

HOUGH END FOOTBALL PLAYING FIELD STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is provided in support of the planning application to build two 106 x 70m Full Size 3G Football Turf Pitch (FTP) to be fenced and floodlit at Hough End Playing Fields, Manchester, M20 1HD in compliance with The FA technical design guidance.
- 1.2 The development of 3G FTPs are part of a larger proposal. The application is for the erection of a two-storey extension to form sports field changing rooms, cafe facilities, flexible club/social/training rooms and gym space following the demolition of the existing building on site, formation of 3G football turf pitches as well as associated floodlighting and fencing together with a reconfiguration of natural turf football pitches, with associated 67no.car park and an additional 60 space overflow car park. In addition, the development strategy includes qualitative improvements to the natural turf football pitches to be met from 12 months pitch improvement works as part of the construction phase, followed by an annual enhanced grass pitch maintenance programme that will be built into the facility business plan for Hough End site.
- 1.3 This Statement explains the aspirations for the project and provides structures and justification illustrating the need for the two 3G FTPs to comply with Sport England Playing Fields Policy Exception E5 and paragraph 97(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework. The document also briefly analyses the characteristics of the site and surrounding area. It should be noted that the design of the 3G FTPs has not been finalised at the time of application submission, however the design and construction of the 3G FTPs will be delivered via The Football Foundation (FF) framework and therefore will be compliant. It is anticipated this element will be dealt with via planning condition.

1.4 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 1.5 As the home City of a number of leading National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Manchester City Council (the Council) has continually sought to work in partnership with the NGBs to ensure high quality facility provision that can underpin comprehensive sports development work locally and regionally, and, where relevant, can meet national and international training and competition requirements.
- 1.6 In this regard, the Council has undertaken Stakeholder group meetings which have involved representatives from the sport organisations, schools, universities, and the community to ensure the plans are aligned to national and local strategies and funding streams. These have included:
- The Football Association (FA);
 - Manchester County Football Association
 - The Football Foundation;
 - Rugby Football Union (RFU);
 - Broughton Park Rugby Football Union Club (Broughton Park RFC);
 - City in the Community;
 - Manchester United Foundation;
 - GLL (operator of leisure facilities in the City);
 - Community Groups;

- Sport Clubs; and
- Local Residents

- 1.7 The Council has brought forward the facility proposals in response to the assessment of need for football, which have informed the programme opportunity and site pitch layout plan at Hough End Playing Fields to better service the current and future needs of local residents, clubs, leagues, schools, and the community groups it serves.
- 1.8 The strategic evidence base for plans have been informed by the findings of the Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy 2017-2021, Manchester Local Football Facility Plan 2019, and a detailed process of strategic planning, evidence reviewing, feasibility work and stakeholder engagement. This information is set out in section 3 and 4 on pages 11 – 17.
- 1.9 These documents alongside extensive stakeholder consultation with community clubs, leagues, schools, universities, and community groups have identified Manchester’s football facility investment priorities, and associated Hough End site proposals to create a community football hub, which will support to deliver the Cities football priorities.
- 1.10 The long-term vision for Hough End is to become a vibrant 7 day a week community football hub facility that can grow and sustain football participation in South Manchester area.
- 1.11 The Council is committed to providing Manchester residents with quality sport and leisure provision, equity of access and increased participation in healthy lifestyle choices.
- 1.12 A community football hub facility at Hough End site would include a mix of 3G and Grass football pitches that will be serviced from high quality football changing facilities and community club / education room. Facility proposals will achieve a number of outcomes, including:
1. Provide high-class sustainable community football facilities that can support all formats of football.
 2. Be a catalyst for participation growth within Manchester, as a hub site for affiliated and recreational football participation.
 3. Provide a home to anchor community clubs and leagues to support growth of teams from junior to adults and provide high quality competition facilities across all formats of the game.
 4. Provide a training and education hub for young people to support pathways into higher education and employment, and the development of volunteers and coaches to build skills and create a sustainable football workforce.
- 1.13 MANCHESTER LOCAL FOOTBALL LANDSCAPE**
- 1.14 Manchester is one of the most famous football cities in the world, with a renowned passion for the game at all levels.
- 1.15 The City has a massive grassroots presence, with over 900 teams participating across all age ranges and formats which is higher than local areas of a similar size. Over the last 10-years there has been a significant national increase in the number of large multi-team football clubs. In Manchester, 13 clubs have more than 10 registered teams. Of the largest clubs in the City, 8 are located in South Manchester Analysis area.

- 1.16 There are 13 amateur football leagues that operate in Manchester. They offer competitive opportunities for many different players, including youth and adults. There is no specific league opportunity for women & girls and disability within Manchester, however there is provision in neighbouring local authorities across Greater Manchester. The largest of the local leagues servicing clubs and teams in the City are East Manchester Junior Football League and Manchester Respect League that provide junior and youth football competition to c1150 junior football teams, played on central venue 3G football facilities at multiple sites. Adult Male 11v11 Leagues have declined over the last 10 years and along with U18s Youth 11v11 transition which is a priority area for growth. Manchester, however, have a strong presence of leagues in the City including Cheshire and Manchester Sunday Football League, Manchester Amateur Sunday Football League, Manchester Saturday Morning Football League, and Manchester Accounts League that currently provide adult male 11v11 football competition to 86 teams.
- 1.17 The FA National Investment Strategy is investing to support clubs both on and off the pitch which includes an aim to have a qualified FA coach with every youth team by 2020/21. In addition, it will support 1,000 clubs to create full player pathways from youth to adult teams and develop 150 community football hubs with male and female pathways, disability, and recreational playing opportunities.
- 1.18 Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) has identified a current supply of 197 grass pitches, across 71 sites, available for community use. Of these, 26% of pitches were rated as poor. There is a need to improve grass pitch quality and a need to improve and enhance changing provision attached to grass pitch sites to service clubs and leagues across Manchester. The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is currently being refreshed and will be adopted by Manchester City Council in early 2022.
- 1.19 The 2017 PPS data, identifies that Manchester area have a theoretical oversupply of artificial 3G Pitches with regards to full sized single pitch 3G facilities for affiliated football team training. However, of the 26 3G pitches in the City available for community use, only 13 full-size pitches are FA certified. A further 10 only meet FA minimum size criteria and are not certified, therefore, increased certification and improvement (where necessary) is required in Manchester. Furthermore, the majority of artificial 3G pitches are located on school sites which in the main are considered as unprotected for community use. The 2017 PPS highlighted that there is significant use of small sided commercial sites for club training, due to lack of access to full size 3G pitches on alternative sites. This is further evidenced with 45% of clubs reporting a lack of access to 3G pitches for training; highlighting that not all of the 26 pitches are accessible with limited access to facilities full at peak times (Monday – Friday evenings 6:00pm – 10:00pm, Saturday - Sunday mornings).
- 1.20 Since the PPS was adopted in 2017, 2 3G artificial grass pitches are no longer available for community use (one in North Manchester and one in Wythenshawe). Closure has resulted in a significant displacement of club teams and community programmes to be met from existing sites and some teams migrating outside of the City to access facilities. In both cases, 3G artificial grass pitches are located on school sites.
- 1.21 Manchester Local Football Facility Plan (2019) identifies significant future demand for grass roots football that is recommended to be met by three strategically located community football hubs sites to enable grass roots football to be coordinated at an area level and reduce any future risk around pitch access; and to provide a focal point for FA/Football delivery including affiliated football and recreational football to support club training and

match play, as well as targeted programmes for underrepresented groups to access informal activity that is currently lacking in the City.

- 1.22 Based on the assessment against FA Hub criteria and the strategic analysis work of supply and demand undertaken as part of the 2017 PPS, Local Football Facility Plan, and Stakeholder consultation with The FA, Football Foundation and County FA's; three new Football Hub sites with good geographical spread across Manchester was identified as the recommended model. As such both the 2017 PPS and Manchester Local Football Facility Plan (2019) identifies Hough End Playing Fields as the recommended Community Football Hub site to service Central and South Manchester area.
- 1.23 Hough End Community Football Hub is identified as an opportunity to support grass pitches as a broader, sustainable, all-in-one community offer; to secure sufficient access to capacity to deliver affiliated football, recreational football participation; and to secure increased capacity to allow for the establishment of new formats of competitive football, such as central venue midweek Flexi, Vets leagues.
- 1.24 Hough End Playing Fields currently has 21 poor quality football pitches, the majority of which are senior 11v11 size. In addition, the existing changing facilities have been condemned as they have reached end of life. There are no 3G grass football pitches on site.
- 1.25 This outcome has been endorsed by The FA, Manchester FA and with Sport England and is a site that on review best delivers the strategic objectives of The Council, The FA, and Sport England.
- 1.26 Hough End is an existing sports site and offers the opportunity to create a community football hub for the City, with excellent transport links, existing infrastructure, and a core usage profile on which to build.

1.27 LEISURE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT

- 1.28 In December 2018, a new leisure contract was awarded to GLL for the management and operation of Manchester City Council's Elite and Community Sport and Leisure Facilities. The contract is for a period of 9 years and 4 months.
- 1.29 Hough End Leisure Centre is one of 20 Leisure Centres that forms part of the Council's Indoor Leisure Contract with GLL. The proposed new Community Football Hub and associated football playing field facilities will be integrated operationally with the existing leisure offer on site, which is managed by GLL.

1.30 APPLICATION DETAILS

Development Location	Hough End Playing Fields
Applicant	Manchester City Council
Planning Agent	
Personal Description	Planning permission is sought to create two new Standard Size 3G Football Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) to be fenced and floodlit with associated features including: 1. Installation of new artificial grass surfaced field of play sized 106 x 70m with associated

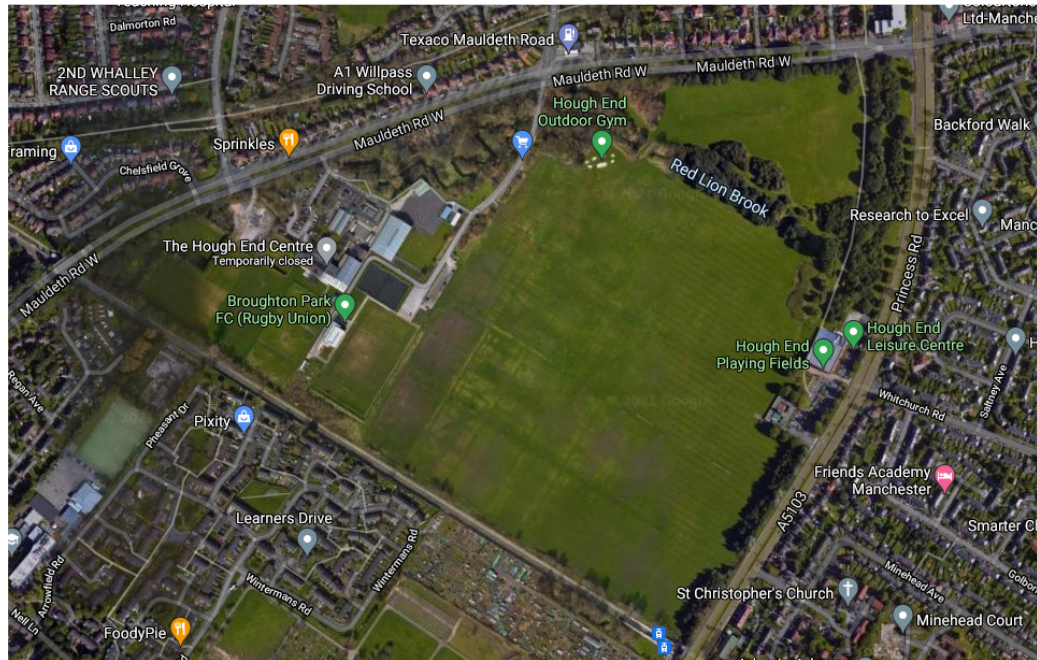
	pitch markings to accommodate an 11v11 football pitch sized 100 x 64m, as well as a variety of 9v9 youth football pitches, 7v7 and 5v5 mini soccer pitches and football training areas 2. Installation of high-level fenced enclosure around the AGP perimeter with new high ball stop fencing with entrance gates to the AGP perimeter to FA design guidance. 3. Installation of new pitch perimeter barrier with entrance gates internally within the fenced enclosure to segregate the pitch playing area (the field of play) from adjoining hard standing areas to FA design guidance. 4. Installation of new hard standing areas adjoining the field of play (internally within the fenced enclosure) complete with associated surfacing for goals storage and pedestrian circulation to FA design guidance. 5. Installation of new hard standing areas connecting the new AGPs to adjacent pavements complete with pedestrian access as well as for vehicular maintenance access and emergency access to FA design guidance. 6. Installation of new floodlight system to FA design guidance.
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2.0 APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 Hough End Fields is located off Princess Parkway, a main arterial route into Manchester City Centre. Historically, Hough End Fields occupies the site of the Alexandra Park Aerodrome opened in 1918 for the test flying and delivery of locally built aircraft for the Royal Airforce.
- 2.3 The first UK domestic air service in 1919 was from Alexandra Park Aerodrome to Southport and Blackpool. By 1922 regular services flew to London, Berlin, and Moscow. The aerodrome's existence is commemorated on a plaque in the sports pavilion.
- 2.4 The site is the largest public playing pitch site within Manchester, historically consisting of the following playing pitches:
- 20 adult football pitches
 - 4 junior and 2 mini soccer pitches
 - 2 Gaelic adult football Pitches
 - 4 adult grass rugby pitches - operated by Broughton Park Rugby Club
 - 2 non turn cricket wickets
- 2.5 Today, the site consists of the following number of playing pitches available for community use:
- 14 adult football pitches
 - 3 junior football pitches and 2 mini soccer pitches

- 2 Gaelic Sport Pitches
 - 6 adult grass rugby pitches – including 2 disused adult grass rugby pitches – operated by Broughton Park Rugby Club
 - 2 non turf cricket wickets
 - 1 equivalent Senior Grass Football Pitch – Hough End Flying Club
- 2.6 The playing pitches were previously serviced by a 1960's changing pavilion adjacent to the leisure centre. The facilities were condemned and closed in 2019. Six temporary changing football cabins are now located at Broughton Park Rugby Club to service football activity on site.
- 2.7 The site also houses Hough End Leisure Centre which includes a 25m six lane swimming pool and training pool, 90 station gym, two squash courts, a sauna and steam room, a community room and dance studio.
- 2.8 The current occupiers of the site include the Broughton RFC, Police Club, the Council and GLL (the leisure operator). Map 1.1 below provides an overview of the site.

Map 1.1 – Map of Site Area



- 2.9 The map highlights that Hough End Leisure Centre is located to the East of the site, with associated car parking and the condemned changing to the south of the leisure centre building. Broughton Park RUFC is located to the West of the site with a clubhouse facility, and the Police Club to the North.
- 2.10 In September 2019, Chorlton High South Free School opened, for a two-year intake, with temporary facilities in place for a 2-year period. The new build is now located on the site of The Hough End Centre. The school is expected to eventually have up to 1,200 pupils.

As part of the school development, the below school sports facilities have been built:

- 5 x recreational level tennis courts hard play
- 1 x Full size sand based artificial grass pitch
- Indoor 4 court sports hall
- Activity studio
- Changing rooms
- Official change
- Accessible change
- Out of hours reception

- 2.11 It is anticipated the school will access the 3G pitches at Hough End Fields provided as part of curriculum use, as there is limited access to playing field space at the new school site with no football facilities in situ.
- 2.12 In terms of the rugby facilities, Broughton Park Rugby Club is located in the western corner of the Hough End who currently operate 4 senior grass rugby pitches at Hough End Playing Fields. There is a further disused senior grass rugby pitches that are not available for community use due to pitch quality. There are wider plans to include the relocation of two Gaelic sport pitches to be operated by Broughton Park Rugby Club alongside their existing pitch programme which will be developed by the club and considered separately. The development of this Community Football Hub however would allow for this re-location, through the rationalisation and reconfiguration of existing grass football pitch provision shown on the proposed new pitch layout plan.
- 2.13 These facilities will not be operated by GLL and will be independently operated. However, it should be noted that whilst the governance models will be different, the two models will be working together via a joint management committee for the site.
- 2.14 For the purpose of this application, the rugby, Gaelic, and school facilities are not included in the proposed plans and associated facility business plan.

2.15 SITE SUITABILITY

- 2.16 The proposed 3G AGPs will replace part of the existing disused grass football playing fields resulting in no displacement of current sporting use. The 3G FTP area equates to an equivalent playing field size of 2.27 senior football pitches. As a result, there will be a reconfiguration of the playing fields at Hough End site to ensure that sufficient grass football pitches are retained. There will be qualitative improvements to the remaining natural turf football pitches through enhanced pitch maintenance works, to support increase community use on site. There is no impact to rugby and Gaelic sport pitches from the proposed development.
- 2.17 The proposed 3G AGPs will be located close to onsite facilities, providing convenient access for all community visitors to and from changing accommodation and administration facilities. This location will also afford convenient pedestrian, maintenance, and emergency access as well and providing for suitable management, supervision, and security.
- 2.18 During a feasibility study, the optimum location for the proposed AGPs was considered. Considerations included:
- Convenient proximity to changing rooms
 - Convenient proximity to welfare accommodation

- Convenient proximity to reception facilities
- Convenient proximity to management and supervision offices
- Convenient proximity of vehicular parking areas
- Avoidance of physical hazards (e.g., historical coal mining, utilities and services, adverse ground conditions, contaminated ground, or landfill)
- Avoidance of unacceptable impacts to residential neighbours (noise, visual and artificial lighting) or the ability to introduce mitigation measures
- Avoidance of unacceptable impacts to any local biodiversity and ecology or the ability to introduce mitigation measures

2.19 We believe the proposed application site provides the best solution for the above considerations.

2.20 PURPOSE

2.21 Hough End proposals have been developed to address the current and future facility needs for grassroots football and health and fitness demand in South Manchester area. The proposed reconfiguration of playing pitches alongside investment into the leisure centre extension with associated changing, community multi-function room, and health and fitness space will better service existing football / health and fitness users and generate significant enhanced sporting benefits for the local community from Hough End site.

2.22 The Council is seeking to provide a new community football hub facility that will provide a balance of grass and 3G football pitches to support the development of the game locally. To address current football demand and projected future growth, there is a need to provide a minimum of 12 No. senior grass football pitches, 2 No. junior grass football pitches, and 2 No. mini soccer 5v5 pitches, alongside 2 Standard Full Size 3G AGPs that will be configured to 5v5, 7v7, 9v9, and 11v11 pitch formats to support a flexible programme for both club / league affiliated football, and recreational football programmes on site.

2.23 When considering current and future projected demand on a sport-by-sport basis, there is a need to provide a minimum of 2 No. senior Gaelic football pitches, 4 No. senior grass rugby pitches, 2 No. non turf cricket wickets, and a dedicated air model craft area. This creates an opportunity to retain a large playing field area for recreational use only in the long term for the benefit of local people.

2.24 Following the development of new 3G AGP's, playing fields can accommodate a maximum allocation of pitches consisting of:

- 2 No. standard full size 3G artificial grass football pitches
- 14 No. senior grass football pitches
- 2 No. mini soccer grass football pitches
- 2 No. Senior Gaelic grass football pitches
- 6 No. Senior Rugby grass football pitches
- 2 No. Non-Turf Cricket Wickets
- Air Model Craft area

- 2.25 The reconfiguration of grass and the new 3G Football AGP provision will result in no displacement of existing usage and support to generate a significant growth programme from the site. Grass pitches will be programmed in response to demand each year.
- 2.26 The future facility mix alongside qualitative improvements to pitches provides opportunities to provide dedicated senior and junior pitches on site and the flexibility to overmark senior grass football pitches to support a flexible programme of use.
- 2.27 Hough End plans have been developed to ensure facilities can meet local need and support future growth across all forms of the game. This includes growth in participation in adult female; adult male; youth football, adult, disability football; small-sided teams and leagues; and recreational football participation.
- 2.28 The 3G AGPs will contribute to the improvement of sporting facilities for local Schools and the community at Hough End Playing Fields site. This proposal will deliver wide ranging benefits to c2,200 school pupils attending Chorlton High School South and Didsbury Point High School at capacity, creating much needed football facilities to support PE, School Sport and Football Competition with no football playing fields on neighbouring school sites.
- 2.29 The proposals will also benefit Manchester Metropolitan University and University Campus of Football Business students (UCFB) with a lack of access to alternative sites reported through consultation to meet current and future projected demands for education programmes, recreational football, and Bucs team training. The new 3G facilities will support growth of Manchester Metropolitan University intra mural league, with demand to create 14 new 11v11 men's teams that cannot be met from existing sites. In addition, the site will become home to UCFB student programmes creating new opportunities for young people in the community to access higher education. On this basis, Hough End will become a key venue to support local student access to education, training, and competition.
- 2.30 This proposal will have a significant impact on the local community to support club training and match play, with access to 3G pitches identified as an issue by 45% of sport clubs citywide representing 170 clubs and 432 teams. Furthermore, consultation with clubs and leagues in the South Manchester catchment area has further evidenced a lack of access to 3G pitches at peak times (evenings and weekends) creating barriers for growth.
- 2.31 Hough End will become home to a number of anchor clubs and leagues, with 10 clubs, 2 Universities, and 2 junior football leagues identifying a need for 3G football facilities from 2023/24 football season. Based on demand, the facilities would service 28 club training slots per week, 1 senior club match equivalent session per week (accommodating 2 teams) and new U10/11s 7v7 mini soccer division (accommodating up to 48 teams) and U11s/U12s 9v9 youth football division (accommodating up to 20 teams) to service South Manchester area. Hough End will become a new central venue league site for Manchester Respect League and East Manchester Junior Football League, creating new opportunities for Manchester clubs to access high-quality competition.
- 2.32 In addition, proposals will address demand for recreational football programmes, creating new opportunities to increase participation amongst under-represented groups such as Women and Girls, Disability, BAEM, and Older People with partner clubs and community organisations on site to develop and deliver much needed targeted programmes. This will include development of new FA wildcat and Girls Unite sessions, disability sessions, vets provision and community social inclusion programmes.

- 2.33 The proposed reconfiguration and qualitative improvements of grass pitches will support a growth strategy for adult football on site, increasing capacity of weekly match equivalent sessions from 36 to 58 match equivalent sessions at Hough End site.
- 2.34 The qualitative improvements will significantly improve the quality of playing fields in response to The FA recommendations to increase capacity to support growth and improve the sporting experience of existing and future users.
- 2.35 The Leisure Centre extension will replace the existing condemned changing facility and provide new modern changing accommodation and community multi-function space that will service all football activity on site.
- 2.36 The club room / education space will be available for all football users pre and post matches, for community hire and will provide training and education programmes to create a sustainable skilled workforce of coaches, officials and volunteers that are pivotal to delivery of grassroots football in Manchester.
- 2.37 The overall aim of the project is to engage as many people in physical activity as possible through the creation of the 3G AGPs and development of new Health and Fitness Space.
- 2.38 Improvements to existing sports facilities will encourage participation in sport and leisure activities and in turn bring much needed health benefits with opportunity to improve quality of life for people engaged in the project.
- 2.39 This project supports outdoor open space uses and the value of sport and opportunities for active lifestyles. The sensitive 3G AGP design will also minimise the impact onto surrounding land.

Project benefits include:

- Sustainable high-quality sport and leisure facilities;
 - Widening access to sport and physical activity;
 - Sport Development pathways;
 - Growth in sport and physical activity participation in particular amongst underrepresented groups;
 - More active residents;
 - Contribute to neighbourhood of choice and development of sustainable communities; and
 - Positive impact on civic pride.
- 2.40 We believe this project should be supported because the project benefits outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use of the application site (part of Hough End grass playing field).
- 2.41 The 3G AGPs and associated playing fields will be managed and operated as an additional amenity to current leisure facilities at Hough End site, providing sporting benefits to school pupils, University students, and local community groups and community sports clubs, including local junior, youth, and adult football clubs from South Manchester area. The 3G

AGPs will provide five principle types of football applications and will offer a variety of match play pitches and training areas within the same enclosed playing space to support The FA's development plans into grassroots football and gain the maximum sport developmental outcomes: both during the day and during evenings and at weekends via pre-arranged and structured community access.

- 2.42 Through the development of club, league and community football programmes, Hough End proposed facilities will support delivery of Manchester football priorities and address local needs in South Manchester and surrounding areas.
- 2.43 In accordance with The FA technical guidance, the aspiration is to introduce multiple pitch markings to gain the maximum football developmental outcomes and benefit from the site footprint and the 3G AGPs will support the following formal pitch formats shown in table 1.

Table 1 – 3G FTP Pitch Formats

Age Grouping	Type	Pitch Size	Quantity
Youth U17/18 and Open Ages Football	11 v 11	100 x 64m	2
Youth U11 / U12*	9 v 9	73 x 46m	4
Mini Soccer U9 / U10**	7 v 7	55 x 37m	4
Mini Soccer U7 / U8* **	5 v 5	37 x 27m	8

- 2.44 Whilst this proposal will result in the loss of part of a usable grass playing field (although the field is in poor condition), the provision of a new 3G AGPs will provide significantly increased usage in comparison to the existing grassed football pitches it replaces. This intensification of use is made possible by the introduction of artificial grass surfaced field of play which is more durable in comparison to natural turf especially during winter weather conditions, plus the provision of artificial (flood) lighting to support evening use for training, competition, and recreational sport activity.

- 2.45 The qualitative pitch improvement works will furthermore increase access to grass football pitches and support to grow all formats of football from Hough End site.

2.46 AMOUNT

- 2.47 This proposal has been prepared in accordance with published Design Guidance Notes (The Football Association (FA) / Sport England) pertinent to external artificial sports facility provision. The 3G Football Pitch will be designed in accordance with The FA Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch Design Principles and Layouts and the proposed amount of development is 0.994 HA for the 3G development.

3.0 LINKS TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES

Time for Change FA Strategy (2020 – 2024)

- 3.1 Hough End Development will contribute to The FA's 'Time for Change' Strategy (2020-2024) by:

- Significantly growing football participation from junior to adults with a particular focus on engagement of under-represented groups such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups, Women and Girls, Disability and Older People.
 - Developing sustainable high quality football facilities that will grow participation across all forms of the game – to secure sufficient local access to affiliated football, recreational football, and informal football.
 - Creating accessible community football facilities that will become the home to junior and adult community clubs, leagues, and community groups to support delivery of local football priorities.
 - Developing a sustainable football workforce
- 3.2 This project is an excellent example of where new 3G FTPs can provide opportunities in an area of strong local need, providing a good balance of high-quality grass and artificial grass pitch provision to support all formats of the game, development of recreational football and targeted programmes to increase participation amongst underrepresented groups, and development of long-term sustainability of community football facilities, which is directly in line with the strategy.
- 3.3 This project is supported by a well thought out and strategic football development plan that will provide a wide range of coaching and participation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities in South Manchester area.
- 3.4 Hough End Facilities is supported by local Schools, Universities, Professional Clubs - City in the Community and MU Foundation, and anchor community clubs, leagues, and youth providers. As key community football delivery partners, this project will enable the applicant and local clubs to deliver their football development plan which is focused on delivering the FA's game changer objectives identified by the FA strategy (2020 – 2024) in supporting to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues locally, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead. These issues are unlikely to be solved within four years, but by working collaboratively with The FA on investment into strategic facilities that meet the needs of local people and our communities, Manchester City Council with partners can make a material step in the right direction.

Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021)

- 3.5 Manchester City Council updated their Playing Pitch Strategy in March 2017 from the previous version in 2014. This strategy applies an evidence-based supply and demand assessment of playing pitch stock and need to protect, enhance, or develop playing field sites.
- 3.6 Manchester's Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) and associated site by site action plan was adopted by the Council Executive in 2017. Together the documents are used as evidence to inform decisions on planning applications for playing field land. The headline position for all pitch sports is either demand is being met or there is a shortfall and as such there is a need to protect, develop and enhance playing field sites citywide.
- 3.7 The site-specific action plan to accompany the strategy identifies the sport specific priorities and key recommendations for action to address current and future demand. This Strategy has been developed from research and analysis and consultation has taken place in

consultation with playing pitch National Governing Bodies of Sport, Sport England, Facility Providers, Schools, individual site users and over 170 sports clubs based in the City. Over 430 football teams took part in consultation via online survey, phone calls and face to face meetings to understand club current and future needs for training and match play. In addition, there were qualitative assessments of all playing field facilities and consultation with facility providers to determine if the existing supply can accommodate current and future sport specific demand.

Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) provides:

- A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of outdoor sports facilities.
- A series of strategic recommendations which provide a strategic framework for the improvement, maintenance, development and, as appropriate, rationalisation of provision.
- A series of sport-by-sport recommendations which provide a strategic framework for sport-led improvements to provision.
- A prioritised area-by-area site action plan to address key issues.

- 3.8 Football was a priority sport for assessment and the sport specific demand analysis has identified there is no projected spare capacity on grass football pitches in Manchester by 2021 with shortfalls identified in all pitch formats. This includes shortfalls of 3.25 adult match equivalent sessions per week, 20 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week, 7.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week, 9 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week and 26 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- 3.9 In South Manchester analysis area specifically, the demand analysis identified projected spare capacity of 12 adult match equivalent sessions, 0.5 youth 9v9 and 3 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week at peak times. However, there is projected shortfalls of 10 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week by 2021.
- 3.10 Manchester area have a theoretical oversupply of Artificial 3G Pitches with regards to full sized single pitch 3G facilities for affiliated football team training. However, of the 26 3G pitches in the City available for community use, only 13 are full-size pitches are FA certified. A further 10 only meet FA minimum size criteria and are not certified, therefore, increased certification and improvement (where necessary) is required in Manchester. Furthermore, the PPS highlighted that there is significant use of small sided commercial sites for club training, due to lack of access to alternative sites. The impact of this is a reduction in availability of small-sided provision for recreational use. This is further evidenced with 45% of clubs reporting a lack of access to 3G pitches for training; highlighting that not all of the 26 pitches are accessible. Since the adoption of the Playing Pitch Strategy in 2017, 2 3G FTP's have closed for community use in North Manchester and Wythenshawe area. Both facilities are located on school sites.
- 3.11 The strategic football priorities in Manchester and sport specific recommendations for sport-led improvements to provision includes the need to improve grass pitch quality; and a need to improve, provide and increase access to changing facilities attached to grass pitch sites to service clubs and leagues across Manchester.
- 3.12 For 3G FTP Pitch provision, recommendations are to consider possibilities to create multi-pitch (potentially multi-sport) hub sites where 3G provision is able to support grass pitches as a broader, sustainable, all-in-one community offer; secure sufficient access to capacity to

deliver non-formalised football participation, including for small-sided football, walking football and partnership delivery through the likes of Council, Trust, Premier League and Community Foundation programmes; to secure increased capacity to allow for the establishment of new formats of competitive football, such as central venue midweek flexi and Vets leagues.

- 3.13 The Site-Specific Action Plan that accompanies the Playing Pitch Strategy identifies Hough End Playing Fields as a site of strategic importance for football development in Manchester. Hough End is the largest football facility in the City with condemned changing facilities, poor quality grass pitches and no 3G football pitches. The proposed plans will address the recommendations identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy creating sustainable community football facilities that can support existing usage and future growth of teams, and recreational football participation in South Manchester area.

Manchester Local Football Facility Plan (2019 – 2028)

- 3.14 In 2018, Manchester refreshed the Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) to identify opportunities to accurately target investment in football facilities across the local area and undertook a full needs assessment and consultation with facility providers, local clubs, community groups and leagues to inform current and future supply and demand for football facilities. The LFFP builds on the initial Manchester LFFP developed in 2017/18 which was the pilot for the subsequent national programme.
- 3.15 National funding partners have significantly increased investment to accelerate efforts to deliver more and better football facilities for the grassroots game and this plan proposes priority projects citywide for potential investment that will transform local football facilities. Local facility priorities include the need for new 3G FTPs, improved grass pitches, improved changing facilities and new recreational football facilities to address FA and local sport priorities including:
- Growth of youth and mini-soccer female teams (transition from and further growth of SSE Wildcats to affiliated football)
 - Further growth of disability football
 - Development of U18/U21 provision
 - Continue to grow Just Play and retain other recreational football provision
 - Retention of adult male football
- 3.16 This LFFP is identified as the key document for football facility investment in Manchester in partnership with The FA, Manchester County FA, and The Football Foundation to address the cities football priorities. It does not however, guarantee the success of future funding applications; each priority project identified will still have to follow an application process to show how it will deliver key participation outcomes, be a good quality, sustainable facility and demonstrate suitable match-funding.
- 3.17 This LFFP, with guidance from local partners, has developed a list of high-level projects for potential investment. Each is aligned to the investment priorities set out in the National Football Facilities Strategy, which include:
- **1,000 new 3G football turf pitches (FTP)s:** in a mix of sizes and settings, dependent upon local needs. All aimed at enhancing the quality of the playing experience.

- **20,000 improved natural-turf pitches:** to help address drop-off due to a poor playing experience.
- **1,000 new changing pavilions / clubhouses:** all linked to priority sites.
- **Small-sided facilities:** to grow the small-sided game for teams & leagues, recreational and informal play.

- 3.18 To assist the delivery of football development priorities, Hough End Playing Fields is a priority project for potential investment identified in this plan that will help develop sustainable high-quality facilities to drive participation across all parts of the game.
- 3.19 Hough End has been identified as a priority project for development of a new community football hub site. This is a strategic football site that has the potential to address the identified shortfalls in training and match play by creating anchor clubs and development programmes on site that can support the full player pathway from junior to adult teams - male and female, disability, and recreational playing opportunities. Hough End 3G FTPs with associated qualitative grass pitch improvements will create accessible quality facilities that can address current and future demand in South Manchester area.
- 3.20 Football pitch demand analysis has been informed by the current Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) and Local Football Plan (2019) and consultation with schools, universities, club, leagues and community organisations. Both documents have been signed off by Sport England, The Football Association, Football Foundation and County Football Association.

4.0 LOCAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION (2020-2021)

- 4.1 Hough End site is identified in Manchester 2017 PPS and by The Council and The FA as a prime location in the City to develop a grass pitch and 3G football hub facility.
- 4.2 The Council has since undertaken extensive consultation with The County FA, and local stakeholders including schools, community football clubs, leagues, professional clubs (City in the Community and MU Foundation), site users, universities, and community groups to inform the facility mix and programme opportunity on site to address local needs and support to deliver the Cities football priorities.
- 4.3 Consultation focused on current facility demand for training, match play, and recreational programmes, and future programme requirements (3–5-year period) to understand if the existing supply of 3G FTP facilities could cater for current and future projected growth. Where possible stakeholders shared club / league development plans to inform future programme requirements. In the main, clubs, leagues, community groups and schools provided a verbal / written response to consultation survey.

Key findings from consultation includes:

Schools

- 4.4 Chorlton High South and Didsbury Point High School have identified a lack of access to 3G football facilities to support delivery of PE, School Sport and Competition programmes to service their c2,200 school pupils at capacity. There are no 3G Football Facilities or Grass Football Pitches on school sites. To support school PE, training, and competition there is a need for 16 full size slots per week on 3G FTPs that cannot be met from existing sites. Schools have identified 3G FTPs as a strategic need to provide high-quality PE, school

sport and competition to their pupils, creating equal opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.

Universities

- 4.5 Manchester Metropolitan University and University Campus of Football Business (UCFB) have identified a lack of access to 3G football facilities Monday – Friday during daytime and evenings to service student programmes. Manchester Metropolitan University have identified a need for 20 full size slots on 3G FTPs to support training and competition to service 2 Senior 11v11 Bucs, and support growth of Intra Mural 11v11 Teams currently capped at 16 due to lack of facilities. Also demand for a 5v5 intra mural division. UCFB have identified a need for a minimum of 56 full size slots on Full Size 3G FTPs as well as classroom facilities Monday – Friday daytime to support an expansion programme in Central and South Manchester catchment area. In both cases, growth programmes cannot be met from existing sites.

Clubs and Community Groups

- 4.5 Clubs have identified a lack of access to 3G football facilities in South Manchester catchment area to support current training needs, development of new teams and community programmes. This represents 10 clubs, which translates into a need for a minimum of c26 training full size pitch slots to deliver club development plans from 2023/24 football season at peak times (Monday – Friday). This equates to a growth of 50 affiliated teams, which includes the development of new women and girl's teams with no capacity to grow from existing sites.
- 4.6 Consultation with City in the Community have identified a lack of access to current 3G facilities to support development of new 11+ education football programmes in South Manchester catchment area. Programmes would be delivered Monday – Friday (Day time) with no available Full Size 3G facilities in the area as they are all on Education sites. In addition, CITC have identified a need for 3G facilities to enable delivery of holiday activity programmes throughout the year.
- 4.7 Consultation with community groups such as Youth on Solid Ground and MU Foundation have identified a lack of access to existing full size 3G facilities in South Manchester catchment area, Monday – Friday evenings to deliver recreational social inclusion football activities to children and young people. There is an identified need for 10 full size slots per week on 3G FTPs from 2023/24 football season to provide positive activities for young people that cannot be met from existing sites.

Leagues

- 4.8 Junior leagues in particular have identified a lack of access to existing 3G football facilities in South Manchester catchment area on weekends to support demand from clubs. Manchester's largest junior football leagues 'Manchester Respect League' and 'East Manchester Junior Football League' play on central 3G venues across the City and currently provide high quality football competition for c1150 teams. Local junior football leagues have identified demand to create new divisions for youth and junior mini soccer in South Manchester area. This includes a new youth 9v9 divisions (to accommodate 20 teams) and junior mini soccer divisions (to accommodate 48 teams) that cannot be met from existing sites.

- 4.9 The new Junior 7v7 and Youth 9v9 divisions will generate 78 new match equivalent sessions per week in partnership with central venue leagues (Manchester Respect League and East Manchester Junior League) and there will be a growth in senior 11v11 and VETS teams on site with partner clubs such as Greater Manchester FC, Gregorian's FC, and Youth on Solid Ground.
- 4.10 Manchester Senior Football Leagues have an aspiration to grow teams and provide better quality football facilities to service adult 11v11 football. Development of high-quality football facilities, in particular improved pitch quality and fit for purpose changing facilities are identified as the key priorities to address the decline in adult 11v11 football and improve the sporting experience of players, coaches and officials.

County FA

- 4.11 Consultation with The FA has identified a need to develop targeted football programmes to increase participation from under-represented groups, working with clubs, community groups and leagues to develop and deliver a mixture of informal, recreational, and small sided football activities in the day and evenings. It is proposed that new targeted programmes will be met from Hough End site.

Summary

- 4.12 Findings have identified a shortfall of 2 x 3G FTPs (2 Standard Full Size 3G FTPs) in South Manchester catchment area to address current and future projected demand from schools, universities, club football training, recreational football, and senior and junior match play (variety of formats) at peak times evenings and weekends. The development of 3G FTPs will create access to different football formats to support affiliated and recreational football such as 5v5, 7v7, 9v9 and 11v11. The existing supply of 3G FTPs are not sufficient to address current need and support significant growth in participation.
- 4.13 For grass pitches, findings identified no shortfalls in senior pitches in South Manchester catchment area, to address current and projected future demand. However, there is a need to address poor quality grass football pitches and improved access to changing facilities on playing pitch sites, which re-affirms the recommendations identified in Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy and Local Football Facility Plan. There are projected shortfalls in mini soccer and youth 9v9 pitches, which will be addressed from qualitative improvements to grass pitches and new 3G FTPs on site.
- 4.14 Hough End plans have been developed to ensure facilities can meet local need and support future growth across all forms of the game. This includes growth in participation in adult female; adult male; youth football, adult, and youth disability; junior football; small-sided recreational; small-sided teams and leagues; and recreational football participation.
- 4.15 As such a 'site development plan' specifying all football development activity, usage and key partner engagement has been developed, as part of the rationalisation to provide new 3G FTPs and reconfiguration of grass football pitches on site. The site development plan is on pages 24 to 28 of this document.

5.0 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION (NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK JULY 2018)

- 5.1 Sport England will be a statutory consultee on this planning application as the proposal affects a playing field. The following details are provided to enable Sport England's informed

assessment of whether the proposed development of an outdoor facility for sport, alongside new indoor leisure facilities provide sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field to satisfy exception E5 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance March 2018.

5.2 Policy Exception E5 requires the proposed development for an indoor or outdoor **sports** facility, to be of sufficient benefit to the development of **sport** as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the **playing field** or **playing fields**'. The statement defines in planning terms what is considered a 'playing field', which is; the whole of a site that encompasses at least one playing pitch. A playing pitch is a delineated area, which together with any run off is of 0.2 hectares or more. Playing pitches may have a grass surface or an artificial one. The aim of the policy is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demands of the pitch sports. The following details are provided to enable an assessment.

5.3 The planning system encourages and promotes the retention of existing and the provision of additional, outdoor sports facilities, both public and private. Specifically, paragraph 97 (concerning open space and recreation) of National Planning Policy Framework July 2018 recommends that:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) 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
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

5.4 As recommended within NPPF paragraph 97, confirmation that part of existing grassed playing field will be replaced by an AGP playing field providing better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location is discussed on pages 7 to 8 and 22 to 23 of this document.

Also, NPPF paragraph 96 recommends that:

5.5 Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision.

5.6 Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) is the relevant Needs Assessment, as referenced in paragraph 96 of the NPPF, and this has been used to help inform the requirements at Hough End.

ANALYSIS

Current Site Usage and Capacity

- 5.7 Hough End Playing Fields currently accommodates 14 senior football grass pitches, 3 junior grass football and 2 mini soccer pitches on site. There is current capacity to accommodate 36 match equivalent sessions per week, where by senior and junior grass pitches can accommodate between 1 - 2 match equivalent sessions per week and mini soccer pitches can accommodate 4 match equivalent sessions per week, based on based on 2021 FA Pitch Assessment Report.
- 5.8 At peak time Hough End site holds 10 x 11v11 matches, 2 junior 11v11 match, 1 youth 9v9 matches per week based on 2021/22 football season.
- 5.9 The proposed reconfiguration of grass and the new FTP provision will result in no displacement of existing usage and support to generate a significant growth programme from the site.
- 5.10 Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021) identifies that South Manchester analysis area have projected current spare capacity of grass football pitches at c12 adult match equivalent sessions per week, 0.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week, 3 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week, with Youth 9v9 capacity identified as balanced by 2021 at peak times (weekends). There is however projected shortfalls of 10 mini soccer 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week which is proposed to be met from the 3G FTPs.
- 5.11 When overlaying this with extensive local stakeholder consultation with the County FA, Clubs, Leagues, Community Groups, Schools and Universities over the last 12 months, this reaffirms the spare capacity levels of senior football pitches, with current demand for 10 senior match equivalent sessions per week at Hough End site, during peak times Sunday AM.
- 5.12 The reconfiguration and qualitative improvements of grass football pitches to a good quality standard will significantly increase capacity from 36 to 58 match equivalent sessions per week. This demonstrates the qualitative improvements will create new capacity to grow football participation on site to address current and future projected demand. The development of accessible high quality football facilities will improve the sport experience for players, coaches, and officials and therefore likely to attract more teams to the site.
- 5.13 The site development plan will include the growth of adult teams (both male and female to address the decline in adult 11v11 football and transition of U16-18 youth 11v11 teams, as a key football priority identified in Manchester Local Football Facility Plan (2019).

Grass Football Pitches

- 5.14 Currently all 14 available senior grass football pitches are 20% undersized and with their arrangement are non-compliant with the FA guidance for safety run-off perimeter margin dimensions. All football pitches are oriented in a sub-optimal playing direction as compared with FA recommendations. The site has historically provided 21 senior grass football pitches, of which, 7 no. lie outside of the 2003 drainage works area. There are now 14 senior pitches available for community use, with 13 pitches identified as adequate and 1 pitch identified as poor quality resulting in individual pitch capacity only able to support between 1 and 2 match equivalent sessions per week.
- 5.15 Following reconfiguration of playing fields with associated qualitative improvements the site can accommodate up to 14 senior grass football pitches and 2 mini soccer grass pitches. The pitches will be marked in line with demand each year. This includes the opportunity to provide dedicated junior pitches and / or overmark pitches to support different formats

including junior 11v11 and 9v9 youth. All pitches will be fully compliant with the FA guidance for safety run-off perimeter margin dimensions and the FA spectator spacing 'Respect' agenda.

- 5.16 To inform pitch improvement works, the Council has undertaken an FA pitch assessment as part of the design stages to identify any drainage issues and put in place improvement measures to address poor pitch quality. The FA pitch report has identified that the majority of pitches are to a basic / poor quality standard and has set out a recommended pitch maintenance programme to provide good quality standard pitches. The Council will commence all measures as part of the construction phases and GLL will adopt the annual pitch maintenance programme as part of the new management arrangements. These measures will reduce the risk of pitches being taken out of use after spells of wet weather and will create long-term quality pitches to increase capacity for match play from 36 to 58 match equivalent sessions per week, supporting a growth programme and improved sporting experience of all users on site.

Grass Rugby Pitches

- 5.17 With the exception of the first team pitch, the existing disused rugby pitches are at sub-optimal playing direction as compared with RFU recommendations. The long-term re-configuration provides full size senior rugby pitches to RFU design guidance.

Gaelic Football Pitches

- 5.18 Of the two Gaelic Football Pitches located to the North of the Red Lion Brook, the second pitch is undersized by approximately 20%. The proposed long-term reconfiguration provides both pitches at full size to Gaelic Sports Association design guidance, both of which are oriented to an optimal playing orientation.

Cricket Pitches

- 5.19 There is an informal presence of summer cricket use at Hough End site as existing. The current football layout is not sufficiently spaced between pitches to allow for a permanent cricket wicket square to be established. The proposed grass football reconfiguration provides sufficient areas between pitches to establish two permanent non turf cricket wickets, one with a 180m boundary and one with a 150m boundary. Both wickets will support to generate an increase in local recreational cricket participation from the site.

3G Pitches

- 5.20 There are no 3G FTPs on site at present. The proposed development would result in a loss of natural grass turf playing field space equivalent to 2.27 senior pitches to provide new Artificial Grass Playing Fields. This equates to 0.994 hectares. The area will accommodate 2 no. Full Size 3G Football Turf Playing Field to FA design guidance. The new 3G FTPs are necessary to provide a purpose build multi-functional facility that would facilitate greater level of sports activity throughout each year, **to support significant growth of affiliated and recreational football activities from the site.**
- 5.21 In the development of Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017-2021), over 170 sport clubs were consulted to understand if the existing supply of facilities could address current and future needs for training and match play. This represented 432 teams, of which 45% of clubs identified they could not access existing 3G facilities to support training at peak times.

- 5.22 Furthermore, the current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with shortfalls of 10 mini 5v5 pitch types in South Manchester analysis area. Further consultation with clubs and leagues over the last 12 months identified further projected shortfalls in 7v7 mini soccer and 9v9 youth pitch types.
- 5.23 There is significant projected demand for junior and adult training and junior match play in South Manchester analysis area. This equates to a growth of 50 affiliated teams, which includes the development of mini soccer, youth, and senior teams (male and female), with limited capacity to grow from existing sites. In addition, the site will be home to new Junior 7v7 and Youth 9v9 divisions from 2023/24 football season to address unmet demand for affiliated football competition. It is therefore proposed that shortfalls in mini soccer and youth pitches, and projected demand for training and match play is met from new 3G FTPs on Hough End site to address capacity issues on existing 3G FTP sites.
- 5.24 In addition, neighbouring schools have a need for 16 full size slots to support the delivery of PE, School Sport and Competition with no football facilities on school sites; and Universities have identified a need for 72 full size slots to support education programmes, training, and competition (daytime and evening) with no access to existing 3G facilities in the City.
- 5.25 When considering future demand, these shortfalls are anticipated to worsen limiting future growth in teams and grass roots sport activity in the South of the City. Due to the existing 3G FTPs identified as unprotected sites for community use, there is also potential that this position could be exacerbated in the future.
- 5.26 Hough End Football Hub presents a significant opportunity to address current shortfalls and support substantial growth in teams as well as growth in recreational participation in particular amongst under-represented groups.
- 5.27 When considering local strategy recommendations and football priorities, alongside stakeholder consultation and analysis of football demand, the Council is seeking to rationalise the number of pitches at the site to provide for the current level of users and projected future growth.
- 5.28 To address demand, an indicative programme of use has been developed. This information is available on pages 28 to 29 of this document.
- 5.29 The new standard full size 3G pitches will be 106 x 70m with associated pitch markings to accommodate an 11v11 football pitch sized 100 x 64m, as well as 1 x 9v9 youth football pitch, 2 x 7v7 and 4 x 5v5 mini soccer pitches.
- 5.30 In summary, the proposed new 3G FTPs alongside the qualitative improvements of grass pitches presents a significant increase in match equivalent sessions per week for adult, youth, and junior football to address current and future projected demand.
- 5.31 The development of new 3G pitches will also secure sufficient access to deliver recreational football participation, and secure increased capacity to allow for the establishment of new formats of competitive football in South Manchester area.

Leisure Centre Extension

- 5.32 The leisure centre extension will replace the existing 1960s changing facility and provide new modern fit for purpose changing accommodation, community multi-function

room / coach education space, and storage space to better service current and future football and education programmes on site. These facilities will significantly improve the sporting experience of existing users on site as well as attracting new clubs, leagues, and community organisations to the site to support growth in football participation.

- 5.33 The education space will provide a new home for UCFB creating new opportunities for young people in the local community to access higher education. In addition, the education space will host coach education courses to upskill new coaches and volunteers which is a key priority locally and nationally.
- 5.34 The leisure centre extension will provide a new health and fitness space to address local demand. Currently a circa 90 station gym and large studio on the upper floor, the facility proposals include an extension of fitness area within the first-floor extension. Market trends across the UK have changed in recent years in terms of health and fitness activities which has resulted in an increase in the sector. A studio space, as provided at Hough End leisure centre allows the operator to increase memberships to meet current and future demand. Based on market demand for up to 5,000 members for the site and the ration of 30 members per station, this would equate for the need of a space the equivalent of circa 145-165 stations (based on 4-5m² per station). It should be noted that we do not expect this to be pieces of physical equipment due to the change in trends and requirement to provide alternative health and fitness methods, this ultimately provides a guide for the space required.

Quantum of Provision

- 5.35 An analysis of the quantum of provision has been presented in an 'overall scorecard' in respect of potential gains and losses for sports pitch provision table 2.

Table 2 – Overall Score Card: Quantum of Provision

Pitch Type	Existing Number of Grass Pitches by Type	Proposed Number of Grass Pitches by Type	Net / Loss Gain Grass Pitches by Type	Existing Artificial Grass Pitches by Type	Proposed Number of AGP Pitches by Type	Net / Loss Gain Artificial Grass Pitches by Type	Total Net Loss / Gain (overall)
Football	14 senior grass football pitches	14 senior grass football pitches	0	0	2 Senior grass football pitches	2	2
	1 youth grass football pitches	0 youth grass football pitches	-1	0	4 youth football pitches	4	4

	2 junior grass football pitches	0 junior grass football pitches	-2	0	4 junior football pitches	4	4
	2 mini grass football pitches	2 mini grass football pitches	0	0	8 mini soccer pitches	8	8
Rugby	6 senior grass rugby pitches	6 senior grass rugby pitches	0	0	0	0	0
Gaelic Sports	2 senior grass pitches	2 senior grass pitches	0	0	0	0	0
Cricket (Artificial Turf Cricket Wicket)	2	2	0	2	2	0	0
Total Playing Field Area (all areas incl run off m2)	204,180	193,364	-10,816	120	17,900	17,780	6,964

5.36 The above table identifies that there will be an overall gain of playing fields as a result of the proposed developments at Hough End Playing Fields site that will create new opportunities for the local community to take part in sport and physical activity on site.

5.37 The above table does not consider the additional health and fitness space that will be provided from the master plan proposal. The leisure centre extension will generate an additional health and fitness space equivalent to 200.24 m2. This space will support to increase local participation in physical activity from Hough End Leisure Centre.

Summary

5.38 When assessing the proposal, consideration must be given to the importance of the standard of design and compatibility of a scheme to harmonise with the general character of the area in which it is set, the impact upon the private amenity of residential neighbours and local highway safety, amongst other material considerations.

- 5.39 The proposed development will implement improved provision in terms of quality and quantity and in a suitable location to benefit local community groups by providing access and opportunities for sport and recreation and making an important contribution to the health and well-being of interested community groups.
- 5.40 The proposal will be sited close to onsite facilities offered at Hough End site, providing convenient access to and from changing and welfare facilities for all community visitors and school pupils.
- 5.41 This proposal will also afford convenient pedestrian and maintenance access as well as provide suitable management, supervision, and security by GLL management and operational staff, so the proximity of existing facilities described above will help to create a vibrant and successful place and a safe and accessible environment.
- 5.42 This proposal satisfies the above planning objectives and is beneficial to the advancement of sports activity and engagement and will provide a genuine asset for local community groups by encouraging more people of all ages to participate in sport. On this basis the analysis evidence that the proposed sporting benefits of the development will outweighing the loss of natural turf playing field by providing a balance of grass and 3G playing fields on site that will support growth in local participation for affiliated and recreational football activities on site.
- 5.43 For these reasons, we believe the following objectives have been satisfied:
- Supporting and enhance the sporting offer in South Manchester area.
 - Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion.
 - Health and wellbeing.
 - Promoting more sustainable development.
- 5.44 The site development plan has built in local stakeholder programme requirements from the site to address current and projected sport specific demand.

Table 3 - Site Development Plan

REQUIREMENT	DETAIL PROVIDED
Impact the proposed development would have on playing pitch provision including proposed summer / winter playing pitches	This proposal seeks to create two new FTPs (Football Turf Pitch) with associated floodlights, ball stop fencing, hard standing areas, clean pedestrian, and maintenance access as well as maintenance equipment store from the Leisure Centre Extension. The proposed FTPs will replace part of the existing playing field, which accommodates 2.27 adult pitches. A reconfiguration to the remaining playing field is necessary to ensure that adequate grass playing pitches are retained to support education and community sport requirements, although it should be noted that the current playing field is identified as poor quality and therefore has limited capacity to host regular match play with a need to rest and rotate pitches to support existing demand. As such the development will

	include c12 months pitch improvement works before the site opens. As part of the facility business plan, from year 1 of operations GLL will be undertaking significant improved maintenance programme in line with FA recommendations to improve pitch quality of remaining playing fields that will increase capacity and usage as well as improving sporting experience of current users on site. The application site is important to the development of sport in the local area and the FTPs will be sited close to onsite facilities; providing convenient access to and from changing rooms offering modern changing accommodation, multi-functional training and education room and administration facilities to service all sport users on site.
Existing community use	Existing Use is as follows: Saturday Morning 5.5 x 11v11 Weekly Senior Match Sessions 2 x 11v11 Weekly Junior Match Sessions 1 x 9v9 Weekly Mini Soccer Match Session Saturday Afternoon 2 x 11v11 Weekly Senior Match Sessions Sunday Morning 10 x 11v11 Weekly Senior Match Sessions 2 x 11v11 Weekly Junior Match Session 1 x 9v9 Weekly Junior Match Sessions Sunday Afternoon 4 x 11v11 Weekly Senior Match Sessions
Proposed community use	The FTPs and associated natural turf grass football pitches will be managed and operated by GLL as an additional amenity to current indoor leisure facilities onsite to provide sporting benefits for local schools, universities, community groups and community sports organisations from South Manchester area during the day and during evenings, and at weekends via pre-arranged structured education and community access including the following types of organisations who will enter long term service level agreements: • Manchester Schools • Manchester Universities • Manchester Clubs • Manchester Community Groups • Hough End Police Club • City in the Community • MU Foundation • Manchester Adult and Junior Leagues

	The new 3G FTPs will especially enable children and young adults to play on appropriately sized pitches with appropriately sized goals, encouraging an increased involvement in the game to enable skill development. The intention is that young players will develop better technical and decision-making skills from a younger age. The site will also service education programmes during the day to support schools and universities to deliver education, training, and competition programmes. Both Chorlton High South and Didsbury High have no grass playing fields and / or 3G FTPs on their sites with school sport and football competition to be met from Hough End. UCFB are nomadic operating at Belle Vue Leisure Centre and require access to a minimum of 2 Full Size 3G FTP and Education Spaces to enable growth in South Manchester catchment area with no capacity from existing sites. The proposal would meet with the aims of national and local policies and would provide much needed sports facility in South Manchester area. It is anticipated the new FTPs could be used up to 106 hours per week for community use, 58 hours per week for University Education Programmes, and 16 hours per week for School Use.
Community access formally secured through a community use agreement	Community use agreements with key partners will be established and managed on a formal basis to facilitate delivery of a Football Development Plan. An indicative winter and summer programme has been developed to set out the current committed slots to address education, training and competition needs from Manchester clubs, Community groups, leagues, schools, and universities.
Sport related benefits of the proposed artificial grass pitch for the applicant and the community. This explanation should provide detail on the deficiencies of the existing facilities and set out how the new facilities will address such deficiencies and help with the delivery of sport and meet community facility needs Furthermore, the explanation should provide details regarding which sports the new artificial grass pitch will accommodate.	South Manchester area has limited access to FTPs to support community and education needs. This proposal will contribute to addressing current high demand for football training and competition and support future growth of grassroots football locally. This site has been strategically identified by The Football Association as a priority Community Football Hub site due to the physical size, current use and demand from clubs and leagues to build on, and opportunity to provide a balance of grass, 3G pitches and ancillary facilities as a broader, sustainable, all-in-one community offer. Hough

	End Community Football Hub would create capacity to sufficient access to deliver affiliated football and recreational football participation, including women and girls wildcat sessions, walking football and new formats of competitive football, such as central venue midweek flexi and Vets leagues. The proposed 3G FTPs will be designed in accordance with Sport England's and The Football Association's technical design guidance for 3G FTPs and will be developed via The Football Foundation 3G Framework. The proposed facility does allow for adequate storage of goals and maintenance equipment, changing provision and access to allow for community use. The new FTPs could be used continuously throughout the year and intensively due to its artificial grass surface and floodlighting and will support to address local sports facility demands identified through consultation by reducing the need for players to travel to facilities outside of the local area. In addition, a football development programme will be implemented to enable FA programmes to be delivered including: • Coaching • Referee training • Volunteering • Women and Girls football • Disability football The proposed FTPs would make a significant contribution towards addressing the unmet demand for modern football facilities and will allow partner organisations to focus training and competition play in one venue and provide access during peak community use periods and gain greater control over facility availability and pricing. This project will support Sport England's key goals in the following ways: • Increasing the number of people playing sport for at least thirty minutes once a week • Developing new teams and participation opportunities • Recruiting new players to all football formats • Providing quality training and match play facilities
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	• Achieving growth in adult participation • Providing juniors supported pathways into adult teams • Providing adult teams with affordable facilities • Raising the percentage of young adults who play sport once a week • Supporting school and club teams • Developing secure pathways into adult football • Creating pathways from recreational football into clubs • Increasing participation in football amongst under-represented groups
Explanation of which sports the new artificial turf pitch/s will accommodate	Football is the targeted sport. An indicative site programme has been developed with partner schools, universities, clubs, community groups and leagues, with committed times during peak usage to support education, training, and match play requirements. The appropriate surface choice is 3G artificial grass with an associated shock pad to deliver the designated performance quality standards.
Proposed surface type	3G artificial grass.
Sustainability	A facility business plan has been developed to ensure the long-term maintenance of the facility, along with a necessary sinking fund to ensure the long-term benefit of the facility and the appropriate replacement of the artificial pitch surface, floodlights and pitch furniture at the end-of-life cycles. This includes an enhanced maintenance programme of grass football pitches to improve pitch quality and increase capacity to better service existing users and support future growth of teams / leagues on site to ensure sustainable high quality long-term facilities are in place. The pitches will be marked in line with programme demand each season and can service a maximum of 14 senior pitches and 2 mini soccer pitches. This includes the provision to provide dedicated junior pitches and / or overmark pitches to support different formats including junior 11v11 and 9v9 youth.
Accurate site plans (to scale) showing the existing and (if applicable) proposed winter and summer playing pitch layouts on the playing field. This information is required to make an informed assessment of what impact the proposed development would have on playing pitch provision.	The artificial grass pitch location is shown in drawing <i>HEV-EWA-03-XX-DR-L-49042-RevP9 Pitches Site Layout as Proposed</i>, grass sport pitches will be marked out in accordance with programme demand

Predicted Usage

- 5.45 The 3G FTP facilities at Hough End will be used by local schools, clubs, community groups, and universities in Manchester. The facility will also attract the local community to engage in new physical activity either for life or as a one-off event. The facility would run all year round with a winter and summer programme, although the peak season runs from mid-August to mid-May to accommodate game play and training in junior and adult football.
- 5.46 Mid-week days would typically host school, university and community football programmes, and evenings would host training and community football programmes. Weekend usage would host Saturday and Sunday morning junior and youth central venue leagues, and afternoons would host senior club matches and community football programmes annually.
- 5.47 Weekday events would cover a significant range of school and community programmes including school PE, School Sport and Competition, University Training and Competition, Disability Football Programme, Walking Football, FA Wildcat Sessions, as well as focused Women Sessions and recreational football and sporting opportunities. The proposed developments will improve the playing experience, contributing to a sustained growth of football in South Manchester and surrounding areas. See table below for a breakdown of predicted usage of the new 3G FTPs.

Table 4 – Predicted usage

When	Who	Activity	Participants
September – June/July Monday – Friday 9:00am – 3:00pm	University Campus of Football Business	University Sport and Football Competition	Young People / Adults Training, Matches, and Education Activities.
September - July Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 3:00pm – 5:00/6:00pm Wednesday 2:00pm – 6:00pm	Didsbury Point High School and Chorlton High South Ages 11 – 16years	PE, School Sport, Football Competition	C2,200 pupils (at capacity)
September – June Monday 6:00 – 10:00pm Wednesday 2:00 – 5:00pm Sunday 1:00 – 7:00pm	Manchester Metropolitan University Students	Training and Matches	C14 teams
Mid-August – Mid May Monday – Friday 6:00 – 10:00pm	Clubs and Community Groups	Training and Informal Recreational Sessions	C50 teams
Mid August – Mid May Monday and Thursday 8:00 – 9:00pm	Manchester United Foundation	Community Football Programmes	Numbers will vary
Mid-August – July Friday 6:00 – 8:00pm	Community Organisations	Youth and Adult Football Programmes	Numbers will vary

Sunday 1:00 – 4:00pm			
September – Mid May Saturday and Sundays 9:00am – 1:00pm	Junior Football Leagues	7v7 and 9v9 Matches	C20 9v9 Teams C48 7v7 Teams
September – Mid May Sunday 1:00 – 3:00pm	Senior / VETS Football Matches	11v11 Matches	C2 11v11 Teams
June – August Mid-Week Day	GLL / City in the Community	Holiday Activities	Numbers will vary
June – August Mid-Week Evening	Senior Football Leagues	Mixed Formats	Several tournaments and leagues
June – August Mid-Week Evening	Clubs and Community Organisations	Targeted Football Programmes including Walking Football, Vets Leagues, Women and Girls Sessions, Social Inclusion Sessions etc.	Multi Formats, Junior, Senior (Male/Female) Introduction sessions, recreational football activities and matches.
All Year Mid-Week Day	GLL	Targeted Football Programmes including Women's Informal / Recreational Football Activities, Adults NEETs, etc.	Multi Formats, Junior, Youth, Adults. Numbers will vary.

5.48 Based on the above justification, we consider the proposals would give rise to a considerable benefit to the wider community through the provision of an enhanced playing facility. Given the above details, we believe Sport England will agree that the proposed development is acceptable under the following exception policy: E5 – The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport and physical activity, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport and physical activity as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Having explained and proven the merits of this proposal in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Local Plan policies including relevant material planning considerations, we request this proposal is accepted for the following reasons:

- The proposal would deliver an enhanced playing facility, with better qualities, in a suitable location, new FTPs supported by effective and appropriate management arrangements and implemented with best practice construction techniques to minimise waste and pollution; in accordance with Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- The proposal would give rise to a considerable benefit to the wider community through the provision of an enhanced playing facility and the opportunity for usage throughout the year, in accordance with Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities (open space and recreation) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018). The new changing facilities and FTPs would be available for use by the local community (local

residents and schools), partner organisations and community groups organised by the applicant. The proposed FTPs would make a significant contribution towards addressing the unmet demand for modern football facilities and will allow visitors to Hough End Leisure Centre including partner clubs to focus on training in one venue and provide access during peak community use periods.

- The proposal provides adequate on-site parking and necessary traffic management to meet the needs of the development and would not result in any harm to the safety of the surrounding public highway network. An over flow car park will be in operation at peak times evenings and weekends to support current and future use. Traffic movement to and from Hough End site will be managed such that FTP users will overlap with exiting site activities and will not create undue congestion within the surrounding vicinity of the application site and will not result in an increase in demand for off-street parking or have a detrimental impact on highway safety, in accordance with Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- The FTPs would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the character, appearance or visual amenity of the surrounding area. The proposal will complement the Playing Field surroundings and will not appear inappropriate to any view looking into Hough End Playing Fields site, in accordance with Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- The proposal would ensure that surface water run-off is effectively managed and does not increase flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- The proposal would ensure that performance of the proposed artificial lighting (floodlighting) system complies with an Environmental Zone E2 (ILP), in accordance with Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- The proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact to any residential amenity or have a detrimental impact on the private amenity of the residents due to excessive impacts from noise, in accordance with Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).
- Equally, the proposal satisfies relevant sections of Manchester City Council planning policies.
- The proposal satisfies Sport England’s E5 exception policy – The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport and physical activity, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport and physical activity as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.
- The proposed FTPs will contribute to the achieving The Football Association’s National Strategy (2020-2024) and is supported with a robust sustainable business plan, satisfying existing and future training needs, mini soccer and competitive matches.