

LANCASHIRE COUNTY BOARD

Playing Field Statement

SUMMARY

Playing Field Statement in support of the relocation of two Gaelic Football pitches at Broughton Park RUFC.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is provided in support of the planning application for relocation of two GAA pitches from the North field of Hough End Playing Fields to the location outlined on Maps 1 and 2 in Section 2 below.
- 1.2 This Statement explains the aspirations for the project and provides the evidence and justification illustrating the need for the relocation of two Gaelic Football Pitches onto the site of two disused rugby pitches to comply with Sport England Playing Fields Policy Exception E5 and paragraph 99(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 1.3 The Lancashire County Board (LCB) has for the past number of years sought to find a suitable location for the development of our much-needed County Ground facility. Having scoured the city of Manchester and surrounding areas we identified two unused Rugby Pitches at Hough End on the Broughton Park RFUC (BRUFC) footprint. The pitches in question have been unused for a number of years as BRUFC have secured the use of two additional pitches which they are currently using. The purpose and main drivers of this project is for LCB to create a “fit-for-purpose” facility to be used predominantly by the wider Irish community with further opportunities for the local community. The facility will ensure that the GAA can future proof its existence by creating an underage facility to serve the local community that will feed the clubs in the county for the decades to come. We cannot do this in our current location as we do not have a fit for purpose pitches, toilet & changing facility’s, access for people with disabilities or car parking. This proposed development addresses all these challenges in their entirety. To put it into context once set up we will have in excess of 200 children playing Gaelic games on the pitches on a weekly basis as part of our underage development programme, thus underlining the absolute necessity for this facility. These children who reside in south Manchester in the locality surrounding Hough end have to travel to North Manchester (Sedgley Park) to participate and train every weekend.

MANCHESTER LOCAL GAELIC GAMES LANDSCAPE

- 1.4 Gaelic games have been played in Manchester and more specifically on Hough End, our home for Gaelic Games for over 60 years being played on two pitches on

the site currently. Unfortunately, we can no longer continue to play in our current location as our pitches are not fit for purpose for a variety of reasons:

- 1) We have no changing facilities resulting in both our ladies and men's teams having to change on the side of the road at Mauldeth Road.
- 2) We have no toilet facilities for both the ladies and men playing at the site.
- 3) We cannot develop our underage offerings in both Gaelic football, Hurling and Camogie because of the safeguarding issues at the site.
- 4) The pitch dimensions do not meet minimum standard.
- 5) The encroachment from the trees on both sides of the main pitch renders our main pitch unplayable without cutting the trees back from the pitch.
- 6) As a direct result of the trees being so close to the perimeter of our pitch, we have an issue from a Health and Safety perspective as this has now cause a slip and trip hazard with the leaves and exposed roots of the trees.
- 7) There is no room for spectators to watch the games in a safe environment.

The LCB is the governing body that runs all Gaelic Games in the county and today we have:

13 X number of adult men's football teams
6 X number of adult ladies football teams
6 x adult men's hurling teams
2 x adult ladies hurling(camogie) teams.

County Hurling Team:

- 1.5 The Lancashire Senior Hurling Team (Men's Team) participates in both of Ireland's national competitions. This requires the team to travel to play against county teams in Ireland. We participate in the National Hurling League and the All-Ireland Championship, as a direct result of not having a fit for purpose pitch we have to travel to Ireland to play our "home games" in Ireland. To put this into perspective we have to travel to Ireland for up to 12 weekends from February (at the start of the league campaign) to May (at the end of the championship). Remarkably we have won the National League and participated in 3 All-Ireland finals over the last 5 years. By relocating our pitches will immediately alleviate this problem and we will be able to host these games in Manchester thus affording significant economic gains to Manchester's economy.

Games Development Administrator (CDA):

- 1.6 As part of our commitment to the ongoing development and sustainability of our National games we have a full time coach (CDA) in the county, this coach is a full time employee of the GAA, and their salary is paid in its entirety by the GAA. Their sole function is to build up a network of schools that they attend to train the youth

of Manchester in Gaelic Games. As of the time of writing there are in excess of 25 schools committed to having their students trained on a monthly basis. The significant challenge that we face is converting the schools training into full time playing members of our clubs. Once we have resolved the playing field issue and as part of the development of our "Home Grown" talent we want to twin the schools that the CDA attends with the clubs in the county locally based to where the schools are based. By twinning the schools and doing this we will encourage a huge uptake in Gaelic Games which will fundamentally resolve any issues with the sustainability of our games over the coming decade and into the future.

Annual Northern Games:

- 1.7 Following the lifting of the Covid restrictions we resurrected the annual children's tournament we had been running pre Covid called the Northern Games.

In 2022 this saw over 900 girls and boys participate in the tournament from all over the country in a Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie one day tournament on the Broughton Park RFU pitches.

Based on the success of the competition in 2022 and the work done by our full-time coach in the local schools we extended this to a 2-day event.

On the Friday we ran a competition specifically for schools, linked directly to this day were the schools that our CDA attended during the year with all of the schools sending at least one team and in many cases several teams to the competition.

On the Saturday clubs from around the country were represented in both Football, Hurling and Camogie, the event was hugely successful seeing the number of participants swelling from 900 in 2022 to over 1300 in 2023.

The event was very well supported and in attendance on the day were The Mayor of Manchester, Local Councillors, Members of Manchester Active, Manchester City Council, The President of the Gaelic Athletic Association and a number of retired Irish players and current staff from Manchester United and Manchester City FC.

Our aim is to continue to run this competition and grow it annually however in order for this event to continue to run we are at the behest of Broughton Park's generosity in order for them to allow us to use their facility. Whilst this is something that we do not foresee ever being a problem entering to a joint venture with Broughton Park and have 2 full sized pitches of our own at that end of the site will secure the future of the Northern Games in perpetuity.

2.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

Development Location	Broughton Park RFC Hough End
Applicant	Lancashire County Board
Planning Agent	Just H Architects
Proposal Description	Relocation of two GAA playing fields from the North field of Hough end (Map 2 below) and development of 2 new fit for purpose playing pitches in the new location outlined in Map 1 below. Low level spectator rail and ball stop fencing.

Map 1 – Proposed Location of Gaelic Pitches



APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 Broughton Park Rugby Club (BRUFC) is located in the western corner of the wider Hough End Playing Fields site. BRUFC sits within 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 Pitches
- 4 adult grass rugby pitches – operated by Broughton Park Rugby Club
- 2 non turf cricket wickets

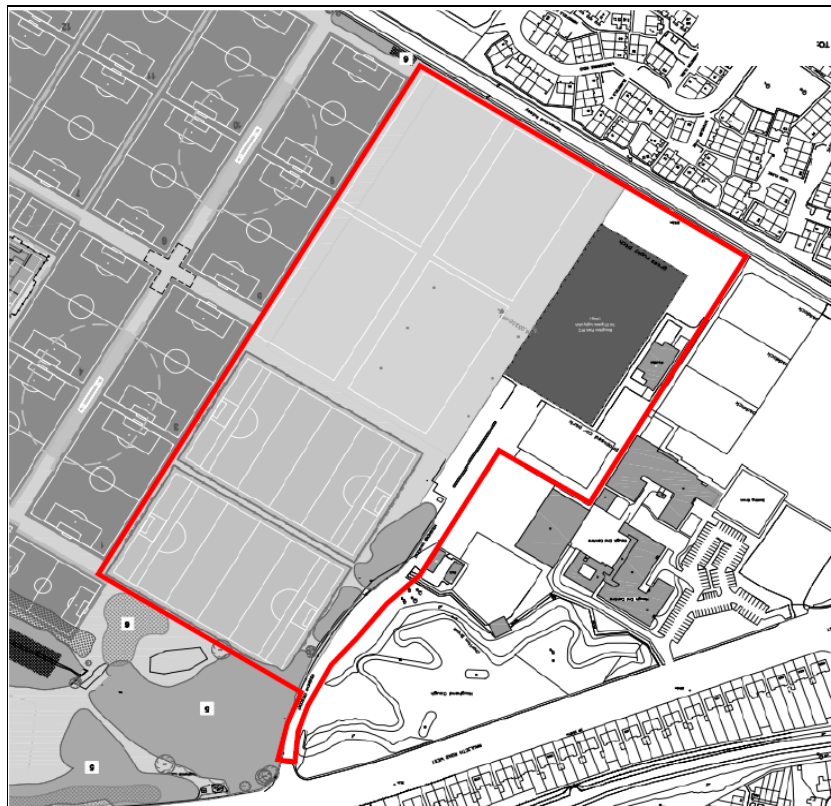
2.2 BRUFC currently operate 5 senior grass rugby pitches and there are a further two disused senior grass rugby pitches that are not available for community use due to pitch quality. The plans to relocate two Gaelic sport pitches, currently located to the north of the site (Map 2), to the site of the disused rugby pitches, is made possible by the development of the Community Football Hub at Hough End (planning approval: 132513/VO/2021) through the rationalisation and reconfiguration of existing grass football pitch provision. The relocated GAA Pitches will be operated by the LCB as is currently the case with the existing pitches.

Map 2 – Current Location of the Gaelic Football Pitches



2.3 The area of land currently used for Gaelic Games which includes Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie will be retained and maintained as recreational amenity land for use by local residents. This will give the local residents and users of the site a dedicated area for walking away from the other sports and free from other users of the site.

Map 3 – Proposed Broughton Rugby Club Pitch Configuration



SITE SUITABILITY

- 2.4 The relocated Gaelic Pitches will be located on the site of two disused rugby pitches resulting in no displacement or prejudicial use of current sporting use. The proposed Gaelic Pitch area equates to 29,988m². The two disused rugby pitches were relocated and replaced as part of the wider Hough End masterplan (planning approval: 132513/VO/2021).
- 2.5 The proposed Gaelic Pitches will be located close to onsite facilities managed by BRUFC 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. The proximity of the pitches to the clubhouse will allow us to offer refreshments to spectators before games and both players and spectators post games finishing. Being able to offer these services/facilities will encourage further use of the facility by the Irish community who are currently looking to relocate to a similar facility following the unfortunate demise and subsequent closure of the Chorlton Irish Club in Chorlton. This club served as a central hub for the Irish community of South Manchester who gathered weekly on various different days of the week to participate in Irish

Dancing classes, Irish music classes, Irish language classes and other such cultural activities.

2.6 During a feasibility study, the optimum location for the proposed Gaelic Pitches were considered, and 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.

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

SPORTING BENEFITS

2.8 The sporting benefits of this pitch relocation and development of two state of the art GAA pitches are ground-breaking, both in terms of participation, sustainability and financially for the GAA.

In the immediate aftermath of opening the pitches we will have 3 clubs using the facility for their underage and adult divisions (St Peter's, St Laurence's and Fullen Gales Hurling Club). This will see c:250 boys and girls ranging in age from 7 to 17 years using the new facility on a weekly basis. Needless to say, this is essential for the sustainability of the clubs moving forward and also offers participation opportunities to the boys and girls of the local communities in Lancashire. Structured league basis blitz's will be organised on a weekly basis to offer the children the opportunity to play and compete weekly against each other.

Additionally, this ensures that we continue with the sterling work that has been done over the last decade by the full time coaching officer (paid in full by the GAA) who coaches on a daily basis in the Primary and Secondary schools throughout the county. As a direct result of the work done by the coaching officer, we have seen an unprecedented level of home grown talent coming through the ranks of not only the clubs but also representing the Lancashire county teams.

Naturally, this co-ordinated approach to the development of our home grown talent links directly back to the schools that our coaching officer coaches in on a

daily basis. It is expected that those schools will have a number of dedicated afternoons during school term times during which the school children will use the pitches for training/matches against the other schools in the county. This will lead to increased membership of the clubs in the county and will increase participation.

There will be a total of 11 adult teams using this new facility on a weekly basis (9 Club and 2 County teams) equating to 250 adults (ladies and men) competing weekly on the site.

Historically and up to 2013 the annual University Gaelic Games competitions were held in Manchester, unfortunately we have had to forgo the running of this competition due to the lack of “fit for purpose” pitches in the North field. The encroachment of the trees added to the lack of facilities for spectators has resulted in the competition being relocated to another GAA facility elsewhere the UK. We will bring that competition back to Manchester and this will see 20+ teams (400 players) representing Universities throughout the UK compete in the annual finals weekend for both the men and ladies competitions.

As you will have seen from the agronomist report the recommended weekly use of the 2 pitches in question is 2 hours per week due to the poor drainage, by approving this development we will turn those 2 pitches into fit for purpose state of the art playing fields for not only the GAA community to use but also for the use of the wider community and local residents (for example dog walkers) to use.

3.0 LINKS TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES

PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY (2022)

- 3.1 In December 2017, the council adopted Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2017–2021) which set out the framework for investment into playing pitch and outdoor facility improvements. The updated Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy 2022–2031 (PPOSS) builds upon the preceding strategy and provides the evidence to help inform planning, investment, and sport development initiatives.
- 3.2 The PPOSS identifies a shortfall of Gaelic Pitches citywide, currently and in the future to 2031 when factoring in population and Gaelic sport participation growth. The key findings for Gaelic Sports are:
 - Existing supply of Gaelic sports pitches in Manchester is insufficient to meet current and anticipated future demand for Gaelic sports.
 - There are issues with quality, pitch specification and compliancy which require addressing in order to meet current, future and presently exported demand.

3.3 The PPOSS Action Plan contains an overview and recommended remedial actions for Gaelic Sports at Hough End:

"Gaelic sports pitches

The long term plan is to relocate two Gaelic pitches from the North Field, which will be retained as a large recreational playing field area. The Gaelic pitches will replace the two disused senior grass rugby union pitches to be brought into use for Club/Community and will form part of the Broughton Park RUFCs lease. Of the two Gaelic football pitches, 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. The plan is to relocate in a phased manner to relocate Pitch 1 and undertake the pitch works in the summer of 2023 and Pitch 2 in 2024. This project is subject to planning approval and funding being secured. The plans will provide two County standard senior Gaelic pitches that will have low level spectator railings and ball stop nets etc to allow for all Gaelic teams (football, hurling) to use as home ground and support the development of the sport/s locally." (Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy p. 54)

148	Hough End Playing Fields	M20 1NA	GAA	Council	Two poor quality GAA pitches. Pitches are undersized and non-compliant. As part of the wider site development, the two pitches are due to be relocated closer to Broughton Park FC where two pitches will be constructed to specification with championship facility requirements. The GAA community has a partnership with Broughton Park RUFC and plans to share ancillary facilities once the relocation takes place. A number of clubs and teams will relocate back to the site once the development is completed.	Explore the opportunity to relocate Gaelic Sport pitches and develop two compliant Gaelic sport pitches with championship facility requirements adjacent to Broughton Park FC.
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3.4 The relocated Gaelic Pitches will be located on the site of two disused rugby pitches resulting in no displacement or prejudicial use of current sporting use. The

proposed Gaelic Pitch area equates to 29,988m². The two disused rugby pitches were relocated and replaced as part of the wider Hough End masterplan (planning approval: 132513/VO/2021) which was supported and agreed with all national governing bodies of sport including the RFU, GAA and Football Foundation.

- 3.5 The relocation of the rugby pitches and Gaelic football pitches is fully supported by the national governing bodies of sport including the RFU, GAA, local clubs, and meets the strategic recommendations of the PPOSS.

4.0 LOCAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION (2020–2023)

- 4.1 We took part in the 6 public consultation meetings to support engagement of all communities and stakeholders that had been organised by Manchester Active at Broughton Park RFU. The dates of the meetings were:
- Monday 29th November 2021 16.00pm – 17.00pm Session 1
 - Monday 29th November 2021 17.05pm – 18.05pm Session 2
 - Saturday 4th December 2021 10.00am – 11.00am Session 3
 - Saturday 4th December 2021 11.05am – 12.05pm Session 4
 - Wednesday 8th December 2021 18.00pm – 19.00pm Session 5
 - Wednesday 8th December 2021 19.05pm – 20.05pm Session 6
- 4.2 Generally, the planned relocation was well received albeit the local residents were sorry that we were planning on moving. The Club has built up a very good relationship with local residents over the years, and we have always been respectful and mindful of the fact that we were playing our games next to their homes. Nevertheless, the residents completely understood the need for us to move based on the lack of amenities and the lack of ability to start up our underage programmes to develop our own Home-Grown players.

Discussions around the Low-Level Spectator Railing and Ball Stop Netting were held, all of which were fully supported once the need for both was fully explained.

- 4.3 In March 2023 three additional consultations with the local community and stakeholders and organised by the Lancashire County Board on behalf of the Gaelic Athletic Association. There was a significant time lapse between the first consultation and the proposed submission of our planning application, and it was deemed appropriate to revisit the consultation and ensure all local resident concerns were identified and addressed.

The public consultation meetings were held at Broughton Park RFU on:

- Wednesday 10th May 2023,
 - Saturday 13th May 2023 M
 - Monday 15th May 2023
- 4.4 By and large the meetings were well reasonably well attended by stakeholders, members of the local community and local council representatives. During the

meetings our plans were well received with two items that required more detailed discussions as in the previous meetings:

- 1) Low level spectator rail
- 2) Ball Stop Netting

The above issues were discussed with stakeholders and members of the public with universal acceptance of their need as outlined in the feedback forms attached (Appendix 1) – no concerns were raised.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

SPORT ENGLAND PLAYING FIELDS POLICY AND GUIDANCE (UPDATED 2021)

- 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 relocation of two Gaelic Football Pitches onto two disused rugby pitches, 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.
- 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.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (UPDATED 2021)

- 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 99 (concerning open space, sport, and recreation) of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

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 the proposal involves the loss of two disused rugby pitches to another sport, Gaelic Football, evidence to justify the proposals compliance against NPPF paragraph 99(c) is provided in this statement.

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 The conversion of land currently used for Gaelic Football to recreational amenity land for public use meets the objectives of paragraph 96 of the NPPF.
- 5.7 Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy (2022-2031) is the relevant Needs Assessment, as referenced in paragraph 96 of the NPPF, and this has been used to help inform the requirements at BRUFC.

MANCHESTER CORE STRATEGY

- 5.8 Core Strategy policy EN10 (Safeguarding Open Space, Sport, and Recreation Facilities) reflects the objectives of the NPPF and Sport England Playing Fields Policy at a local level. The policy seeks to protect and enhance existing open space, sport and recreation facilities and contains a clause that "The development will be ancillary to the open space, sport or recreation facility and complement the use or character."

6.0 ANALYSIS

- 6.1 The Gaelic Games season is April – October with training held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Matches are played on Saturday evening/ Sunday mornings. Table 4 below sets out the predicted usage of both pitches.

PREDICTED USAGE

Table 1 – Predicted usage

Team Usage By Season	Month	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total No of People	Total Hours per Week
St Laurences Ladies	Mar-Nov	40		40	40		70		190	8.5
St Laurence Underage	Mar-Nov						150		150	2.5
St Laurences Men	Mar-Nov		30		30			70	130	6.5
									0	
St Peter's Underage	Apr - Nov						80		80	2.5
St Peter's Men	Feb- Nov		25		25			70	120	6.5
									0	
Fullen Gaels Ladies	Mar-Nov		35		35			60	130	6.5
Fullen Gaels Men	Mar-Nov	25		25			60		110	6.5
									0	
Lancashire County Hurling Team	Jan-June	30		30			80		140	6.5
Lancashire County Football Team	Mar-June		30		30			80	140	6.5

Tournaments	Month	Total No of People	Total Days per annum
Underage Blitz	May-Aug	160	6
Annual Northern Games	May	1500	2

Note: Weekdays each session is 2 hours and Weekend sessions are 2.5 hours

- 6.2 Table 1 shows there will be nine teams with 1,190 sports participants playing thirteen hours per week each season. In addition, there are two regular tournaments per season attended by 1,660 sports participants across eight days. This demonstrates a high level of pitch usage to meet the clubs and local community sport needs.

QUANTUM OF PROVISION

- 6.3 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
Rugby	6 senior grass rugby pitches	6 senior grass rugby pitches	0
Gaelic Sports	2 senior grass pitches	2 senior grass pitches	0

- 6.4 The above table identifies that there will be no change to the current number of pitches as a result of the proposed development. The relocation of the two Gaelic Pitches nearer to the Rugby Club will create new opportunities for the local community to take part in sport and physical activity on site.

Table 3 – Sporting Benefits Justification

REQUIREMENT	DETAIL PROVIDED
Impact the proposed development would have on playing pitch provision including proposed summer / winter playing pitches	No impact, pitch numbers and types will stay the same.
Existing community use	Existing pitches are used by GAA for matchplay and training across the course of the season. Also accommodate Underage Blitz tournaments and the annual Northern Games. This activity has been ongoing for over 60 years.
Proposed community use	See table 1.
Community access formally secured through a community use agreement	Yes, Community Use Agreement will be put in place with Manchester Active's assistance prior to first use of the pitches.
Proposed surface type	Natural turf.
Accurate site plans (to scale) showing the	See planning application submission.

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.	
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- 6.5 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 the proposed development meets the requirements of Sport England Policy Exception 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; and paragraph 99(c) of the NPPF.

7.0 DESIGN

- 7.1 A Feasibility Study has been undertaken by sports turf specialists (PSD/TGMS dated 6th July 2023) to determine the current quality of the area of land proposed for the Gaelic Football Pitches. The report sets out the works that need to be undertaken to ensure the pitches are fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the GAA.
- 7.2 Three development options are presented to improve and drain an area of 29,988m². Options 1 and 2 involve site remodelling with two options for drainage solutions, whereas option 3 is only an enhanced maintenance scheme. A bespoke pitch specification will be developed based on option 1.
- 7.3 Labosport has undertaken a Ball Trajectory Assessment and made recommendations for the location, length and height of ball stop fencing to reduce the incidence of ball strike on cars and pedestrians. Map 4 shows the location and length of the proposed ball stop netting. The recommendation is for ball stop netting behind each goal to the west of the two pitches. Each length of netting should be 42m and a height of 16.5m.

Map 4: Ball Stop Netting Location



The proposed specification is in line with that recommended in the Ball Trajectory Assessment:

Material: High Density Polyethylene (HDPE). This net is UV protected to increase the lifespan of the netting and allow it to be left outside all year round.

-Size: 12'x14'x70'. 12'x14'x55'. 12'x12'x70'. 12'x12'x55'.etc

-Twine size: #21.#24.#36.#42.#51(Twisted twine)

-Mesh size: 1-3/4".1-7/8"

-Mesh type: square mesh

-Knot type: knotted net

-Colour: black or green

Border ropes stitched to the net – secures cage, holds form, and reduces interior netting wear

Holds form, and reduces interior netting wear

Centre rope supports ceiling of net

Three 10 tie lines at each ceiling end of the net

250mm tie lines at each bottom corner of the net

Net secured on 2 No 16.5m aluminium poles set into RC base 900 x 900 x 1200mm with 4 No M12 hold down bolts

7.4 The pitches will be enclosed by a 1.1m high galvanised and powder coated steel mesh panel fencing to act as a spectator viewing area. Pedestrian and maintenance gates will be installed.

7.5 The above ground facilities that support the relocation of the Gaelic Football Pitches are ancillary to the main purpose of the area as a sports facility. For that reason, it is considered the ancillary facilities meet Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E2:

"The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use."

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Having explained and proven the merits of this proposal in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Core Strategy 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.
- 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 (2021).

- 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. This allows current users to park off street and use the changing facilities. At present cars park along Mauldeth Road West and players change at their cars.
- 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 (2021).
- 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 (2021).
- 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 Exceptions to policy E2 and 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.
- The relocated pitches will be designed and constructed to a quality and standard that meets GAA requirements, as shown in the PDS/TGMS Feasibility Report.