand for grass pitches
 - 2 new cricket facilities are already coming on stream in Shinfield and Aborfield and Newlands
 - Potential for tennis and padel on-site
 - There are no rugby clubs in the area
 - No on-site needs for indoor sport.
- 5.10 Consultation with **Bruce Winton, Chief Executive and Clerk, Shinfield Parish Council and Ian Clark, Head of Facility Committee** revealed that:
- 3G pitch provision is desperately needed in the area to meet midweek training needs, for Shinfield Rangers and Spencer's Wood FC (amongst others), considered to be less demand for grass pitch provision
 - Despite the new Manor Ground and High Copse Farm cricket provision, which will come on stream in 2026, there is still considered to be a demand for cricket
 - Shinfield Cricket Club continues to grow with 5 senior teams and over 150 juniors
 - Focus of any on-site cricket provision at Spencer's Wood, should be on junior cricket, requiring more modest ancillary provision and thus ensuring the sustainability, alongside all provision coming on-stream
 - The Parish Council would be interested in managing any on-site facilities, including the 3G, hence they are keen to ensure the provision is sustainable
 - All rugby clubs are located in the north

- Parish Council are looking to invest in tennis and padel at their Millworth Lane site, so would not want to see on-site provision at Spencer's Wood.

5.11 Consultation with **Jonathon Wood, Berks and Bucks FA** revealed that:

- Existing need in the Southern and Urban West Areas, alongside growth, should help to define on-site needs
- Ryeish Sports Hub 3G, the nearest provision to Spencer's Wood is already at capacity
- Need for 3G provision, Spencer's Wood could meet the needs in the Woodley / Earley area. Shinfield Rangers and Spencer's Wood FC have large needs
- Any on-site 3G would reduce the need for mini and youth provision.

5.12 Consultation with **Harry Ash, Delivery Manager LTA** revealed that:

Tennis

- For a housing development of 450 homes, LTA insight would suggest a minimum increase in tennis members locally of approx. 17 players
- Looking at the tennis infrastructure locally, the closest tennis clubs to the area are Shinfield Tennis Club (4 floodlit courts; 5 min drive) and Riseley Tennis Club (4 floodlit courts; 7 min drive)
- As illustrated in the PPS Assessment Report, Shinfield Tennis Club have space capacity for approximately 70 more members. However, Riseley Tennis Club are 'over-capacity' by approximately 32 members
- Overall, I would say given there are two tennis clubs well within a 10 minute drive time and the most local club (Shinfield TC) has significant capacity to welcome new members, no new tennis facilities will be needed on site.

Padel

- LTA insight suggests there is a latent demand for padel of approx. 469 players within a 10 minute drive time of postcode RG7 1DY
- Given there are no padel courts within a 10 minute drive time of this site, it can be assumed none of this demand is being met locally
- The LTA assumes a capacity of approx. 200 players per padel court based on a Pay and Play model rather than membership based
- Therefore, if 2-3 padel courts could be provided on site, this would provide a much needed facility to meet this unmet demand
- The possibility of providing offsite contributions for padel to Shinfield TC and/or Riseley TC should also be explored given the likely relevant audience already existing at these sites. According to the PPS Assessment Report, Riseley TC have expressed an interest in providing padel at their site.

The LTA are therefore on the same page with Shinfield PC. They would agree any developments (for tennis or padel) should happen at the nearby tennis sites (off-site). The LTA would like to see opportunities for off-site contributions.

5.13 Consultation with **Neil Higginson-Dark, ECB** revealed that:

- There are 39 cricket grass pitches in the Spencer's Wood catchment. 33 clubs, 241 teams, 112 senior and 92 junior. 8 women and girls clubs and 38 women's and girls' teams
- Since 2021 there has been a 100% growth in clubs and 124% growth in teams. There is therefore big demand for cricket

- The new Manor Ground is very nice and the ECB are also aware of Arborfield.

5.14 **Debbie Spindlow, Netball Development Officer, Berkshire and South Team Leader** commented that, we have a few netball clubs and commercial leagues based in the area.

Football

5.15 As a consequence, consultation demonstrates that the picture presented in the PPS remains accurate and relevant and the opportunities highlighted and generally supported by the NGBs, i.e., potential on-site 3G and grass pitch provision, plus potential for cricket. All other sports needs are best delivered off-site, subject to further discussions to determine priorities.

Summary of Outdoor Facility Provision

5.16 Table 5.2 therefore summarises the facility needs based upon the existing PPS and the consultation to date. It outlines the key deficiencies identified and highlights where provision is considered unable to meet current and / or future needs, and therefore where on-site provision may be required or alternatively off-site investment should be prioritised.

5.17 The implications for the proposed development are reviewed in Section 6.

Table 5.2 - Summary of Needs – Outdoor Sports Provision

Facility Type	PPS Position and Consultation Findings	Implications for Proposed Development
Football	• PPS identified pressures on existing pitches, particularly adult pitches, with the biggest deficiencies in the Urban West • 5 v 5 and 7 v 7 deficiencies are less evident • On-site grass pitches supported by the FA, local consultation less supportive • Deficit of 8 3G pitches across the borough, including six in the Urban West and one in the South • There is a 3G Strategy for delivery but it is acknowledged that all schemes may not be deliverable and opportunity sites may emerge • Spencer's Wood in good location to meet 3G needs • All consultees support site for 3G	• Existing grass pitch deficiencies mean that any new demand cannot be accommodated • Inclusion of grass football pitches within the site development should therefore be considered, with a focus on adult pitches • 3G pitch provision is also a key opportunity and need, supported by consultees. Potential for on-site provision • Provision of / investment into grass football pitches alongside 3G provision should therefore be considered, alongside appropriate ancillary provision, on-site.
Rugby Union	• All rugby clubs are based in the North of the borough, where the big deficiencies exist • There are no significant shortfalls in the Urban West and South Area • No requirement for on-site provision • Any rugby investment should be focused on improvements to pitch conditions and ancillary provision at existing clubs	• On site provision likely to be of limited value, given the focus of all rugby activity in the North, and the preference of clubs to host activity at their club base • To be confirmed by RFU • Contribution towards rugby union off-site in-line with Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC), subject to discussions with the RFU and overall s106 discussions.
Cricket	• Big deficiencies identified in cricket across the borough in the PPS • There are large deficiencies in cricket in both the Urban West and Southern Areas, ranging from 120 MES shortfalls per season to 160 • Further growth has also been identified by the ECB	• Potential for on-site cricket provision to be determined in consultation with ECB.

Facility Type	PPS Position and Consultation Findings	Implications for Proposed Development
	- The PPS therefore shows that there is currently very limited spare capacity for additional cricket teams even with a significant number of sites overplayed - There are 3 new cricket facility either under construction or planned within the borough. Two in Shinfield parish and one in Arborfield and Newlands parish) that should meet any additional needs and reduce levels of overplay. - Despite the recent and proposed cricket developments in the area, the Parish Council still feel there is demand for on-site cricket provision as part of the Spencer's Wood development, particularly for junior play - Whilst the PC acknowledge that 2 new cricket facilities, plus a potential third at Spencer's Wood in relative quick order marks a significant growth, they feel there remains significant demand and provision at Spencer's Wood could provide for junior matchplay, therefore requiring a smaller facility and less of a pavilion facility (just toilet and kitchen provision?) - Wokingham Council are supportive of the Parish Council position, subject to the views of the ECB.	
Hockey	- PPS indicates that provision was adequate. No demand was identified - All pitches should be protected - Priority to ensure that existing hockey AGPs are appropriately maintained and resurfaced to the appropriate standard when required.	- Existing position is reported to be adequate to meet both current and future demand - Off-site requirement for maintenance and upkeep of the facilities will be required to ensure that they meet future demand - Contribution towards England Hockey off-site in-line with Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC), subject to discussions with EH and in the context of overall s106 discussions
Tennis	- PPS identifies in-sufficient tennis capacity to meet demand - Recommends protecting existing tennis courts, unless provision can be adequately re-provided, as per Sport England guidance - LTA and Parish Council preference for off-site provision and investment in existing infra-structure - PC are currently putting together a project for the development of Millworth Lane Recreation Ground, where Shinfield Tennis Club are based. The aim is to develop the site with 2 Padel courts and potentially additional tennis court - Risley TC also have an interest in developing padel, as identified by the PPS and the LTA - Investment in tennis and padel to be focussed of-site at existing clubs to support sustainability.	- No need for on-site tennis on Spencer's Wood or indeed padel, given the desire to develop this on Millworth Lane and at Risley TC - Position supported by the LTA - Off-site investment in-line with LTA calculator, in the context of overall s106 discussions.

Facility Type	PPS Position and Consultation Findings	Implications for Proposed Development
Bowls	Current demand is being met.	Existing position is reported to be adequate to meet both current and future demand. No requirements.
Netball	No demand identified.	Existing position is reported to be adequate to meet both current and future demand. No requirements.

6.0 Implications for Spencer's Wood Sports Strategy

Introduction

- 6.1 Sections 4 and 5 have considered the adequacy of current provision drawing on the existing evidence base, as well as the views of National Governing Bodies of Sport to date. They have provided an updated position statement, outlining whether provision is adequate to meet existing and projected future demand and the potential implications for Spencer's Wood.
- 6.2 This section considers the additional demand that will be generated by the new development. It then compiles this information with the position statements set out in Sections 4 and 5 to ascertain whether existing provision is able to sustain the additional demand and the potential implications for the Spencer's Wood sports strategy.
- 6.3 We have considered both the baseline requirement to meet identified need, but also any opportunities to provide additionality over and above the minimum requirements in order to make the development a desirable place to live, as well as to provide greater sporting and health benefit.

Impact of Proposed New Development

- 6.4 The PPS suggest that Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator should be used to determine the impact of new development. This is now the most frequently used tool for this purpose as it provides a transparent indicator of amount of demand that will be created by a specific development, based on the levels of participation in an area.
- 6.5 The calculations in the calculator are based on the Team Generation Rate (TGR) which are provided in the PPS and as such, are bespoke to Wokingham. As the PPS is up-to-date the TGRs are from the 2023 data, as set out overleaf.

Sport and Age Groups	Number of teams in age group within the area	Current population in age group within the area	Future population in age group within the area	Current TGR	Population Change in Age Group	Potential Change in Team Numbers in Age Group
Football Adult Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	96	30122	31254	313.771	1132	3.60772857
Football Adult Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	12	31400	30487	2616.67	-913	-0.348917197
Football Youth Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	122	5489	4726	44.9918	-763	-16.95864456
Football Youth Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	32	5122	4490	160.063	-632	-3.948457634
Football Youth Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	84	2792	2342	33.2381	-450	-13.53868195
Football Youth Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	24	2558	2193	106.583	-365	-3.42455043
Football Mini Soccer Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	141	4838	4454	34.3121	-384	-11.19140141
Football Mini Soccer Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	143	4708	4319	32.9231	-389	-11.81542056
Cricket Open Age Mens (18-55yrs)	72	40696	41559	565.222	863	1.526833104
Cricket Open Age Womens (18-55yrs)	12	41912	41197	3492.67	-715	-0.20471464
Cricket Junior Boys (7-18yrs)	84	15503	14021	184.56	-1482	-8.029929691
Cricket Junior Girls (7-18yrs)	24	14678	13304	611.583	-1374	-2.246627606
Rugby Union Senior Men (19-45yrs)	11	26623	27712	2420.27	1089	0.449949292
Rugby Union Senior Women (19-45yrs)	1	27970	31022	27970	3052	0.109116911

Sport and Age Groups	Number of teams in age group within the area	Current population in age group within the area	Future population in age group within the area	Current TGR	Population Change in Age Group	Potential Change in Team Numbers in Age Group
Rugby Union Youth Boys (13-18yrs)	15	7580	7086	505.333	-494	-0.977572559
Rugby Union Youth Girls (13-18yrs)	6	7215	6783	1202.5	-432	-0.359251559
Rugby Union Mini/Midi Mixed (7-12yrs)	13	15387	13456	1183.62	-1931	-1.631442126
Hockey Senior Men (16-55yrs)	26	43094	43937	1657.46	843	0.508609087
Hockey Senior Women (16-55yrs)	23	44245	43471	1923.7	-774	-0.402350548
Hockey Junior Boys (11-15yrs)	14	6902	5902	493	-1000	-2.028397566
Hockey Junior Girls (11-15yrs)	22	6391	5590	290.5	-801	-2.757314974

- 6.6 The results of the application of the calculator are set out in Table 6.1. This provides an indication of potential on and off-site issues to aid discussions around options. These figures will be subject to further discussion and agreement as part of the overall approach to s106 contributions. In this context they represent a starting point.
- 6.7 The calculations have been undertaken on the assumption that the new development will provide 420 new dwellings, which is the most up to date position at the time of writing. Applying a 2.3 multiplier gives 1035 people.

Table 6.1 – Impact of New Development on Demand for Pitch Sports (420 dwellings).

Facility Type	Impact of New Development (Number of Pitches)	Capital Cost	Lifecycle Cost
Natural Grass Pitches	1.85	£208,871	£40,367
Adult Football	0.28	£34,203	£6,738
Youth Football	0.63	£64,264	£12,981
Mini Soccer	0.67	£22,634	£4,481
Rugby Union	0.09	£16,496	£3,052
Rugby League	0.00	£0	£0
Cricket	0.18	£71,274	£13,114
Artificial Grass Pitches			
Sand Based	0.03	£33,845	£880
3G	0.08	£106,766	£2,834

- 6.8 The Playing Pitch Calculator provides only an indication of demand that will be generated specifically by the new development.
- 6.9 This additional demand is then considered in the context of the adequacy of existing provision (Section 5) in order to determine if this demand can be met. This provides an understanding of:
- Whether on site provision should be considered
 - Whether contributions towards off site provision may be required.
- 6.10 The analysis carried out in Sections 5 enables us to provide a rounded picture of requirements relating to outdoor sports. This helps us to determine not only whether the additional demand that will be generated by the development can be sustained by the existing infrastructure, but also to understand whether there are any opportunities to deliver additional facilities that could bring added value to the development.

Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)

- 6.11 The SFC covers Swimming pools, Sports halls, Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and Indoor bowls centres. It helps to quantify the demand for these facilities, providing an understanding of the additional demand that the population is likely to generate. It does not take into account

the existing supply of facilities – this means that the results must then be considered in the context of the findings set out previously, the adequacy of current provision.

- 6.12 The calculator can also be used to inform decision making in relation to the cost of off-site contributions (where these are identified as being required) as well as to understand where on site provision is required. This will be part of the negotiation process in relation to s106 agreements.
- 6.13 The results of the application of the Sports Facility Calculator for the proposed new development are set out below, it demonstrates that the new development will generate relatively little demand in terms of indoor sports facilities. This accords with the Local Plan findings. It is based upon the provision of 420 new dwellings, 2.3 multiplier giving 989 people.

Swimming Pools

- 10.87 sqm
- 0.2 lanes
- 0.05 pools
- **£252,171 off-site contribution**

Sports Halls

- 0.28 courts
- 0.07 halls
- **£226,830 off-site contribution**

Indoor Bowls

- £7,536 off-site contribution

The finding so the SFC accord with the local plan standards, and consultation and reiterate there is no need for on-site provision. They provide a *starting point* for negotiating *off-site* contributions.

- 6.14 The SFC therefore helps to quantify the level of off-site investment. At present there is no up to date Built Facility Strategy (BFS), with which to identify projects for investment, where qualitative issues have been identified. Consultation has suggested that a review of the BFS is planned and it is anticipated this will be produced and should be used as the tool to identify where off-site investment in indoor sports facilities, in-line with the SFC findings should be targeted.

Tennis Calculator

- 6.15 A new calculator has been developed by Sport England, in partnership with the LTA, to estimate the demand that a new development will generate for tennis. This is currently available as a trial version only and parameters within this may consequently be changed. The LTA have requested off-site contributions and use of the tool.
- 6.16 Use of this calculator suggests that the proposed new development will generate 21 visits per week to a tennis court. This equates to demand for 0.13 courts (£14,193).

Implications for proposed development at Spencer's Wood – Creation of a Sports Strategy

- 6.17 Policy in both the existing DPD and the emerging Local Plan acknowledge the impact that new development will have in generating additional demand, and require that this is considered (*in the context of new provision / contributions towards existing provision*) as part of the planning process.
- 6.18 The calculations set out in table 6.1 and the outcomes of the SFC confirm the scale of demand that the proposed new development in Spencer's Wood will generate. This additional demand then needs to be considered in the context of the existing infrastructure in order to create a sports strategy for the development.
- 6.19 Table 6.2 therefore draws upon the information presented in Sections 4 and 5, as well as the results of the SFC and PPC and evaluates whether the existing infrastructure is able to accommodate the existing (and projected future) demand and the implications of this for Spencer's Wood.

Table 6.2 – Implications for Proposed Development

Facility Type	Is existing infrastructure adequate?	Impact of Development	On Site Provision Justified?	Off Site Contribution justified?	Justification
Sports Halls	Consultation reported existing facilities to be adequate to meet current and projected future demand.	0.28 courts	No	No clear requirements as existing provision appears to be largely adequate in qualitative terms, but potential justification to maintain quality of existing facilities. Subject to updated BFS and further consultation.	No justification for on-site facilities as supply appears adequate Application of Local Plan standards does not justify need for on-site provision Qualitative improvements potentially required to ensure facilities continue to meet demand, this should be part of overall s106 discussions with the Council.
Swimming Pools	Consultation reported existing facilities to be adequate to meet current and projected future demand. New facilities have been developed, good local infrastructure already in place.	0.05 pools	No	No clear requirements as existing provision appears largely adequate in qualitative terms, but potential justification to maintain quality of existing facilities. Subject to updated BFS and further consultation.	No justification for on-site facilities as supply appears adequate. Application of Local Plan standards does not justify need for on-site provision Qualitative improvements potentially required to ensure facilities continue to meet demand, this should be part of overall s106 discussions with the Council.

Facility Type	Is existing infrastructure adequate?	Impact of Development	On Site Provision Justified?	Off Site Contribution justified?	Justification
Health and Fitness	Unknown. Subject to updated BFS and further consultation.	Excluded from calculators.	No	No	No clear evidence demand cannot be met, or that qualitative improvements are required. Application of Local Plan standards does not justify need for on-site provision.
Community Halls	Unknown. Subject to updated BFS and further consultation.	Excluded from calculators.	No	No	Application of Local Plan standards does not justify need for on-site provision.
Specialist Facilities	Unknown. Subject to updated BFS and further consultation.	Excluded from calculators.	No	No	No requirements from development have emerged to date.
Football	No. PPS identifies deficiencies in current and projected future provision. Gaps also in 3G AGP provision.	0.28 adult football pitches. 0.63 youth pitches and 0.67 mini pitches. 3G provision - 0.08 3G AGPs. Impacts of development are not significant.	Yes – given existing deficiencies, alongside impacts of growth, potential for on-site provision. Potential mix of grass pitch provision and 3G.	Depending on on-site options.	Evidence that provision is insufficient to accommodate demand from new development, given existing deficiencies in the area and impacts of growth. Demand equates to greater than 0.5 of youth and mini football pitches, so on site provision should be considered. Informal kick-about space could meet this need. Also potential for pitches on cricket outfield to link to 3G. Area deficiencies are however for adult pitches, so pitch configuration will need to be confirmed. Whilst significant demand for 3G and needs in the area, the scale of the development is insufficient to warrant on-site provision, in itself. On-site provision could however benefit the overall development and link into grass pitch provision. Potential for scheme to deliver 3G need and provide further <i>added value</i> . But may be better provided off-site as suggested by Sport England consultation comments and in-line with the council 3G strategy.

Facility Type	Is existing infrastructure adequate?	Impact of Development	On Site Provision Justified?	Off Site Contribution justified?	Justification
Cricket	No. PPS identified that there was no spare capacity in area. Participation growth means that this position is now likely exacerbated.	0.18 pitches	Demand from development cannot be met. But scale of development is not large enough to require on site provision.	Depending on on-site options.	Evidence that provision is insufficient to accommodate demand from new development, given existing deficiencies in the area and impacts of growth. Scale of development alone means on site provision is not necessarily justified, although still considered to be significant demand in the area and potential for scheme to deliver and provide <i>added value</i> .
Rugby Union	Yes in the area. All deficiencies in the North Area.	0.09	Demand from development can be met. Scale of development is not large enough to require on site provision	Yes to meet needs borough-wide.	Qualitative improvements to meet club needs identified in the north in-line with PPC.
Hockey	Yes – both current and projected future demand can be accommodated within existing infrastructure.	0.03 pitches	No. Capacity to accommodate demand that will be generated	Yes, are qualitative issues identified in the PPS	Qualitative improvements to meet needs identified in the north in-line with PPC.
Tennis	No – PPS identifies insufficient capacity to meet demand.	0.13 courts	No. Spare capacity to accommodate demand that will be generated	Yes, to invest in local club infra-structure	No clear rationale for on-site provision. Requirement however for contribution to support existing club infra-structure, in line with the tennis calculator.
Bowls	Current demand being met according to PPS.	Excluded from calculators.	No.	No clear requirements or mechanism for off-site contributions.	No clear rationale for on-site provision or mechanisms for off-site.
Netball	No demand according to PPS.	Excluded from calculators.	No.	No clear requirements or mechanism for off-site contributions.	No clear rationale for on-site provision or mechanisms for off-site.

- 6.20 Table 6.3 therefore suggests that based upon the evidence presented in Sections 4 and 5, alongside the impacts of growth that on-site provision can potentially be justified for football and cricket, alongside potential 3G provision.
- 6.21 However calculators suggest that with the exception of football, the development in itself will not generate enough demand to require significant on-site provision. With evidence that the existing facilities cannot sustain the additional demand, contributions will be required to support necessary improvements. This could be a better solution for 3G provision, in-line with the Council's 3G strategy and Sport England comments.
- 6.22 These sports where needs will be unmet however provide the opportunity to develop a package that *adds value* to the local community, by meeting and exceeding baseline requirements and delivering strategic need
- 6.23 There is justification for off-site contributions towards rugby union, hockey and tennis, alongside indoor provision. This will be part of the s106 negotiation process and considered against other requirements, subject to further consultation.
- 6.24 The above issues give rise to several options that could be provided as part of a sports strategy for the proposed Spencer's Wood development.
- 6.25 The key differences between the options is how needs for football and cricket are delivered. For football, there is evidence that the existing infrastructure cannot accommodate the demand that will be generated, and this is potentially sufficient to warrant the creation of new grass pitches (*with demand for both youth and mini football generated by the development equivalent to more than 0.5 of a pitch*). There is however a greater area need for adult pitches, so exact priorities will need to be agreed. There is also potential for on-site 3G provision, which would further impact on grass pitch needs and pitch configuration i.e., 3G provision may reduce the requirement for any on-site mini and junior provision.
- 6.26 For cricket, evidence from consultation also demonstrates that the new demand that will be generated may not be able to be accommodated. The new development will not contain enough houses by itself to require new cricket provision, however this also represents an opportunity to *add value*. With demand still high, the opportunity to provide an on-site cricket facility as part of the development may provide further provision in an area of need. This could be delivered in partnership with grass football pitches, which could form part of the outfield.
- 6.27 The options set out therefore vary from a package that delivers the minimum requirements – contributions that directly reflect the impact of the proposed development, to solutions that respond directly to the existing needs (that will be exacerbated by the proposed development) and add extra value, to meet local strategic priorities and make the scheme exemplar.
- 6.28 These are explored further in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 – Potential Options for Sports Strategy

Option	Package	Comments
1 – Minimum - Mitigating the impact of Development	- Off-site contribution to football, 3G AGP, rugby, cricket, hockey and tennis in-line with PPC - There is no on site requirement for indoor sport, and at present only limited evidence to suggest that off-site contributions are needed - Negotiation required in relation to indoor facility contributions (off site).	- Does not explicitly deliver football requirements - PPS deficiencies not addressed - Meets with other minimum baseline requirements - No extra value / benefits.

Option	Package	Comments
2 – Meeting Requirements	- On site grass football (to be defined) - Off-site contribution to 3G AGP - Off-site contribution to rugby, hockey, cricket and tennis - There is no on site requirement for indoor sport, and at present only limited evidence to suggest that off-site contributions are needed - Negotiation required in relation to indoor facility contributions (off site).	- Baseline package addresses the specific demand generated by the development - Small on site football facility, which can be flexibly marked to meet needs - No added value generated.
3 – Added Value – delivering strategic priorities	- Grass cricket ground on site - Football pitches provided on cricket outfield and as part of informal kick-about area - On-site 3G provision to meet strategic needs identified in the PPS - Off-site contribution to rugby union, tennis and hockey - There is no on site requirement for indoor sport, and at present only limited evidence to suggest that off-site contributions are needed - Negotiation required in relation to indoor facility contributions (off site).	- Football on site to meet existing and growth needs. Pitch configuration to be agreed with FA - Cricket needs that cannot be met are also delivered on site – this represents added value (<i>calculator shows impact of development to be less than a pitch</i>) - Responds to priority need identified by Parish Council and evidenced in PPS - On-site 3G to meet strategic needs identified in the PPS. Potential to be operated by the Town Council, who will operate alongside the grass pitches, with daytime links to the school.

- 6.29 Option 3 delivers on-site provision and reflects the evidence set out in this report and the development framework, although the on-site 3G is currently included to illustrate how it works in space and masterplanning terms and how it could be delivered if required on-site.
- 6.30 The brief that was set for the sports strategy to explore opportunities to add extra value, as well as to understand the baseline requirements. Options 1 and 2 provide the baseline requirements (with 2 most directly responding to the evidence available) while Option 3 responds to wider community benefit and respond to broader strategic need.
- 6.31 A sports strategy which encompasses option 3 therefore provides the opportunity to promote the development as making a strong contribution to sport and leisure and providing *added value* to meet sport and leisure needs and priorities.
- 6.32 Option 3 also responds to Local Policy, which requires between 1.486ha-1.723ha of on-site provision for outdoor sport. Option 3 puts forward 2.54ha as follows:
- Multi-Functional Open Space = 1.04 hectares
 - Floodlit 3G pitch (106 x 70m) = 0.87 hectares.

- Informal kick-about space = 0.63 hectares.

The multi-functional open space (marked 9 on the development framework) has been created to accommodate cricket and football flexibly, with the exact specification and configuration to be agreed with NGBs. On-site provision may off-set the need for off-site contributions and should be a consideration in s106 discussions.

- 6.33 The total of 2.54ha, exceeds existing and emerging Local Plan policies, as illustrated in table 6.4 overleaf.

Table 6.4 – Local Plan standards

Document	Policy	Policy Requirement	Requirement for 420 dwellings	Level Provided
Existing Policy				
Core Strategy	CP3 - Playing Field Provision (within overall open space provision)	1.67ha / 1000 population	1.723ha	2.54ha
DPD	TB08 - Playing Field	1.66ha/ 1000 population	1.71ha	2.54ha
Emerging Policy				
Submission Local Plan	HC4 Outdoor Sports Facilities	1.44ha per 1000 population	1.486ha	2.54ha

- 6.34 It is important to note that the provision of a new primary school as part of the proposed development also offers a potential opportunity to deliver further community value through facilities through the provision of a secured community use agreement, coupled with an effective design, which could include separate access to the school fields and the provision of accessible ancillary facilities. Whilst encouraged as part of Local Plan policy, early discussions with Sport England in relation to this scheme confirmed that they would not wish to see community use of the primary school as the only sporting benefit offered. There are considered to be significant limitations with community use at a primary school, and it was recommended that this was delivered to offer additional benefit only, rather than presented as part of the strategy to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.
- 6.35 If designed effectively, with separate access to the school fields (and the provision of accessible toilets), the school playing fields could function for curricular use during the week and become the home of a mini football club at weekends. It is recognised that there are challenges in providing community use of school sites, however Sport England provides guidance as to how facilities can be delivered effectively. <https://www.sportengland.org/funds-and-campaigns/use-our-school>

Implementing the Sports Strategy on the New Development

- 6.36 Option 3 offers added value, benefitting the existing local sporting community as well as meeting the needs of the new residents and strategic sporting priorities. Option 3 is reflected in the current development framework and exceeds Local Policy requirements. Option 3 has been consulted on and has fed into the development framework and is put forward as the preferred option, with the 3G included on-site to illustrate the potential.

Active Design

- 6.37 Alongside the provision of on-site sports facilities, and off site contributions, Active Design should be a key consideration of the development. The principles of Active Design will support the delivery of strong, sustainable connections with nearby neighbourhoods and with existing sports facilities.
- 6.38 Active Design takes a fresh look at the opportunities to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through the design and layout of the built environment to support a step change towards healthier and more active lifestyles.
- 6.39 Sport England have been consulted on the proposals and a response was received on 29th November 2024, which stated *'I have gone through your submission a couple of times , which seems fairly comprehensive. I have to admit there is a lot of the scheme I really like, as it does seem to have really embraced informal activity.'* Detailed comments have been built into this report and the Design and Access Statement (DAS) as appropriate, these include elements to be considered at detailed design change including the incorporation of low level lighting, PV and ground source heat pumps.

Summary

- 6.40 This paper has evaluated the leisure needs for the proposed development at Spencer's Wood. It considers both the adequacy of current provision, and the ability of the existing infrastructure to sustain the growth that is proposed in the context of the existing provision.
- 6.41 In order to arrive at the conclusions set out, we have used the Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy and checked and challenged these through consultation with Wokingham Council, Shinfield Parish Council and the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport.
- 6.42 We have also used both the Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC) and Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) in draft form, to determine the impact of the proposed development.
- 6.43 The preferred option set out in the Development Framework responds to needs and takes into account the demand that will be generated by the proposed development, alongside Active Design considerations.