



To: Executive Councillor for Planning Policy  
and Transport: Councillor Kevin Blencowe  
Report by: Director of Environment  
Relevant scrutiny Development 2 June 2016  
committee: Plan Scrutiny  
Sub Committee  
Wards affected: All wards

**CAMBRIDGE AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE INDOOR  
SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY**

**Not a Key Decision**

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**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28 March 2014. The examination of the emerging Local Plan is continuing, with hearing sessions taking place during Summer 2016 on a range of matters.
- 1.2 Policies 68 and 73 and Appendix I within the emerging Local Plan address open space and recreation facilities to be provided through new development.
- 1.3 Sport England made representations to the consultation on the Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission in September 2013, which supported the principle of Policy 73, but considered it necessary for the Council to complete an up to date city wide assessment of need, as required by Paragraph 73 of the National Planning Policy Framework..
- 1.4 The Council recognised that further sports strategy documents were needed to address concerns raised by Sport England.

- 1.5 The Council has worked with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Sport England to develop two sports strategies: a Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031 for grass and all weather pitches covering both areas; and an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031 to guide future provision of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategies assess existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision.
- 1.6 The Indoor Sport Facility Strategy 2015-2031 addresses the future provision of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategy has assessed existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision. The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy is provided as Appendix C to this report.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 This report is being submitted to the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee for prior consideration and comment before decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.
- 2.2 The Executive Councillor is recommended:
  - a. to endorse the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015 – 2031 (Appendix C) as a material consideration in decision-making and as part of the technical evidence base for the Local Plan with immediate effect;
  - b. to agree that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes are made in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport, the Chair and Spokesperson of Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Councils submitted the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans for examination on 28 March 2014. The separate plans were prepared in parallel with joint working throughout the process in recognition of the close functional relationship between the two areas and reflecting the duty to cooperate.
- 3.2 Joint examination hearings on strategic issues were held between November 2014 and April 2015 on topics such as: housing and employment needs, development strategy, Green Belt, transport, infrastructure and housing supply.
- 3.3 Further joint hearing sessions are due to take place in June 2016. These joint hearing sessions are to be followed by a number of Cambridge only hearing sessions on the historic and natural environment, retail, the City Centre and Areas of Major Change, climate change, employment land, services and local facilities and allocations for development outside the Areas of Major Change. These Cambridge only hearing sessions will be taking place in June, July and September 2016.
- 3.4 The hearing sessions which address open space and the provision of sports facilities are timetabled to take place in June and September 2016.
- 3.5 Within the emerging Local Plan, Policy 68: Open space and recreation provision through new development requires open space and recreation facilities to be provided through new development and seeks to address the impact of development by taking into account local circumstances. The requirements for open space provision are set out in Appendix I: Open Space and Recreation Standards of the emerging Local Plan, which supports both Policies 68 and 73.
- 3.6 Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities in the emerging Local Plan explains the criteria that must be met in

justifying the loss of existing facilities and in providing for new or enhanced community, sports or leisure facilities.

- 3.7 In response to representations received by Sport England during the public consultation on the Cambridge Local Plan 2014 – Proposed Submission document, the Council considered it necessary to complete sports strategy documents to support the relevant policies in the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.8 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, in partnership with Sport England, have developed two sports strategies: a Playing Pitch Strategy 2015-2031 for grass and all weather pitches covering both areas; and an Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031 to guide future provision of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategies set out to assess existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision.

### **Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015 - 2031**

- 3.9 The Indoor Sport Facility Strategy 2015-2031 will guide the future provision of indoor sports halls, swimming pools and outdoor cycling facilities to serve existing and new communities in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategy has assessed existing facilities, the future need for sport and active recreation facilities, and opportunities for new provision.
- 3.10 The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy has been developed in accordance with Sport England's methodology which has involved significant consultation with pitch/facility providers and users as well as the relevant National Governing Bodies. The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy provides an action list of where new provision should be provided on-site and how off-site contributions should be used to support new and improved provision. The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy is provided as Appendix C to this report.

3.11 The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy has identified a need for some additional provision, across a range of facility types, as well as more generic needs in terms of improvement to the quality of existing facilities, and the accessibility of provision. A summary of these needs are provided in Appendix A.

3.12 The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy identifies a need for capital investment in some existing facilities, or replacement of them in the long term, to address both current and future needs in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Whilst some of this investment relates to new additional facility provision, there is also a need for medium and long-term investment in existing ageing stock; existing levels of participation are more likely to be retained and increased participation more likely to be achieved, if the environment in which people take part is modern and fit for purpose. The development of improved sports facilities, and physical activity environments, will facilitate increased participation, which in turn will benefit individual and community health. The challenge is that the greatest health benefit will be gained by encouraging the inactive, to become active.

3.13 In relation to getting more people active, particularly from deprived areas, it is important to highlight the following issues:

- Some of the existing facility stock is ageing and deteriorating in quality; and
- Increased populations will put additional demands on the capacity of existing facilities, along with increasing participation will increase demand on existing facilities.

3.14 There is a need to:

- Replace and/or refurbish ageing facilities;
- Optimise and increase the capacity for community use of sports facilities on education sites;
- Develop new sports halls to provide for indoor sports, a swimming pool, and health and fitness facilities;
- Develop cycling provision, and that for walking and running; and

- Improve informal recreational activities through the development of safe walking, running and cycling routes and appropriate infrastructure.

The recommendations from the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy are set out in Appendix B of this report.

3.15 The Strategy, as set out in Appendix C, will be used to help to plan effectively for future sports facility provision; current and future need; population growth and increased participation to 2031. It forms part of the evidence base for the plan making process and is a material consideration for decision-making on relevant planning applications.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The preparation of the Local Plan and the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031 has already been included within existing Development Plan Fund budget plans.

### **(b) Staffing Implications (if not covered in Consultations Section)**

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report. The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031 has already been included in existing work plans.

### **(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

This strategy has a positive impact on access to sports facilities, which can improve health and wellbeing across Cambridge's communities.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental impacts in relation to the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy 2015-2031.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

The Indoor Sport Facility Strategy 2015-2031 was not subject to direct public consultation. Consultation has taken place with Sport England and the relevant National Governing Bodies for sport.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

## **5. Background papers**

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- National Planning Practice Framework  
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/>

## **6. Appendices**

- Appendix A: Summary of Facility Needs in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire
- Appendix B: Strategy Recommendations
- Appendix C: Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Indoor Sport Facility Strategy 2015-2031

## **7. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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## Appendix A - Summary of Facility Needs in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

FACILITY TYPE	FACILITY NEEDS/PRIORITIES
SPORTS HALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of an additional minimum 2 badminton courts, but more likely 9 badminton courts (just over 2 sports halls - 4 badminton court size) by 2031 (reference Table 5.8). This assessment already takes into account new provision at Trumpington Community College and in Northstowe Phase 2</li> <li>• Reliance on existing education site based sports halls e.g. Netherhall Sports Centre, and Swavesey Village College</li> <li>• Ageing facilities will require replacement /investment in the medium to long term, so planning for this needs to be considered now e.g. – Kelsey Kerridge, Melbourn and Impington Sports Centres, Chesterton Community Sports Centre</li> <li>• Extension of an existing facility e.g. North Cambridge Academy’s 3 court sports hall could also provide an option to increase availability of courts at a centre with existing community access</li> <li>• Consideration of future needs for sports halls within new settlements and as a result of growth included in Local Plans</li> </ul>



FACILITY TYPE	FACILITY NEEDS/PRIORITIES
SWIMMING POOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An additional 8 lane swimming pool of either 25m or 50m in length, serving both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, potentially located at the University of Cambridge Sports Centre in the North West of Cambridge</li> <li>• There is a need to consider planning now for future investment in extensions, refurbishment or replacement of Abbey Leisure Complex, and Parkside Pools by 2031, (equating to 51% of the swimming pool stock in Cambridge)</li> <li>• Investment and improved facilities at Jesus Green Lido to provide year round access</li> <li>• Investment in the Frank Lee Centre (medium term), to make the facility suitable for community use</li> </ul>
HEALTH AND FITNESS FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased supply of community accessible and affordable Gym fitness stations; current deficit of -18, with a future deficit of -78 in Cambridge</li> <li>• Increased supply of community accessible and affordable Gym fitness stations; current deficit of -203, with a future deficit of -326 in South Cambridgeshire</li> </ul>
INDOOR TENNIS COURTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional courts to meet club demand; potential for partnership with the LTA. This could possible be at least partially addressed by a new facility at the University of Cambridge. (Reference paragraphs 5.342-5.441)</li> </ul>
GYMNASTICS FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access to sports hall facilities for club use, and continued development of club-led specialist gymnastics facilities (Reference paragraphs 5.335-5.341)</li> </ul>

FACILITY TYPE	FACILITY NEEDS/PRIORITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
CYCLING FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A 1.6km off road closed circuit; potential for a club operated BMX track</li></ul>
INFORMAL FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe cycling, running and walking routes</li></ul>

## **Appendix B: Strategy Recommendations**

1. Further work is undertaken to assess the business case for the development of new swimming provision on the University of Cambridge's West Cambridge Campus, accompanied by a review of pool programming across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
2. Jesus Green Lido should be developed to provide year round access for community use.
3. The need to replace ageing Swimming Pool facilities is recognised and planned for appropriately, including identification of the investment required. Investment will be required to invest in and retain/extend/replace Parkside Pools, and Abbey Leisure Complex (Cambridge), and in Melbourn and Impington Sports Centres (South Cambridgeshire).
4. There is a need for Investment in the Frank Lee Centre (medium term), to make the facility more suitable and open for community use.
5. The need for new swimming provision should be considered, and an updated assessment undertaken, as part of planning for settlements beyond 2031 e.g. Waterbeach. An updated assessment will be needed every 5 years to ensure the Strategy remains robust.
6. The need to replace ageing Sports Hall facilities is recognised and planned for appropriately, including identification of the investment required. Investment will be required to improve/replace existing education site based sports halls e.g. Melbourn and Impington Sports Centres, and Netherhall and Chesterton Community Sports Centres.
7. The potential for larger facilities should be considered in relation to the development of new/replacement/improved sports halls (given the identified undersupply by 2031), to address identified needs of e.g. handball, and indoor tennis.

8. The identified under supply of community accessible fitness facilities is addressed through future facility development in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
9. Additional indoor tennis courts are developed in Cambridge to meet club demand.
10. An off road cycling circuit (1.6km) is developed, potentially also involving a BMX track.
11. The Local Authorities continue to work with local schools to develop formal community use agreements, or at minimum, commitments for a period of time to protect community access (pay and play usage as a priority). All new secondary schools should provide secured community access (pay and play) to sports facilities.
12. The Local Authorities work with local schools to extend existing provision for community access to benefit local sports clubs.
13. The development of safe walking, running and cycling routes and appropriate infrastructure e.g. bicycle racks, storage, benches etc across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and in areas of new housing development to facilitate active lifestyles.
14. Use this Indoor Sports Facility Strategy to inform infrastructure needs of the area, including allocation of funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy. Where appropriate, contributions towards offsite provision may also be sought towards projects through the Section 106 process. Such funding could be used to improve the quality of facilities, or towards new facilities.
15. This Indoor Sports Facility Strategy and analysis is reviewed and updated every 5 years to ensure the needs analysis remains robust and relevant and properly informs decisions about sports facility provision beyond 2031.