

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL DRAFT MITIGATION STRATEGY

OCTOBER 2020

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL MITIGATION STRATEGY

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GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial grass pitch)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
CC	Cricket Club
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
KKP	Knight Kavanagh & Page
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFC	Rugby Football Club
RFU	Rugby Football Union

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MITIGATION STRATEGY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Mitigation Strategy for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, developed by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP). It has been commissioned by the Council following the allocation of numerous playing pitch sites for development in the Solihull Local Plan Review. This will now undergo a formal public consultation phase (for six weeks) following approval of a draft submission plan.

The proposed allocations that may impact on playing field land are as follows:

- ◀ Site 2: Frog Lane, Balsall Common
- ◀ Site 4: West of Dickens Heath
- ◀ Site 8: Hampton Road, Knowle
- ◀ Site 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)
- ◀ Site 15: Auckland Drive, Chelmsley Wood
- ◀ Site 16: East of Solihull (off Lugtrout Lane)
- ◀ Site 18: Sharman's Cross Road
- ◀ Site 20: Damson Parkway
- ◀ Amber Site: A6 Rowood Drive

In addition, although not proposed through site allocations, land at Land Rover Sports & Social Club may be lost through the planning application process as the playing field is required for future expansion of the plant and supporting infrastructure. Similarly, a new dual carriageway provided as part of the M42 J6 improvements is likely to impact on provision at Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association).

The purpose of the Mitigation Strategy is to ascertain the impact the allocations will have on the supply, demand and capacity of playing pitch sites before identifying how any permanent loss of playing field land can be appropriately mitigated. It has been informed via an update of the Solihull Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), completed in November 2019 (the original study was signed off in January 2017) as part of the Stage E process of Sport England's PPS guidance: an approach to developing a delivering a PPS, as well as through consultation with stakeholders for each allocation. This includes Council officers, landowners and developers.

Furthermore, the Strategy recognises the increase in playing pitch demand that is projected to derive from the allocations themselves as well as from wider housing growth in the Borough. Using this, the report is able to evidence what supplementary provision might be required to enable such additional usage to be accommodated. Overall, the Local Plan Review states that it will allocate sufficient land for 15,017 new dwellings for the period covering 2020-2036; this includes proposed additional allocations (5,270 dwellings), the UK Central Hub (2,740 dwellings), remaining Local Plan allocations (1,311 dwellings), existing planning permissions and windfall sites.

NB: Since this report was first drafted, the Council has begun to progress certain elements relating to the study based on its findings and as part of the Local Plan process. In addition, a further consultation exercise has been undertaken with relevant NGBs and clubs affected by proposals. For more information, please see Addendum 1.

PART 2: POLICY AND CONTEXT

This section of the report summarises policies and strategies that relate to the allocation of playing pitch sites for development. These should be considered and adhered to when proposing development on playing field land to ensure that there are no challenges. The overarching theme is that playing pitch sites cannot be lost for development unless appropriately replaced or unless certain exceptions are met.

Solihull Local Plan

Policy P20 in the emerging Solihull Local Plan recognises the importance and multi-functional benefits of public open space, sports and recreational facilities within the Borough, including playing pitch sites, and supports the enhancement of existing facilities. It states that “existing facilities that are of value to the local community for recreation, play and sports will be protected”. This is unless:

- i) It can be evidenced clearly that the open space or facilities are surplus to requirements and are no longer required to meet local need;
- ii) The land does not fulfil a useful purpose in terms of its appearance, landscape quality, recreational use, wildlife value or climate change mitigation/adaptation;
- iii) The proposed development provides equivalent or better replacement open space, sport, or recreation facilities in size, quality and accessibility within an accessible location for existing and potential new users; or
- iv) The development results in a substantial community benefit that clearly outweighs the harm resulting from the loss of the existing open space/facilities.

The existing policy P20 also seeks to protect playing pitch facilities, stating that “loss of existing facilities through development will not be permitted where they are of value to the local community for recreation”.

Solihull Playing Pitch Strategy

An up-to-date PPS provides the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions affecting the provision of outdoor sports facilities. The primary purpose of the PPS is to provide a strategic framework that ensures that the provision of playing pitches meets the local needs of existing and future residents within a local authority. It is produced in accordance with national planning guidance and provides robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision.

The Solihull PPS was completed in January 2017 and updated as part of the Stage E process in November 2019. Both the original study and the update report that the existing position for all included sports is that demand is either being met or that there is a shortfall, whereas the future position shows the exacerbation of shortfalls. This is evidenced in the headline findings table overleaf.

Given the identification of shortfalls, in accordance with Sport England’s Playing Field Policy (see below), the overall conclusion of the PPS is that there is a need to protect all existing provision until all demand is met, or there is a requirement to replace any lost provision. This should be through providing provision that is to an equal or better quantity and quality, before existing facilities are lost, or through providing alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which must outweigh the loss. Furthermore, replacement proposals must account for the entire hectareage of playing field land that is lost (also incorporating car parking, accompanying buildings and unmarked land), rather than just the playing pitches.

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Table 2.1: Quantitative headline findings from the updated Solihull PPS

Sport	Current picture	Future demand (2035) ¹
Football (grass pitches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Adult pitch demand is being met ◀ Shortfall of seven match sessions on youth 11v11 pitches ◀ Shortfall of 1.5 match sessions on youth 9v9 pitches ◀ Mini 7v7 pitch demand is being met ◀ Mini 5v5 pitch demand is being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of seven match sessions on adult pitches ◀ Shortfall of 17 match sessions on youth 11v11 pitches ◀ Shortfall of 5.5 match sessions on youth 9v9 pitches ◀ Mini 7v7 pitch demand is being met ◀ Shortfall of 1.5 match sessions on mini 5v5 pitches
Football (3G pitches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of nine full size 3G pitches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of nine full size 3G pitches
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of 93 match equivalent sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of 255 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of 10.5 match equivalent sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Shortfall of 16 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No current demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No future demand expected
Hockey (Sand AGPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Current demand is being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Future demand can be met
Other grass pitch sports ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Current demand is being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Future demand can be met
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Current demand is being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Future demand can be met
Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Current demand is being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Future demand can be met

Sport England Playing Field Policy

Sport England is a statutory consultee on developments impacting on playing pitch provision (and accompanying ancillary provision) and it will object to proposals unless at least one of its five policy exceptions is met. The exceptions are:

- ◀ **Exception One:** Excess of provision - a robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.
- ◀ **Exception Two:** Ancillary development - the proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.
- ◀ **Exception Three:** Land incapable of forming part of a pitch - the proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:
 - ◀ reduce the size of any playing pitch;
 - ◀ result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
 - ◀ reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
 - ◀ result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
 - ◀ prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

¹ Future demand based on Office of National Statistics (ONS) calculations and club consultation which also includes latent and exported demand.

² Includes Gaelic football provision

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- ◀ **Exception Four:** Replacement provision of equivalent or better quality and quantity - the area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:
 - ◀ of equivalent or better quality, and
 - ◀ of equivalent or greater quantity, and
 - ◀ in a suitable location, and
 - ◀ subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.
- ◀ **Exception Five:** New sports provision benefit outweighs the loss of the playing field - The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

Sport England will require any mitigation to be in place and operational prior to any playing field land being lost.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 97 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

Summary

In summary, there is clear national and local policy in place to guide the Council and developers in the approach needed when development results in the loss of playing field land. Given the findings of Solihull's PPS, it is also clear that no pitches can be deemed surplus to requirements in the Borough, meaning other policy exceptions need to be met to warrant development. It is therefore imperative that each playing pitch site that is subject to development is mitigated in accordance with the Council's planning policy, Sport England's guidance and the NPPF. This relates not only to the playing pitches but to the whole of the playing field area that is proposed for loss, including supporting infrastructure such as clubhouses, changing rooms and car parking.

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PART 3: ALLOCATION SUMMARY

The following section summarises how each allocation is likely to impact on playing pitch provision, establishing the hectarage of playing field land proposed for development and what pitches are currently provided. To inform this, a review of relevant consultation with key stakeholders is included.

For site allocation maps, please refer to Appendix 2.

Site 2: Frog Lane, Balsall Common

The allocation includes playing field land on Holly Lane, which is used as a detached playing field by Heart of England School. This covers 2.7146 hectares and contains one adult and youth 9v9 football pitch, both of which are assessed as poor quality. The pitches are available for community use and such usage, together with school use, results in capacity being reached.

Table 3.1: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 2

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Holly Lane (Heart of England School)						
2.7146	Football	Adult	1	Poor	1	1
		Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1

The allocation is for a 110-dwelling development. However, consultation with Richborough Estates and Star Planning confirmed that the housing proposal is exclusive of the playing field land. All provision will be retained, meaning no mitigation nor further consideration is required.

Site 4: West of Dickens Heath

West of Dickens Heath covers five separate playing pitch sites. These are:

- ◀ Highgate United FC
- ◀ Leafield Athletic FC
- ◀ Shirley Town FC
- ◀ Wychall Wanderers FC
- ◀ Old Yardleians RFC

Combined, the area covers 16.2684 hectares of playing field land and provides seven adult, two youth and eight mini football pitches as well as four senior rugby pitches. As such, it is considered to be a key location for both football and rugby in the Borough.

The provision across the sites is mixed, with some pitches considered good quality, some poor quality and the majority standard quality. Moreover, some pitches have substantial capacity remaining, such as the mini football pitches at Highgate United FC and the adult football pitch at Shirley Town FC, whereas others are overplayed, such as the rugby pitches at Old Yardleians RFC and the adult football pitches at Wychall Wanderers FC.

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Table 3.2: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 4

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Highgate United FC						
4.5506	Football	Adult	1	Good	3	2.5
			2	Standard	4	3
		Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2.5
		Mini 7v7	2	Poor	4	4
		Mini 5v5	3	Standard	12	1.5
Shirley Town FC						
1.9530	Football	Adult	1	Good	3	0.5
Leafield Athletic FC						
1.7013	Football	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	2
		Mini 7v7	2	Standard	8	1
		Mini 5v5	1	Standard	4	2.5
Wychall Wanderers FC						
2.1472	Football	Adult	2	Standard	4	5.5
Old Yardleians RFC						
5.9190	Football	Adult	1	Poor	1	3
	Rugby	Senior	4	Standard	8	10.5

Plans have previously been drawn up that involve the retention and repurposing of land for rugby use at Shirley Town and Leafield Athletic football clubs, with all football provision relocating to new playing field land to the north of Tythe Barn Lane. However, this was not deemed to be acceptable by either the FA or the RFU. Not only did the proposal involve a significant loss of playing field land, but the land retained was also too small to accommodate the needs of Old Yardleians RFC. The proposal was that the Club would be serviced by a full size 3G pitch and two junior grass pitches, which is insufficient to meet its peak time match play requirements. Moreover, a significant element of the land north of Tythe Barn Lane has been designated as a Local Wildlife Site, calling into question how deliverable it is.

Due to the above, alternatives have since been explored, led by Richborough Estates and Star Planning, to enable a 350-dwelling development albeit no formal proposal is in place. Various parcels of land have been identified to enable mitigation; however, the size has generally been insufficient. If land was to be retained at Shirley Town and Leafield Athletic football clubs and lost at the remaining sites, the overall loss of playing field would equate to 12.6168 hectares.

The potential mitigation of the playing field land is recognised in Solihull's Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP). There is a recommendation that the creation of two full size 3G pitches forms part of the replacement provision. However, it is worth noting that the creation of 3G pitches does not add anything over and above the area of land needed to provide appropriate mitigation. That is, one 3G pitch does not count for (say) two natural turf pitches even though there are obvious quality benefits of providing a 3G pitch.

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Site 8: Hampton Road, Knowle

This site incorporates Knowle FC, which plays in the football pyramid and is serviced by an adult pitch and a separate grass training area that doubles up as a mini pitch. The total area of playing field land equates to 1.6190 hectares. Both pitches are rated as standard quality, with the adult pitch significantly overplayed due to the large number of teams fielded by the Club despite limited provision.

Also included within the area is Knowle Village CC. The site covers 1.4512 hectares and provides a standard quality cricket square with 12 grass wickets. It currently has some spare capacity for an increase in usage.

Table 3.3: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 8

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Knowle FC						
1.6190	Football	Adult	1	Standard	2	7.5
		Mini 5v5	1	Standard	4	3.5
Knowle Village CC						
1.4512	Cricket	Senior	1	Standard	48	37

Consultation with Savills revealed that the proposal for 150 dwellings will result in the loss of the Knowle FC site, whereas the Knowle Village CC site will be retained. The Club is reportedly unwilling to be part of any relocation, meaning no mitigation is required. As a result, it is imperative that the proposed housing development does not prejudice the use of the site, particularly in terms of ball-strike issues which is becoming a frequent planning concern for cricket nationally.

Plans are already in place for the proposed loss of Knowle FC. The intention is for the Club to be relocated in a phased approach; firstly, a replacement stadia pitch will be established, serviced by limited clubhouse facilities and car parking, before additional pitches are created together with a permanent, purpose-built clubhouse. The initial phase will occur before the existing provision is removed and should ensure appropriate mitigation, whereas the second phase will be linked to dwelling occupation and will provide the Club with more hectarage, a greater number of pitches and better ancillary facilities than it currently has. The aspiration is also for a full size 3G pitch to be provided, as identified in Solihull's LFFP.

Land to the north of Hampton Lane has been identified as a potential option to enable the mitigation set out above. That being said, it must be noted that the development of pitches at this site may impact on a listed building albeit not directly (e.g. through earth moving). This could also present a problem in terms of enabling the housing development that will provide the Club with its additional provision.

The Club wants to stay within the Knowle area although it is open to exploring land around the wider vicinity, if necessary, such as in Dorridge.

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Site 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)

The allocation affects the playing field land servicing Arden Academy Trust, spanning 4.7526 hectares. This currently incorporates two poor quality adult football pitches that are available to the community but that are under-utilised and three standard quality senior rugby pitches that are unused by the community despite being available. In addition, a sand-based AGP (measuring 85x50 metres) and six macadam tennis courts are provided. These are also available to the community but receive little usage on account of not being floodlit.

Table 3.4: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 9

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Arden Academy Trust						
4.7526	Football	Adult	2	Poor	2	1
		Mini 5v5	1	Standard	4	3.5
	Rugby	Senior	3	Standard	6	0
	Hockey	Sand-based	1	Standard	-	-
	Tennis	Macadam	6	Poor	-	-

The playing field forms just one area of the allocation. There are plans for the School to be rebuilt within the wider confines of the site, with other areas developed for housing (600 dwellings). In addition, there is an identified need for a new primary school within the area, which could be co-located with the High School. Combined, these proposals are likely to result in the loss of some playing field land, although to what extent is currently unknown; some will undoubtedly need to be retained to service the School's needs.

Plans relating to the mitigation and the proposed site layout and facility mix have been developed, although these are at a very early stage and are liable to change. One aspect that developers are keen to explore is whether providing the School with improved sporting facilities as part of its rebuild will satisfy an exception to planning policy, in that the replacement provision could outweigh the loss of playing field land and be better for sport. Aspirations existed for a full size 3G pitch to be provided on the land that is retained, whilst provision of a swimming pool and a larger, improved sports hall were also being considered albeit the deliverability and need was questionable.

Site 15: Auckland Drive, Chelmsley Wood

Auckland Drive contains playing field land encompassing 1.6357 hectares, with one standard quality youth 9v9 football pitch provided. This is currently unused.

Table 3.5: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 15

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Auckland Drive						
1.6357	Football	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	0

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The current proposal is to develop a new Special School for 100 pupils on the site; however, consultation with the Council's Education Department identifies that there is significant sensitivity around this. As such, there are no current plans for the playing field land to be subject to development, meaning no mitigation planning is required at this stage.

Site 16: East of Solihull (off Lugtrout Lane)

The allocation covers playing field land at Lugtrout Lane, which services Coldland Colts FC. It provides six standard quality football pitches of various forms, with some level of spare capacity existing on each of them. The playing field site spans 2.6813 hectares.

Table 3.6: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 16

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Lugtrout Lane						
2.6813	Football	Youth 11v11	2	Standard	4	1
		Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	1
		Mini 7v7	1	Standard	4	1
		Mini 5v5	2	Standard	8	0

Previous mitigation plans involved relocating Coldland Colts FC to the North of the site, where Knowle & Dorridge CC is located; however, the site masterplan now indicates the retention of all playing pitch provision. As a result, no mitigation proposal is required and therefore no further consideration is deemed necessary. This has been informed through consultation with various stakeholders, including Tyler Parkes, DS Planning and Rosconn Group.

Site 18: Sharman's Cross Road

The site encompasses disused playing field land and car parking totalling 2.5588 hectares. When in use, two senior rugby pitches were marked out, previously servicing, until 2010, Birmingham & Solihull RFC (the Club now plays in Stratford on Avon). The Council owns the land that hosted this provision.

In addition, Solihull Arden Tennis Club is located adjacent. This covers 1.5813 hectares of land and features 13 good quality floodlit tennis courts.

Table 3.7: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 18

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Sharman's Cross						
2.5588	Rugby	Senior	2	Disused	-	-
Solihull Arden Tennis Club						
1.5813	Tennis	Artificial	13	Good	-	-

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As confirmed through discussions with Cerda Planning and Study Inn, the entire hectareage of land hosting the disused rugby pitches is proposed for development. The allocation is for 100 dwellings and a planning application has been prepared for 87 dwellings, although a proposal is also being considered to develop flats equating to approximately 500 units. The stakeholders report that they want the development to move quickly, stating that the playing pitch issue is currently holding up progress. Nevertheless, no existing mitigation proposal is in place and no replacement land has been identified.

In contrast, the land servicing Solihull Arden Tennis Club will be unaffected by the proposals. In fact, the Club could benefit from the scheme via improved access; the existing entry road is extremely tight.

Site 20: Damson Parkway

The allocation covers two playing field sites; Solihull Moors FC and Birmingham Exiles RFC. The former is serviced by a full size 3G pitch and a stadia adult football pitch over 3.8736 hectares of land, whilst the latter is serviced by three standard quality senior rugby pitches over 4.2125 hectares of land. The grass pitch at Solihull Moors FC has spare capacity, although this is intentionally retained given the level of football played, whereas the pitches at Birmingham Exiles RFC are considerably overplayed.

Table 3.8: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation 20

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Solihull Moors FC						
3.8735	Football	Adult	1	Good	3	1.5
		3G	1	Good	-	-
Birmingham Exiles RFC						
4.2125	Rugby	Senior	3	Standard	7	9.5

Following consultation with Barton Wilmore and Stoford, it is confirmed that the allocation includes the entirety of land occupied by Solihull Moors FC. This will therefore need to be mitigated, which the stakeholders are aware of although no plans are in place and no options have been considered. The site is a key location for football within Solihull, with the Club playing at National League level (Step 1). It has also grown its mini and youth section significantly in recent years. Furthermore, the existing site is situated within a small footprint for what is provided, meaning replication of this elsewhere may be problematic (additional space may be needed).

The land servicing Birmingham Exiles RFC is not included within the developable masterplan, meaning the site is expected to remain as is with no mitigation required.

Amber Site: A6 Rowood Drive

Rowood Drive contains lapsed playing field land (last used in 2011), covering 0.9503 hectares. When in use, it provided as many as six mini football pitches. It is owned by Lode Heath School.

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Table 3.9: Summary of playing field provision for site allocation A6

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Rowood Drive						
0.9503	Football	Mini 7v7	4	Lapsed	-	-
		Mini 5v5	2	Lapsed	-	-

The School has plans to sell the land for housing (30 dwellings) in order to fund improvements and enhancements to its gymnasium, as informed by the Council's School Asset Support Team, Capita and Urban Vision. Discussions focused on whether the proposed gymnasium refurbishment would satisfy planning policy given that the development could outweigh the loss and be better for sport, or whether like-for-like mitigation would still be required.

Although currently an Amber site within the Solihull Local Plan Review, latest information suggests that the site is likely to be put forward for development.

Land Rover Sports and Social Club

The playing field land encompasses 7.0882 hectares and comprises of four adult, one youth and one mini football pitch as well as one senior rugby pitch. All of the football pitches are rated as standard quality whereas the rugby pitch is assessed as poor. Each pitch is well used by the community and the venue is considered key by both the FA and the RFU. Despite some spare capacity existing, this is not available at peak time for the respective sports.

Table 3.10: Summary of playing field provision for Land Rover Sports and Social Club

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Land Rover Sports and Social Club						
7.0882	Football	Adult	4	Standard	8	6.5
		Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	1
		Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1.5	4
	Rugby	Senior	1	Poor	1.5	0.5

Consultation with Jaguar Land Rover confirmed plans for the entire playing pitch site to be lost in order to provide car parking spaces for employees. It is aware of the need to mitigate the loss and has previously explored enhancements to provision at Hillfield Park and Elmdon Park, although neither were considered feasible against planning policy as both already provide playing field land.

The development is considered time sensitive; the aspiration is for work to be complete by 2022. To achieve this, the intention is for a planning application to be submitted by spring 2021; this will enable a 12-month notice to be served to the Sports and Social Club on site, which currently has a lease agreement in place.

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Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association)

Plans to provide a new dual carriageway as part of the M42's Junction 6 improvements impacts on playing pitches at Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association). The site, which spans 6.0378 hectares, is deemed to be the principal Gaelic sports facility in the West Midlands, hosting three dedicated pitches that are serviced by eight changing rooms, a social area and a large car park. Numerous Warwickshire Gaelic football and hurling matches are played at the site, as well as the British University Gaelic Football Championships. Most recently, with the entry of Warwickshire's hurling team into the Lory Meagher Cup and the Leinster Junior Shield, it also regularly hosts fixtures against teams from Ireland.

No capacity guidance exists for Gaelic football pitches; however, anecdotal evidence suggests that the provision can currently accommodate demand as the facilities are substantial and good quality.

Table 3.11: Summary of playing field provision for Páirc na hÉireann

Hectarage	Sport	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current usage (match equivalent sessions)
Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association)						
6.0378	Gaelic football	Senior	3	Good	-	-

Despite several attempts, full consultation has been unsuccessful with Highways England in relation to the allocation. Nevertheless, initial indications are that the provision will be fully mitigated on a like-for-like basis as part of the wider development, exclusive of this study.

Summary

As evidenced, three of the proposed allocations are not expected to infringe on playing field land and therefore do not require consideration for mitigation. To clarify, these are:

- ◀ Site 2: Frog Lane, Balsall Common
- ◀ Site 15: Auckland Drive, Chelmsley Wood
- ◀ Site 16: East of Solihull (Lugtrout Lane)

Furthermore, mitigation of Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association) is expected to be delivered exclusive of this Strategy. This leaves the following seven allocations that are expected to impact on playing field land and that do require continued inclusion from this point onwards:

- ◀ Site 4: West of Dickens Heath
- ◀ Site 8: Hampton Road, Knowle
- ◀ Site 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)
- ◀ Site 18: Sharman's Cross Road
- ◀ Site 20: Damson Parkway
- ◀ Amber Site: A6 Rowood Drive
- ◀ Land Rover Sports and Social Club

The table below confirms the hectarage of playing field that is proposed for loss at each of the sites. However, it must be noted that the current loss for site allocation 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) is unknown.

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Table 3.12: Summary of playing field land within allocations

Site allocation	Site name	Playing field land proposed for loss (hectare)
4	West of Dickens Heath	12.6168
8	Hampton Road, Knowle	1.6190
9	South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)	Unknown
18	Sharman's Cross Road	2.5588
20	Damson's Parkway	3.8736
A6	Rowood Drive	0.9503
-	Land Rover Sports and Social Club	7.0882

The total proposed loss across the sites, where known, equates to 28.7067 hectares.

PART 4: MITIGATION OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Whilst in some instances the loss of playing field land can be mitigated through improvements or enhancements to existing playing field sites (or other sports facilities), this will, for the most part, be unacceptable in Solihull. This is due to the number of sites proposed for loss and the significant amount of hectarage that requires mitigation as well as the identified current and future shortfalls across most pitch types. Generally, replacement provision is required, as a minimum, on a like-for-like basis.

It must also be noted that the new playing pitch provision will need to be in place and useable before the existing provision is removed. This not only means that the new provision will need to be established, but also that the pitches will need to be “bedded in”. Where drainage improvements are required or where land needs to be cultivated and prepared, it can take a further 18 months before fixtures are able to be accommodated. Accounting for surveys, feasibility work and construction, some mitigation proposals will therefore need to commence up to three years before land can be released for development. As such, early strategic planning is a necessity to enable the developments to occur within the Local Plan period.

To facilitate replacement provision, where possible, it is advised that the allocations should be grouped together into areas to potentially enable the creation of hub sites. This will be more cost effective than mitigating all provision individually and will allow for large, good quality multi-sport sites to be established, rather than numerous smaller sites that will be less sustainable, uncomplimentary to each other and potentially inadequate to service required needs. Not only will the hub site model provide adequate mitigation (providing the sites are of a sufficient size), but it will also enhance the sporting landscape within Solihull, delivering against relevant sport and recreation policies, and provide space for wider amenity.

Notwithstanding the above, there is an acknowledgement that some clubs will have a need to remain independent despite the hub site recommendation. As such, there may be a requirement to mitigate some sites separately or develop distinct sections within a wider site to accommodate specific clubs, with such parcels then being serviced by their own clubhouse and other services. This should be decided on a case-by-case basis, primarily through consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Based on the make-up of the Borough, where sites are located and where general housing growth is proposed, the following four areas have been identified by the Council for the purpose of grouping the allocations together:

- ◀ Blythe
- ◀ East of Solihull
- ◀ Knowle/Dorridge
- ◀ Balsall Common

The table below identifies which area each allocation sits within. As seen, none of the proposed allocations fall within the Balsall Common area. The hectarage of playing field land to be lost within the Blythe area equates to 12.6168 hectares, whereas it amounts to 14.4709 in the East of Solihull area. The total cannot currently be determined in the Knowle/Dorridge area due to uncertainty around how much land will be lost at Arden Academy Trust; it could be anything between 1.6190 hectares and 6.4512 hectares.

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL MITIGATION STRATEGY

Table 4.1: Site summary

Hub site area	Site allocation	Site name	Playing field land proposed for loss (hectare)
Blythe	4	West of Dickens Heath	12.6168
East of Solihull	18	Sharman's Cross Road	2.5588
	20	Damson's Parkway	3.8736
	A6	Rowood Drive	0.9503
	-	Land Rover Sports & Social Club	7.0882
Knowle/Dorridge	8	Hampton Road, Knowle	1.6190
	9	South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)	Unknown
Balsall Common	N/A	N/A	N/A

The sub-sections below identifies the potential mitigation needs within each area and sets out potential options to be considered that could meet the requirements.

Blythe area

Although only one allocation is located within the Blythe area, the land requiring mitigation for site allocation 4: West of Dickens Heath is considerable, not only due to its large size but because it potentially impacts on five different playing pitch sites. Whilst previous proposals have involved the retention of land at Leafield Athletic FC and Shirley Town FC for use by Old Yardleians RFC, with all football provision relocating to land north of Tythe Barn Lane, this is not considered feasible. The size of the retained land is insufficient to meet the current and future needs of rugby, whilst the area identified for relocation equates to a substantial loss of playing field land. Furthermore, a significant part of the land identified for the relocation has been designated as a Local Wildlife Site, thus impacting on its deliverability.

Given the above, an alternative approach is required. To that end, if the land accommodating Leafield Athletic FC and Shirley Town FC is to be retained, it is recommended that the existing football provision is kept in situ. Both sites currently have enough pitches to meet demand and the quality of the provision is generally adequate albeit the changing facilities at Leafield Athletic FC require improvement. This will leave 12.6168 hectares of land requiring mitigation to offset the loss of Old Yardleians RFC, Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC.

The creation of a hub site to offset the loss of the three sites is seen as the best approach. If securing land large enough proves to be problematic, an alternative option could be to utilise two parcels of land, relocating Old Yardleians RFC to one whilst relocating Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC to the other. Not only is this likely to be more deliverable, but it may resolve issues that could arise if all three sites were to be merged, with football and rugby clubs often struggling to co-exist in terms of management and sharing ancillary space. The partnership of Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC is seen as a good fit as both clubs already share pitches, with youth teams from Wychall Wanderers FC currently accessing pitches at Highgate United FC's existing site.

As aforementioned, the starting point for mitigating playing pitches must be for it to be done, as a minimum, on a like-for-like basis, without an overall loss of land. In addition, it is also important that demand can be met on the supply of pitches provided within the hectareage.

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL MITIGATION STRATEGY

Old Yardleians RFC

If Old Yardleians RFC was to be mitigated separately to Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC, the Club requires access to at least 5.9190 hectares of land and requires access to four grass senior pitches, which is the same number it currently has. Whilst the Club's existing pitches are overplayed, the shortfall can be eradicated without the need for increased provision.

The table below summarises current capacity at the site.

Table 4.2: Capacity at Old Yardleians RFC

Site	Pitch type	Quality	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions		
				Capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Old Yardleians RFC	Senior	Standard	Yes	2	4	2
	Senior	Standard	No	2	2.5	0.5
	Senior	Standard	No	2	2	0
	Senior	Standard	No	2	2	0

Re-providing the pitches to a good quality has the potential to increase capacity by six match equivalent sessions (a good quality pitch has capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions). This will be enough to alleviate overplay on one of the pitches and reduce it to minimal levels on the other overplayed pitch. To achieve a good quality rating, it is imperative that a drainage system is installed, whilst a regular, sophisticated maintenance regime is also required.

Table 4.3: Capacity at Old Yardleians RFC (good quality)

Site	Pitch type	Potential quality	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions		
				Potential capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Old Yardleians RFC	Senior	Good	Yes	3.5	4	0.5
	Senior	Good	No	3.5	2.5	1
	Senior	Good	No	3.5	2	1.5
	Senior	Good	No	3.5	2	1.5

The pitch that remains overplayed does so because it receives heavy, concentrated usage from training demand; it currently accommodates all training demand due to the presence of floodlighting. Providing floodlights on another pitch would therefore enable such activity to be spread around, which would fully remove overplay as a result.

Table 4.4: Capacity at Old Yardleians RFC (good quality with additional floodlighting)

Site	Pitch type	Potential quality	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions		
				Potential capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Old Yardleians RFC	Senior	Good	Yes	3.5	3.5	0
	Senior	Good	Yes	3.5	3	0.5
	Senior	Good	No	3.5	2	1.5
	Senior	Good	No	3.5	2	1.5

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An alternative option to providing additional floodlighting is to provide a floodlit World Rugby compliant 3G pitch as part of the mitigation, which has been explored previously and is supported by the RFU. Such provision would be able to accommodate all training demand, freeing up capacity on the grass pitches and lessening the need for them to be floodlit.

Currently, the floodlit pitch at Old Yardleians RFC receives 4.5 match equivalent sessions of training demand each week. If transferred, in conjunction with pitches improving to good quality, spare capacity would exist on each pitch.

Table 4.5: Capacity at Old Yardleians RFC (good quality with no training demand)

Site	Pitch type	Potential quality	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions		
				Potential capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Old Yardleians RFC	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	1	2.5
	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	1.5	2
	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	2	1.5
	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	2	1.5

Given the resultant spare capacity, the creation of a 3G pitch may actually reduce the number of grass pitches required. In this scenario, all match play demand could feasibly be take place on two grass pitches, as shown in the table below. Although spare capacity is minimal, this does not account for the fact that the 3G pitch can also accommodate matches.

Table 4.6: Capacity at Old Yardleians RFC (two pitches - good quality/no training demand)

Site	Pitch type	Potential quality	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions		
				Potential capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Old Yardleians RFC	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	3	0.5
	Senior	Good	N/A	3.5	3.5	0

Three match suitable pitches (one 3G and two grass) is also sufficient when accounting for peak time demand. Each pitch would provide one match equivalent session of peak time capacity (totalling three), compared to 1.5 match equivalent sessions being required. At most, three teams are fielded on both Saturday mornings and Saturday afternoons, whilst the need for pitches for mini activity is less as matches are more infrequent and only a section of a full-size pitch is required.

Notwithstanding the benefits of providing a 3G pitch, it must be stated that this will not reduce the need to mitigate the overall hectareage of the Club's existing site on a like-for-like basis. Instead, the space created would be expected to contribute towards reducing other pitch shortfalls or would need to be retained as strategic reserve. The presence of a 3G pitch does not represent a capacity increase in terms of Sport England's Playing Field Policy and, therefore, any overall loss is still likely to be objected to. Furthermore, the creation of a 3G pitch is an expensive option when compared to the creation of a grass pitch and it is unlikely that the RFU will be in a position to contribute any funding.

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL MITIGATION STRATEGY

In addition to pitch requirements, consideration also needs to be given to ancillary facilities. The social nature of rugby means that substantial clubhouse space is required to include numerous changing rooms, a bar, kitchen, and function space. Such provision can also act as a significant income generator for rugby clubs, enabling them to be self-sustaining. As well as this, car parking needs to be considerable due to the number of visitors that are likely to attend matches, particularly at youth and mini level. Consultation with the RFU is therefore required to fully determine needs.

Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC

For Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC, re-providing existing provision to a good quality, within the same land requirements (6.6978 hectares), would also satisfy demand. Currently, the youth 11v11 pitch at Highgate United FC is overplayed, as are the adult pitches at Wychall Wanderers FC.

Existing capacity across all of the pitches is identified in the table below.

Table 4.7: Capacity at Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC

Site	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Match equivalent sessions		
				Capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Highgate United FC	Adult	1	Good	3	2.5	0.5
		2	Standard	4	3	1
	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2.5	0.5
	Mini 7v7	2	Poor	4	4	0
	Mini 5v5	3	Standard	12	1.5	10.5
Wychall Wanderers FC	Adult	2	Standard	4	5.5	1.5

Improving quality to good as part of the mitigation would alleviate all overplay and create some level of spare capacity on each pitch type.

Table 4.8: Capacity at Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC (good quality)

Site	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Match equivalent sessions		
				Capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Highgate United FC	Adult	1	Good	3	2.5	0.5
		2	Good	6	3	3
	Youth 11v11	1	Good	4	2.5	1.5
	Mini 7v7	2	Good	12	4	8
	Mini 5v5	3	Good	18	1.5	16.5
Wychall Wanderers FC	Adult	2	Good	6	5.5	0.5

As identified in Solihull's LFFP, providing two full size 3G pitches within the mitigation package is also an option. This has been explored previously and is a priority for the FA and the Football Foundation. The Football Foundation may also contribute funding towards the development of the pitches as, from its perspective, they would be seen as an enhancement, rather than replacement.

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Not only will the 3G pitches accommodate the training needs of the clubs (as well as other clubs in the locality) and reduce 3G shortfalls (the Solihull PPS identifies a shortfall of four 3G pitches in the area), it could also lessen the requirement for grass pitches. The excess space could then be utilised to reduce other shortfalls in the area or retained as strategic reserve to accommodate any future growth.

The FA is particularly supportive of mini match play taking place on 3G pitches and it is considered that all mini teams currently using the grass pitches at Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC could transfer demand. With an efficient programme of use, the FA model suggests that one full size 3G pitch can accommodate up to 16 home mini 5v5 teams on one match day, eight home mini 7v7 teams, or a combination of both. There are currently only 14 mini teams using the sites, meaning no mini grass pitches would be required if 3G provision was provided.

Whilst youth and adult teams could also utilise the 3G pitches for matches, such usage is unlikely to drastically lessen the need for grass provision due to peak time limitations. Multiple mini matches can be played at one time on a 3G pitch, which is generally not the case for youth or adult play. Furthermore, the opportunity to play matches back-to-back is more limited as kick-off times tend to be more rigidly applied. As such, one full size 3G pitch generally equates to one grass adult pitch, meaning two full size 3G pitches would result in two fewer grass adult pitches being needed (in effect, replacing the provision like-for-like).

Another factor to consider when mitigating the loss of Highgate United FC is the Club's status within the football pyramid, with its first team currently competing at Step 5. It is therefore vital that the Club is provided with facilities that not only enable it to continue playing at this level but that also allow it to progress if and when required. As such, providing facilities suitable for at least Step 4 football is advisable to guarantee short-term suitability (in the event of a promotion), whilst ensuring future developments can take place to allow for further progress should also be sought. This will future proof the mitigation package.

As with the RFU, consultation with the FA is required to determine what ancillary facility provision is required as part of the mitigation. There is a growing recognition that youth and mini teams tend not to use changing rooms, meaning the focus will primarily be on providing a clubhouse that can satisfy catering and social needs in order to provide the clubs with a base and an income source. Only Highgate United FC will require changing rooms to a high specification, given the level of football its first team plays at.

Old Yardleians RFC, Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC

As previously mentioned, mitigating all three existing sites together is seen as the best approach if land large enough can be secured (12.6168 hectares). This will then require a combination of rugby and football pitches to be provided, in accordance to the needs set out above. To summarise, this equates to the need for four senior grass rugby pitches (with two floodlit) or two senior grass rugby pitches and a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch as well as five adult, one youth and five mini grass football pitches or three adult and one youth grass football pitch and two full size 3G pitches.

If the 3G method is considered to be the preferred option for satisfying both football and rugby needs, further work is required to ensure the provision of three pitches at one site is feasible and sustainable. However, it is considered that this could be workable given that there is an identified shortfall of four pitches within the locality, although discussions are required with the FA and RFU to inform and confirm this. It may be that only two 3G pitches are desired, (provided at least one can be used for both sports) which would then increase the need for grass pitches.

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To overcome any potential issues with the clubs co-habiting, multiple clubhouse buildings may be required rather than a single facility, thus allowing the clubs to remain autonomous within the wider site. Specifically, one clubhouse may be required for Old Yardleians RFC, with a separate clubhouse then provided for the football clubs. This will allow the clubs to have their own manageable bases and will lessen the likelihood of any conflict. In effect, it will help separate the land into two distinct areas, although an access road and utilities, for example, could be shared. As a result, the cost of delivery will be less when compared to delivering the mitigation on separate parcels of land.

Including Leaffield Athletic FC and Shirley Town FC

A different method to mitigating the provision within the site allocation is to also include the land associated with Leaffield Athletic FC and Shirley Town FC. This would allow the existing land to be used for other open space or recreational needs, or it would increase the land available for housing and therefore secure a greater level of contribution towards the mitigation proposals. However, it would also increase the land required for the development of a hub site by 3.6543 hectares, which could be impractical in terms of securing land large enough.

If including the clubs as part of the mitigation proves feasible, notwithstanding the overall land requirement, it is possible that they could be amalgamated onto a fewer number of pitches compared to what they currently have access to. This is on the basis of the clubs co-existing with Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC. Only one team currently uses the pitch at the existing Shirley Town FC site, with sufficient capacity existing to accommodate this if the adult pitches at Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC were re-provided to a good quality. Similarly, seven of the teams using the existing Leaffield Athletic FC site are mini teams and therefore could be accommodated on the proposed 3G pitches. As such, only the youth 9v9 pitch at the current site would need to be re-provided.

Housing growth

Site allocation 4: West of Dickens Heath proposes the creation of 350 dwellings, resulting in an estimated population increase of 840 people (based on an assumed occupancy rate of 2.4 people per dwelling). Using Sport England's Playing Pitch calculator, the table below estimates the additional playing pitch demand this growth could create. This is on the basis that the increased population will produce the same ratio of demand for each playing pitch sport as the population of Solihull currently does (team generation rate).

Table 4.9: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from 350 dwellings

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 350 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ³	Training demand ⁴
Adult football	0.21	1.95 hours
Youth football	0.46	
Mini soccer	0.30	
Rugby union	0.09	0.11 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.08	0.23 hours

³ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

⁴ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and a suitable AGP for hockey.

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Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 350 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ³	Training demand ⁴
Junior & mixed hockey	0.04	0.08 hours
Cricket	5.86	- ⁵

Additionally, the calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 1.53 changing rooms to support the increased demand.

As seen, a 350-dwelling development is unlikely to require new, additional onsite provision, with demand not equating to the need for a whole pitch for any of the sports. Instead, improving quality and increasing the capacity within the mitigation proposals will be sufficient to accommodate the consequential growth in demand.

Summary

- ✦ As a minimum, mitigation is required to offset the loss of land at Old Yardleians RFC, Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC.
- ✦ Old Yardleians RFC requires at least 5.9190 hectares of land and four good quality grass senior pitches, with two floodlit, or a full-size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch and two good quality grass senior pitches.
- ✦ To mitigate losses at Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC, 6.6978 hectares of land is required. This needs to re-provide all of the existing grass pitches to a good quality, or two full size 3G pitches are required in replacement of two adult and all mini grass pitches (with all remaining pitches replaced to a good quality).
- ✦ It is imperative that the relocation of Highgate United FC provides the Club with facilities suitable for progression through the football pyramid to future proof provision (as a minimum, Step 4 facilities should be sought).
- ✦ Establishing a hub site covering at least 12.6168 hectares could offset the loss at all three sites; however, this could be problematic in terms of securing a site large enough. The alternative is to mitigate Old Yardleians RFC separately to the two football clubs.
- ✦ Provision at Shirley Town FC and Leafield Athletic FC could be retained in current form, whereas an alternative approach could include their relocation within the mitigation package for Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC. This would increase the land requirement by 3.6543 hectares but, if achievable, will free up the existing land for other open space and recreational needs, or for additional housing.
- ✦ Consultation is required with the RFU and FA to fully determine the ancillary facility needs of each club.
- ✦ Housing growth linked to the allocation is unlikely to result in demand that warrants additional pitch provision but reinforces the need to improve the quality of pitches to a good standard.

East of Solihull area

The East of Solihull area encompasses four site allocations that require consideration:

- ✦ Site 18: Sharman's Cross Road
- ✦ Site 20: Damson's Parkway
- ✦ Site A6: Rowood Drive
- ✦ Land Rover Sports and Social Club

⁵ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

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No existing proposals for replacement provision are in place for any of these sites, meaning new playing field land needs to be identified to enable adequate mitigation. To appropriately offset the loss, creating new playing pitch land of the same size (14.4709 hectares) is required to ensure support from the relevant stakeholders and limit any challenge that could come forward. As with all mitigation proposals, consultation is also required with the relevant NGBs to fully determine ancillary facility needs.

Damson Parkway (Solihull Moors FC)

Whilst a hub site approach should be explored, it may be considered practical to replace provision for site 20: Damson's Parkway on a separate parcel of land given the nature of Solihull Moors FC. This is a professional club playing at a high level, meaning it is not well-suited to sharing facilities with other clubs playing at a lower level; it must be provided with and have management of a stadia adult pitch with ground grading that is suitable for it to progress into the Football League (which is one promotion away). Furthermore, the FA will not agree to any mitigation unless the existing full size 3G pitch is also re-provided due to the importance of such provision.

Conversely, including the relocation of Solihull Moors FC within the mitigation package for the other allocations is possible; however, it is vital that the Club retains some level of autonomy as part of this. The land would need to be separated to provide it with its own distinct section and facilities.

To enable appropriate mitigation, not only will the existing playing field hectareage have to be mitigated (3.8736 hectares), additional land may be needed to provide for the additional infrastructure required to deliver a stadium development. This reflects the incremental growth of the Club and the restrictive nature of its current site, which is regarded as very tight, with limited flexibility. Moreover, the mitigation is likely to be relatively expensive compared to other sites due to the specification and level of facilities required.

Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club

The mitigation for Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club will more easily form a hub site (9.6470 hectares), although neither site is without its issues. For example, the developers of Sharman's Cross Road have been keen to explore whether any mitigation is required given that the two rugby pitches that were accommodated are now disused. However, this is likely to be irrelevant from a planning policy perspective, especially given PPS findings, which identifies shortfalls in the area. On this basis, it needs to be determined what pitch supply should be provided as part of the package to best reduce deficits.

There is a current shortfall of 4.5 match equivalent sessions on rugby pitches within the area and a future shortfall of 7.5 match equivalent sessions. This is due to three clubs playing in the locality, with two having overplayed pitches and one having security of tenure issues. Edwardian RFC has a shortfall of four match equivalent sessions at its site, whilst Camp Hill RFC has a shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions. Birmingham Civil Service RFC does not have any shortfalls, but it utilises a pitch at Land Rover Sports and Social Club, which is also impacted upon by this allocation.

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Table 4.10: Summary of rugby clubs within the area

Site	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Quality	Match equivalent sessions		
					Capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Birmingham Civil Service RFC	1	Senior	No	Poor	1.5	0.5	1
Camp Hill RFC	2	Senior	No	Good	3	2.5	0.5
		Senior	Yes	Good	3	5	2
Edwardian RFC	2	Senior	No	Standard	2.5	2.5	0
		Senior	Yes	Poor	1.5	5.5	4

If the two disused pitches were relocated and re-established as part of the mitigation package and made available to either Camp Hill or Edwardian rugby clubs, overplay would remain for both as the majority is created by training demand on floodlit pitches. The provision would therefore need to be accompanied by floodlighting in order to allow for training activity to be spread around. Nevertheless, whilst this would alleviate overplay issues, there is no guarantee that the clubs would be willing to access the provision. Due to the nature of rugby, many clubs are reluctant to access secondary venues due to cost implications and a perception that it detaches teams from a home base.

Given the above, a different solution could be for the mitigation to secure contributions towards establishing World Rugby compliant 3G pitches at one or both of Camp Hill and Edwardian rugby clubs existing sites. This will allow training demand to be transferred from their grass pitches and will also enable all teams to remain at their home sites. However, it must be noted that there is minimal football requirement for 3G pitches within the locality. This means that the sustainability of the pitches would be questionable on the basis of receiving rugby use only, although the provision would not necessarily need to be full size. Exploration is required with the RFU to understand if it would support the creation of 3G provision and also with Sport England to understand whether this would be seen as appropriate mitigation (meeting a policy exception). If deemed appropriate, it could lessen the land requirement for the mitigation package by up to 2.5588 hectares.

An alternative option is for the mitigation to instead establish replacement provision for the relocation of Birmingham Civil Service RFC, potentially simplifying options in relation to the loss of Land Rover Sports and Social Club in the process. Not only would such a proposal ensure the Club has access to good quality provision (it currently uses a poor quality pitch and has limited clubhouse and changing room access), it fields just one team and therefore only requires access to one pitch. This means that the space that would be occupied by the second pitch could be converted to reduce other pitch shortfalls in the area i.e. football. Although two rugby pitches were provided at Sharman's Cross Road, it does not mean two rugby pitches need to be provided as part of the mitigation (subject to RFU approval).

For football, there is a current shortfall of youth 11v11 pitches within the area and a future shortfall of youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 pitches. The establishment of a new pitch or new pitches should focus on alleviating this.

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Table 4.11: Football pitch capacity within the Sharman's Cross Road area

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions	
	Current capacity	Future capacity
Adult	6.5	4
Youth 11v11	2	3
Youth 9v9		0.5
Mini 7v7	0.5	0.5
Mini 5v5	0	1

If the mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road can adequately accommodate Birmingham Civil Service RFC's needs, the mitigation of Land Rover Sports and Social Club can then focus solely on providing football pitches and alleviating the shortfalls identified in the table above. Furthermore, as its rugby pitch will not be required, the space vacated by this can be used to further increase the stock of football pitches. This is acceptable from a planning perspective as the overall playing field hectarage (7.0882 hectares) will still be mitigated on a like-for-like basis.

The site currently accommodates four adult, one youth and two mini pitches that, although not at capacity, are well used and are key for the FA, which also runs various courses and activities from the site.

Table 4.12: Football pitch capacity at Land Rover Sports and Social Club

Pitch type	Number of pitches	Quality	Match equivalent sessions		
			Capacity	Current usage	Capacity rating
Adult	4	Standard	8	6.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	1.5	0.5
Mini 7v7	1	Standard	4	1	3

If the pitches were to be permanently lost, the capacity of football pitches within the area would be significantly affected. In fact, a shortfall would be created on each pitch type that is provided, substantially so in relation to adult pitches. This evidences the importance of the provision.

Table 4.13: Football pitch capacity without Land Rover Sports and Social Club

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions	
	Current capacity	Capacity without Land Rover Sports and Social Club
Adult	6.5	4
Youth 11v11	2	2
Youth 9v9		2.5
Mini 7v7	0.5	1.5
Mini 5v5	0	0

Whilst the provision of a full size 3G pitch could assist in reducing grass pitch shortfalls and lessen grass pitch requirements, there is currently a shortfall of just one 3G pitch for football within the area and Tudor Grange Academy is earmarked for eradicating this in the Solihull LFFP.

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As such, there is no apparent need for football 3G provision to be included as part of the proposal, unless a robust business plan can be created or unless support from the relevant football partners can be gained. In addition, a 3G pitch would further increase the cost of the mitigation package.

Rowood Drive

For the final allocation, the playing field land to be lost at Rowood Drive could be replaced as part of the creation of a hub site, together with the replacement land for Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club. The additional hectareage this provides (0.9503 hectares) should be used to establish supplementary football pitches to offset the loss of the existing lapsed pitches. The configuration of such provision should be informed by the aforementioned existing shortfalls and in consultation with the FA.

Alternatively, the stakeholders of the site are keen to explore whether improvements to Lode Heath School's gymnasium can offset the loss of playing field land, without replacement provision being required. With an increase in football pitches possible as part of the mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club, evidence suggests that the development may, in part, meet Sport England Playing Field Policy Exception 5, if contributions go towards delivering this as well as the gymnasium. This is because bringing the provision back into use is considered low value from a football perspective, particularly because the lapsed pitches are not accompanied by appropriate ancillary facilities.

Additionally, to further ensure a policy exception is met, consideration should be given to resurfacing the full-size hockey pitch at Lode Heath School. This currently caters for club demand but is rated as poor quality and has exceeded its recommended lifespan. Resolving its quality issues is identified as a key aspiration by England Hockey.

Housing growth

Combined, the site allocations within the East of Solihull area contribute housing growth of 130 dwellings and a presumed population growth of 312 people. This is relatively minimal, with neither the Land Rover Sports and Social Club nor the Damson's Parkway proposals involving housing developments. The Sharman's Cross Road development is for 100 dwellings, whereas the Rowood Drive proposal is for 30 dwellings.

Using Sport England's Playing Pitch calculator, the table below estimates the additional playing pitch demand the growth could contribute. This is on the basis that the increased population will produce the same ratio of demand for each playing pitch sport as the population of Solihull currently does (team generation rate).

Table 4.14: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from 130 dwellings

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 100 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ⁶	Training demand ⁷
Adult football	0.08	0.70 hours
Youth football	0.17	
Mini soccer	0.11	

⁶ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

⁷ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

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Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 100 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ⁶	Training demand ⁷
Rugby union	0.04	0.04 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.03	0.09 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.01	0.03 hours
Cricket	2.13	. ⁸

Additionally, the calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 0.56 changing rooms to support the increased demand.

As seen, a 130-dwelling development is unlikely to require new, additional onsite provision, with demand not equating to the need for a whole pitch for any of the sports. Instead, improving quality and increasing the capacity within the mitigation proposals will be sufficient to accommodate the consequential growth in demand.

Summary

- ✦ It may be appropriate to mitigate provision at Damson's Parkway (3.8736 hectares) separately to the other allocations given the nature of Solihull Moors FC and the facilities the Club requires. It is imperative that the Club is provided with a stadia adult pitch suitable for progression into the Football League (one promotion away), as well as a full size 3G pitch and sufficient space for the required supporting infrastructure.
- ✦ Mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club could form the creation of a hub site, if sufficient land can be identified (9.6470 hectares).
- ✦ Mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road is required despite its current disused status due to playing pitch shortfalls. Two senior rugby pitches could be provided to accommodate demand from Edwardian RFC and Camp Hill RFC given overplay of current provision; however, the clubs may be unwilling to transfer demand.
- ✦ A different approach could be to supply one or both of the clubs with World Rugby compliant 3G provision, if this can be supported by the RFU and Sport England. Alternatively, another option is to provide one senior rugby pitch for use by Birmingham Civil Service RFC, which will then free up space to also provide football provision to reduce local shortfalls.
- ✦ The football pitches at Land Rover Sports and Social Club require mitigation, as a minimum, on a like-for-like basis given the importance of the provision to local clubs and the FA. With rugby provision potentially not required, space will also exist for the creation of additional football pitches to better accommodate demand and to allow for increased usage.
- ✦ The playing field land to be lost at Rowood Drive could be replaced as part of the creation of a hub site, together with the replacement land for Sharman's Cross Road and Land Rover Sports and Social Club (adding 0.9503 hectares). Alternatively, it is possible that the mitigation can meet a policy exception through improving Lode Heath School's gymnasium and resurfacing the School's hockey pitch, subject to agreement with Sport England.
- ✦ Consultation is required with the RFU and the FA to fully determine ancillary facility needs within the mitigation package/s.

⁸ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

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- ◀ Housing growth linked to the four allocations is unlikely to result in demand that warrants additional pitch provision; the level of new housing is relatively low with two of the allocations (Damson's Parkway and Land Rover Sports and Social Club) being for employment purposes.

Knowle/Dorridge area

The Knowle/Dorridge area contains two allocations; site 8: Hampton Road and site 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle). Existing plans are in place for the former, whilst uncertainty exists for the latter as the exact loss of playing field land is still to be determined. Although the sites cannot be merged to create a hub site, it is considered that they should be intrinsically linked as, together, they can provide sufficient playing pitch land to satisfy all needs within the area.

For Hampton Road, the proposal is for Knowle FC to be relocated in two phases, with the first phase providing replacement provision and the second phase providing additional provision to better accommodate the Club, subject to the impact the development might have on a nearby listed building. With additional grass pitches, a full size 3G pitch and a purpose-built clubhouse proposed, these plans should be supported as they will more than mitigate what is set to be lost.

For South of Knowle (Arden Triangle), playing pitch land will likely be lost to enable Arden Academy Trust to be rebuilt within the wider confines of the site, which is also subject to a housing development proposal and the possible creation of a primary school. Whilst some playing field land may need to be replaced offsite as part of the mitigation package, it is imperative that enough provision is also retained on site to meet the needs of the School.

Provided sufficient provision is retained for use by the School, the excess provision that is proposed as part of plans for Hampton Road could be used to offset, or at least partially offset, what is going to be lost as part of the South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) proposal. To fully determine this, the exact loss at Arden Academy Trust needs to be established, as does the exact gain at Knowle FC. Combined, the sites need to provide 6.3716 hectares of playing field land.

A key challenge with this approach is that it links both developments together and adds an additional layer of potential negotiation to the playing pitch solution. It is likely that the Hampton Road developers will require funding from the South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) proposal in order to deliver the combined mitigation.

In addition to ensuring land requirements are met, ensuring a sufficient number of football pitches are provided across the two sites is also seen as key. Currently, 25 teams are split across the two sites (all fielded by Knowle FC). On the assumption that all the mini teams play on the proposed 3G pitch (which is possible), the table below identifies what grass pitch requirements remain.

Table 4.15: Pitch requirements for Knowle FC

Pitch type	Number of teams	Teams accommodated at peak time	Pitches required
Adult	3	2	1
Youth 11v11	3	3	2
Youth 9v9	4	4	2

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As seen, one adult, two youth 11v11 and two youth 9v9 pitches are required, although the full size 3G pitch will account for one of these (meaning four adult/youth grass pitches are needed). As long as this number is provided to a good quality across the relocated Knowle FC site and the Arden Academy Trust site following the School's rebuild, all current demand can be adequately accommodated. Consultation is required with the FA to determine what ancillary provision is required to support the provision and what the exact pitch configuration should be at both sites.

If 6.3716 hectares of playing field land is not provided across the two allocations, the stakeholders for South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) are keen to explore whether providing improved sports facilities as part of the school's rebuild can meet a Sport England Playing Field Policy exception (specifically, exception 5). Aspirations are held for a new swimming pool and an improved sports hall to be established, although the need for the former is questionable as is the deliverability. As such, making this case is not advisable.

It has also been suggested that the existing sand-based AGP at Arden Academy Trust could be expanded and converted to 3G as part of the school's redevelopment; however, this is not considered feasible. A 3G pitch is proposed as part of Knowle FC's relocation and this is preferred by the FA (and included in Solihull's LFFP). Having two 3G pitches within such close proximity is not desirable as they will be competing for the same market, thus impacting on sustainability. Moreover, there is not enough demand in the locality to support the creation of two pitches.

Housing growth

Combined, the site allocations within the Knowle/Dorridge area contribute housing growth of 750 dwellings and a presumed population growth of 1,800 people. Site allocation 8: Hampton Road is proposed for a 150-dwelling development, whilst site allocation 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) is proposed for a 600-dwelling development.

Using Sport England's Playing Pitch calculator, the table below estimates the additional playing pitch demand the growth could contribute. This is on the basis that the increased population will produce the same ratio of demand for each playing pitch sport as the population of Solihull currently does (team generation rate).

Table 4.16: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from 750 dwellings

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 600 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ⁹	Training demand ¹⁰
Adult football	0.44	3.52 hours
Youth football	0.95	
Mini soccer	0.55	
Rugby union	0.17	0.20 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.14	0.42 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.07	0.15 hours

⁹ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

¹⁰ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

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Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 600 dwellings	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ⁹	Training demand ¹⁰
Cricket	10.51	- ¹¹

Additionally, the calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 3.26 changing rooms to support the increased demand.

Whilst the increase in population derived from the allocations is somewhat significant, the overall increase in demand for playing pitches is still minimal, with only football demand potentially warranting additional provision. As such, contributions will be required to enable the creation of the additional grass pitches and/or 3G pitch proposed. This will increase capacity to a sufficient level to accommodate the consequential growth in demand.

Summary

- ◀ Existing mitigation plans for site allocation 8: Hampton Road should be supported given that it will increase the playing field land and pitch supply within the area.
- ◀ Given the excess provision that is proposed as part of plans for Hampton Road, this could be used to offset, or at least partially offset, what is going to be lost as part of the South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) allocation. Combined, the sites need to provide 6.3716 hectares of playing field land, although it is imperative that this includes enough provision on site at Arden Academy Trust to meet the needs of the School.
- ◀ The land across the two sites needs to provide four good quality adult/youth grass pitches to meet current demand, in addition to the proposed full size 3G pitch. This needs to be agreed between both developments and the subsequent financial arrangements need to be signed up to.
- ◀ Once playing field land hectareage has been determined, consultation is required with the FA to fully determine what pitch configuration should be sought at both sites, as well as what ancillary provision is required to support the provision.
- ◀ Arguing that the re-build of Arden Academy Trust meets a policy exception is not advisable at present as the need for the improvements proposed is questionable.
- ◀ Whilst the increase in population derived from the allocations is somewhat significant, the overall increase in demand for playing pitches is still minimal, with only football demand potentially warranting additional provision.

Balsall Common area

There are no allocations within the Balsall Common area that require mitigation, meaning no action is required at this stage. However, that is not to say that there is no need for a hub site to be developed, or for improvements to be made to existing provision. There is wider housing growth proposed within the locality, meaning demand for playing pitches could increase to a level that requires investment. The next section of this report explores this further.

¹¹ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

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PART 5: HOUSING GROWTH

Creating new playing field land as part of the mitigation process is not only able to replace provision that is lost, but it may also provide an opportunity to ensure that participation increases derived from wider housing growth can be accommodated. This section of the study shows how this might be possible and identifies what increased provision may be required as a consequence of taking this approach.

With the Solihull Local Plan Review identifying housing growth equating to 15,765 new dwellings up to 2030, each allocation is likely to result in enhanced playing pitch demand to a greater or lesser extent. Ordinarily, playing pitch needs linked to housing growth would be dealt with individually for each development when a planning application is submitted, or for a group of developments within a locality. Dependent on the level of growth, this would then lead to new provision being created within or nearby to a development, or contributions would go towards the improvement and/or enhancement of existing sites in the area.

An alternative method is to determine what playing pitch increases will be required to support the increased demand and incorporate this into the Mitigation Strategy, particularly where the creation of hub sites are proposed. This will help future proof the supply, lessen the planning requirements for future developments, further enhance the sporting landscape within Solihull and enable additional contributions to be sought towards the establishment of such provision. It potentially provides a more wholesome approach to playing pitch needs, with isolated thinking often resulting in new, unsustainable sites being created that are low value and underused, or in contributions going towards sites that are less in need when compared to others.

Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator provides a tool for determining likely increases in playing pitch demand linked to housing growth, using team generation rates from the PPS to determine how many new teams are likely to be generated for each relevant sport. It then provides the associated costs of delivering what is required to cater for the demand, which can then be used as a starting point when negotiating what contribution should be requested from developers. There is an expectation from Sport England that the calculator should be used as a guide by local authorities with a robust PPS in place.

For the purposes of the Mitigation Strategy, it is advised that the calculator is used to group allocations together into the four areas of Blythe, East of Solihull, Knowle/Dorridge and Balsall Common, where possible. This is because these are the areas under consideration for replacing the playing pitch provision that is allocated for development. To that end, the table below identifies the allocations that fall within each area, excluding those with existing planning permission, as well as those that directly impact on playing field land as these have already been factored into earlier sections of this report.

Table 5.1: Summary of housing allocations by area

Area	Allocation	Number of dwellings
Blythe	11	640
	12	1,000
	26	300
	Windfalls	783
East of Solihull	6	100
	16	600
	17	200
	24	80
	Windfalls	888

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Area	Allocation	Number of dwellings
Knowle/Dorridge	25	100
	Windfalls	321
Balsall Common	1	990
	2	110
	3	220
	10	100
	21	100
	22	300
	23	60
	Windfalls	285

In total, the increased number of dwellings requiring consideration across the four areas totals 7,177. Broken down, this equates to 2,723 dwellings in Blythe, 1,868 dwellings in East of Solihull, 421 dwellings in Knowle/Dorridge and 2,165 dwellings in Balsall Common.

For more information in relation to Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator and its implementation, please see Appendix 1.

Blythe

The total number of dwellings requiring consideration in the Blythe area is 2,723, which equates to a population growth of 6,535 people (2.4 people per dwelling). The following table identifies the playing pitch demand likely to derive from this level of growth, both in terms of match play and training.

Table 5.2: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from housing growth in Blythe

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ¹²	Training demand ¹³
Adult football	1.58	14.52 hours
Youth football	3.39	
Mini soccer	2.29	
Rugby union	0.69	0.80 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.59	1.78 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.27	0.61 hours
Cricket	40.72	~ ¹⁴

The table below translates the estimated demand into new pitch requirements and identifies the associated capital and lifecycle costs of creating the provision. As evidenced, the overall capital cost is £1,273,969, whilst the overall lifecycle cost is £182,997 per annum. This can be used as a starting point when negotiating the level of contribution that can be acquired from developers.

Further to the above, the Calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 11.62 changing rooms to support the provision, the cost of which is estimated at £1,856,323.

¹² As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

¹³ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

¹⁴ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

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Table 5.3: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision in Blythe

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches		
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ¹⁵	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) ¹⁶
Natural Grass Pitches			
Adult football	(2) 1.58	£148,444	£31,322
Youth football	(3) 3.39	£238,724	£50,132
Mini soccer	(2) 2.29	£53,882	£11,315
Rugby union	(1) 0.69	£90,922	£19,457
Rugby league	0	£0	£0
Cricket	(1) 0.94	£261,964	£52,917
Artificial Grass Pitches			
Sand based AGPs	(0) 0.16	£124,533	£3,861
3G	(0) 0.38	£355,499	£13,993

As evidenced, population growth derived from housing allocations in the area is likely to result in increased demand for all pitch types (with the exception of rugby league). This demand is somewhat substantial for adult, youth and mini football, whilst significant demand is also likely to exist for rugby and cricket provision. Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

Whilst the calculator identifies the need for new pitch provision, it is possible that existing provision can accommodate the projected increase in usage. In some instances, instead of developing new pitches, it is possible for contributions to go towards improving or enhancing existing sites. This is on the basis that the investment can increase and sustain capacity to a level that can cater for the additional demand without it creating or exacerbating shortfalls. Rarely, it is also possible that existing provision has sufficient capacity to accommodate all of the additional demand, without improvements and therefore contributions being required.

Given the above, it is now appropriate to consider whether the projected growth in the Blythe area can be accommodated on the existing supply of relevant pitches within the locality or as part of the mitigation packages proposed. The table below therefore identifies current pitch shortfalls in the area and the impact the increased demand from housing would have on this.

Table 5.4: Supply/demand analysis of pitches within the Blythe area

Sport	Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions	
		Current supply/demand balance	Future supply/demand balance
Football	Adult	9.5	11.08
	Youth	0.5	3.89
	Mini	2.5	0.21
Cricket	Senior	1	1.94
Rugby	Senior	3	3.69

¹⁵ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

¹⁶ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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As seen, only demand for mini football can be adequately accommodated on the existing pitch supply, suggesting that new provision is required to cater for all other formats of play or that contributions are required to improve/enhance existing facilities. As part of this, contributions could go towards enabling the mitigation proposals within the area as well as adding provision to them, if required.

For adult football, the existing proposal for the mitigation of Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC is for the clubs to be re-provided with their current number of pitches and for these pitches to be developed to a good quality. It is projected that this will create four match equivalent sessions of spare capacity, which will be sufficient to accommodate the increase in demand derived from the housing growth (1.58 match equivalent sessions). Therefore, contributions should go towards enabling this.

There is a projected creation of 1.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity on youth pitches as part of the mitigation proposals for Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC. Whilst this would cater for some of the increased demand identified, it would leave 1.89 match equivalent sessions unprovided for, suggesting that two additional youth pitches are required. However, this could be reduced by one if contributions could also go towards improving the retained provision at Leaffield Athletic FC as this would create one additional match equivalent session of spare capacity. If Leaffield Athletic FC was to be included within the mitigation package, ensuring the pitch is re-provided to a good quality will have the same effect.

With no new pitches proposed for cricket as part of the mitigation, there is a possibility that a new square will be required to accommodate the increased demand. However, with only 40.72 match equivalent sessions needing to be accommodated, there is an option to improve existing provision within the locality to provide sufficient capacity. Squares at Dickens Heath Sports Club, Earlswood CC and Woodbourne Sports Club are all currently overplayed, but quality improvements would alleviate this. Furthermore, the square at Grove Lane currently has spare capacity for an increase in peak time demand, providing 30 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. The creation of a new cricket square as a result of housing growth is often not advisable, unless the demand is sizeable. This is because it is likely that the increased demand will be absorbed by existing clubs that will not want to access secondary venues, rather than new clubs being formed.

For rugby, 7.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity are projected to exist if Old Yardleians is provided with four good quality pitches as part of its relocation (with two floodlit). This would be more than sufficient to accommodate the projected growth in demand linked to the wider housing allocations. The increase could also be accommodated if a full size 3G pitch is provided instead of two of the grass pitches, provided enough match play demand transferred to the 3G provision. Contributions should therefore go towards enabling the mitigation.

Summary

- ◀ An increase in adult football demand can be accommodated within the existing mitigation proposals.
- ◀ There is a need for two new youth football pitches to be created, or a need for one new pitch in conjunction with improving quality on the youth pitch at Leaffield Athletic FC.
- ◀ All mini football demand can be accommodated on the current stock of pitches.
- ◀ There may be a need for a new cricket square; however, improving existing squares in the locality and using spare capacity at Grove Lane offers a more sustainable approach.
- ◀ The mitigation proposal for Old Yardleians RFC will provide enough spare capacity to accommodate the projected growth in rugby demand.

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- Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

East of Solihull

The total number of dwellings requiring consideration in the East of Solihull area is 1,868, which equates to a population growth of 4,483 people (2.4 people per dwelling).

Table 5.5: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from housing growth in East of Solihull

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ¹⁷	Training demand ¹⁸
Adult football	1.08	9.69 hours
Youth football	2.32	
Mini soccer	1.57	
Rugby union	0.47	0.55 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	
Adult hockey	0.41	1.22 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.19	0.42 hours
Cricket	30.54	-. ¹⁹

The overall capital cost of providing the provision to meet the demand is £873,941, whilst the overall lifecycle cost is £125,535 per annum. In addition, the calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 7.97 changing rooms to support the provision, the cost of which is estimated at £1,273,435.

Table 5.6: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision in East of Solihull

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches		
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ²⁰	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) ²¹
Natural Grass Pitches			
Adult football	(1) 1.08	£101,832	£21,487
Youth football	(2) 2.32	£163,764	£34,390
Mini soccer	(2) 1.57	£36,963	£7,762
Rugby union	(0) 0.47	£62,372	£13,348
Rugby league	0	£0	£0
Cricket	(1) 0.65	£179,707	£36,372
Artificial Grass Pitches			
Sand based AGPs	(0) 0.11	£85,430	£2,648
3G	(0) 0.26	£243,872	£9,599

¹⁷ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

¹⁸ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

¹⁹ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

²⁰ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

²¹ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Population growth derived from housing allocations in the East of Solihull area is likely to result in increased demand for all pitch types (with the exception of rugby league). This demand is somewhat substantial for adult, youth and mini football, whilst significant demand is also likely to exist for cricket provision. Although residual demand is created for rugby, hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

The table below identifies current, relevant pitch shortfalls within the area and the impact the increased demand from housing growth would have on this.

Table 5.7: Supply/demand analysis of pitches within the East of Solihull area

Sport	Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions	
		Current supply/demand balance	Future supply/demand balance
Football	Adult	6.5	5.42
	Youth	2	4.32
	Mini	0.5	1.07
Cricket	Senior	10	40.54

As evidenced, demand for adult football can be adequately accommodated on the existing pitch supply. New provision is required to cater for the remaining demand, or contributions are required to improve/enhance existing facilities.

Given that land will exist for additional football pitches to be established as part of the proposed mitigation of Land Rover Sports and Social Club and Sharman's Cross Road (as fewer rugby pitches are required), and given that the existing pitches at the sites are not overplayed, utilising the space for the creation of additional youth and mini pitches is considered to be the best approach. If two additional youth pitches and one additional mini pitch can be provided, demand from the housing growth could be accommodated. As such, contributions should go towards enabling this.

With no new pitches proposed for cricket as part of the mitigation, there is a possibility that a square will be required for the increased demand. However, with only 30.54 match equivalent sessions needing to be accommodated, there is an option to improve existing provision within the locality to provide sufficient capacity. Additional capacity would be created by improving quality at sites such as Solihull Municipal Club and Moseley Cricket Club, whilst capacity of 14 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity already exists at Tudor Grange Academy.

Whilst not enough demand is likely to be generated from the housing growth for additional rugby provision, it must be noted that there are significant rugby pitch shortfalls in the area. As such, to accommodate what residual demand will be created, contributions should be sought towards the creation of a pitch as part of the mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road, or towards improving quality or creating 3G provision at Camp Hill RFC and Old Edwardians Sports Club (dependent on which approach is taken).

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Summary

- ◀ An increase in adult football demand can be accommodated on the existing supply of pitches within the area.
- ◀ Utilising the additional space created as part of the mitigation proposal for Land Rover Sports and Social Club and Sharman's Cross Road for the creation of youth and mini football pitches will satisfy an increase in demand for these pitch types.
- ◀ There may be a need for a new cricket square; however, improving existing squares in the locality and using spare capacity at Tudor Grange Academy offers a more sustainable approach.
- ◀ Whilst not enough demand is likely to be generated from the housing growth for additional rugby provision, there are significant pitch shortfalls in the area. Contributions should therefore be sought towards the creation of the pitch as part of the mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road and/or towards improving quality or creating 3G provision at Camp Hill RFC and Old Edwardians Sports Club.
- ◀ Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

Knowle/Dorridge

There are 421 dwellings requiring consideration in the Knowle/Dorridge, which equates to a population growth of 1,010 people (2.4 people per dwelling).

Table 5.8: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from housing growth in Knowle/Dorridge

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ²²	Training demand ²³
Adult football	0.24	2.24 hours
Youth football	0.52	
Mini soccer	0.35	
Rugby union	0.11	0.12 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.09	0.27 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.04	0.09 hours
Cricket	6.88	-. ²⁴

The overall capital cost of providing the provision to meet the demand is £196,895, whilst the overall lifecycle cost is £196,895 per annum. In addition, the calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 1.81 changing rooms to support the provision, the cost of which is estimated at £286,899.

²² As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

²³ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

²⁴ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

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Table 5.9: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision in Knowle/Dorridge

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches		
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ²⁵	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) ²⁶
Natural Grass Pitches			
Adult football	(0) 0.24	£22,942	£4,841
Youth football	(1) 0.52	£36,895	£7,748
Mini soccer	(0) 0.35	£8,328	£1,749
Rugby union	(0) 0.11	£14,052	£3,007
Rugby league	0	£0	£0
Cricket	(0) 0.15	£40,487	£8,178
Artificial Grass Pitches			
Sand based AGPs	(0) 0.02	£19,247	£597
3G	(0) 0.06	£54,943	£2,163

As the level of proposed housing growth is relatively minimal, the increase in demand derived from allocations in the Knowle/Dorridge area is only likely to result in the need for additional youth football pitch access. The level of growth for other pitch types is unlikely to result in additional teams being formed and therefore there will no impact on the existing supply of provision.

With existing youth pitch shortfalls in the area, there may be a need to include an additional youth pitch as part of the mitigation proposals for Knowle FC and Arden Academy Trust. However, the pitch supply currently identified as being in need across the two sites includes two youth 11v11 pitches to meet 1.5 match equivalent sessions of peak time demand. This leaves 0.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity, which could be used to accommodate the increased demand.

Given the above, securing contributions to assist in the delivery of the mitigation proposals is considered to be sufficient.

Summary

- ◀ Demand derived from housing growth in the area will result in increased demand for youth football pitch access; however, the level of growth for other pitch types is unlikely to result in additional teams being formed.
- ◀ The pitch supply identified as being in need to enable mitigation of Knowle FC and Arden Academy Trust includes two youth 11v11 pitches to meet 1.5 match equivalent sessions of peak time demand; this leaves 0.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity.
- ◀ As such, securing contributions to assist in the delivery of the mitigation proposals is considered to be sufficient.

Balsall Common

The total number of dwellings requiring consideration in Balsall Common is 2,165, which equates to a population growth of 5,196 people (2.4 people per dwelling).

²⁵ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

²⁶ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Table 5.10: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from housing growth in Balsall Common

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (match equivalent sessions) ²⁷	Training demand ²⁸
Adult football	1.26	11.54 hours
Youth football	2.69	
Mini soccer	1.82	
Rugby union	0.55	0.64 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	-
Adult hockey	0.47	1.41 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.22	0.48 hours
Cricket	35.40	_ ²⁹

The overall capital cost of providing the provision to meet the demand is £1,012,937, whilst the overall lifecycle cost is £145,501 per annum. Moreover, the Calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 9.24 changing rooms to support the provision, the cost of which is estimated at £1,475,969.

Table 5.11: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision in Balsall Common

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches		
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ³⁰	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) ³¹
Natural Grass Pitches			
Adult football	(1) 1.26	£118,028	£24,904
Youth football	(3) 2.69	£189,810	£39,860
Mini soccer	(2) 1.82	£42,842	£8,997
Rugby union	(1) 0.55	£72,292	£15,471
Rugby league	0	£0	£0
Cricket	(1) 0.75	£208,288	£42,074
Artificial Grass Pitches			
Sand based AGPs	(0) 0.13	£99,017	£3,070
3G	(0) 0.30	£282,659	£11,126

As evidenced, population growth derived from housing allocations in the Balsall Common area is likely to result in increased demand for all pitch types (with the exception of rugby league). This demand is somewhat considerable for adult, youth and mini football, whilst increased pitch access is also likely in relation to rugby and cricket provision. Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitches, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

²⁷ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for football, rugby and hockey is per week; cricket is per season.

²⁸ Equates to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch for football, floodlit natural grass pitch for rugby union and suitable AGP for hockey.

²⁹ Training for cricket is considered to take place away from playing provision (e.g. via practice nets) so is not included

³⁰ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

³¹ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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With no existing playing pitch sites requiring mitigation within the area, one option is to create a hub site to provide the necessary provision to cater for the identified demand. Alternatively, contributions could be sought to improve/enhance existing sites in the locality to a level that can accommodate the increase in demand, or a combination of both could be delivered.

If a hub site was to be created to accommodate all demand, it would require the following:

- ◀ One adult football pitch
- ◀ Three youth football pitches
- ◀ Two mini football pitches
- ◀ One senior rugby pitch
- ◀ One cricket square

With substantial football pitch shortfalls existing in the area, it is advisable for new football pitch provision to be created. This could not only accommodate the increase in demand derived from the housing growth, but it could also assist in eradicating overplay at other sites in the locality via the transfer of demand. There is a current shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches and 0.5 match equivalent sessions on youth pitches.

Creating a new rugby pitch is not advisable due to the nature of the sport. It is likely that the increase in demand will be absorbed into existing clubs, rather than a new club being formed, and such clubs are unlikely to want access to a secondary site. Instead, contributions should be acquired to improve existing provision in the locality, such as at Old Silhillians Sports Club, which has overplayed pitches.

Similarly, cricket demand is likely to be absorbed into existing clubs. Contributions could therefore be sought to improve overplayed sites such as the John Woolman Ground. Furthermore, the square at Grove Lane is in close proximity and has spare capacity for an increase in demand.

Summary

- ◀ New football pitches should be created to satisfy the increase in demand, with at least one adult, three youth and two mini pitches required.
- ◀ To accommodate rugby demand, contributions should be sought to improve existing provision in the locality, such as at Old Silhillians Sports Club.
- ◀ For cricket, contributions should be sought to improve overplayed sites such as the John Woolman Ground, whilst Grove Lane is in close proximity and has spare capacity for an increase in demand.
- ◀ Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).

Next steps

Where it is identified that additional pitches are required to support wider housing growth, the next step is to determine whether additional hectareage is needed to accommodate the provision or whether the required supply can fit within existing land requirements. The need for additional pitches does not necessarily equate to the need for additional land to be provided; with a robust configuration, the creation of good quality pitches and the creation of 3G provision, the land that enables the mitigation of the allocated playing pitch sites may, in some instances, provide sufficient space. This can only be determined after suitable sites have been identified as it is very much dependent on the shape, size and condition of the land.

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The exception to the above statement is in the Balsall Common area, given that there are no playing pitch sites allocated for development and therefore no mitigation required. As such, additional playing field land is required to support the increased demand from housing growth. Further work is necessary to determine how much hectarage is needed to establish the required pitch configuration.

For the other three areas, there is a clear need to agree on the initial mitigation proposals before consideration is given to what additional provision is required and how this can be accommodated. There is also a requirement for the additional pitch requirements to be agreed with Sport England and the relevant NGBs, with the Calculator simply used as a guide to inform these discussions.

PART 6: CONCLUSION

There is a clear need to mitigate the loss of playing field land allocated for development in the Draft Solihull Local Plan Review and this mitigation must adhere to planning policy to ensure there are no challenges or objections. This paper has therefore looked to outline what is required as part of the mitigation, both in terms of land requirements and pitch needs. Furthermore, it has identified how the creation of new playing field sites as part of the mitigation process can provide an opportunity to also accommodate the pitch demand derived from wider housing growth. This can future proof the facilities, help significantly enhance the sporting landscape within the Borough and lessen planning requirements for future developments.

The table overleaf summarises the requirements for each allocation, identifying multiple options where different approaches are possible. The next step is to identify land that can appropriately deliver what is necessary and to re-engage developers to ensure they fully comprehend and are understanding of what is required. There will also be a need for the Council to continue to engage openly with Sport England throughout the next stages of the project to ensure that it is content with the approach to mitigation. This may require a formal Sport England pre-application process to be undertaken to enable formal engagement with relevant NGBs on the content of this study.

It must also be noted that, as suitable land has yet to be identified for most of the allocated sites, large parcels of land will need to be secured; this is likely to be costly if the sites are not under Council ownership. Moreover, given the lack of mitigation proposals coming from developers and the potential blockage this could cause, there may be a need for the Council to identify land within its Local Plan Review or to enter into negotiations with land owners to enable the mitigation to be delivered (e.g. land swap). This could be within the greenbelt or allocated to minimise the future merging of specific villages or communities. Land availability and suitability will also need to be considered within existing constraints such as archaeological, ecological and flood risk factors.

Depending on the status of the options that have been or that are going to be identified, further work may be required in order to progress specific land opportunities. This is to further understand their potential to provide what is necessary and to identify any issues that could prevent development.

Creating hub sites as part of the mitigation package and incorporating demand from wider housing growth will require contributions to be pooled together from various developments and developers. This may prove difficult, given that each development will be working to different timescales and each will be contributing different levels of funding based on how much land and what types of facilities are to be lost. A solution could be for the Council to fund the mitigation, prior to development being delivered, before then securing the required funds from each developer when appropriate. This may also be necessary to address cashflow challenges for developers, with many often reluctant to release funds until a certain number of dwellings are occupied. It could also help speed up the delivery of housing in the area, therefore delivering added economic benefits.

Table 6.1: Summary of mitigation proposals

Area	Allocation	Site	Mitigation requirements/options	Allocation housing growth	Wider housing growth
Blythe	4: West of Dickens Heath	Highgate United FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Provision across the two sites should be mitigated together to form a hub site, with like-for-like replacement required in terms of land (6.6978 hectares). ◀ As a minimum, the re-provision of all grass pitches currently servicing the clubs is required (three adult, two youth and six mini pitches) to a good quality, or two full size 3G pitches are needed with one adult and two youth grass pitches. ◀ If enough space can be acquired, the mitigation of Old Yardleians RFC should be incorporated into the creation of the hub site. ◀ The mitigation of Leaffield Athletic FC and Shirley Town FC could also be incorporated if the existing provision was not to be retained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Housing growth linked to the allocation is unlikely to result in demand that warrants additional pitch provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ An increase in adult football demand can be accommodated within the existing mitigation proposals. ◀ There is a need for two new youth football pitches to be created, or a need for one new pitch in conjunction with improving quality on the existing youth pitch at Leaffield Athletic FC. ◀ All mini football demand can be accommodated on the current stock of pitches. ◀ There may be a need for a new cricket square; however, improving existing squares in the locality and using spare capacity at Grove Lane offers a more sustainable approach. ◀ The mitigation proposal for Old Yardleians RFC will provide enough spare capacity to accommodate the projected growth in rugby demand. ◀ Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).
		Wychall Wanderers FC			
		Leaffield Athletic FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Provision should remain in situ for continued use by Leaffield Athletic FC as the land is presently identified for retention and because all demand can currently be met. ◀ Alternatively, the site could be mitigated in conjunction with other football provision within the allocation, freeing up the existing space to be repurposed for other open space/recreational needs or for additional housing. ◀ If included within the mitigation, like-for-like replacement is required in terms of land (1.7013 hectares); however, it is likely that the Club could be amalgamated onto a fewer number of pitches. 		
		Shirley Town FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Provision should remain in situ for continued use by Shirley Town FC as the land is presently identified for retention and because all demand can currently be met. ◀ Alternatively, the site could be mitigated in conjunction with other football provision within the allocation, freeing up the existing space to be repurposed for other open space/recreational needs or for additional housing. ◀ If included within the mitigation, like-for-like replacement is required in terms of land (1.9503 hectares); however, it is likely that the Club could be amalgamated onto a fewer number of pitches. 		
		Old Yardleians RFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Like-for-like mitigation is required in terms of land (5.9190 hectares). ◀ The mitigation must provide four good quality senior pitches with two floodlit, or a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch and two good quality senior pitches. ◀ Ideally, the mitigation should be done in conjunction with the mitigation of Highgate United FC and Wychall Wanderers FC; however, if sufficient land cannot be secured, mitigating the rugby provision separately is acceptable. 		

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Area	Allocation	Site	Mitigation requirements/options	Allocation housing growth	Wider housing growth
East of Solihull	Site 16: East of Solihull (Lugtrout Lane)	Lugtrout Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action required; playing field land is to be retained. 2.6813 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site is lost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing growth linked to the allocations is unlikely to result in demand that warrants additional pitch provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in adult football demand can be accommodated on the existing supply of pitches within the area. Utilising the additional space created as part of the mitigation proposal for Land Rover Sports and Social Club and Sharman's Cross Road for the creation of youth and mini pitches will satisfy an increase in demand for these pitch types. There may be a need for a new cricket square; however, improving existing squares in the locality and using spare capacity at Tudor Grange Academy offers a more sustainable approach. Whilst not enough demand is likely to be generated from the housing growth for additional rugby provision, there are significant pitch shortfalls in the area; contributions should be sought towards the creation of the pitch as part of the mitigation of Sharman's Cross Road and/or towards improving quality at Camp Hill RFC and Old Edwardians Sports Club. Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).
	Site 18: Sharman's Cross Road	Solihull Arden Tennis Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land servicing Arden Tennis Club will be unaffected. In fact, the Club could benefit from the scheme via improved access. 		
	Land Rover Sports and Social Club	Sharman's Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two sites should be mitigated together, with the total land requirement equating to 9.6470 hectares. Like-for-like mitigation for Sharman's Cross (2.5588 hectares) is required despite current disused status. Two senior rugby pitches could be provided to accommodate demand from Edwardian RFC and Camp Hill RFC; however, the clubs may be unwilling to transfer demand and floodlighting is required. A better approach could be to provide one or both clubs with World Rugby compliant 3G provision at their existing sites, subject to agreement from the RFU and Sport England. Another option is for one senior rugby pitch to be provided for use by Birmingham Civil Service RFC, freeing up space to then also provide football provision to reduce local football shortfalls. The football pitches at Land Rover Sports and Social Club require mitigation on a like-for-like basis given the importance of the provision. This means at least four adult, one youth and one mini pitch is required. Furthermore, with the rugby pitch potentially not requiring replacement, space will be created for additional football provision to be established within the land requirement. 		
		Land Rover Sports and Social Club	Land Rover Sports and Social Club		
	Site A6: Rowood Drive	Rowood Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible that the mitigation can meet a policy exception through improving Lode Heath School's gymnasium, although other options should be considered such as resurfacing the hockey pitch. If the above is not possible, the land should be mitigated on a like-for-like basis (0.9503 hectares). This requirement should form part of the hub site creation in conjunction with the mitigation of Sharman's Cross and Land Rover Sports and Social Club and should focus on providing football pitches. 		
	Site 20: Damson's Parkway	Solihull Moors FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site requires like-for-like mitigation (3.8736 hectares). It may be appropriate to do this on a separate parcel of land to the other sites within the area given the nature of the Club. As a minimum, the Club needs a stadia adult pitch suitable for progression in the Football League (one promotion away) and a full size 3G pitch. Given how tight the existing site is, additional land may be required to enable appropriate mitigation. 		
Birmingham Exiles RFC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action required; playing field land is to be retained. 4.2125 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site is lost. 			
Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association)	Páirc na hÉireann (Gaelic Athletic Association)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action required, playing field land is likely to be mitigated by the developer exclusive of the Mitigation Strategy. 6.0378 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site requires inclusion. 			

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Area	Allocation	Site	Mitigation requirements/options	Allocation housing growth	Wider housing growth
Knowle/Dorridge	Site 8: Hampton Road	Knowle FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Knowle Village CC is to be retained, meaning no mitigation is required. 2.7146 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site is lost. ◀ Existing mitigation plans for Knowle FC should be supported given that it will increase the playing field land and pitch supply within the area. ◀ Given the excess provision that is proposed as part of the plans, this could be used to offset, or at least partially offset, what is going to be lost as part of the South of Knowle (Arden Triangle) allocation. ◀ Further work is required to determine what the exact gain of land is going to be at Knowle FC and what the exact loss is going to be at Arden Academy Trust. ◀ Combined, the sites need to provide 6.3716 hectares of playing field land as part of the mitigation process, although it is imperative that this includes enough provision on site at Arden Academy Trust to meet the needs of the School. ◀ The land across the two sites needs to provide four good quality adult/youth grass pitches to meet current demand, in addition to the proposed full size 3G pitch. ◀ Arguing that the re-build of Arden Academy Trust meets a policy exception is not advisable at present as the need for the improvements proposed is questionable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Whilst the increase in population derived from the allocations is somewhat significant, the overall increase in demand for playing pitches is still minimal, with only football demand potentially warranting additional provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Demand derived from housing growth in the area will result in increased demand for youth football pitch access; however, the level of growth for other pitch types is unlikely to result in additional teams being formed. ◀ The pitch supply identified as being in need to enable mitigation of Knowle FC and Arden Academy Trust includes two youth 11v11 pitches to meet 1.5 match equivalent sessions of peak time demand; this leaves 0.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. ◀ As such, securing contributions to assist in the delivery of the mitigation proposals is considered to be sufficient.
	Site 9: South of Knowle (Arden Triangle)	Arden Academy Trust			
Balsall Common	Site 2: Frog Lane	Heart of England School (Holly Lane)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No action required; playing field land is to be retained. 4.2125 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site is lost. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ New football pitches should be created to satisfy the increase in demand, with at least one adult, three youth and two mini pitches required. ◀ To accommodate rugby demand, contributions should be sought to improve existing provision in the locality, such as at Old Silhillians Sports Club. ◀ For cricket, contributions could be sought to improve overplayed sites such as the John Woolman Ground, whilst Grove Lane is in close proximity and has spare capacity for an increase in demand. ◀ Although residual demand is created for hockey and 3G pitch access, this is unlikely to be enough to warrant the creation of new provision (over and above what is already needed).
Other	Site 15: Auckland Drive	Auckland Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No action required; playing field land is to be retained. 1.6357 hectares requires mitigation if this changes and the site is lost. 	-	-

ADDENDUM 1: PROGRESS TO DATE

The purpose of this addendum is to set out what additional work has been carried out and what additional steps have been taken since this Mitigation Strategy was first drafted (in May 2020). This particularly relates to processes commenced by the Council as well as consultation that has been undertaken with relevant clubs and NGBs.

Local Plan

Solihull Council's Local Plan Review was approved for publication on October 6th, 2020 and is to now undergo a six-week public consultation process. Based on the NPPF as well as the findings of the updated PPS and the Mitigation Strategy, a clear policy is set out to protect the playing pitch sites allocated for development.

Policy P20

Existing facilities that are of value to the local community for recreation, play and sports will be protected unless:

- i) It can be evidenced clearly that the open space or facilities are surplus to requirements and are no longer required to meet local need;
- ii) The land does not fulfil a useful purpose in terms of its appearance, landscape quality, recreational use, wildlife value or climate change mitigation/adaptation;
- iii) The proposed development provides equivalent or better replacement open space, sport, or recreation facilities in size, quality and accessibility within an accessible location for existing and potential new users; or
- iv) The development results in a substantial community benefit that clearly outweighs the harm resulting from the loss of the existing open space/facilities.

The public consultation process will present the opportunity for NGBs, clubs and other interested parties to submit representations on the policies included. Details of these will be sent to the Inspector for subsequent examination once the Local Plan has been formally submitted.

The Mitigation Strategy will be published as a supporting document when the Local Plan is submitted. As such, this will reiterate the need for replacement provision being required, in terms of land, pitches and ancillary facilities, and that the new provision will need to be in place and useable before the existing provision is lost. It will also provide a clear steer towards the creation of hub sites to mitigate the loss of the allocations and to address future demand associated with wider population/housing growth within the Borough.

Site identification

One of the significant discoveries of the Mitigation Strategy is that replacement sites are for the most part yet to be identified should development of the allocated playing pitch sites go ahead, with the majority of the developers not having appropriate mitigation plans prepared. As such, the Council has appointed a land advisor to identify potential sites that may be suitable for the development of hubs in terms of size and location as well as in regard to their appropriateness.

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One aspect being explored is land within the greenbelt, whereby a policy within the emerging Local Plan allows for reasonable development for sporting use. To assist in enabling such land to be used to mitigate the loss of playing pitches (and supporting infrastructure), there may be a need to allocate suitable sites within future iterations of the Local Plan. Furthermore, compulsory purchase orders might need to be explored where the land does not already fall under Council ownership (and where negotiations with landowners are unsuccessful).

Once sites have been identified, it is recognised that further work is required to develop appropriate masterplans. These will not only need to conform with planning policy but they must also work for all relevant partners (e.g. the clubs) and be sustainable and viable in the long-term.

Ultimately it will be the developers' responsibility to provide replacement provision; however, the Council is keen to work with them to ensure appropriate sites and mitigation proposals are brought forward. It was apparent that most of the developers were unsure about the scale of their mitigation responsibilities before this study was commissioned, making it imperative that the findings are relayed back to them to make it clear what is required.

Consultation

Upon drafting the Mitigation Strategy and presenting it to Sport England and the relevant NGBS, the Football Foundation and Birmingham FA asked for consultation to be undertaken with clubs that may be affected by the various allocations. Due to this, similar discussions were also carried out with relevant rugby clubs as well as the sports and social club at the Jaguar Land Rover site.

Overall, consultation took place with the following clubs, with the Council, Football Foundation, Birmingham FA and RFU involved where appropriate:

- ◀ Birmingham Civil Service RFC
- ◀ Highgate United FC
- ◀ Land Rover Sports and Social Club
- ◀ Old Yardleians RFC
- ◀ Solihull Moors FC
- ◀ Coldland Colts FC
- ◀ Knowle FC
- ◀ Leafield Athletic FC
- ◀ Shirley Town FC
- ◀ Wychall Wanderers FC

The purpose of the consultation was to set out to the clubs the rationale and process of the Mitigation Strategy as well as the overarching findings and to reassure them that policies are in place to protect the provision of playing pitches. Moreover, the clubs were taken through what the likely next steps will entail and were reassured that they would be an integral part of that process and would have the support of their relevant NGB to reinforce their needs. There will be a requirement to engage relevant clubs within any feasibility studies that are undertaken when replacement sites are identified, in addition to involving them within the development of site masterplans.

The discussions were generally well received, with no significant challenges raised and no amendments required to the study and its findings.

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APPENDIX 1: DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TOOLKIT

The following provides a further step-by-step guide to securing developer contributions for playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in Solihull through using the updated PPS.

For any application warranting a developer contribution the following processes should be followed in order to help inform the potential needs a new housing development may require and/or should look to consider.

In accordance with NPPF, contributions should not be sought from developments of 10 units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of no more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area).

Any obligations sought should be based on a tailored approach to each development, using the robust evidence base provided as part of the PPS to help with clearly justifying the needs arising and how they are to be met.

Step by step guide

Step 1	Determine the playing pitch requirement resulting from the development	Navigation
	The main tool for determining this is the PPS Playing Pitch Calculator which is a Sport England tool provided on completion of the Strategy. This has been populated with the current demand data from the Playing Pitch Assessment Report.	Accessed via: https://www.activeplacespower.com/ You will need to register if you are not already and you will need to gain access to the NDC by seeking permission from the Sport England Regional Planning Manager.

The PPS Assessment Report provides an estimate of future demand for key pitch sports (football, rugby, hockey and cricket) based on population forecasts and club consultation. This demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required.

Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases and converts the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches required. This is achieved by taking the current demand/team generation rates and population in the PPS Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth.

The calculator also gives the associated capital and lifecycle costs of supplying the increased pitch provision, although please note that these are indicative costs only and appropriate local work should be undertaken to determine the true costs of any new pitches.

As identified within the PPS, the longer term aim is to move towards increasing use of 3G pitches to accommodate competitive football fixtures. Therefore, there is a case to suggest that contributions towards football provision (and in some cases rugby union) could be made. Such provision would, however, require a business plan for the facility which aligned to FA programming and pricing and to encourage use of the facility on weekday evenings for training and for fixtures at weekends.

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Step 2	Determine the other pitch and non-pitch requirements resulting from the development	Navigation
	Use the PPS to identify level of need that may be generated from new development(s) for outdoor sporting provision not included within the PPS New Development Calculator.	◀ Playing Pitch Strategy (Part 4 & 6)

The Playing Pitch Calculator does not calculate demand for other types of pitches or non-pitch provision which may be played in the area. However, the PPS identifies (where relevant) current and future demand for the following additional types of outdoor sporting provision; tennis courts and athletics tracks.

Where there is no identified shortfall in provision or future demand for new provision within an area relevant to the development (e.g. an analysis area or settlement), consideration should be given to the nearest site to the development containing that type of pitch provision. This should consider if the site could benefit from a contribution towards increasing capacity to meet likely need generated from the development. For example, this could include increasing quality, addition of ancillary facilities such as floodlighting, changing rooms or car parking. Use the PPS action plan to identify site by site recommendations.

Step 3	Determine whether new provision is required and whether this should be on or off site	Navigation
	Consider if the nearest site/s to the development containing that type of provision could benefit from a contribution towards increasing capacity to meet likely need generated from the development. If there are no potential options to improve existing, or extend planned provision to create additional capacity then new provision will be required. Where the calculator does not create demand for a whole pitch, which is often the case for smaller size developments, it is recommended to make a contribution to increasing the capacity of an existing site to meet demand generated from the development.	◀ PPS Action Plan (Part 6)

When identifying a site for off-site contributions, consider the proximity and location of existing playing pitch sites and whether it could help serve the new development. Identify the analysis area in which the development sits and identify if there are any Hub sites or Key centres within the Area.

If there are no analysis areas or the development site is close to the local authority boundary, apply an initial one-mile radius around the site in order to help identify the nearest priority sites. This may require consultation with neighbouring authorities.

Hub sites are of Borough wide importance where users are willing to travel further to access the range and high quality of facilities offered. Hub sites are likely to be multi-sport facilities. These have been identified on the basis of high impact on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

Key centres although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider). However, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e. a dedicated site.

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Step 4	Determine how best to satisfy demand through new onsite provision	Navigation
	To further help determine how best to satisfy demand for new onsite provision, use the Playing Pitch Strategy to identify existing shortfalls and consult with local clubs/groups to identify local issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Playing Pitch Strategy (Part 1 Headline Findings)

Although the PPS will help to identify existing shortfalls (and in doing so provide a guide as to how best to meet demand generated from the new development), local clubs/groups should be consulted to further update the most recent local situation. Useful questions to answer may include, for example:

- ◀ Are there any teams/clubs playing outside of the local area (exported demand) which could utilise provision at the site?
- ◀ Do any local clubs identify existing plans/demand for access to new provision?
- ◀ Are there any overplayed sites in the local area where existing demand could be transferred to a new site?
- ◀ Do any local clubs identify any latent demand (i.e. if they had access to more pitches they could they field more teams?)

Step 5	Determine how best to satisfy demand through new offsite provision	Navigation
	Identify the potential sites for investment within the PPS Action Plan to help determine how best to meet demand generated from the new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ PPS Action Plan (Part 6)

Consider the location of the new population (e.g. the location of the development site) alongside the results of the PPS assessment work. This will enable you to understand the nature of the current playing pitch sites within an appropriate catchment of the new population and the issues in the area. This may lead to suggestions of one or more ways of meeting the estimated demand, such as:

- ◀ Enhancing existing pitches to increase their capacity and ensure adequate maintenance to maintain the higher level of use
- ◀ Securing greater community access to currently restricted provision and undertaking necessary works to allow such use to occur (e.g. enhanced changing provision)
- ◀ Providing new playing pitches on existing sites.

This decision should be based on the potential to improve existing facilities within an appropriate catchment of a development to create additional capacity, and how realistic it is given the nature of the local area to provide new provision. For example, there may be some poor quality playing fields that could potentially be improved with additional drainage and long-term maintenance works, along with enhanced changing provision, to enable their use to be increased, thereby creating additional capacity to meet the increased demand generated from the development.

Discussions should be held with relevant parties (e.g. landowners, facility operators and user groups), and any further necessary evidence gathered (e.g. a feasibility study), to help identify the specific works that are required, and to ensure they will provide the necessary additional capacity to meet the needs. It will also be important to demonstrate that the specific works can be delivered within an appropriate timescale in relation to the occupation of the development site.

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Step 6	Consider design principles for new provision	Navigation
	The exact nature and location of provision associated with onsite developments should be fully determined in partnership with each relevant NGB. Further to this, each pitch sport NGB provides national guidance in relation to provision of new pitches.	http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/facilities FA 3G pitch guidance RFU Facilities Guide ECB guide to developing pitches England Hockey Facilities Strategy

There is also a need to ensure that the location of outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities are appropriately located in the context of indoor sports provision (if also being provided onsite) to ensure a cohesive approach to the whole sporting offer.

Step 7	Calculate the financial contribution required	Navigation
	After using the PPS Playing Pitch Calculator as a starting point for cost, the local cost of provision should be fully determined in order to calculate the financial contributions.	N/A

A clear and transparent methodology for calculating up to date costs for the specific works, including appropriate ancillary provision, should be presented. Where appropriate, depending on how the needs are to be met, the cost of any required land purchase should be included in the financial contribution. If an obligation will be directed to an off-site project it should be ensured the costs are limited to meet the needs of the individual development.

Along with any capital costs for the works, an obligation should ensure an appropriate level of lifecycle costs towards the new or enhanced provision. This is required to cover the day to day maintenance for an agreed long term period and to help ensure a sinking fund exists for any major replacement work, e.g. the future resurfacing of an artificial grass pitch.

Wherever possible, specific local costs should be used, especially if the works are to improve the existing quality of a site to increase capacity as there may be a number of site specifics to take into account. Sport England does provide indicative costs for new provision:

<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

For all developments community use agreements between providers and users would ensure that such demand continues to be provided for in the long-term.

Step 8	Identify potential management options for new provision	Navigation
	To further help determine the sustainability of establishing new provision, consideration should be given to the potential management opportunities which may be available.	N/A

To further help determine the sustainability of establishing new provision, consideration should be given to the potential management opportunities which may be available onsite:

- ◀ Is the local authority (or town/parish council) in a position to take on further outdoor sports facilities from a financial point of view?
- ◀ Is an education establishment to be provided as part of the development which offers a potential management option of outdoor sports facilities?

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- ◀ Is there a leisure trust in place which has the capacity to take on the management of outdoor sports facilities?
- ◀ Is there an opportunity for a trust based model of management, for example, by formation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) or Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)?
- ◀ Is there an existing sports club that has the capacity to take on the management of another site?

At this point, further dialogue with the relevant NGB may be required to help determine options available.

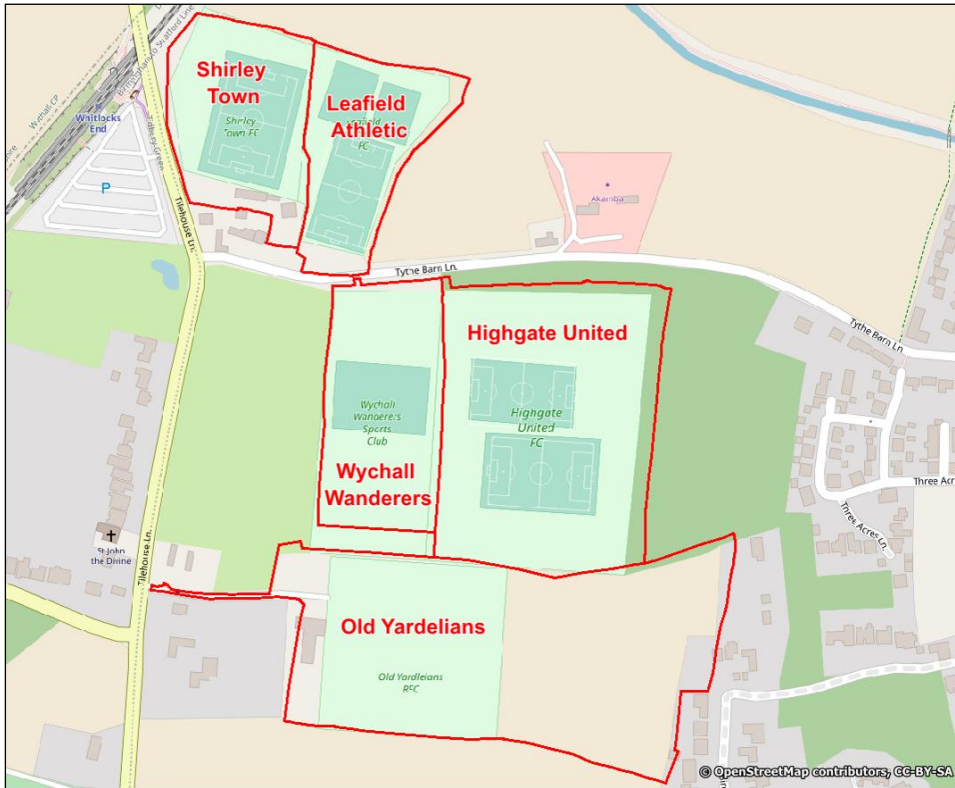
APPENDIX 2: SITE ALLOCATION MAPS

Site allocation 2

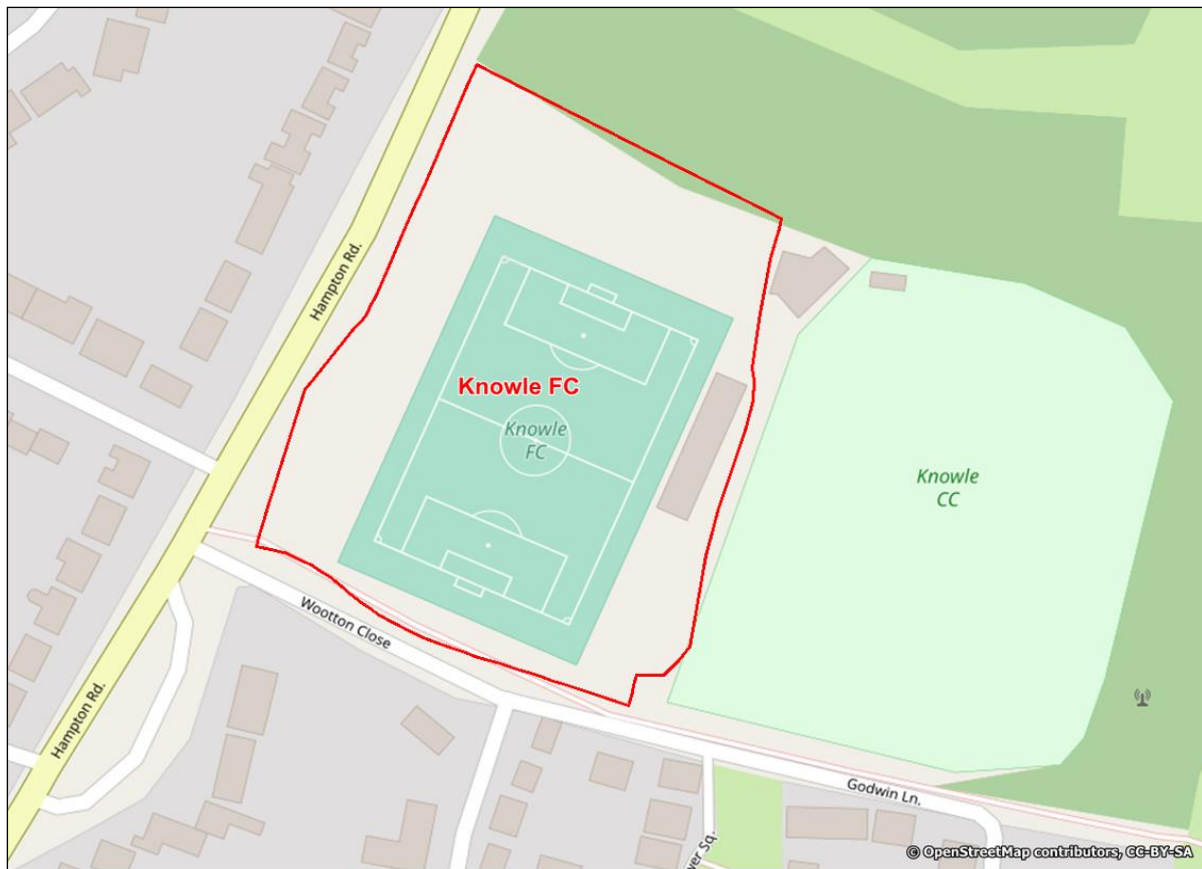


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Site allocation 4



Site allocation 8

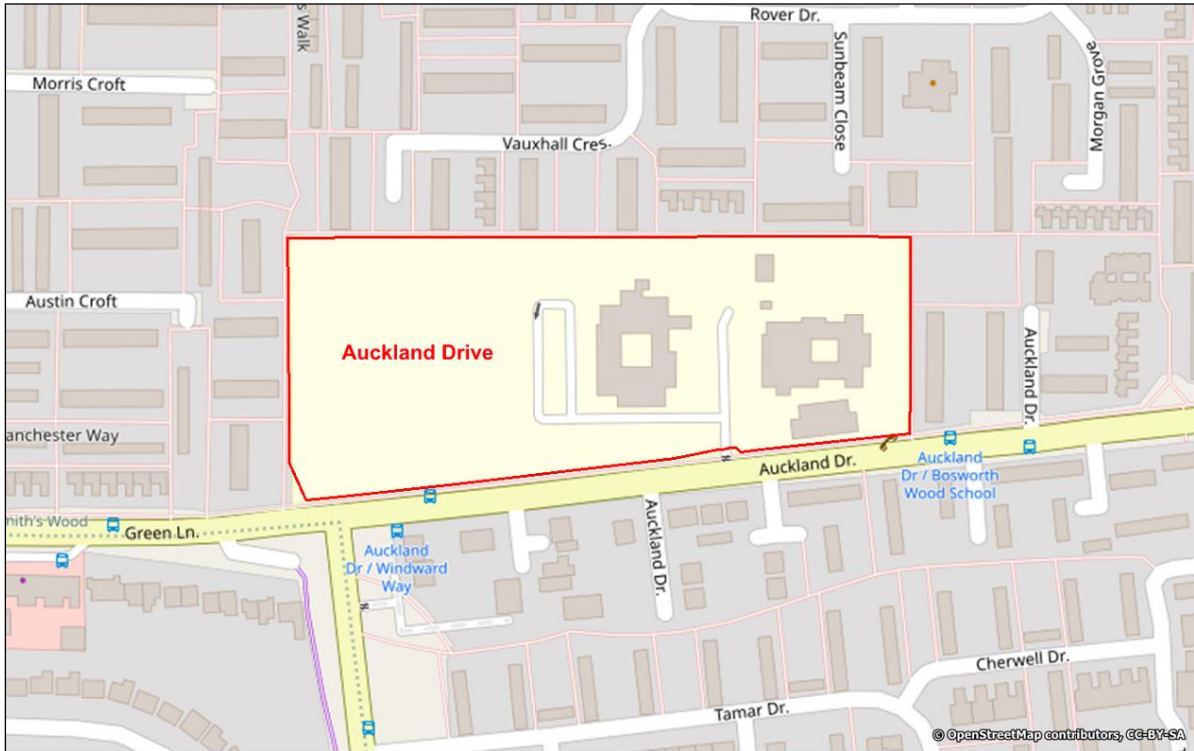


Site allocation 9



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Site allocation 15



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Site allocation 16



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Site allocation 18



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Site allocation 20



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Site allocation A6 and Land Rover Sports and Social Club

