

CAB1651(LDF)
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): ALL

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

2 April 2008

WINCHESTER DISTRICT OPEN SPACE, SPORTS AND RECREATION STUDY

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officers: Margaret Kirby / Mandy Ford Tel No: 01962 848170

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 1545 (LDF): Update on the Open Space and Built Facilities Assessment (LDF Committee, 6 November 2007)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report supplements the initial conclusions of Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study set out in Report CAB1545 (LDF), considered by this Committee in November 2007. The completion of the report was delayed to allow for further work on built facilities, to enable the conclusions and recommendations for that part of the Study to be as robust as those for open space.

This Study is an important part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and future Local Development Documents, and the Core Strategy will have to consider standards for open space and built recreation facilities as an essential part of the community infrastructure associated with new development. This Study contains a great deal of detailed information and new recommended standards for open space and built facilities to allow this to be assessed, so that these facilities can play their part in the development of sustainable communities.

A presentation has been arranged for all City Council Members on 1 April, prior to the consideration of this Report by this Committee, and all Parish Councils and Sports Clubs and organisations have also been invited. The consultants appointed to produce the Study will present the main findings of the Study, and explain how the information can be accessed and used.

This report explains the content of the supplementary Study documents (the Sub Area Profiles, the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Built Facilities Study) with the key findings and recommendations drawn together in the Part 1 Study: the Main Report. A copy of the

Summary Report is attached at Appendix 1 to this report, and this will be made available as a leaflet at the presentation on 1 April. This sets out the new recommended local standards for the provision of open space and built facilities, and summarises the key recommendations of the Study for open space and built facilities.

The Committee is requested to endorse the proposed standards and other recommendations set out in Appendix 1 and agree that they should be used in developing the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents to assess the need for the provision or improvement of these facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That paragraphs 3.1 and 3.3 of Appendix 1 be endorsed as the recommended new standards for open space and built recreation facilities, to be promoted through the Core Strategy.
- 2 That the policies and recommendations in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.3 of Appendix 1 be endorsed as issues for further consideration in appropriate Local Development Documents or through initiating local partnership working.

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

2 April 2008

WINCHESTER DISTRICT OPEN SPACE, SPORTS AND RECREATION STUDY

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS 12) advises that LDFs need to be prepared on the basis of a thorough understanding of the needs of the District, and the opportunities and constraints that operate within it to ensure that any policies are founded on a robust and sound basis. Paragraph 4.11 requires local authorities to gather evidence about their areas, and makes specific reference to the need for studies to be undertaken or commissioned on the need for additional leisure facilities. The Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study is one of a number of studies that will provide the evidence that would be “relied upon by the local planning authority in testing the soundness of the development plan document at independent examination”.
- 1.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG 17) was issued in 2002, advising local authorities to “undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities. Assessments will normally be undertaken at district level”. The PPG also advised that the information should be used to derive local standards, comprising:
- quantitative elements (how much new provision may be needed);
 - a qualitative component (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities)
 - accessibility (including distance thresholds and consideration of the cost of using a facility).

The PPG also sets out “typologies” for open space (in the Annex paragraph 2) and for built facilities (in the Annex paragraph 5), which local authorities are expected to use to undertake their assessments.

- 1.3 The advice in the PPG was then supplemented by the Companion Guide “Assessing Needs and Opportunities”, published in September 2002. The Companion Guide suggests a way that audits of provision and local assessments of need can be carried out.
- 1.4 The earlier report considered by this Committee [CAB1545(LDF)] explained, in paragraph 1.2, that, in view of the amount of work needed to carry out such a comprehensive assessment, there was insufficient time to undertake this and incorporate new standards in the current adopted Local Plan. The recreational standards in the adopted Local Plan, and the City Council's Open Space Funding System which operates through them, therefore continues to rely on the former

National Playing Fields Association's (now Fields in Trust's) standards for children's play and sports grounds. However, the adopted Local Plan indicates that an assessment carried out in accordance with PPG 17 would be carried out at an early date, so that a local standard could be established through the City Council's Local Development Framework. This Study was therefore commissioned in May 2006, prior to the current statutory Local Plan's formal adoption.

- 1.5 PPG 17 advises that assessments should normally be undertaken at District level. However, the adjoining Districts of Winchester and East Hampshire agreed to engage consultants jointly to undertake the Study. Joint working has offered financial and other benefits, with the Districts having many similarities, both being largely rural in nature. It was also very timely as both Districts were about to commence work on their Core Strategies, and the assessment would form an important part of each District's evidence base.
- 1.6 Consultants Inspace were appointed to undertake the Study, and it was agreed that a separate report would be prepared for each District Council area, to provide the basis for each District's local standards.
- 1.7 Although most authorities who have already carried out PPG 17 studies have not undertaken an open space and built facilities assessment at the same time, it was agreed at the start that each District's Study would be as comprehensive as possible. There are often close relationships between outdoor and indoor facilities in both Districts, and therefore both open space and built facilities standards would be required. The inclusion of a built facilities assessment has also helped to attract the interest of Sport England, in view of their particular interest in this field, and whose technical and financial assistance throughout the Study has been greatly appreciated.
- 1.8 The built facilities assessment required a slightly different approach to that for open space, as there was no previous experience of a nationally recognised or a Local Plan standard. There were, however, sources of additional information that could be used to develop standards that would be comparable and as robust as those for open space. In order to achieve this aim within the shortest possible timescale, consultants RQA were engaged in October 2007 to work under the auspices of Inspace, and to produce a separate Built Facilities Study for the District. The main conclusions and recommendations of the Study were however to be integrated into the Inspace main report. This has delayed the completion of the overall Study, but it was important that the standards recommended for the provision of built facilities were as robust as those for open space.
- 1.9 The interim report on the Study, considered by this Committee in November 2007 [Report CAB 1545(LDF)], set out the main stages of the Study process, its organisation, and the PPG 17 typologies for open space and built facilities from which the District's own typologies were derived.
- 1.10 Although the Study has been prepared primarily to meet the requirements of PPG 17, with the ultimate aim of setting local standards for the provision of open space and built recreation facilities, as a basis for planning policy, it was always known that the Council's Sports and Recreation Team would need to be actively involved in the Study. Officers of the both the Strategic Planning and Sports and Recreation teams in both Districts have therefore jointly worked with both consultants to ensure that the Study and its component parts were as robust as possible. As a result, the

information will also be of considerable benefit to the Sport and Recreation Team and Environment Division as a basis for future strategies.

- 1.11 The resulting wide-ranging Study has, however, also relied heavily on consultation with those who manage and use the facilities, and the Council very much appreciates the help given to the Consultants by these organisations during the course of the Study.

2 Format of the Final Report

- 2.1 The Consultants' report has now been received from Inspace Planning Ltd, and it is made available in four parts. The key findings of the Study are set out in the Part 1: The Main Report, which addresses the requirements of PPG 17 and includes a summary of the main conclusions and recommendations of the three more detailed other parts of the Study.

- 2.2 The Study therefore comprises:

Part 1: The Main Report

Part 2: Sub Area Profiles

Part 3: Playing Pitch Strategy

Part 4: Built Facilities Study

Each part can be accessed on the Council's web-site at www.winchester.gov.uk.

- 2.3 Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this report refer to the detailed supporting parts of the Study (the Sub Area Profiles, the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Built Facilities Study). Section 6 sets out the main Study findings, with Section 7 commenting on the recommended standards for open space and built facilities. Section 8 draws conclusions on the role of the Study as part of the evidence base for the LDF and how it will be used in future.

3 The Sub Area Profiles (Part 2 of the Study)

- 3.1 The Sub Area Profiles are based on groups of parishes grouped around the main settlements of the District, as identified in the adopted Local Plan. Within the profiles, separate parish information can be accessed on local facilities, and this will facilitate any need to re-group parishes for the purposes of the Core Strategy or other documents prepared within the Local Development Framework, should there be a need to use different sub-areas.

- 3.2 The Sub Area Profiles examine the amounts, quality and distribution of open space facilities in each of the 8 Sub Areas and identify strategic priorities within each area. A summary of these is included in the main Part 1 Report at paragraph 8.4. These highlight the main issues and priorities that will need to be addressed within each area.

4 The Playing Pitch Strategy (Part 3 of the Study)

- 4.1 The Playing Pitch Strategy has examined the supply of playing pitches in the District relative to demand by local teams and identifies the main issues that need

addressing for those sports. It follows the recommended Sport England methodology, looking primarily at the sports of football, cricket, rugby and hockey although there has been some analysis of the provision of outdoor tennis courts, in view of their importance in the District.

4.2 Playing pitches form a significant element of sports ground provision in the District and therefore the results of this Study should be used to improve playing pitch provision in the District. The key messages from the Study are that:

- Winchester urban area has the potential to secure an adequate supply of pitches to meet current and future demand, if school sites are secured for community access through Community Use Agreements..
- Quality of pitches is the main concern of both suppliers and users, but pitches which best fit the requirements of users and providers should receive most resources to improve quality.
- Provision of sustainable sports facilities should be the aim.
- There should be appropriate changing facilities, fit for purpose and providing for a range of users.
- There are insufficient junior pitches, and most of the need could be achieved by reducing the number of senior pitches and reconfiguring them as juniors.
- There are insufficient hockey pitches in the District, and artificial turf pitches would normally be required.
- Floodlit STPs are needed for training, to allow grass pitches time to recover after use.

5 The Built Facilities Study (Part 4 of the Study)

5.1 The Built Facilities Study has been carried out as a separate Study, based as closely as possible on the methodology used for the different types of open space. It has drawn on the various consultations carried out by Inspace Planning Ltd, with RQA working in close co-operation with them. RQA has supplemented this by using additional information, including the Active Places and Active People Survey Reports supplied by Sport England, which have provided guidance on the level and use of facilities within Winchester District.

5.2 As a result, a number of key issues have been identified, which need to be addressed through the LDF and other complementary measures. Standards are recommended, including quantity, quality and accessibility components, similar to the standard for open space. These are summarised within the main Part 1 Report in Section 8.6.

5.3 Firstly, the requirements for new-build community and recreation facilities need to be identified and linked to major development. This is currently the case at West of Waterlooville, and would also be required if other areas of major development were to take place in the District, for example, at Winchester City (North) or at North Whiteley.

5.4 One of the main findings of the Study is the identification of quality issues at the District's two main leisure centres – at the River Park Leisure Centre in Winchester, and Meadowside Leisure Centre in Whiteley. This is likely to require an assessment of the limited options available for improvements at both sites, and a decision then needs to be taken on whether it would be preferable to relocate each facility, possibly

within adjacent new areas of major development, if they are proposed within the next Plan period.

- 5.5 The Council is advised by RQA to adopt a hierarchy of built provision within the District, based on the outcomes of the Study. This will require additional formal Community Use agreements with secondary schools, which play an important role for community sport and recreation. There are opportunities to improve indoor recreation provision at a number of school sites – particularly at Henry Beaufort and Westgate Schools in Winchester, and at Sparsholt College.
- 5.6 In association with this, there is a need for a Community Halls Strategy, based on assessments of quality, quantity and accessibility. This should be prepared for the District, based on role and quality of halls, identifying 'hub' centres' contributing to the hierarchy of provision at a local parish level, particularly in the rural areas. These 'hub centres' should be accessible and of sufficient size and quality to accommodate a range of recreational sporting activities within key settlements.
- 5.7 The Study recommends the development of a Strategy for Sports Facilities. It is suggested that a local stakeholder group be established at an early stage, linking with the Winchester District Sports and Physical Activity Alliance (SPAA). The proposed Strategy for Sports Facilities could be undertaken by the SPAA working with other key partners, which would enable ownership across a range of partners and perhaps would provide enhanced opportunities for co-operation and joint-working.

6 Main Study Findings

- 6.1 All Members of the City Council, all Parish Councils and representatives of sports clubs and organisations throughout the District have been invited to a presentation on the findings of the Study on 1 April, prior to this Committee's consideration of this report. The purpose of the presentation is to explain the purpose of the four Parts of the Study, and how they may be accessed, and to summarise the findings of the main Part 1 Report.
- 6.2 As the study is very detailed and comprises a number of different elements, the Consultants have produced a Summary Report, which is attached as Appendix A to this Committee report. It covers:
- 1 Why the study has been carried out and the main documents produced
 - 2 The process followed for the study (as recommended by the Companion Guide to PPG 17)
 - 3 Proposed District standards of provision for open space and built facilities (using quantity, quality and accessibility components as recommended by PPG 17).
 - 4 Application of the standards, identifying the main deficiencies in the District.
 - 5 Policies and recommendations, the main study outcomes that will need to inform relevant LDF documents.

6 Future application of the standards and the need to use the information in this study to prepare supporting LDF documents.

7 The recommended standards

7.1 The proposed District standards for both open space and built facilities have been derived based on existing provision within the District, for each type of facility, and the results of the wide-ranging consultation with a large number of organisations. The consultation was used to measure satisfaction with the current level of provision, and identify how it compares with other authorities, but recognising that any new local standard would need to be achievable.

7.2 For open space and built facility standards, both quantity and accessibility components are included, and the quality assessment is held as part of the audit information so that it can be used by officers to identify priorities for particular improvements.

7.3 The recommended open space standard includes a much wider range of types of open space than is currently the case in the adopted Local Plan's standard. It is based on the PPG 17 typology but with fewer open space categories to reflect the types of open space found in the District. These categories and the proposed standards for them are set out in paragraph 3.1 of the Summary Report attached at Appendix A.

7.4 The recommended new standard for the provision of built facilities is set out in paragraph 3.3 of the Summary Report at Appendix A and, similarly to the open space standard, is based on the PPG 17 typology, but with adjustments to reflect the facilities that exist in the District.

8 Conclusions

8.1 Adequate high quality open spaces and built recreation facilities that are readily accessible to local residents are essential components of sustainable communities and therefore the results of this Study will be used to inform future provision of facilities throughout the District, through the preparation of the Core Strategy, other relevant LDF documents, and documents prepared by the Sports and Recreation Team.

8.2 The Study therefore concludes with recommended local standards for both open space and built facilities, and a number of recommendations that will need to inform planning policies being developed in the Local Development Framework and any future strategies guiding the provision of open space and built facilities.

8.3 Members are therefore requested to endorse the recommended standards set out in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.3 of Appendix A. They are further requested to endorse the key recommendations in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the Summary Report in Appendix A, for use as a basis for assessing the need for future provision of open space and built recreation facilities.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:9. CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 9.1 Key aims are to ensure that open spaces are attractive and accessible, and that citizens are able to enjoy a healthy active life by increasing recreation opportunities. The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study forms an essential part of the evidence base for the LDF, which must be sound and robust. It will also provide valuable base information for a future review of the Council's Open Space Funding System, and will inform future strategies for the Council's Sports and Recreation Team and Environment Division.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 10.1 The appointment of Consultants to undertake the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study, and the Built Facilities Study, has been jointly funded by Winchester City Council and East Hampshire District Council, together with contributions to both studies by Sport England. Budget provision exists for this work and significant savings have been made by joint commissioning. The preparation of the Greenspace, Built Facilities and Community Halls Strategies, which the Study recommends, have not yet commenced, and if further budget approval is necessary, this will be the subject of a separate report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

- 1 Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study: Summary Report

Appendix 1

Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study Summary Report

1.0 Introduction

The study has been carried out in response to the Government's requirement under Planning Policy Guidance note 17 (PPG17), for all Local Authorities to carry out a review and produce locally derived standards for open space, sport and recreation facilities. The study in the Winchester District has been produced in partnership with East Hampshire District Council (following advice in the PPG17 guidance to seek cross boundary working). This summary outlines the purpose and key findings of the study. The overall study is a comprehensive set of documents presented in four parts:

- Part 1: Main Report
- Part 2: Area Profiles
- Part 3: Playing Pitch Strategy
- Part 4: Built Facilities Study

The Part 1 Report includes the main findings from the Area Profiles, the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Built Facilities Study and meets the requirements of PPG 17, but all the documents can be accessed in full on the Council's web-site at www.winchester.gov.uk.

2.0 Study process

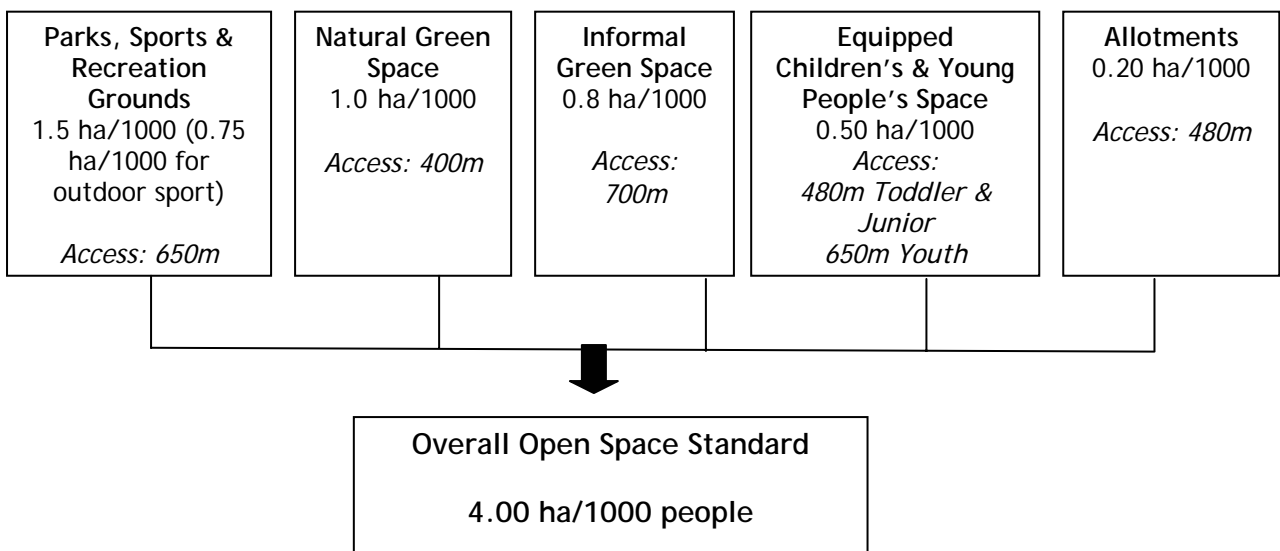
The study has been a long and comprehensive process which has followed the PPG17 guidance and the advice in the Companion Guide: "Assessing Needs and Opportunities". The process included the following:

- Step 1: Identify local needs
- Step 2: Audit local provision
- Step 3: Set provision standards
- Step 4: Apply the provision standards
- Step 5: Draft policies / recommendations

3.0 Proposed standards of provision

The information from the assessment of local needs and the audit of provision has been used to develop standards of provision for open space, sports and recreation facilities. The standards have three aspects - Quantity, Access and Quality - and they are summarised below:

3.1 Open space standards (quantity and access)



3.2 Open space standards (quality)

All open space has been assessed against quality standards outlined in the PPG17 guidance and 'Green Flag' standards. A comprehensive database of the quality scores of all sites has been developed and used to identify priorities for improving the quality of open space across the District.

3.3 Built facilities standards (quantity and access)

Sports Facility	Proposed standard Per 1000 pop	Proposed facility per no. population	Access standard (walking)	Driving catchment
Sports halls <i>with community access</i>	54.5m ² (0.1 hall)	1 per 11,000	20 minutes	15 minutes
Swimming pools <i>with community access</i>	13m ² (0.04 pool)	1 per 25,000	20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Fitness Gyms <i>all provision</i>	4 stations -16m ² gym space	1 station per 250	10 minutes	10 - 15 minutes
Synthetic turf pitches <i>All provision</i>	330m ² (.05 pitch)	1 per 20,000	20 - 30 minutes	20 - 30 minutes
O/D Tennis Courts <i>Club and public</i>	0.8 courts	2 per 2,500	20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink	1 rink per 20,000	15-20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes

3.4 Built facilities standards (quality)

The quality of built facilities has been assessed through on site condition surveys and QUEST, which is the Quality Assurance accreditation model adopted by public sector leisure centres (supported by the Institute of Sport, Parks and Leisure (ISPAL) and by Sport England).

4.0 Application of the standards

The standards outlined above have been used to identify existing deficiencies or surplus in the quantity, access and quality of facilities across the District. Analysis has taken place by groups of Parishes called Sub Areas and across the District. The following summarises the key findings made across the District:

4.1 Open space

Overall, there is a sufficient quantity and good access to open space across the District. There are a number of localised deficiencies in both quantity and access which have been identified in the study and a strategy for addressing these will be developed in the future. The study found that there is little opportunity for disposing of open space, unless alternative provision can be found.

In relation to the quality of open space, the key findings are to:

- Invest in all types of open space including formal and informal provision.
- Improve the consistency of management and maintenance of open space across the District.
- Widen the range of play opportunities across the District (e.g. natural play opportunities).
- Provide support to Parishes to manage and improve their facilities.

- Produce management plans for key sites.

4.2 Built facilities

The table below summarises the provision and application of the built facilities standards across the District:

Sports Facility	Proposed standard per 1000 pop	Proposed facility per no. population	Current provision per 1000 pop	Current shortfall per 1000 pop	Quantity required -shortfall by 2016	Quantity required -shortfall by 2026
Sports halls <i>with community access</i>	54.5m ² (0.1 hall)	1 per 11,000	47.6m ² (9 halls included)	6.9m² (1.3 halls)	11.3 (2.3)	12 (3)
Swimming pools <i>with community access</i>	13m ² (.04 pool)	1 per 25,000	8.6m ² (3 pools included)	4.4m² (1.53 pools)	5 (2)	5.3 (2.3)
Fitness Gyms <i>All provision</i>	4 stations -16m ² gym space	1 station per 250	3.7 stations (418 total)	.3 stns (34 in total)	500 stations in total	528 stations in total
Synthetic turf pitches <i>All provision</i>	330m ² (.05 pitch)	1 per 20,000	283m ² (0.04) (5 pitches)	47m² (0.8 pitches)	6.3 (1.3)	6.6 (1.6)
O/D Tennis Courts <i>all courts</i>	0.8 courts	2 per 2,500	0.6 court (74 courts included)	0.2 (23 courts)	100 (28 courts)	106 (34 courts)
Indoor Bowls Rinks	.05 rinks	1 rink per 20,000	1 x 6 rink centre per 120,000 population	No shortfall	6 rink indoor centre	6 rink indoor centre

5.0 Policies and recommendations

5.1 Open space

The policies and recommendations that are made in the study identify where new provision is required and where provision needs to be enhanced, protected or relocated. The following identifies the key findings for open space:

- *New provision.* Open space should be provided as part of new development in line with the recommended Winchester standard. Where it is not practical to provide open space on site, there should be new provision off site or enhancement to existing facilities.
- *Enhanced provision.* Funds received through developer contributions should be allocated to a wide range of open space typologies in line with the Winchester standards.

- *Protected provision.* Public open space should be afforded protection through planning policy. There is little opportunity for disposing of open space, unless there is a greater community need and/or alternative provision can be provided.
- *Relocated provision.* There are no obvious demands or opportunities for 'land swaps' within the District.

5.2 Built facilities

The key issues that have arisen from the built facilities study are:

- The need to provide new sports facilities as part of proposed major development areas, particularly the need for a new swimming pool and sports hall in the south of the District.
- The need to adopt a hierarchy of provision within the District linked to the role of all providers.
- To provide accessible community/village halls of sufficient size and quality to accommodate a range of recreational sporting activities within key settlements.
- There is the potential to improve, increase and formalise such arrangements at some of the strategically located colleges and schools within the Winchester District.
- There is the potential to improve access to Army sites for community use.
- There is scope for increased joint working between facility providers and clubs under the auspices of the SPAA and also the establishment of a facilities forum or sub group to share information and co-operate on projects and initiatives. .

6.0 Future use and application of standards

This study forms the basis of the information that will inform policies related to open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Local Development Framework. It provides all the information required to plan for the provision of facilities in the future. It will therefore be used as the basis for developing more detailed requirements for the provision of recreation facilities in association with new development, and will outline priorities for investment and action.