

PENDLE

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JULY 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the Executive Summary of Pendle Borough Council's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). Whilst the Council has been the key driver in developing it, it is expected that plans and actions emanating from it can only be delivered in partnership with other key stakeholders, e.g. Sports Clubs, National Governing Bodies, Schools, Parish/Town Councils, etc. The document should be used alongside the Pennine Lancashire PPS, particularly for the site by site action plan.

Purpose

The document provides guidance and support to the local authority in order to understand and assess the need for playing pitches. It provides a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2016 and 2026. The PPS covers the following playing pitches and outdoor sports:

- ◆ Football pitches
- ◆ Cricket pitches
- ◆ Rugby union pitches
- ◆ Rugby league pitches
- ◆ Artificial grass pitches (AGPs) (Hockey)
- ◆ Bowling greens
- ◆ Tennis courts

Key Drivers/Objectives

The key objectives for the Playing Pitch Strategy are:

- ◆ To provide the basis for ongoing monitoring and review of the use, distribution, function, quality and accessibility of playing pitches.
- ◆ Support external funding bids and maximise support for playing pitches.
- ◆ To provide a strategic framework for the provision and management of playing pitches within the Study Area
- ◆ To inform the review of emerging planning policy within the Local Development Frameworks of the participating authorities
- ◆ To provide adequate planning guidance to assess development proposals affecting playing fields.
- ◆ To inform land use decisions in respect of future use of existing outdoor sports areas and playing pitches within the Study Area.

Study area

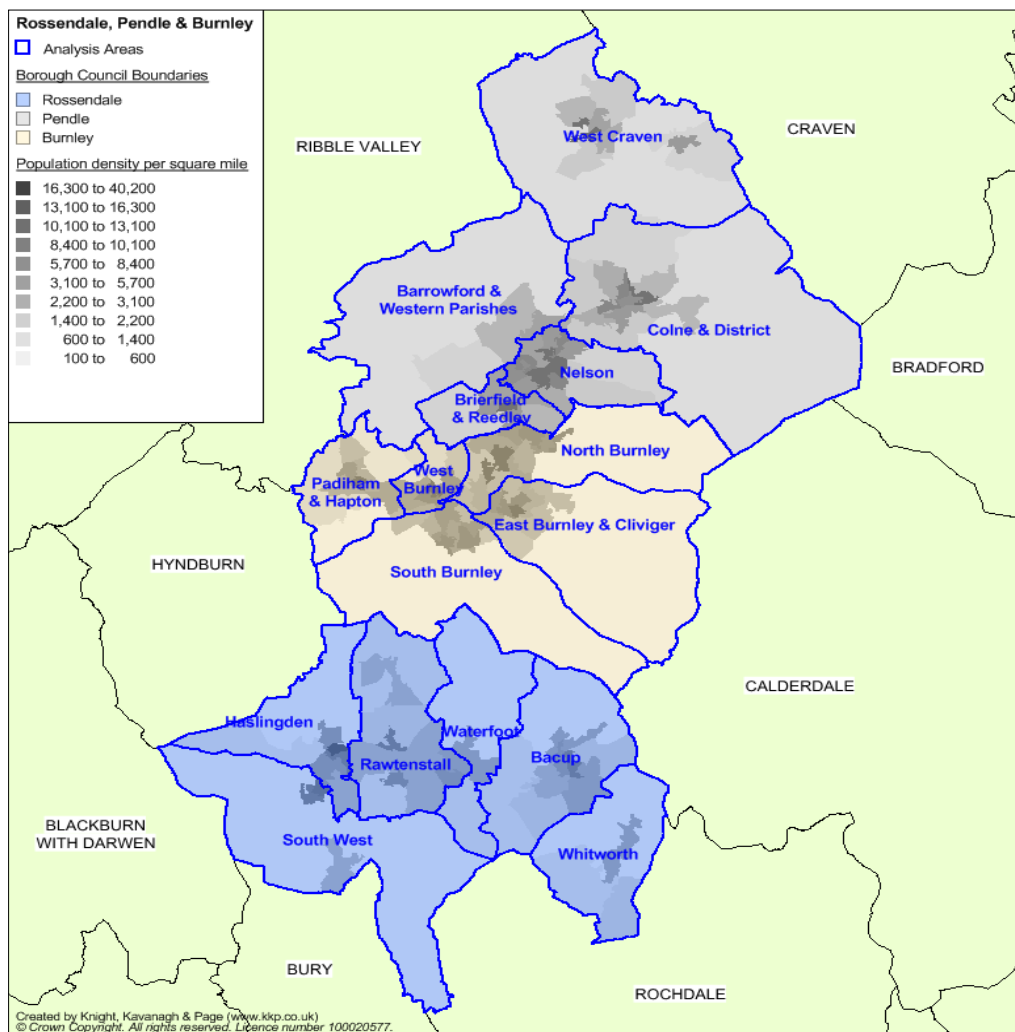
The local authority boundary of Pendle will provide the geographic scope of the PPS. Sub areas, or analysis areas, have been created to allow a more localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch surpluses and deficiencies at a local level.

Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account. Pendle is divided into five analysis areas based on the Area Committee system in place:

Appendix 1

Local authority	Analysis area	Ward
Pendle	Barrowford & Western Parishes	Barrowford Old Laund Booth Higham & Pendleside Blacko & Higherford
	Brierfield & Reedley	Brierfield Reedley
	Colne & District	Waterside Boulsworth Horsfield Vivary Bridge Foulridge
	Nelson	Whitefield Walverden Bradley Marsden Southfield Clover Hill
	West Craven	Earby Craven Coates

Analysis area map



Vision

This study has been developed on the basis of the above strategic drivers in order to ensure that it reflects the Council's wider ambitions:

'To provide an accessible, high quality and sustainable network of sport pitches and other associated outdoor sports facilities, which provide opportunities for participation by all residents at all levels of play from grassroots to elite and maximises opportunities for realising health benefits'

Methodology

The Strategy is predicated on an in-depth needs assessment which used the Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance. This guide provides a recommended methodology to undertaking a robust assessment. The approach comprises of 10 steps which can be seen in the figure below:



Appendix 1

Headline findings

The table below highlights the quantitative headline findings from the Pendle Playing Pitch Assessment Report:

Sport	Analysis area	Current demand shortfall	Future demand shortfall (2026) ¹
Football (grass pitches) ²	Pendle	Demand is being met for adult matches Shortfall of 1.5 youth 11v11 matches Demand is being met for youth 9v9 Demand is being met for mini 7v7 Shortfall of 1 mini 5v5 matches	Demand is being met for adult matches Shortfall of 5.5 youth 11v11 matches Shortfall of 1 youth 9v9 matches Demand is being met for mini 7v7 Shortfall of 1.5 mini 5v5 matches
Football (3G AGPs)	Pendle	Shortfall of 2 full size 3G pitches³	Shortfall of 2 full size 3G pitches to accommodate all competitive mini football
Cricket	Pendle	Shortfall of 1 pitch	Shortfall of 1 pitch
Rugby Union	Pendle	Shortfall of 7.5 match sessions	Shortfall of 13.5 match sessions
Rugby League	Pendle	Demand is being met	Demand is being met
Hockey (Sand AGPs)	Pendle	Demand is being met	Demand is being met

¹ Please note that this is demand that will exist in 2026 if the current demand is not met and also includes latent and displaced demand identified.

² Quantified in match equivalent sessions.

³ To service current training needs. On the basis that there are 138 teams playing within Pendle, there is a recommended need for two full size 3G pitches. A new 3G pitch at Fisher More Secondary School is going ahead and will therefore reduce the shortfall in Pendle.

Summary

Football pitches – grass

- ✦ There are a total of 235 football pitches across the three local authorities, of which 194 are available for community use.
- ✦ Of the 194 pitches available for community use, there are 65 in Pendle.
- ✦ Although security of tenure of pitches/sites is generally good, clubs such as Earby Town FC, Barnoldswick Town FC and Colne FC also report aspirations to acquire land on long term leases. Further to this, there may be opportunities for other bodies such as parish/town councils to take on more responsibility for playing pitches in the future.
- ✦ Tenure of some sites does remain unsecure, notably at schools and academies which state their own policies and are more likely to restrict levels of community use. This is the case at Marsden Heights School and Pendle Vale College, for example.
- ✦ In Pendle, there are 16 pitches assessed as good quality, 28 as standard and 21 as poor.
- ✦ A total of 101 clubs containing 378 teams were identified as playing within Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley. This consists of 110 men's teams, eight women's teams, 125 youth boys' teams, 11 youth girls' teams and 124 mini soccer teams.
- ✦ There are 138 teams within Pendle.
- ✦ There is latent demand totalling five adult, five youth and four mini teams in Pendle.
- ✦ Future demand expressed by clubs equates to four adult, 10 youth and five mini teams in Pendle.
- ✦ The table shows a total of 15.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity in Pendle.
- ✦ There is 5.5 match equivalents of overplay in Pendle.
- ✦ There is an overall shortfall of adult pitches both now and in the future within Rossendale and Burnley, however, spare capacity exists in Pendle.
- ✦ For youth 11v11 pitches there is future shortfall within each local authority. There is a significant shortfall of youth 11v11 pitches and the shortfall would be far greater if teams were playing on the correct pitch sizes.
- ✦ 9v9 play can be accommodated on the current supply of pitches in Pendle. However, future demand results in a shortfall within each local authority.
- ✦ Current and future demand can be accommodated on 7v7 pitches in Pendle.
- ✦ There is a shortfall in 5v5 pitches both now and in the future in Pendle.

3G pitches

- ✦ Of the seven full size 3G AGPs within Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley, one is in Pendle.
- ✦ The pitch at Nelson & Colne College is available for community use, is floodlit and is FA registered to host competitive matches.
- ✦ The carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately 10 years. As the 3G pitch within Pendle has been built/resurfaced in the last six years, no major quality issues exist.
- ✦ In Pendle, there is a recommended need for three full size pitches, meaning there is a current shortfall of two pitches based on demand from 138 teams.
- ✦ A new 3G pitch at Fisher More Secondary School is going ahead and will therefore reduce the shortfall in Pendle.

Cricket pitches

- There are 20 senior grass cricket pitches across Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley all of which are available for community use. Of the pitches, 11 are located in Pendle.
- The audit of grass wicket cricket pitches in Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley found nine pitches to be good quality and the remaining 11 as standard quality.
- In total, there are 28 clubs servicing the local authorities generating 56 senior teams and 54 junior teams, amounting to 110 teams in total.
- The Pendle District Cricket League reports that it currently has a waiting list of three teams due to a lack of pitches available.
- Based on TGRs, it is predicted that there will be an increase of four junior boys' teams.
- There are clubs within each local authority that wish to grow. In Pendle, this amounts to potential growth of five junior teams.
- Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish more female teams in every local authority over the next five years. Despite this, there are currently no dedicated female teams within Pendle, although girls can play in mixed junior teams.
- All pitches within Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley currently show potential spare capacity amounting to a combined total of 477 match equivalent sessions, however, only five are available during peak time for senior cricket (Sundays).
- Of pitches with actual spare capacity, there are 0.5 pitches within Pendle.
- No pitches are overplayed, although Barrowford Cricket Club and Earby Cricket Club are operating close to capacity.
- Spare capacity is considered to exist for junior matches both now and in the future as no non-turf wickets are adjudged to be at capacity or overplayed.
- There is a shortfall of pitches in Pendle for current and future demand. This is due to the unmet demand reported by the Pendle District Cricket League.

Rugby union pitches

- There six senior and two mini pitches within Pendle. All pitches are considered available for community use.
- There are two good, eight standard and three poor quality senior pitches. One mini pitch is assessed as standard and one is assessed as poor.
- Four clubs play across Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley consisting of 11 senior, 13 junior and 15 mini teams.
- Both Burnley RUFC and Pendle RUFC report unmet demand for one senior team.
- All three Pendle clubs report an intention to increase the number of their teams in the future. Where quantified, planned growth amounts to three senior men's, one senior women's, five junior boys', two junior girls' and two mini teams.
- The peak time for demand for senior rugby is Saturday pm and for mini/junior teams is Sunday am, although junior teams mostly play on senior pitches.
- In total, there is considered to be 3 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity. Of this, all match equivalents are in Pendle.
- In total, overplay of these pitches amounts to seven match equivalent sessions, of which 5.5 match equivalents are in Pendle.
- There is an overall shortfall of senior pitches amounting to 16.5 match equivalent sessions, of which a shortfall of 12.5 is identified in Pendle.
- Improving quality of pitches will help to provide greater capacity and help to reduce overplay throughout the Area. In addition, removing all training demand from match pitches would significantly reduce overplay. A more practical way to alleviate overplay, however, would be to install additional floodlighting.

World rugby compliant AGPs

- It is the intention of the RFU investment strategy into AGPs to invest in communities across the country where grass rugby pitches in the local community are over capacity and where the installation of an AGP would support the growth of the game at the host site and for the local rugby partnership, including local rugby clubs and other organisations within the Local Authority. The RFU is keen to work with partners such as the Council and the FA to look at sites of mutual interest for future AGP provision.

Rugby league pitches

- There are two rugby league pitches in Pendle, one at Victory Park (used by West Craven Warriors RLFC) and one at West Craven High School (available for community use but unused), both of which are in the West Craven Analysis Area.
- Both pitches were assessed as standard quality, meaning they can each accommodate two matches per week.
- West Craven Warriors RLFC fields one senior men's team, one senior women's team and two primary teams. All matches are played at Victory Park as well as six hours of training each week during the league season. However, some training demand is displaced to Skipton. The Club reports plans to increase its number of teams by two junior boys' teams, two junior girls' teams and three primary teams.
- The Club reports no issues with the pitch at Victory Park, however, does express a demand for a dedicated clubhouse facility and an AGP for winter and floodlit training.
- When taking into account match play and training the Victory Park pitch is overplayed by 3.5 match sessions per week but has 0.5 match sessions of spare capacity when just accounting for match play.

Hockey pitches

- There are eight full size (sand based/dressed) artificial pitches across Rossendale, Burnley and Pendle. Of these, two are in Pendle.
- Through the audit assessment, the full size AGP within Pendle was assessed as standard quality.
- The only club servicing the three local authorities is Pendle Forest Hockey Club, which plays all its home matches at Marsden Heights School in Pendle. The Club consists of three senior women's teams, one senior women's veterans' team and four junior girls' teams. The Club itself reports no aspiration to grow in terms of teams, however, there is likely to be future participation increases based on England Hockey growth rates.
- Supply is deemed sufficient enough to meet current and future demand for both senior and junior hockey in Pendle. Focus should be placed on ensuring the quality of the AGP at Marsden Heights School is sustained.

Tennis courts

- ◀ There are a total of 54 tennis courts identified in the three local authorities across 19 sites, all of which are available for community use. The courts are relatively evenly distributed, with 16 courts in Pendle.
- ◀ In addition, there are also courts within educational sites; however, no regular community use or demand is recorded.
- ◀ Of provision that is available for community use, 42 courts are assessed as good quality, five are deemed standard and seven are rated as poor.
- ◀ The courts assessed as poor quality in Pendle are all located at Marsden Park, whilst the standard quality courts are located at Alkincoats Park.
- ◀ Craven Tennis Club report that its ancillary provision is poor quality due to the age of the clubhouse and its size.
- ◀ Craven Tennis Club consists of three junior members and 23 senior members. All junior members are boys, whilst senior membership is broken down as 20 men and three women.
- ◀ As well as the club expressing no future demand, no unmet demand or latent demand was reported during consultation.
- ◀ All clubs report spare capacity on their courts in that the current number of courts can accommodate both current and future demand. Park courts are also reported to be readily available for casual users, whilst numerous courts within education sites are available to the community if demand existed.

Bowling greens

- ◀ There are 39 crown green bowling greens in Rossendale, Burnley and Pendle provided across 30 sites. Of these, 12 greens are in Pendle.
- ◀ All greens in Pendle were assessed as good quality, with the exception of Colne Cricket & Bowls Club and Earby Memorial Bowling Club.
- ◀ Of clubs consulted within Pendle there are a total of 402 members across seven clubs.
- ◀ In correlation to a national trend of declining membership, only one club in Pendle (Brierfield Bowling Club) has seen a reduction in membership since 2012.
- ◀ One club in Pendle (Earby Memorial Bowling Club) states plans for membership to increase in the future.
- ◀ Generally, it is considered that most bowling clubs are able to accept additional members should demand increase. It is therefore unlikely that demand would increase to such an extent that additional greens will be needed, meaning any investment should instead be focused on improving existing greens.
- ◀ No clubs report a need for an additional green; however, it is recommended that support is offered to those clubs operating above their local authorities' average in order to ensure greens are not being overused.

Objectives and recommendations

The three main themes of the strategy reflect Pendle's priorities emanating from Sport England's planning objectives for sport; **protect**, **enhance** and **provide**:

AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of sports facilities where it is needed for meeting current or future needs

Recommendations:

- a. Protect playing field sites through local planning policy
- b. Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs/organisations, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c. Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.

AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports facilities through improving quality and management of sites

Recommendation:

- d. Improve quality
- e. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) for the management and improvement of sites.
- f. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

AIM 3

To **provide** new outdoor sports facilities where there is current or future demand to do so

Recommendation:

- g. Rectify quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock.
- h. Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.

Sport specific recommendations

Recommendations – grass football pitches

- ◀ Existing quantity of football pitches to be protected, unless equivalent alternative provision is provided.
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as standard or poor quality, prioritise investment for pitch improvements and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality.
- ◀ Remark adult pitches exclusively used by youth teams (u13s-u16s) in order to better accommodate demand and where possible transfer remaining youth teams to utilise spare capacity on other existing sites.
- ◀ Work with schools to maximise and secure access to pitches on school sites which are currently unavailable for community use and have sufficient capacity to accommodate community use in addition to school use.
- ◀ Where appropriate, develop partnership and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded clubs to manage their own 'home' sites.
- ◀ Explore opportunities for other bodies such as parish/town councils to take on more management/responsibility for playing field sites.

Recommendations – 3G pitches

- ◀ Increase provision of 3G pitches and as a priority explore options to provide double pitch sites.
- ◀ Ensure that sinking funds (formed by periodically setting aside money over time ready for surface replacement when required) are in place to maintain 3G pitch quality in the long term.
- ◀ Carry out consultation with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance/buy in of moving all youth/mini competitive play to 3G pitches in the future.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches meet FA requirements and are subsequently tested and FA registered. In addition, ensure that existing and future 3G pitches are used to maximum potential to allow for future back to back programming of mini/youth matches at peak times.

World rugby compliant AGPs

- ◀ Given large amounts of over play on rugby sites consider world rugby compliant AGPs in the Area whether at club sites or shared sites.

Recommendations – cricket

- ◀ Existing quantity of grass wicket cricket pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Work with The Pendle District Cricket League to further established levels of unmet demand and explore options for access to an additional pitch in Pendle and utilising spare capacity at Burnley Belvedere Cricket Club.
- ◀ Lancashire County Cricket Groundsmen Association and LCCB to work with clubs to review quality issues on those pitches assessed as standard quality.
- ◀ Work with clubs to establish potential future demand to establish women and girls cricket.
- ◀ Work with clubs to ensure appropriate access to ancillary facilities supports provision of pitches/sites.
- ◀ Work with clubs to improve access to indoor training facilities during the winter months.

Recommendations – rugby union

- ✦ Existing quantity of rugby pitches to be protected, unless equivalent alternative provision is provided.
- ✦ Work to address overplay at Burnley Rugby Club via improvements to pitch quality (maintenance schedules).
- ✦ Work to address overplay at Colne & Nelson Rugby Club via improvements to pitch quality (both maintenance schedules and drainage works). Also consider installing floodlights in order to help address capacity issues to provide both training and evening match play opportunities.
- ✦ Work with Pendle RUFC to develop a long term plan for the sustainability of the Club.
- ✦ If opportunities arise, explore options to provide a full size 3G pitch either directly through the RFU or in partnership with the FA which is World Rugby compliant to help address shortfalls.
- ✦ Explore options for improving on site ancillary facilities on all of the club sites.

World rugby compliant AGPs

- ✦ Consider additional rugby world rugby compliant AGPs in the Area to address levels of overplay, whether at club sites or shared sites.

Recommendations – rugby league

- ✦ Ensure existing pitch quality is sustained or improved as resources allow through maintenance improvements.
- ✦ Explore options to secure usage of West Craven High School for West Craven Warriors RLFC in order to alleviate overplay at Victory Park.
- ✦ Carry out further consultation with Burnley & Pendle RLFC to fully understand the clubs training and future needs.
- ✦ If opportunities arise, explore options to provide a full size 3G pitch in partnership with the FA which is RFL Community Standard compliant to help address shortfalls as a result of training.

Recommendations – hockey

- ✦ Retain a sufficient level of sand based pitch provision to accommodate current and future demand.
- ✦ Ensure that the quality of Marsden Heights School is sustained and that there is secured use of the pitch for Pendle Forest Hockey Club.
- ✦ Lancashire FA and England Hockey to work together to further assess feasibility of converting potential surplus sand AGPs to 3G pitches.
- ✦ Ensure that sinking funds (formed by periodically setting aside money over time ready for surface replacement when required) are in place to maintain AGP pitch quality in the long term.

Recommendations – tennis

- ✦ Priority should be placed on improving current facilities, with particular focus placed on improving the courts at Marsden Park.
- ✦ Support Craven Tennis Club to seek funding options to make improvements to ancillary facilities
- ✦ Support the LTA in working to improve accessibility to tennis in order to help deliver its Strategy. The LTA is keen to encourage parks and clubs to make use of technology solutions, which includes online court booking and fob access to courts and facilities.
- ✦ Ensure clubs can access appropriate standard of courts to allow LTA competitions.

Recommendations – bowling greens

- ▶ Ensure local authority greens are not being overused and ensure that quality is sustained or improved.
- ▶ Address spare capacity and maximise the availability of bowling greens for pay and play in order to raise the profile of the game, increase levels of membership and the revenue generated by sites.
- ▶ Support clubs which plan to attract younger people through hosting events such as family days as well as establishing links with local primary schools.
- ▶ Investigate further the need for two greens to be accommodated at one site. Explore opportunities to combine play on to one green, for example, at sites such as Thomas Street and Marsden Park.

Protecting existing supply

There is one disused site in the borough that needs to be considered.

	Local Authority Area	Site	Address	Sport	Management	Current Status
	Pendle	Harrison Drive Playing Field	Harrison Drive	Football	Pendle Council	One disused adult football pitch not used for at least ten years, poor quality.

The PPS Assessment shows that all playing field sites require protection and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future, this also includes lapsed, underused and poor quality sites.

Sport England's playing field policy only allows for development of lapsed or disused playing fields if a PPS shows a clear excess in the quantity of playing pitch provision at present and in the future across all playing pitch sports, the site concerned has no special significance to sport and the development involves measures to address any deficiencies in terms of quality or accessibility identified by the PPS. All playing fields should be protected up until the point where all demand has been met. Due to shortfalls identified in the PPS, Harrison Drive cannot be developed without sufficient mitigation.

Prioritising investment

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

The financial, social and sporting benefits which can be achieved through development of strategic sites (also known as hub sites) are significant. Sport England provides further guidance on the development of community sports hubs at:

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/planning_tools_and_guidance/sports_hubs.aspx

Where development of Strategic Sites includes provision of 3G pitches for football it is recommended that further modelling/feasibility work is carried out to ensure sustainability of new 3G pitches to accommodate competitive fixtures. However, as a priority consultation

Appendix 1

should be carried out with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance/buy in of moving competitive play to 3G pitches in the future.

Recommended tiered site criteria

Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites	Informal sites
Strategically located. Priority sites for NGB.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community. Likely to include education sites.	Serves the local community.
Accommodates three or more good quality grass pitches. Including provision of at least one AGP.	Accommodates two or more good quality grass pitches.	Accommodates more than one pitch.	Likely to be single-pitch site.
Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Supports informal usage and/ or training etc.
Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract.	Basic level of maintenance i.e. grass cutting and line marking as required.
Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Appropriate access changing to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).	No requirement for access changing to accommodation.

Important Hub and Key Centre sites in Pendle (sites that should be prioritised for investment) are:

Hub

- ◆ Rolls Royce (Hub)

Key Centres

- ◆ Bullholme Playing Fields
- ◆ John Bradley Playing Fields
- ◆ Holt House Playing Fields
- ◆ Trawden Recreation Ground
- ◆ Edge End Playing Fields
- ◆ Marsden Heights School
- ◆ Nelson & Colne College
- ◆ Pendle Vale School
- ◆ Swinden Playing Fields
- ◆ Victory Park

Poor quality pitches/playing surfaces

Poor and standard quality sites that are over played on will require investment to alleviate over play. These are located at:

- ◀ Goldshawbooth Playing Field
- ◀ Pendle Forest (Football)
- ◀ Burnley Rugby Club
- ◀ John Bradley Playing Fields
- ◀ Colne & Nelson RUFC
- ◀ Nelson & Colne College (Barrowford Road)
- ◀ Park High School
- ◀ Primet High School
- ◀ Trawden Recreation Ground
- ◀ Marsden Park (Tennis)
- ◀ Hodge House Playing Fields
- ◀ Ringstone Crescent

Monitoring and updating

It is important that there is regular annual monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring should be led by the local authority and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. This should form an on-going role of the steering group. It is possible that in the interim between annual reviews the steering group could operate as a 'virtual' group; prepared to comment on suggestions and updates electronically when relevant.

As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the steering group, then Sport England and the NGB's would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date. If the PPS is used as a 'live' document, and kept up to date, the time frame can be extended to five years.