

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Statement of Common Ground as agreed between:

1) Sport England

and

2) South Cambridgeshire District Council

In respect of:

- **Chapter 9 of the South Cambridgeshire Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2013)**

and

- **Matter SC8: Promoting Successful Communities**

Representations:

- **60695 (Policy SC/7)**
- **60697 (Policy SC/9)**

Purpose

1. To identify areas of common ground with regard to Matter SC8: Promoting Successful Communities in relation to the representations made by Sport England.

Background

2. Sport England submitted objections to Chapter 9 of the South Cambridgeshire Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2013) relating to Policies SC/7 and SC/9.

Policy SC/7: Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments

3. Sport England supports the principle of new development providing for open space including formal outdoor sports facilities, and also supports the flexible approach which acknowledges that such facilities may be best provided through direct on-site facilities or contributions towards new or existing off-site provision if this can meet this need.
4. Sport England does not support the principle of providing for new development through a standard of provision. They recommended that
 - a robust assessment of need to be carried out using Sport England methodology and
 - an action plan be developed via this assessment which identifies the priorities for new open space provision based on outputs from the study in terms of existing and proposed needs.
5. They also wished to see new housing developments, especially those of strategic importance, making provision for community indoor sport.

Policy SC/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards

6. Sport England Sport England supports the principle of this policy which seeks to protect existing open space, including recreation areas, and is broadly compliant with the NPPF as well as Sport England's own policy 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England', which we use to respond to statutory planning consultations for development affecting playing fields.
7. However, Sport England was concerned that there is no existing up to date playing pitch assessment for the district; therefore Sport England had urged SCDC to carry out such an assessment as soon as possible. Sport England has advised SCDC that the Recreation and Open Space Study (2012) does not constitute a robust assessment of need against which to judge applications affecting existing playing fields.

8. Sport England recommended the following amendments to Policy SC/9 in order to make it more robust:
 - I. There should be a direct reference to 'playing fields' within the policy text as they are specifically protected via Sport England's statutory consultee status and the NPPF (Para. 73)
 - II. The policy should state that on-site or off-site replacement provision should be provided prior to the loss of the existing facility, in order to ensure continuity of provision.
 - III. In terms of loss of playing fields, the policy should state that any assessment of need to demonstrate an excess of provision should constitute a playing pitch assessment using Sport England's adopted methodology.
9. Since the submission of the Local Plans, the Council has recognised that further sports strategy documents were needed to address concerns raised by Sport England in objections to Policy SC/9 and SC/7. The Council has worked with Cambridge City Council and Sport England to develop two sports strategies: a Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031¹ for grass and all weather pitches covering both areas; and an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031² to guide future provision of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF), the strategies assess existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision
10. These sports strategies follow Sport England's guidance on how to undertake assessment of needs and opportunities for sporting provision in order to meet the requirements of paragraph 73 of the NPPF. The development of both strategies will help to plan effectively for current and future need for sports facility provision, addressing population growth and increased participation to 2031.
11. Both strategies have been developed in accordance with Sport England's methodology³ which has involved significant consultation with pitch/facility providers and users as well as the relevant National Governing Bodies. The strategies provide an action list of where new provision should be provided on-site and how off-site contributions should be used to support new and improved provision.
12. The Playing Pitch Strategy considers current levels of active participation from clubs based within Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, their playing pitch requirements and the facilities available for use. Peak times of play and current and future capacity has also been considered. Consideration is also

¹ RD/CSF/190 – [Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031](#)

² RD/CSF/200 – [Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031](#)

³ RD/CSF/230 <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/>

given to the potential for clubs to increase the number of teams in the future, quality of facilities and the secured future of playing pitches.

13. The Playing Pitch Strategy summarises the data collected as part of the assessment and identifies the strategic requirements for future provision in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. The Playing Pitch Strategy provides an action plan for each sport and pitch assessed, explaining what needs to be implemented to support current and future demand for pitch provision based upon the planned growth in both Councils' Local Plans. These action plans have been jointly agreed by the National Governing Bodies
14. The strategy has identified areas where additional provision is needed, or where existing facilities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire require upgrading to address current or future demand. The Council will seek to address the deficiencies by securing provision of new facilities or contributions from development to provide new or improved facilities, where required to address increased usage and population growth.
15. In 2015, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire commissioned a joint Indoor Sports Facility Strategy⁴ in order to assess existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation, opportunities for new provision, and the expansion of existing facilities.
16. The strategy identifies a need for additional provision across a range of facility types, as well as improvements to the quality of existing facilities, and the accessibility of provision. The strategy demonstrates a need for capital investment in some existing facilities, or their replacement in the long term, to address both current and future needs in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Whilst some of this investment relates to the provision of additional facilities, there is also a need for medium and long-term investment in existing ageing stock.

Areas of Common Ground

17. Sport England confirms that the proposed modifications have substantively addressed the comments made in their objections, and therefore they have no outstanding objections relating to these policies.
18. The Council proposes a number of modifications to reflect the findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, which have been conducted in partnership with Sport England and with the involvement of a number of National Governing Bodies for sport. These modifications will ensure that the findings of these strategies are formally identified as part of the evidence base to the local plan and need to be considered in any proposals relating to open space within the district.

Policy/Paragraph	Modification	Justification
New paragraph	<u>South Cambridgeshire District Council</u>	Responding to

⁴ RD/CSF/200 Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015 -2031

after 9.24	<p><u>and Cambridge City Council in partnership with Sport England, has developed two sports strategies: a Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031 for grass and all weather pitches covering both areas; and an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031 to guide future provision and management of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the NPPF, the strategies set out to assess existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision</u></p>	updated information submitted to the examination reflecting the completion of the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Indoor Sport Facilities Strategy in 2016
Add to the end of paragraph 9.28	<p><u>Regard should also be made to the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy.</u></p>	Responding to updated information
Add to paragraph 9.31	<p><u>The Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy have provided additional evidence for the Council by assessing the current and future needs for facilities within the district. These strategies will need to be taken into account when considering future provision.</u></p>	Responding to updated information
<p>Policy SC/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards</p>	<p>Policy SC/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, <u>Playing Fields</u>, Allotments and Community Orchards</p> <p>Planning Permission will not be granted for proposals resulting in the loss of land or buildings providing for recreational use, <u>playing fields</u> or for the loss of allotments or community orchards except where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. They would be replaced by an area of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location; or b. The proposed development includes provision of open space, or sports and recreation facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the loss; or c. An excess of provision in quantitative and qualitative terms is clearly demonstrated in all the functions played by the land or buildings to be lost, taking into account potential 	Responding to representations made by Sport England

	<p>future demand and in consultation with local people and users.</p> <p>d. <u>Where replacement open space is to be provided in an alternative location, the replacement site/facility must be fully available for use before the area of open space to be lost can be redeveloped.</u></p>	
Paragraph 9.35	<p>Add sentence to end of paragraph 9.35:</p> <p><u>Many of these village facilities were assessed as part of the work on preparing both the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy. These strategies have considered the future needs of the district for such facilities. The Playing Pitch Strategy did not find that any of the existing recreation areas were surplus to requirements and in fact all were identified as needing to be protected within the local plan.</u></p>	Responding to updated information

Areas of Disagreement

19. There are no outstanding areas of disagreement between Sport England and South Cambridgeshire District Council with regard to Chapter 9 of the South Cambridgeshire Proposed Submission Local Plan (July 2013) and Matter SC8: Promoting Successful Communities.

Signed: Philip Raiswell, Planning Manager, Sport England

Signed: Caroline Hunt, Planning Policy Manager, South Cambridgeshire District Council

Date: 16 Sep 2016