



OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY
2016 - 2031

A
REPORT
BY



JANUARY 2018

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Background

- 1.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (the Council) wish to understand the current level of provision in respect of playing pitch provision within the Borough and as a result have undertaken a playing pitch assessment.
- 1.2 RPT Consulting were appointed to undertake the assessment and develop the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which seeks to identify;
 - **What** should the current and future key playing pitch provision be in the borough
 - **Why** should the Council continue to invest in playing pitches – what is the key evidence to support this investment;
 - **Where** should any new investment or replacement facilities and pitches be developed.
 - **How** can the facilities be improved and delivered through any future management arrangements and
 - **When** would any new or replacement facilities and pitches be able to be delivered through a targeted Action Plan building on the Strategy.
- 1.3 The focus for the strategy has been to identify the current provision within The Borough of Oadby and Wigston and both the quality and quantity of existing provision, enabling the Council to identify the strategic approach to future provision.

Strategic Context

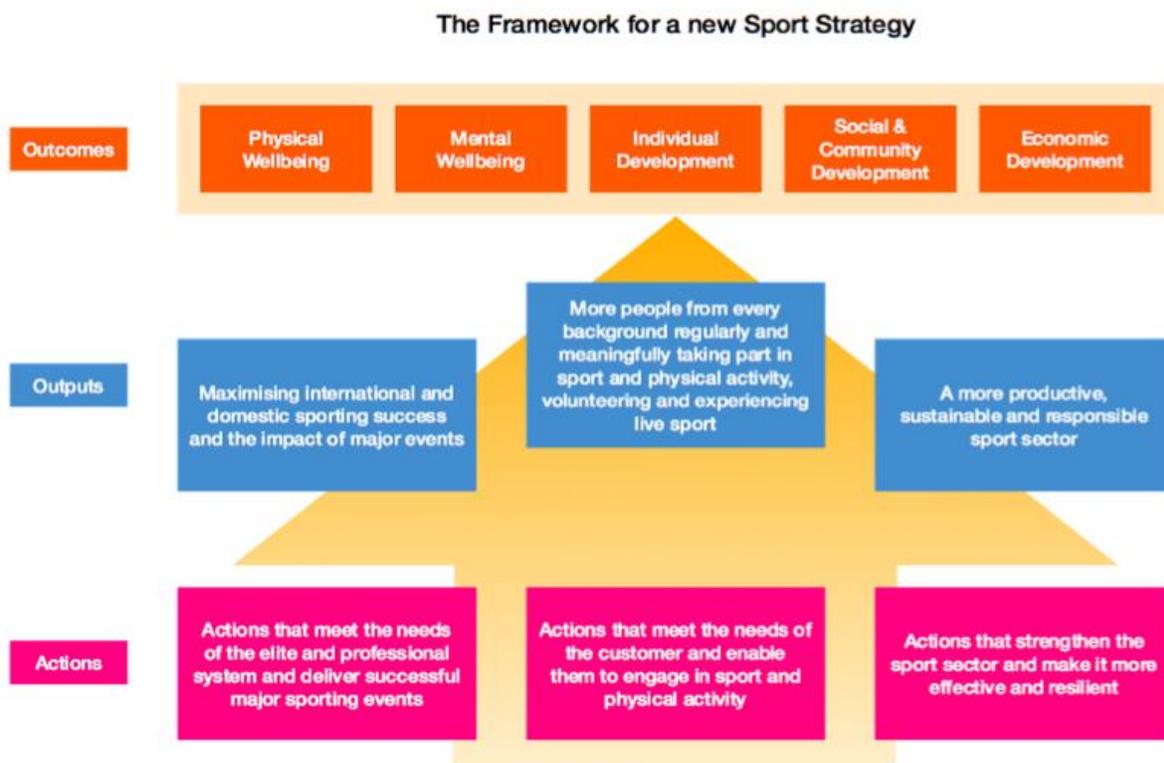
- 1.4 Playing pitch provision in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston operates within a strategic framework which includes a number of strategies and plans at a national, regional and local level, which influence policy and the approach to provision, such as
 - Sporting Futures – A New Strategy For An Active Nation – HM Government
 - Sport England: Towards an Active Nation Strategy (2016 – 2021)
 - Start Active – Stay Active 2011
 - Changing Behaviours, Changing Outcomes (Dept of Health)
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - 2012
 - Whole Sport Plans of National Governing Body's (NGB) – for example Football, Athletics, Tennis, Cricket, Rugby Union as some of the most popular sports and others including Rugby League, Netball, Hockey
 - National Facilities Strategy for Rugby Union (2013-2017)
 - The FA National Strategy (2016 – 2020)
 - Cricket Unleashed – ECB Strategy (up to 2021)
 - OWBC Corporate Plan (to 2019)
 - OWBC Annual Open Space Review 2017
 - Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy 2010
- 1.5 All of these strategies and frameworks impact on physical activity, sport and improving health and provide the context for playing pitch provision in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston. We present an overview of the various strategies and plans

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which impact on future provision in Appendix A and summarise over subsequent paragraphs the key themes.

- 1.6 The new government strategy (Sporting Futures – A New Strategy for an Active Nation) sets out a framework for the sport strategy (see Figure 1.1 below) which identifies outcome for both physical and mental wellbeing, individual development, social & community development and economic development.
- 1.7 These represent some constant themes throughout the strategic context about delivering improved health and wellbeing, bringing communities together and economic development. The Council should consider these outcomes and themes in any future provision.
- 1.8 Sport England's new strategy presents the approach Sport England will take to delivering the outcomes from Sporting Futures and in particular reflects a number of key investment programmes to deliver on the outcomes, including tackling inactivity, investing in children and young people, facilities, volunteering and taking sport and activity into the mass market.
- 1.9 These present some opportunities for the facilities in the Borough to focus on key outcomes and deliver to these programmes.

Figure 1.1 – Sporting Futures – A framework for an active nation



(Source: *Sporting Future – A New Strategy for an Active Nation*)

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1.10 There are a number of key themes within the National Governing Bodies (NGB's) Whole Sport Plans (WSP) which are common to a number of sports, these key themes help set the context for Sport and Leisure provision nationally and show how NGBs link in with the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, such as:

- A number of 'back to sport' programmes, which NGBs have developed to encourage people back into participating, such as Back to Netball – encouraging women to return to sport or the "This Girl Can" campaign run by Sport England.
- The development of flexible, small sided games such as Touch Rugby, Last Man Stands (Cricket) and 5 a side leagues for football, giving opportunities for sports to be played in spaces which wouldn't have otherwise been suitable.
- Opportunities to develop schools, college and university links to promote and develop the partnerships between schools and clubs, for example, satellite clubs.
- Facility improvements are also a feature of some of the Whole Sport Plans (WSPs) such as for cycling and football, which may offer access for funding for some facilities.
- Investment through clubs (such as Athletics and other sports) in specialist equipment is also a key feature of a number of WSPs.
- A focus on target groups, such as women and people with disabilities is a key feature of many WSPs, for example swimming has identified the need for improved opportunities for disabled swimmers, through better access to facilities and targeted sessions.

1.11 The development of the WSPs does provide a number of initiatives which the Council and its partners can take forward to encourage participation, but also may offer opportunities to bring in external funding or resources to help deliver a sustainable future locally.

1.12 It should however be recognised that the WSP's are currently undergoing review and new plans prepared in 2017/18 should be considered in any new leisure provision, to reflect the Sport England strategy. The key sports (Football, Rugby and Cricket all have recently launched National Strategies which are summarised in Appendix A).

1.13 The other key aspect of the strategic context is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) within which The Borough of Oadby and Wigston sits, in particular linked to Sport, Leisure and Open Space.

1.14 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and is based on the principle of sustainable development. One of the key strands of the policy is to promote Healthy Communities and to facilitate social interaction, creating healthy, inclusive communities. A summary is provided in

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the box below of the key features of the NPPF and the relevance to sport and leisure provision.

NPPF Summary of Paragraphs 70-74

In relation to social, recreational and cultural facilities and services which the community needs, planning policies and decisions should,

- Plan positively for the provision of community facilities (including sports venues) to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments
- Guard against unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services
- Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community
- Ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing and community facilities and services.

The Government also wants planning decisions to be based on up to date local plans, put together with communities and based on adequate evidence. Thus the availability of a locally based assessment of need should be recognised in any future development needs.

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land including playing fields should not be built upon 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.

1.15 In particular in relation to social, recreational and cultural facilities and services which the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- Plan positively for the provision of community facilities (including sports venues) to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- Guard against unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.

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- Ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing and community facilities and services.

1.16 The Government also wants planning decisions to be based on up to date local plans, put together with communities and based on adequate evidence. Thus the need for locally based assessment of need should be recognised in any future development needs.

1.17 The Council itself has a number of strategies and frameworks within which leisure provision operates and in particular this includes the emerging Local Plan and Corporate Plan. The Council's current corporate priorities that relate to leisure, recreation, health and wellbeing are:

- **Green and Safe Places**

Invest in and encourage activities that provide green, pleasant & safe places in the borough for all enjoy. Protect the borough's trees and natural habitat wherever possible.

- **Wellbeing for All**

Work with other organisations to improve wellbeing for all in the Borough. Help secure new easy-to-access opportunities to enable everybody to live a harmonious and healthy life.

1.18 This overarching strategy will provide a framework for the future provision of leisure facilities in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston, but will not be a substitute for local assessment of needs which should be undertaken for any new housing development.

Demographic Analysis

1.19 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has a total population of circa 55,979 (Leicester and Leicestershire HEDNA 2017). It is however located close to Leicester city and as such is both influenced by Leicester and also has the opportunity to attract people from Leicester to facilities. The population is forecast to grow to circa 60,903 by 2036 (Leicester and Leicestershire HEDNA 2017), which is a growth of 8.8%.

1.20 We compare the age profile of the population with both regional and national figures in the table below.

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Table 1.1 – Population Age Profile

Key Indicator	Oadby and Wigston	East Midlands	England
Total Population	55,979	4,533,200	53,012,500
Ages			
0-14	16.2%	17.3%	17.7%
15-19	8.9%	6.5%	6.3%
20-34	16.9%	18.8%	20.3%
35-44	12.6%	13.8%	14.0%
45-54	14.2%	14.1%	13.7%
55-64	11.7%	12.4%	11.6%
65-74	9.4%	9.2%	8.6%
75 and over	9.8%	7.9%	7.7%

(Source: ONS/HEDNA)

1.21 As can be seen from the table above there are a number of key implications for the future of leisure provision in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston when comparing against the East Midlands and England, for example:

- The proportion of 15-19 year olds is higher than the East Midlands and England, whilst the 20-44 year olds are lower.
- 75 year olds and above are also higher than the East Midlands and the national picture.

1.22 This suggests that it is important for leisure provision to consider both teenagers in its provision but also for the older members of the population.

1.23 Sport England has also prepared data relating to the sporting profile of The Borough of Oadby and Wigston which is presented in detail in Appendix B and we summarise some of the key features from this in subsequent paragraphs. Table 1.2 below summarises some of the key indicators.

Table 1.2 – Catchment Analysis

Key Indicator	Oadby and Wigston	East Midlands	England
People with Disabilities	5.5%	10.3%	9.4%
Ethnic Minority	33.6%	8.5%	12.1%
Unemployed	4.0%	8.0%	8.1%
Adult Obesity	23.8%	24.3%	24.2%
Childhood Obesity	17.7%	18.3%	19.0%

(Source: Sport England Local Sport Profile 2015)

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.24 As can be seen from the table there are a number of key implications, for example

- There is a higher proportion of ethnic minority groups which means that provision should take these groups into account.
- Both the unemployed and people with disabilities will be recognised within this assessment.
- Adult and childhood obesity is lower than the regional and national picture which is a positive message for the future and it will be important to maintain this in the future.

1.25 The demographic profile suggests an older yet relatively active population within the Borough, which is confirmed when reviewing the levels of participation in sport and active recreation from the Sport England Local Sport Profile, which we summarise below.

- Active participation in sport (3 x 30 mins activity per week) is only slightly lower in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston (20.3%) than the East Midlands (23.2%) and England (22.3%).
- Other indicators such as club membership, those who have received coaching and taking part in organised competition are all comparable with the East Midlands and England, although those people taking part in competition is significantly higher.

1.26 The analysis suggests that within The Borough of Oadby and Wigston the population is relatively active (compared to the National population) and this has impacted on obesity rates amongst adults and childhood obesity and also the involvement in sport activities as opposed to participation.

1.27 We summarise in the table below how the top 5 sports for participation compare with the region and nationally.

Table 1.3 – Top 5 Sports Participation Rates

Sport	Oadby and Wigston Borough	East Midlands	England
Gym	13.3%	10.2%	10.6%
Football	8.3%	7.3%	7.2%
Cycling	7.7%	8.7%	8.3%
Athletics	7.5%	6.3%	6.9%
Swimming	6.3%	11.2%	11.6%

(Source: Sport England Local Sport Profile, 2015)

1.28 It can be seen that gym, football and athletics are higher than the region and England as a whole. Cycling and swimming are all lower than the region and also England, whilst swimming is almost half that of both the region and England.

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1.29 We also compare participation rates in the Borough with its nearest authorities in terms of profile and population (as per Sport England data), as summarised below:

Table 1.4 – Participation Rates

Local Authority	Participation in Sport and Active Recreation (3x30 minutes)	
	2005/06	2014/16
Oadby and Wigston	21.1%	22.5%
Blaby	21.5%	27.2%
Gedling	20.1%	25.1%
Broxtowe	23.3%	22.2%
Castle Point	19.0%	20.4%

(Source: Sport England Local Sport Profile)

1.30 As can be seen from the table above The Borough of Oadby and Wigston has the third highest level of participation in both 2005/06 and 2014/16 with an increase, although this is not as great as some areas such as Blaby and Gedling.

1.31 Sport England has also developed a market segmentation profile which identifies a number of different types of people and their typical characteristics. From the local sport profile for The Borough of Oadby and Wigston (Appendix B) there are a number of segmentation types which provide higher proportions than East Midland and England. These include

- **Ben – Competitive Male Urbanites (6.0%)** – aged 18-25, single graduate professional. Very active, including football
- **Chloe – Fitness Class Friends (5.1%)** – aged 18-25, single graduate professional. Active particularly keep fit and gym
- **Jackie – Middle England Mums (6.8%)** – aged 36-45, married with children. Part time or stay at home mum. Active, particularly in gym and swimming
- **Philip – Comfortable Mid-Life Males (11.1%)** – aged 46-55, married with children. Active, particularly in cycling and golf
- **Roger & Joy – Early Retirement Couples (9.8%)** – aged 56-65, married and probably retired. Less active but swimming and keep fit
- **Frank – Twilight Year Gents (6.0%)** – aged 66 plus, married or single and retired. Much less active- golf is main activity
- **Elsie & Arnold** – Retirement Home Singles (9.3%) – aged 66 plus, widowed, retired. Much less active, but swimming main activity

1.32 Consideration of programmes for these groups should be taken into account in the future development of any facilities.

Process

1.33 Our approach to the development of the strategy has been to undertake the following actions:

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Strategic Review of the current profile of the Council and how it sits within the regional context.
- Review of existing provision and consultation with key stakeholders.

1.34 We set out the results of our work in the rest of the report in accordance with the following sections

- Section 2 – Playing Pitch Methodology – setting out the detailed approach to the analysing the provision.
- Section 3 – Supply and Demand – identifying the current and future demand for pitches and ancillary provision, setting out a review of existing provision and the gap analysis of any provision.
- Section 4 – Strategic Framework and Action Plan – setting out the strategic framework in which the Council should operate and the Action Plan for the development of new provision and improvements to existing provision.

1.35 We support our report with a number of key appendices.

SECTION 2 – PLAYING PITCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 2.1 This Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has been produced to provide valuable evidence of sporting and community need for protecting and developing local playing fields and outdoor sports facilities. The strategy is likely to influence long term planning decisions and the direction of investment.
- 2.2 The methodology has been developed based on Sport England’s Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) guidance recommending a step by step approach which has been developed by Sport England in partnership with a number of National Governing Bodies (NGB) of sport including:
- The Football Association (FA)
 - England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)
 - Rugby Football Union (RFU)
 - England Hockey (EH)
- 2.3 The strategy does not take into account Rugby League as there is no evidence that the sport is played in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston and as such, has not been considered in the scope.
- 2.4 Sport England’s PPS guidance replaces the previous guidance “Towards a level playing field” and takes on board experiences and lessons learnt.
- 2.5 A successful PPS will aim to:
- Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by improving the quality of outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities across the Borough of Oadby and Wigston for adult and junior players.
 - Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by ensuring that there are sufficient outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities to meet current and future demand of adult and junior players.
 - Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by facilitating greater access to outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities.
 - Secure resources and identify priorities for on-going investment in playing pitches and outdoor facilities.
 - Work in partnership with individual sports, clubs and community groups to help them achieve their ambitions and goals.
- 2.6 The approach has followed the key principles set out within the PPS guidance and these include:
- A collaborative approach which is owned by a number of parties, including Sport England, OWBC and NGB’s.
 - A steering group led approach (based on OWBC officers and members).
 - Sport England and NGB engagement.
 - Using the available resource, knowledge and skills to the best effect.
 - Clearly setting out why the PPS is being developed.
 - Reflects the differences in sports and how they are played.

SECTION 2 – PLAYING PITCH METHODOLOGY

- Focusing on situations at individual sites.
- Check and challenges throughout the process.
- Reviewing different scenarios and focusing on local solutions.
- A process for updating and keeping the PPS robust.

2.7 Our approach has mirrored the recommended approach from Sport England as set out in the figure below:

Figure 2.1 – Sport England’s 10 Step Approach to developing a PPS



Source: Sport England

2.8 The approach set out above can be broken down into 5 stages as set out below:

- Stage A – Prepare and tailor the Approach (Step 1)
- Stage B – Gather Information and views on the supply and demand (Steps 2 & 3)
- Stage C – Assess the supply and demand information and views (Steps 4,5 & 6)
- Stage D – Develop the Strategy (Steps 7 & 8)
- Stage E – Deliver the Strategy and keep it robust and up to date (Steps 9 & 10)

SECTION 2 – PLAYING PITCH METHODOLOGY

2.9 This approach has been tailored for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston as set out below:

- Establishment of an Officer Project Team and also a Member Steering Group to prepare and tailor the approach.
- Consultation with National governing bodies, including Sport England and Leicestershire and Rutland Sport in addition to the individual sporting NGB's. (Step 1 and also follow up consultation to support Steps 7 & 8 – developing the strategy).
- Gathering Information and Assessing Supply and Demand (Stages B & C) through:
 - Audit of all existing pitches in the Borough, cataloguing location, condition and accessibility.
 - Identifying clubs, teams and schools that utilise the pitches.
 - Establishing the number of home games per week, the total number of pitches required and peak demands for games by location.
 - Consultation with all sports clubs to assess the current situation in terms of members, teams, future plans and any current issues they may be dealing with.
 - Initial contact was achieved by circulating questionnaires. Numerous phone calls were carried out to follow up each club and team in order to gain a response.
 - Collecting data concerning pitch and ancillary facilities booking information.
 - Consultation with pitch maintenance personnel.
- Development and presentation of the emerging findings to the Steering Group to develop the strategy and local actions for specific sites (Stage D).

2.10 An action plan on the proposed strategy and recommendations together with the approach to maintaining the PPS and keeping it up to date and robust is presented.

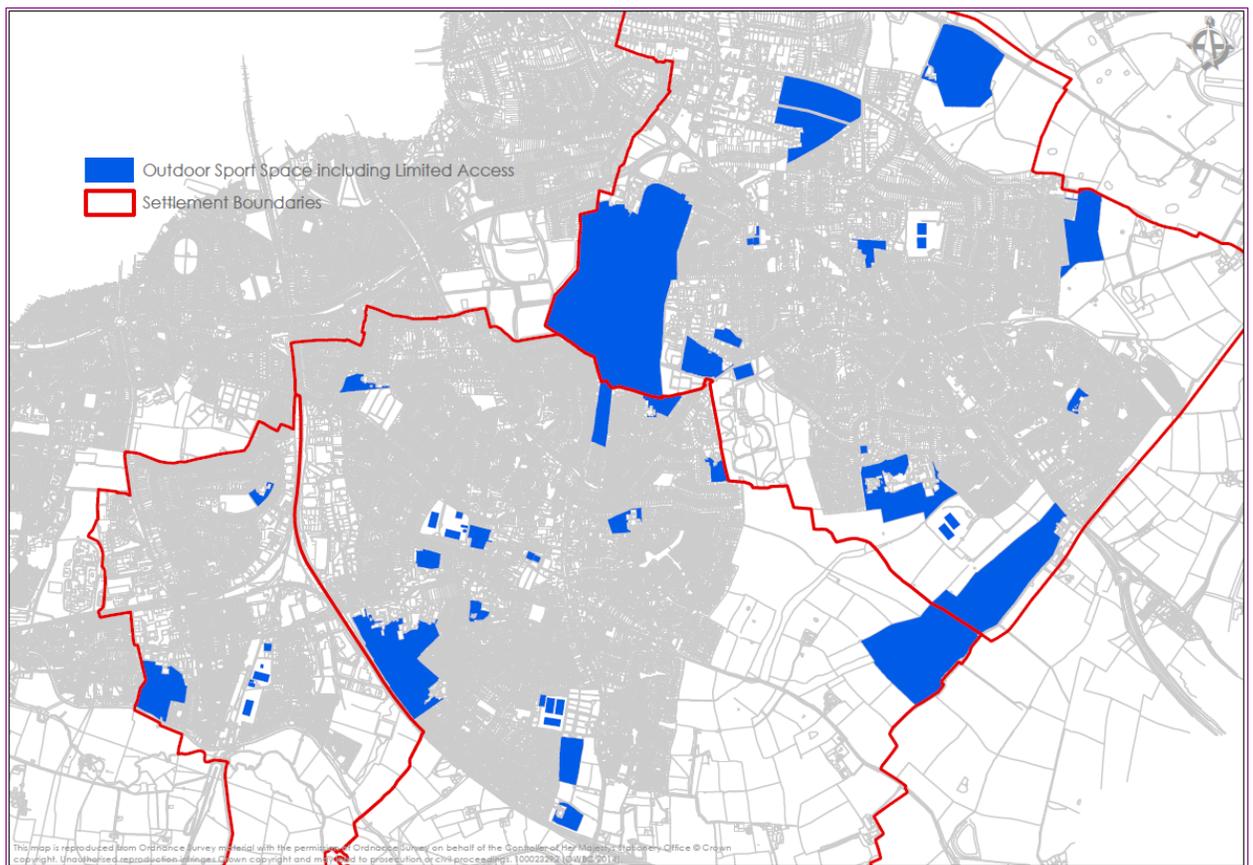
2.11 The findings of the supply and demand are summarised in the next section.

SECTION 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Supply & Demand Analysis

- 3.1 This section presents across the key sports (Football, Cricket, Rugby Union and Hockey) an overview of the supply and demand for each sport and also summarise in the section the supply and demand for Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) and other outdoor sports.
- 3.2 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is a relatively small administrative area with limited playing pitches. Supply and demand is varied depending upon the sport, however in general clubs agree that it is acceptable to travel 20-25 minutes (by car) in order to train and play, which would suggest this is what they are currently doing (based on questionnaire responses).
- 3.3 The distribution of outdoor sports space is illustrated below and provided in further detail in Appendix C.

Figure 3.1 – Outdoor Sports Space in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston



- 3.4 The Annual Open Space Review (2015) identified the following provision and requirements for outdoor sport in Oadby and Wigston, with the layout and distribution summarised in Appendix C.

SECTION 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Table 3.1 – Outdoor Sports Space by Ward

Ward	Requirement Outdoor Sport Public Access (Hectare)	Current Provision of Outdoor Sport Public Access (Hectare)	Current Provision of Outdoor Sports Pitches with Public Access (Hectare)	Outdoor Sport Public Access (Shortfall)/ Oversupply	Current Provision of Limited Public Access ¹ (Hectare)
Brocks Hill	3.97	1.15	0.99	(2.82)	30.94
Grange	6.54	2.20	2.2	(4.34)	26.93
St Peters	4.35	0.26	0	(4.09)	68.21
Uplands	4.44	0.00	0	(4.44)	7.56
Woodlands	4.76	0.00	0	(4.76)	0.71
South Wigston	7.52	1.31	1.13	(6.21)	7.11
All Saints	5.77	1.93	1.65	(3.84)	22.41
Fields	6.47	1.27	1.1	(5.20)	1.31
Meadowcourt	5.81	0.00	0	(5.81)	23.20
St Wolstans	6.50	0.00	0	(6.50)	5.48

Note 1 – current provision of limited public access includes the entire site of an open space (for example: the entire playing field within a boundary of a school).

By Area

Area	Requirement Outdoor Sport Public Access (Hectare)	Current Provision of Outdoor Sport Public Access (Hectare)	Current Provision of Outdoor Sports Pitches with Public Access (Hectare)	Outdoor Sport Public Access (Shortfall)/ Oversupply	Current Provision of Limited Public Access ¹ (Hectare)
Oadby	24.07	3.61	3.19	(20.45)	134.36
South Wigston	7.52	1.31	1.13	(6.21)	7.11
Wigston	24.54	3.20	2.66	(21.34)	52.40
Total	56.13	8.13	6.98	(48.00)	193.87

Note 1 – current provision of limited public access includes the entire site of an open space (for example: the entire playing field within a boundary of a school).

Note: the requirement is based on the standards within the Open Space review of 1 hectare per 1,000 population

- 3.5 As can be seen from the Open Space Review there is a significant undersupply of public access outdoor sports space, however there is a significant amount of outdoor sports space with limited public access and is through schools and educational establishments, which we explore further for individual sports.

SECTION 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND

- 3.6 It should also be noted that there is significant amount of this provision which is due to the racecourse in St Peters ward, which includes golf facilities (although the golf course has been closed since 2014).

Football

Supply

- 3.7 Appendix D identifies the facility audit and presents the detail of the pitches which are available for football within Oadby and Wigston. We summarise the supply of pitches in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 – Football Pitch Summary

Pitches (Access)	Adult	Junior	Mini	Total
Community Use	17	2	2	21
Limited Community Use	11	5	5	21
Total	28	7	7	42

- 3.8 There are a total of 42 pitches in Oadby and Wigston of which 50% are available for community use. The majority of these are Council owned pitches with some community use on education sites. There is limited community use on other pitches which are either on school sites or higher education. Some of the key issues identified with the supply include:

- University of Leicester has two sites within Oadby for football at Stoughton Road playing pitches and The Roger Bettles Sports Centre at Manor Road. Whilst these are open for community use there is limited use on the sites due to University use.
- There are 5 mini football pitches in Primary Schools across the Borough which are only used by the school and not open for community use.
- There appear to be a number of key sites, such as Coombe Park which is utilised by Oadby Owls FC. We discuss these further in looking at the demand for pitches.
- These pitches also include Oadby Town FC's football ground which is owned and used exclusively by Oadby Town FC, with no community access.

- 3.9 There are two full sized Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) in the Borough, of which only one is a 3G pitch with the other one identified as a sand filled pitch. Both of these are on education sites with limited community access, with the sand filled pitch at the University ground on Manor Road, Oadby and the 3G pitch at Wigston College, on Station Road, Wigston.

SECTION 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND

3.10 There is some community use of the sand filled pitch at the University in Oadby and limited community use of the 3G pitch at Wigston College. Both pitches are of an acceptable quality, although would benefit from upgrading.

3.11 Consideration has also been given to the quality of pitches and an overview of the key facilities and the quality of these has been undertaken. Non-technical assessments have been undertaken for all of the key sites and the outcomes are summarised in this report. It should however be noted that some of the assessments were undertaken in the summer months and as a result it is recommended that these assessments are revisited during the winter months to assess the state of the pitches during the on-season months. The Council will seek to do this regularly as part of its annual monitoring and will endeavour to keep the PPS up to date and accurate by doing so. There are a number of key issues arising from the assessments including:

- Horsewell Lane – the playing surfaces of the pitches and the quality of the ancillary facilities is considered poor and investment is required to deliver an acceptable quality of provision in this location.
- Coombe Park – some of the playing surfaces on the pitches are considered to be of poor quality, although they are predominantly used by Oadby Owls FC who have highlighted significant capacity issues to meet their growing demand.
- Other public and private pitches and ancillary facilities throughout the Borough range in quality from poor to standard, with the vast majority of pitches having changing accommodation and ancillary rooms such as club rooms, of varying quality. There are currently two additional Council-owned sites in the Borough that would benefit from investment. Pitch and / or ancillary facility improvements at Willow Park in Wigston and installation of a pitch and ancillary facilities at Pochins Bridge / Windlass Drive¹ in South Wigston.
- Wigston College – the grass pitches are in good condition but with a bit of a gradient and undulating approach. The maintenance doesn't appear to be high quality and they have been rated average quality. The pitch at Wigston College was installed in 2007 with the 1st Generation 3G AGP surface and therefore, it is not FA approved and cannot currently host competitive matches. The pitch is considered to be of average quality and the College intend to upgrade the surface in 2019/20 to an FA approved surface so that it can be registered on the FA 3G Football Turf Pitch (FTP) Register. There is currently limited community use of this site, although there are aspirations to increase that provision in the future as well.
- Wigston Academy – the pitches are good quality but heavily used for curriculum use and only accommodates limited community use at present.

¹ The ownership and maintenance of the open space at Pochins Bridge / Windlass Drive is still subject to the agreed trigger point as per the Section 106 Agreement between the developer and the Council.

SECTION 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND

- 3.12 Overall the supply indicates that there are 21 pitches available for community use with the quality of the pitches ranging from poor to standard. The role of unsecured pitches (with no formal agreement in place) on limited access sites such as schools or on the University of Leicester's Oadby campus could represent a threat to the supply of pitches in future years, should community access be restricted or stopped.
- 3.13 It is also apparent from this study and as a result of the consultation responses that there is limited 3G AGP provision in the Borough, with no provision in Oadby (except the sand based AGP at the University of Leicester's Manor Road Campus).

Demand

- 3.14 According to the FA's Football Participation Report there are a total of 17 clubs in Oadby and Wigston with 67 teams playing in the Borough. Appendix E sets out the clubs currently playing in the Borough based upon data provided by the FA for the 2017-18 season. Of these clubs, there are 3 main clubs within the Borough.
- 3.15 The 3 main clubs that have the majority of teams and are also registered within Oadby and Wigston are summarised below:

Table 3.3 – Key Football Clubs

Club	Location	Comments
Oadby Owls FC	Coombe Park, Oadby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FA Community Club • Operate 38+ teams across age range from Under 7 to Under 16 including women teams • Also operate a Veterans team • Players live within the Borough, as well as in other locations throughout Leicester and Leicestershire • Currently play matches and train at Coombe Park, although they also rely upon other facilities both within and outside of the Borough to meet their training and match play demand. For example, they currently utilise facilities at Goals and Judgemeanow Community College in Leicester City, as well as Kibworth High School in Harborough.
Oadby Town FC	Freeway Park, Oadby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The First Team currently plays in Step 5 of the FA national league structure. • Freeway Park, Oadby is their home ground
Wigston Youth FC	St John Fisher School, Wigston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FA Youth Club • Operate six teams at U7 (development), U8, U9, U10, U11 and U13 age groups,

- 3.16 The key club within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is Oadby Owls FC who operates out of Coombe Park and run in excess of 38 teams. They have highlighted a need for improved facilities and in particular are seeking the development of an FA approved and / or FIFA Quality Standard 3G artificial grass pitch to help meet their training and match play demand. At present, they also rely upon other facilities

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within and outside of the Borough to meet their training and match play demands. For example, they currently utilise facilities at Goals and Judgemeadow Community College in Leicester City, as well as Kibworth High School in Harborough District. This situation is not ideal for a number of reasons and therefore, they are seeking to find a solution that will create a more formal, long-term solution for the Club, ideally in Oadby.

- 3.17 There are a number of other clubs and organisations who hire the University of Leicester facilities. This includes Leicester City Girls Centre of Excellence at Under 10 through to Under 16 level.
- 3.18 In order to calculate the future demand for football in Oadby and Wigston, a Team Generation Rate (TGR) has been calculated using the current number of teams and current population. These have then been used for the population projections for Oadby and Wigston to assess how the population growth or reduction will affect the demand for teams.

Table 3.4 – Team Generation Rates for Oadby and Wigston

Age Group	Current Population	Number of Teams	TGR	Future Population (2031)	Projected Number of Teams	Change in Teams
Adult (Men)	7,500	18	417	7,360	17.6	- 0.4
Adult (Women)	8,160	1	8,160	8,220	1.01	+0.01
Youth Boys (10-15yrs)	2,960	16	185	3,380	18.3	+2.3
Youth Girls (10-15yrs)	2,740	6	457	3,160	6.91	+ 0.91
Mini (8-9yrs)	3,800	26	146	4,200	28.8	+ 2.8

Note: Adult is considered 16-45 year olds

- 3.19 It can be seen from the table above that there is a limited increase in the number of teams with Mini and Youth both increasing by 1-4 teams. Other areas are likely to remain the same.
- 3.20 It should be recognised that the TGR's have been calculated based on the current provision and do not take into account any improved marketing or development of new teams through increased participation. Of particular note is the lack of women's teams, which should be a focus for any investment in new team development. In total, there are presently 67 active teams in the Borough and it is anticipated that this number could rise to approximately 73 teams over the course of the Plan period.

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Demand/Supply Balance

3.21 We set out overleaf the summary of the demand/supply balance for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston based on match equivalents.

Table 3.5 – Demand/Supply Balance for Football (Pitches)

Balance per Pitch Type	Match Equivalents			
	Adult	Junior	Mini	Total
Supply	33	6	8	47
Demand	20	14	29	63
Current Balance (matches per week)	+13	-8	-21	-16
Future Demand	20.4	16	32.1	68.5
Future Balance	+12.6	-10	-24.1	-22.5

Assumptions Made in the Calculations

1. Adult pitches – poor quality as 1 match per week and average quality as 2 matches per week
2. Junior pitches – poor quality as 2 matches per week and average quality as 3 matches per week
3. Mini pitches – poor quality as 3 matches per week and average quality as 4 matches per week
4. Each team plays one match per week

3.22 The results from the table above illustrate that overall there is an oversupply of grass pitch provision in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston for adults, although there is an undersupply of Youth and Mini grass pitches. Bearing in mind that the majority of junior and mini pitches are used by Oadby Owls, although pitch improvements could help to marginally increase capacity, it is unlikely that it would have a significant impact at peak times. Therefore, this would support the need to improve sub-standard grass pitches and to explore opportunities to develop an additional AGP in the Borough to improve capacity at peak times, particularly in Oadby.

Football Summary

The main club playing in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is Oadby Owls FC who operate a significant number of teams in the Borough at all age groups.

Although the majority of grass pitches and ancillary facilities in the Borough are generally considered to be of an acceptable quality and that there appears to be a slight oversupply of adult grass pitches within the Borough, there does also appear to be a significant need for additional junior and mini pitches.

The quality of pitches and facilities currently ranges from poor to adequate on some of the more actively used publicly owned and private sites, although there are also a few examples where the pitches are considered to be of good quality as well.

There is a need to invest in pitch maintenance or improved facilities at a number of these lower quality or priority sites moving forwards. The Council has currently identified Coombe Park, Horsewell Lane, Willow Park and Pochins Bridge / Windlass Drive as its priorities over the Plan period to 2031.

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Oadby Owls FC have expressed a desire to develop an AGP facility, preferably in Oadby and ideally to FIFA Quality Standard or FA approved 3G AGP standard, to accommodate their extensive training and match demands. .

The University of Leicester has also expressed a desire to improve its full-sized 3G AGP provision in Oadby at the Manor Road Campus and / or the Stoughton Road Sports Ground.

Beauchamp College, Gartree High School and Manor High School, all of which are also in Oadby, have also expressed a desire to increase the provision of facilities with regards to full sized 3G AGPs.

The 3G AGP at Wigston College's Station Road site would also benefit from resurfacing to a FIFA Quality Standard or FA 3G FTP Quality Approved carpet, having originally been installed over ten years ago in 2007. Also, increased access for the wider community would be beneficial and would help to meet the Borough's supply and demand.

FA data modelling evaluates the baseline requirement for 3G pitches taking into account the training requirements of clubs. It assumes that one 3G pitch is theoretically required per 42 teams and that based on FA policy, all football training should take place on 3G pitches (as opposed to sand based pitches).

On the basis that there are in excess of 65 active teams in the Borough and that this number is set to rise over the Plan period, there is a theoretical need for at least 1 to 2 full size FA 3G FTP Quality Approved or FIFA Quality Standard pitches in the Borough to meet this demand, as well as to upgrade the existing facilities at Wigston College. The Council will endeavour to facilitate a conversation between the the University of Leicester, the schools in Oadby, Oadby Owls FC, the FA and the Football Foundation to consider options for joint working to deliver additional community-use FA approved and FIFA Quality Standard full-size 3G AGP facilities in the Borough that would potentially be of benefit to all parties and solve capacity issues at Coombe Park and at the education and further education sites in the Borough.

Rugby Union

3.23 The demand for Rugby in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is generally delivered by two clubs, South Leicester RFC and Oadby Wyggs RFC. They participate at different levels with South Leicester RFC currently participating in National League 2 (North) and Oadby Wyggs RFC participating in Midlands 2 East.

3.24 We summarise in this section the supply and demand for Rugby in Oadby and Wigston.

Supply

3.25 Appendix D identifies the facility audit and presents the detail of the pitches which are available for Rugby within the Borough. We summarise the supply of pitches in the table below:

Table 3.6 – Rugby Pitch Summary

Pitches (Access)	Adult	Junior	Total
Community Use	8	1	9
Limited Community Use	6	1	7
Total	14	2	16

3.26 There are a total of 16 pitches in the Borough of which 9 are available for community use. The majority of these (6) are Club owned pitches across the two main rugby clubs. The remainder of the pitches are on education sites with limited or no community use. The non-community use pitches are also on school sites. Some of the key issues identified with the supply include:

- Each of the two club sites have 3 senior pitches on their site. Currently Oadby Wyggs RFC share their ground and third pitch with Leicester Tigers RFC, which is used as a training pitch. This arrangement has an impact upon the quality of the shared playing surfaces, particularly during the winter months.
- Leicester Tigers RFC use Oadby Wyggs RFC's Oval Park site as the main training venue for all Senior and Academy activity with the Academy often playing their competitive matches on the site.
- Leicester Tigers RFC has medium term relocation plans with aspirations to develop their own state-of-the-art and bespoke training facilities, although as yet, this plan hasn't been confirmed.
- Currently there is a lot of activity on Oadby Wyggs RFC's Oval Park site as a full community programme is run as well and the site is put under a lot of pressure.
- South Leicester RFC has identified supply and demand issues of its own and are investigating opportunities to increase capacity at their site both through maintenance improvement and / or through the installation of floodlighting at their Welford Road ground.
- All of the non-club sites are located at either schools or higher education facilities and are predominantly used by school or university sides. There is limited or no community use of these sites.

3.27 Consideration has also been given to the quality of pitches and an assessment of the quality of the pitches at the two clubs has been undertaken by the RFU and the key issues from these is set out below and in Table 3.7.

- The pitch ratings at South Leicester RFC's Welford Road (Wigston) ground range between poor to adequate for all three pitches. There are a number of issues identified including:

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- Over the last 5 years the club have invested in the pitches to improve their performance after a number of years where investment was not made, with circa £14,000 being invested in the 2016/17 season.
- The Club has aspirations to invest in additional floodlighting and better maintenance programmes so that midweek training doesn't have to be cancelled to ensure that weekend matches can be played.
- The pitch ratings at Oadby Wyggs RFC's Oval Park (Oadby) range between poor to adequate for all three pitches. In particular, the Deso Pitch Master (pitch 2) is in very poor condition with relatively little natural grass present as a result of significant over-use due to the arrangement between Oadby Wyggs RFC, Leicester Tigers RFC and some additional community access. This type of surface tends to be firm and can feel compacted which may also be as a result of a lack of adequate maintenance to ensure this type of pitch system continues to offer a high-quality surface throughout the season.

3.28 Overall, the supply indicates that there are 9 pitches available for community use (in addition to the pitches at the clubs identified above, these are at Wigston College and Beauchamp College) with the quality of the pitches here being rated as adequate. The core provision revolves around the two club facilities, with limited use on the school sites. Table 3.7 illustrates the pitch quality assessment scenarios for the two key sites in the Borough. As can be seen, both sites can accommodate 5-6 matches / training sessions a week and almost all of the pitches would benefit from maintenance improvements. As already highlighted, pitch 2 at Oadby Wyggs FC has the best drainage and acts as the training pitch for Leicester Tigers. However, this is a hybrid surface with very little natural grass which results in a compacted and poor surface to play on during the on-season. In the future, should pitch maintenance and / or drainage be improved; floodlighting be upgraded or installed on additional pitches; or, should a World Rugby compliant 3G AGP which would displace some of the mid-week pitch demand be developed, these scenarios may all lead to greater supply and relieve the capacity issues currently felt at the two sites.

Table 3.7 - Pitch Quality Assessment Scenario (April 2016)

Oadby Wyggs RFC, Oval Park, Oadby Pitch 1 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

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Oadby Wyggs RFC, Oval Park, Oadby Pitch 2 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5
Oadby Wyggs RFC, Oval Park, Oadby Pitch 3 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5
South Leicester RFC, Welford Road, Wigston Pitch 1 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5
South Leicester RFC, Welford Road, Wigston Pitch 2 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5
South Leicester RFC, Welford Road, Wigston Pitch 3 Assessment		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

Demand

3.29 The demand for rugby is summarised in the table below, with the number of teams each club runs.

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Table 3.8 – Rugby Teams

Club	Mini / Midi Teams	Youth (13-18) Teams	Adult Teams	Total
Oadby Wyggs	6	6	3	15
South Leicester	6	5	2	13
Totals	12	11	5	28

3.30 In considering the demand from these teams it is recognised that each team will play at home every other week.

Table 3.9 – Team Generation Rates and Future Demand

Age Group	Current Population	Number of Teams	TGR	Future Population (2031)	Projected Number of Teams	Change in Teams
Adult (Men)	7,500	5	1,500	7,360	4.9	-0.1
Youth - Male (13-18yrs)	2,640	11	240	3,000	12.5	+1.5
Mini / Midi – Mixed (6-12yrs)	4,420	12	368	4,940	13.4	+ 1.4

3.31 It can be seen from the table above that there is the potential for some growth in teams with the growth in population, although this is a relatively low increase and in the case of adults is likely to be a very slight decrease.

3.32 It should be noted that this calculation assumes that the current marketing and participation schemes by the clubs, RFU and other stakeholders such as the Council does not change and thus there is no increase or decrease in the percentage of people who participate. This may be affected by success in major tournaments, for example it appears that participation in women's rugby has increased by circa 70% following England's win in the World Cup 2014.

Supply & Demand Balance

3.33 To calculate whether there is any spare capacity at rugby sites in the Borough, the table below shows the supply and demand figures for matches and training for the two community clubs in Oadby and Wigston.

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Table 3.10 – Supply and Demand Balance by Club

Club	Mid Week Training			Weekend Match Play		
	Supply	Demand	Capacity	Supply	Demand	Capacity
Oadby Wyggs	3	6	-3	6	6	0
South Leicester	3	5.5	-2.5	6	5.5	0.5

Notes

5. Supply and Demand are shown in the number of matches that can be accommodated based on 2 matches/training per week
6. For Mid-Week the supply is based on the floodlit areas only

3.34 As can be seen from the table above the overall site capacity for each site is a deficit of 2-3 matches (once the mid-week training and match play is taken into account). This equates to a deficit of 1 pitch at each site. It should be noted that in both clubs the floodlit pitches are used during the week and also as weekend match pitches, so impacting on capacity if the weather is poor due to deterioration of the playing surfaces.

3.35 Thus the analysis suggests that both clubs are over capacity and there is a need for additional facilities, in particular for the mid-week training. One solution may be to explore the option to install additional floodlights to assist in training as opposed to seeking to create additional pitches. However, should additional floodlights be installed at either site, this would increase the use of the existing pitches and therefore have a greater impact upon the quality of the playing surfaces, thus having a detrimental impact upon the quality of surfaces through over-use. Therefore, should floodlighting be considered as an option, each club would have to consider an investment programme to improve maintenance and / or drainage for each site.

3.36 At Oadby Wyggs RFC, the supply/demand balance is based on use by the community and does not include Leicester Tigers RFC's use, which is predominantly during the daytime. However the impact of this training is likely to be contributing to the poor quality of some of the pitches at this site.

Rugby Summary

There are two clubs where Rugby is predominantly played in Oadby and Wigston (Oadby Wyggs & South Leicester) with both sites being over capacity, particularly for mid-week training.

The quality of South Leicester RFC's pitches at Welford Road in Wigston range between poor to adequate but have seen recent improvements having undergone maintenance investments in the 2016-17 season.

Oadby Wyggs RFC's facilities at the Oval Park, Oadby range in quality from poor to adequate and the site comes under pressure as it is also used as Leicester Tigers RFC's training venue for the Academy and Senior activity, as well as a community-based Rugby initiative.

If Leicester Tigers RFC were to relocate from this ground to a new training centre in the medium term, then Oadby Wyggs RFC would be keen to secure the site under a formal lease agreement which would allow for additional capacity at the site. However, Leicester Tigers RFC have yet to secure a suitable site and therefore, this scenario is unlikely at present.

South Leicester RFC have identified the need for increased pitch maintenance standards / drainage infrastructure and the potential to invest in additional floodlighting as mid-week training often has to be cancelled to ensure that weekend matches can be played.

Should any of these options be pursued, the priority should be to explore the potential for each site to improve pitch maintenance and / or drainage to accommodate additional use at both key locations.

The University of Leicester has also expressed a desire to improve its outdoor playing pitch provision at its Oadby Campus on Manor Road and Stoughton Road. Therefore, following on from this Playing Pitch Strategy, the Council will endeavour to facilitate a conversation between Oadby Wyggs RFC, South Leicester RFC, Leicester Tiger's RFC, the University of Leicester and the RFU, to consider options for joint working to deliver a World Rugby Compliant 3G AGP in the Borough that would potentially be of benefit to all parties and solve capacity issues at Oval Park, Oadby and at Welford Road, Wigston.

Cricket

3.37 There are a limited number of cricket clubs that operate within the Borough, Shree Sanatan 3rd XI Cricket Club and SPA Cricket Club both use facilities at Uplands Park. Wigston Town Cricket Club use facilities just outside of the Borough at Meadows Sports Ground, Countesthorpe, in Blaby District.

3.38 Particular issues that were identified through the club and NGB consultation included:

- The pitch and wicket playing surfaces, as well as the pavilion and ancillary facilities at Uplands Park can be compromised because they are not separated from the main park activities and therefore not protected during the winter months.
- It is believed that the majority of players within Oadby and Wigston travel outside of the Borough into Leicester and Leicestershire to play cricket. However, it is also thought that a number of players from elsewhere in the City and County travel into the Borough to play at Uplands Park.
- Last Man Standing which is a short form of the game that could be considered in the strategy moving forwards. However, there is already an established league in Leicester City for community use and the University

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of Leicester has established a venue for the University of Leicester's students at its Stoughton Road Sports Ground in Oadby.

3.39 The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) have established a new strategy called '[Cricket Unleashed](#)' for the whole game for the period up to 2021.

3.40 ECB will be working with Leicestershire County Cricket Club Community Team (LCCCCT) and a number of other local delivery partners to make the game more accessible and inspire the next generation of players, coaches, officials and volunteers.

3.41 Under the '[More Play](#)' strand of the Cricket Unleashed strategy the following key areas will be a priority that the Oadby and Wigston PPS will inform and support:

- **CLUBS & LEAGUES**

We will inspire stronger relationships with the game by breaking down barriers and improving accessibility. We will create opportunities for people to play the game anyhow, anytime and anywhere.

- **KIDS**

We will provide more opportunities for kids to play by putting the bat and ball in more schools across the country and by engaging with teachers to integrate cricket more into the classroom curriculum. We will roll out an ability-based pathway for children that will foster skill development and player progression, but most importantly focus on just having fun. The first stage of that pathway will be a national, entry-level programme delivered in schools, clubs and the community with a greater connection to the professional game.

- **COMMUNITIES**

We will ensure that cricket is at the heart of the communities in which it is played through a game wide philosophy of inclusivity. We will diversify participation with particular focus on women, girls, multicultural groups, those with disabilities and inner city communities. We will actively drive a broader representation of society in all areas of the game.

- **CASUAL**

We will inspire stronger relationships with the game by breaking down barriers and improving accessibility. We will create opportunities for people to play the game anyhow, anytime and anywhere.

Supply

3.42 Appendix D summarises the audit of pitches available and there are 8 grass cricket wickets available in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, of which 3 are available for Community Use, as follows:

- Uplands Park (Council owned) – 2 pitches available for full community use, but only one can be used at once as the outfield overlap

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- Manor High School (Education Site) – 1 pitch but appears to be limited community use.

3.43 The quality of pitches in the Borough suggests that the Council owned Uplands Park wickets and surrounding out field areas are considered to be adequate which is based on both an assessment of the pitches and also feedback from relevant clubs. The Council invested in the cricket provision at Uplands Park between 2008 and 2010 by completing a programme of renewal which saw both wickets get re-laid and reseeded. Despite this, the Clubs do still feel that there is room for improvement on both the wickets and surrounding pitch areas.

3.44 One of the issues highlighted in the consultation is the lack of high quality pitches in the Borough and the ability to protect pitches which are predominantly on open parks because they are not fenced off from other users in the park when not in use.

Demand

3.45 There are no cricket clubs in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston who own their own pitch or facilities and it appears that the majority of players will travel out of the Borough to access and play for other clubs.

3.46 However, there are 2 clubs who play and hire facilities within the Borough and utilise Uplands Park. Both of these teams are actually registered elsewhere in the Leicester and Leicestershire, but play their matches in Oadby at Uplands Park. This arrangement is acceptable for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and helps to meet demands for pitches elsewhere in the County.

3.47 All of the demand currently in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is based on pay and play use to hire facilities as opposed to formal, long-term, community use agreements.

3.48 Wigston Town Cricket Club is registered in the Borough but currently play in Countesthorpe at Meadows Sports Ground (Blaby District) which they are able to access easily and consider to be of a better quality. Previously, they have played at Stoughton Road facilities, however these are utilised by the University of Leicester and are not currently available for community use. Wigston Town Cricket Club plays in the Leicestershire and Rutland League.

Demand/Supply Balance

3.49 The current demand for pitches is being met on the existing pitches for pay and play with the capacity of 4 pitches for community use and utilisation of 2 pitches at Uplands Park. Although this does not reflect the potential use by clubs such as Wigston Town Cricket Club who use facilities outside of the Borough, this does also take account of teams utilising the facilities in the Borough, despite those teams actually being registered elsewhere in Leicester and Leicestershire.

3.50 The main issue with the supply/demand balance moving forwards is the quality of the pitches and the ability for clubs to enable the quality to be improved on what is effectively a public park.

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3.51 In consultation with the England Cricket Board, the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is not seen as a priority area due to its proximity to Leicester City and also its relatively small population.

Cricket Summary

There is limited cricket played in the Borough and it is predominantly played through pay and play access, as opposed to long term agreements for clubs.

The main issue appears to be the limited availability of quality and accessible facilities for community use on a pay and play basis in the Borough.

The key requirements should be about protecting and enhancing existing facilities at Uplands Park in Oadby for community use and to seek opportunities for additional community use of pitches in the Borough on existing sites, such as those on limited access school sites or at the University of Leicester's Sports Ground on Stoughton Road, also in Oadby.

Hockey

Supply

3.52 Appendix D sets out the facility audit and the supply of facilities in the Borough. Currently Hockey is played on Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) and we summarise the supply below.

Table 3.11 – AGP Supply

AGP Type	Full Size	Small Size	Notes
Sand Filled	1	2	All on Education or University Sites
3G	1	1	All on Education or University Sites
Total	2	3	

3.53 All of the current sites are on school or university sites and are considered of adequate quality. There is only one full sized sand based pitch which is suitable for Hockey and this is on the University of Leicester's Manor Road site in Oadby.

3.54 Consultation with England Hockey suggests that the standard of pitches is not seen as an issue in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston. England Hockey's recent change in policy of the use of 3G pitches has stated that 3G pitches should only be used at Category 4 level (recreational use) and if there is no alternative.

Demand

3.55 There is limited hockey played in the Borough with one principle club:

- Leicester University Mixed Hockey – play at Manor Road, Oadby.

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3.56 The club is not affiliated to England Hockey and are not accredited by Clubmark because they are a University-run team. There are also a number of larger clubs in Leicestershire, some of which are located in close proximity to the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.

Tennis

3.57 There are 2 main tennis clubs within the Borough.

- Wigston Tennis Club (play at Horsewell Lane Recreation Ground)
- Oadby (Granville) Tennis Club, Leicester Road, Oadby

3.58 There are 7 courts available within council owned sites that are easily accessible to the general public, whilst the club makes use of private facilities.

3.59 There are a further 4 courts which are located at Horsewell Lane and are used by the Wigston Tennis Club only.

3.60 Furthermore, there are a number of courts within educational establishments suggesting that currently considering there are just 2 clubs in the Borough the demand for tennis playing facilities is being met with surplus to spare.

All Clubs Survey

3.61 As part of the PPS, club consultation has been undertaken to understand the requirements and needs of the various sports clubs within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. 44 questionnaires were sent out to a combination of clubs and facility providers (such as schools).

3.62 The key findings from the research included.

- Over the last 5 years the number of sports clubs within the Borough has increased by an average of 23%
- The most commonly listed current issues for sports clubs were:
 - External funding
 - Lack of information
 - Access to local facilities
 - Lack of coaches
- 100% of clubs played 11-30 home games on their main pitch per season with 50% between 11-20 and 50% between 21-30 games.
- On average 4.3 games were cancelled per club per season due to pitch conditions
- On average clubs felt that their main pitch could cope with a maximum of 2.4 games per week

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- Playing pitches (football) described as the ‘best’ pitches in the Borough included:
 - Horsewell Lane – pitch 3
 - Uplands Park
 - Manor Road
 - Stoughton Road
- However 2 of the responses stated that there were no adequate football pitches within the Borough – suggesting all pitches were in need of extensive remediation
- Playing pitches described as the ‘worst’ pitches in the Borough included:
 - Horsewell Lane – pitch 1
 - Horsewell Lane – pitch 2
 - Uplands Park
- The most commonly listed future plans for clubs was increasing membership
- Majority of club members resided in Oadby, Wigston or Leicester
- 66% of clubs felt pitch provision in The Borough of Oadby and Wigston was adequate. The other 33% felt it was not.
- Majority of clubs believed it was acceptable to travel 20-25 minutes by car to games and training.
- A demand was identified for training pitches, such as artificial turf pitches (in particular 3G training pitches, which a number of clubs travel outside of the Borough for).

3.63 In October 2017, we undertook a further survey to gain an updated understanding of the requirements of sports clubs within the Borough. From the responses received, some of the key findings included:

- A need for a suitable artificial, flood lit, affordable training facility in Oadby, primarily for Football.
- The quality of the grass football pitches were rated as either ‘standard’ or ‘good’.
- Dog fouling on sports pitches was highlighted as being an issue by all respondents.
- Pitch drainage is understood to be generally adequate, although extreme weather conditions can result in matches being postponed and rearranged. Over the past twelve months, on average, only one game per club was cancelled.

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- The changing and ancillary facilities are generally regarded as ‘adequate’ or ‘good’ throughout the Borough, with the exception of Horsewell Lane’s pavilion, where it has been identified that the facilities are in need of significant investment to bring the changing and shower facilities up to an acceptable standard.

3.64 We explore the strategic framework for the way forward in the next section and also Action Plan.

Delivery of Outcomes

- 4.1 The overall context for future local provision of playing pitches must be set within the strategic context and overall vision within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston which we seek to establish in this section.
- 4.2 The focus is to ensure that future playing pitch provision can support in delivering a number of key outcomes which reflects the aspirations of the Council's Corporate Plan (up to 2019) and in particular:

Improving the Health of Residents

- a. The Council wants to ensure residents live a full and healthy life.
- b. The Council will continue to develop its relationship with partners in order to develop and implement appropriate outcomes that attempt to achieve this.

Greening the Borough

- a. The Council will continue to invest in and encourage activities which result in a greener Borough

Equality

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will take action to ensure that all people who visit, live or work in the Borough are treated justly and equally, are free from prejudice, fear, harassment and discrimination, and have equal access to learning, employment and social opportunities to enhance their quality of life:

- 4.3 In particular the role sport can play in strengthening the economy and communities will need to be recognised. These outcomes are what frame the strategic framework for playing pitches and indeed other leisure facilities.

Strategic Framework

- 4.4 The analysis of current provision set out in previous sections identified a number of key features including:
 - There is a good distribution of playing pitch provision across the Borough, however over half of the provision is either in private ownership (such as for private sports clubs) or in educational establishments (including University and School provision). A lot of these facilities have limited or no community access.
 - There are close links with other provision in surrounding authority areas and there is a flow of people between those areas and the Borough. For example, there are playing pitches on the edge of the Borough in Blaby District that are used by clubs based in Wigston, such as Meadows Sports Ground on Countesthorpe Road.
 - There appears to be some capacity to develop additional usage on existing sites which are in Council or private ownership.

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- There is a lack of full size Artificial Grass Pitches within the Borough, particularly of FA, RFU, and FIFA approved 3G standard.
 - The quality of pitches within Council owned facilities are variable with some specific issues around both pitch quality and also ancillary facilities.
- 4.5 Overall there does not appear to be any major shortfalls in provision, however the quality of provision could be improved and access to facilities improved. In particular it is recommended that the current supply of pitches for football, rugby and cricket are protected at the very least and additional capacity is sought through various mechanisms.
- 4.6 As a result of these issues it is proposed that the following key strategic framework and actions should be used by the Council in developing playing pitches for the Borough.
- The Council should continue to invest in and develop Council playing pitches and ancillary facilities to maintain and improve both the quality of pitches and also ancillary facilities (such as changing and pavilions). We explore the site by site recommendations in the Action Plan in Table 4.1.
 - Maximise the capacity and community access for existing public and private facilities.
 - The Council should seek to discuss and explore options with the University of Leicester, Leicestershire County Council, private Sports Clubs and Schools to find solutions that seek to increase community access at those sites through the delivery of programmes which may enable clubs and other organisations greater ability to access those pitches and facilities.
 - To support the development of this infrastructure, there should also be support for the development of a database of coaches and volunteers by the Council, working in partnership with the NGBs.
 - The Council should continue to work closely with Sport England and the NGBs to develop further the support for new facilities and programmes which encourage participation. The Council will seek to work with Sport England, as necessary, to calculate new development contributions when seeking to deliver these items of sporting infrastructure over the Plan period.
 - Review and develop an approach to identifying space for additional mini and youth football pitches.
 - Seek to deliver new full-size FA, RFU, and FIFA approved 3G Artificial Grass Pitches for the Borough, preferably within Oadby.
- 4.7 Wherever possible, the primary approach should be to consider improving the maintenance and drainage strategy, as well as installation of floodlighting and upgrading of artificial surfaces where appropriate, for all of the Borough's existing sites where there are already facilities in place. In addition to that, the next step will

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be to seek opportunities in the Borough to develop new facilities, ideally to include state-of-the-art full-size, 3G, Artificial Grass Pitches that meet the approved standards of the relevant NGB's.

Site Actions

- 4.8 In considering the development of this Playing Pitch Strategy, it is important to consider the approach to individual sports and to be site specific when establishing an Action Plan that will seek to deliver on the shortfalls identified within each individual sport.
- 4.9 It should be noted that short term is 1-5 years, medium term is 5-10 years and long term is 10-15 years.

Table 4.1 –Action Plan

Site	Issue/ Opportunity	Key Actions	Partners	Timescale
Football				
Coombe Park, Oadby	Capacity issues identified as a result of Oadby Owls FC's impressive growth to in excess of 38 teams. The Club has a range of age groups, genders and abilities and needs more flexibility in the size and quality of pitches available. This has resulted in over-play and pitch surface issues at Coombe Park, as well as some teams having to train and play matches at alternative sites, within and outside of the Borough.	Seek solutions that will enhance playing surfaces on the site, including: pitch maintenance improvements, enhanced drainage infrastructure, specialist turf solutions that are more durable throughout the season, as well as, development of a full-size FA Approved / FIFA Quality Standard 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) to reduce the demand on the existing grass pitches and to increase capacity at Coombe Park at peak times. If capacity for additional matches is delivered on-site, improvements and / or enhancements may also be required to the pavilion, as well as increased provision of car parking spaces and improved access to the site.	OWBC Oadby Owls FC Football Association Football Foundation	Short
University of Leicester, Manor Road and Stoughton Road Campus, Oadby	Lack of a full sized FA approved 3G AGP for the students at the University of Leicester.	Seek to deliver a full-size FA Approved / FIFA Quality Standard 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) at the Oadby Campus.	University of Leicester Football Association Football Foundation	Short

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Site	Issue/ Opportunity	Key Actions	Partners	Timescale
Beauchamp College, Gartree High School and Manor High School, Oadby	Lack of a full sized FA approved 3G AGP for the students at the three schools.	Seek to deliver a full-size FA Approved / FIFA Quality Standard 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) at one of the schools in Oadby.	Beauchamp College, Gartree High School and Manor High School Football Association Football Foundation Leicestershire County Council	Short
Horsewell Lane, Wigston	Poor to adequate pitch surfaces and out-dated ancillary facilities within the pavilion and surrounding communal areas.	Seek to demolish and rebuild a new pavilion to an agreed specification and to renew the communal areas in the car parking area. In addition to this, enhance playing surfaces for each pitch using techniques including: improved pitch maintenance schemes, consideration of enhancing drainage infrastructure, or, specialist turf solutions that are more durable throughout the season.	OWBC Football Association Football Foundation	Short
Willow Park, Wigston	Poor to adequate pitch surfaces and ancillary facilities require improvements.	Seek to enhance playing surfaces for each pitch using techniques including: improved pitch maintenance schemes, consideration of enhancing drainage infrastructure, or, specialist turf solutions that are more durable throughout the season. Seek to update and / or upgrade the ancillary facilities.	OWBC Football Association Football Foundation	Short
Wigston College, Station Road, Wigston	Existing full-sized AGP surface is 1 st generation 3G and not FA approved.	Seek to upgrade the playing surface on the full- sized AGP to an FA approved 3G playing surface.	Wigston College Football Association Football Foundation	Short

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Site	Issue/ Opportunity	Key Actions	Partners	Timescale
Pochins Bridge / Windlass Drive, South Wigston ²	No football pitch or pavilion on site.	Explore opportunities to establish a football pitch and ancillary facilities, including a pavilion and communal areas.	OWBC Football Association Football Foundation	Short to Medium
Rugby Union				
Oadby Wyggs RFC and Leicester Tigers RFC, Oval Park, Oadby	Poor to adequate pitch surfaces on all three pitches, as a result of capacity issues due to over-use for training and matches.	Seek solutions that will enhance playing surfaces on site, including, pitch maintenance improvements, enhanced drainage infrastructure, or, specialist turf solutions that are more durable throughout the season. Consider options to seek funding to deliver an on or off-site World Rugby Compliant 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) solutions to reduce the demand placed on the three pitches at Oval Park.	Oadby Wyggs RFC Leicester Tigers RFC Rugby Football Union	Short to Medium
South Leicester RFC, Welford Road, Wigston	Lack of adequate floodlighting and capacity issues identified as a result of poor to adequate pitch surfaces on all three pitches, as a result of over-use for training and matches.	Seek to invest in floodlighting infrastructure to increase capacity at Welford Road. Seek solutions that will enhance playing surfaces on site, including, pitch maintenance improvements, enhanced drainage infrastructure, or, specialist turf solutions that are more durable throughout the season. Consider options to seek funding to deliver an on or off-site World Rugby Compliant 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) solutions to reduce the demand placed	South Leicester RFC Rugby Football Union	Short to Medium

² The ownership and maintenance of the open space at Pochins Bridge / Windlass Drive is still subject to the agreed trigger point as per the Section 106 Agreement between the developer and the Council.

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Site	Issue/ Opportunity	Key Actions	Partners	Timescale
		on the three pitches at Welford Road.		
Cricket				
Uplands Park, Oadby	Maintain and enhance cricket pitches and ancillary communal facilities.	Protect and enhance the quality of Cricket wickets and surrounding pitch area. Ensure continued community use for Cricket at Uplands Park.	OWBC	Short, Medium and Long
University of Leicester, Manor Road and Stoughton Road Campus, Oadby	Limited community access for Cricket pitches and ancillary facilities at the University's Stoughton Road Sports Ground in Oadby.	Seek to increase the level of community access into the University of Leicester's sporting facilities at the Oadby Campus for Cricket, as well as for other sports.	University of Leicester OWBC	Short

4.10 It will also be important that the Council reviews the action plan over the coming years through annual monitoring to deliver improved facilities in the right locations to meet the most pressing demand. The Council will seek to work with Sport England and the relevant NGB's, as necessary, to calculate new development contributions when seeking to deliver these items of sporting infrastructure over the Plan period.

4.11 The Council will also seek to engage with all public and private organisations in the Borough and where they share common interests or objectives, seek to relay that information and to facilitate conversations that may prove useful to see if the common goal can be the catalyst for future partnership working to encourage new and improved sporting facilities in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston over the Local Plan period to 2031.

APPENDIX A – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

APPENDIX A – REVIEW OF STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

This is a PDF document and has therefore been saved in a separate document.

APPENDIX B – LOCAL SPORT PROFILE

APPENDIX B – LOCAL SPORT PROFILE

This is a PDF document and has therefore been saved in a separate document.

APPENDIX C – MAPS OF EXISTING PROVISION

APPENDIX C – MAPS OF EXISTING PROVISION

This is a PDF document and has therefore been saved in a separate document.

APPENDIX D – FACILITY AUDIT OF PITCHES

APPENDIX D – FACILITY AUDIT OF PITCHES

This is a PDF document and has therefore been saved in a separate document.

APPENDIX E – FOOTBALL CLUBS IN THE BOROUGH

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