

Subject:	Rossendale Borough Council playing pitch strategy Stage E update March 2025	Status:	For Publication
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Report of:	Programme Manager – Sport and Physical Activity / Principal Planner – Forward Planning	Portfolio Holder:	Communities, Housing and Health
Key Decision:	☒ Forward Plan ☒	General Exception	☐ Special Urgency ☐
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet considers recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and:

- 1.1 Formally adopts the Stage E Update, of the Rossendale Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy as the borough-wide evidence base for the planning, protection, enhancement, and provision of outdoor sports pitches and associated facilities.
- 1.2 Delegates to the Director of Economic Development the ability to make minor amendments as necessary in consultation with the Lead member for Communities, Housing and Health.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council and its partners have already achieved significant success through this strategy, including securing circa £1 million of investment from the Football Foundation to deliver a new 3G pitch at the Adrenaline Centre.
- Building on this success, a number of priorities have been agreed as set out later in the report to ensure the continued development and sustainability of pitch provision across Rossendale these include:
 - Seek further sites for additional 3G pitches.
 - Support clubs to apply for Football Foundation Funding.

Retain multi-pitch sites, allowing the Council to focus resources and raise quality standards at these strategic hubs.

- Collaborate with partners at Marl Pits to expand participation in Rugby Union and secure the long-term sustainability of Rossendale Sports Club.
- Work in partnership with the four local Cricket Clubs
- The Stage E Update of 2024 provides an update in relation to pitch sports of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy Assessment Report (dated October 2020). It is a strategic, evidence-based framework to guide the future provision, protection, enhancement, and development of pitch sports facilities across the borough.
- This includes football, rugby union, cricket, and artificial grass pitches (AGPs). The strategy is aligned with Sport England guidance and ensures compliance with the

National Planning Policy Framework. It will support the Council in achieving its goals around community health, sport, leisure, and sustainable planning.

- The Rossendale Playing Pitch Strategy 2024 will guide future decision-making, funding applications, and policy development.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by the Council to update its 2020 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), looking specifically at pitch sports.

3.2 The document includes updates to the overall supply and demand analyses for the pitch sports which were included in the original Assessment Report. It will also renew relevant sections from the Strategy & Action Plan document including recommendations and the site-by-site action plan.

3.3 Information has been provided by officers and the relevant national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) regarding alterations in supply, quality (including ancillary provision) and affiliation data since the previous study.

3.4 Conducting annual reviews will help to keep the PPS live and up to date. This includes an update of the supply and demand data which is within this document (known as the Stage E process within the PPS guidance). There will come a point where the Steering Group will conclude that there have been significant changes to a sport or Study Area/Sub Area that require a full refresh of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy, or when the core data has aged beyond five years since its original capture.

3.5 The previous PPS was finalised in 2020 and is thus five years old. Sport England agreed that a Stage E update would be acceptable for an interim update position on the sports included within the scope of work for the Authority. It is however accepted by the PPS steering group that a new PPS will be required in the near future which will involve following all stages and steps of Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance. The sports updated were:

- Cricket
- Football
- Rugby union
- Third generational artificial grass pitches

Sports not updated within the refresh – bowls, tennis, running tracks.

4. DETAILS

4.1 In 2025 Rossendale launched its inaugural Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 'An Active Valley'. The ambition is that the valley becomes increasingly active, with vibrant towns where healthy and active lives are common practice – the Council want people to move more, move well and more often. The local ambition is to create an environment where people are physically active in their daily lives, which in turn will improve health and resilience. This will increase both physical and emotional wellbeing; improve life chances, employability, decrease dependence on health and social care services and support prosperity.

4.2 With that in mind it was agreed that the Playing Pitch Strategy be "refreshed" to provide Rossendale with an action plan to improve its outdoor grassed pitch facilities and provide the Council and partners with the needs through the supply and demand analysis. In

particular, the Council is required to demonstrate to Sport England that there is a need for a 3-G pitch.

The report can be summarised as follows:

Sport	Growth	Quality	Supply / Demand Conclusion
Football	In 2020 there were 107 football teams playing in Rossendale. With there currently being 156 this represents an overall growth of 46%	In total, five pitches are assessed as good quality, 30 as standard quality and 22 as poor quality	There are current shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches. Spare capacity is available on both formats of mini pitch Future demand (through population increase) forecasts limited future growth
Football 3G	There are two 11v11 and six small sided pitches identified as artificial in the Valley	All pitches are identified as poor quality	With 156 teams currently affiliated to Rossendale there is a need for four 11v11 3G pitches to service current levels of demand. Future demand does not increase this shortfall. The current shortfall equates to three 11v11 3G FTPs overall but will increase to four if the 3G pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy falls out of use
Cricket	There are four natural turf wicket squares in Rossendale spread across five sites. All squares are available for community use	PitchPower reports for each of the clubs in Rossendale three squares are standard quality and one is good quality	There is a sufficient supply of cricket provision in Rossendale to accommodate both current and anticipated future levels of demand. Based on current demand levels, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate existing demand for cricket provision. Identified future demand is also likely to be accommodated for on the existing stock. New Hall Hey will provide a strategic reserve site for weekend cricket which will be able to accommodate potential weekend demand for local clubs.
Rugby Union	There are a total of six rugby union pitches across three sites.	There is one good quality rugby union pitch in Rossendale, three standard and two poor quality pitches.	There is currently an insufficient level of rugby union provision in Rossendale which equates to three match equivalent sessions per week on dedicated rugby union pitches. Future demand (if realised) will increase the existing shortfalls by one match equivalent session per week.

- 4.3 This Stage E Update is explicitly prepared as a needs assessment to evidence local demand and priorities. Its purpose is not only to guide planning and provision but also to strengthen the Council's position in securing external funding and investment opportunities from bodies such as Sport England, the Football Foundation, and other potential funders.
- 4.4 The Council and its partners have already achieved significant success through this strategy, including securing circa £1 million of investment from the Football Foundation to deliver a new 3G pitch at the Adrenaline Centre. This demonstrates how the Playing Pitch Strategy functions as an effective needs assessment and funding tool.
- 4.5 Building on this success, the following priorities have been agreed to ensure the continued development and sustainability of pitch provision across Rossendale:
- Seek further sites for additional 3G pitches within the next five years, with a focus on education partnerships.
 - Transfer single-pitch sites to football clubs based on clear criteria: must be a community football club, affiliated to Lancashire FA, and hold a minimum 2 STAR FA accreditation. Initial transfers will involve six pitches across five sites.
 - Support clubs to apply for Football Foundation Funding over the next six years, by granting leases.
 - Retain multi-pitch sites (Maden Recreation Ground and the Adrenaline Centre) within the RBC portfolio, allowing the Council to focus resources and raise quality standards at these strategic hubs.
 - Collaborate with partners at Marl Pits to expand participation in Rugby Union and secure the long-term sustainability of Rossendale Sports Club.
 - Work in partnership with the four local Cricket Clubs to grow the game—particularly women's and girls' cricket—while ensuring targeted investment from the ECB and Lancashire Cricket Board to deliver appropriate facilities.
- 4.6 The recommendations within the Stage E report can be summarised as follows, which build from the Playing Pitch Strategy carried out in 2021.

Football:

- Protect the existing quantity of pitches (unless replacement provision meets NPPF and Sport England Playing Field Policy requirements and is agreed upon and provided)
- Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as poor or standard quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality
- There has been an increase of 49 community football teams playing in Rossendale since the 19/20 football season. As a result of this there is an increased associated need for 3G pitches to provide for midweek training opportunities.
- Modelling is based on an FA model which suggests that for every 38 community football teams there is a need for one (11v11 size) 3G pitch with sports lighting.
- Use section106 monies to support the development of 3G pitches in Rossendale (Borough wide).
- Redirect the S106 sum to support the development of an 11v11 3G pitch at the Adrenaline Centre.
- Utilise the secondary S106 for pitch improvements at strategic playing field sites

Cricket:

- Protect existing quantity of cricket squares

- Improve quality at sites assessed as standard quality and ensure quality is sustained at sites assessed as good through partnership working with LCF
- Consider options to increase and improve stock of suitable practice facilities

Rugby Union:

- Protect the existing quantity of rugby union pitches including those used for curricular and extra-curricular demand
- Explore options to improve the changing pavilion accessed by Rossendale RUFC and other sports club as part of a multi-sport led approach

5. RISK

5.1 The risk factors below detail the implication of not adopting the strategy:

- Without an up-to-date PPS, the authority may struggle to justify planning decisions involving playing fields
- Many sports governing bodies, Sport England, and other grant funders require a PPS to demonstrate local demand and priorities. Without it, the authority and local clubs may miss out on significant investment.
- Poorly planned facilities may not meet community needs, leading to reduced opportunities for physical activity and negative health outcomes.

6. FINANCE

6.1 Undertaking the Stage E Report, which forms a partial update of the 2020 Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy, has enabled the Council to demonstrate the need for additional 3-G pitches in Rosendale. The Study will also help to direct s106 funding for grassed sports. It is also a much needed tool to attract future funding opportunities.

7. LEGAL

7.1 The legal implications are covered within the body of this report. It is necessary that the Council has a robust strategy which is evidence based to place the Council in a strong position when dealing with future planning applications and responding to challenges.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Playing Pitch Strategy will support the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 73 and 74) and local planning policy in helping to determine playing pitch provision to support developments.

8.2 The playing pitch strategy will enable the Council to request s106 from local development to be put towards playing pitches and ancillary facilities, maximizing the use of Council funds

8.3 Consultation has been undertaken by KKP throughout the development of the report, the strategy will be reviewed annually and further consultation will be undertaken with relevant bodies.

8.4 Any equality implications related to the strategy gives consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

9.1 Approval of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy as well as the underlying Assessment Report will ensure that the document can be used in the assessment of contributions arising from planning applications as well as guide the priority of work to be undertaken (including maintenance) and identify where funding applications should be

focused to enable the Council to attract inward investment from organisations such as the Football Foundation.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Rossendale Borough Council Playing pitch strategy Stage E update March 2025	Attached

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

STAGE E UPDATE

MARCH 2025

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	2
PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY	3
PART 2: FOOTBALL	7
2.1: Introduction	7
2.2: Supply (2024).....	8
2.3: Demand	16
2.4: Capacity analysis	17
2.5: Supply and demand analysis.....	24
2.6: Conclusions (2024)	25
PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (AGPS)	27
3.1: Introduction	27
3.2: Supply (2024).....	27
3.3: Demand	30
3.4: Supply and demand analysis.....	31
3.5: Conclusion (2024)	33
PART 4: CRICKET	35
4.1: Introduction	35
4.2: Supply (2024).....	36
4.3: Demand	41
4.4: Capacity analysis	45
4.5: Supply and demand analysis.....	48
4.6: Conclusion (2024)	49
PART 5: RUGBY UNION	51
5.1: Introduction	51
5.2: Supply (2024).....	51
5.3: Demand	55
5.4: Capacity analysis	57
5.5: Supply and demand analysis.....	60
5.6: Conclusions (2024)	60
PART 6: SPORT SCENARIO TESTING (UPDATED 2024)	62
PART 7: SPORT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS (UPDATED 2024)	72
PART 8: ACTION PLAN (UPDATED 2024).....	74
APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT	86

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
CFA	County Football Association
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FE	Further Education
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LCC	Lancashire County Council
LFA	Lancashire County Football Association
LCF	Lancashire Cricket Foundation
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RBC	Rossendale Borough Council
RLT	Rossendale Leisure Trust
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby union football club
S106	Section 106
SE	Sport England
TGR	Team generation rate
WR	World Rugby

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1: Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) to update its 2020 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).

The document includes updates to the overall supply and demand analyses for the pitch sports which were included in the original Assessment Report. It will also renew relevant sections from the Strategy & Action Plan document including recommendations and the site-by-site action plan.

Information has been provided by the Council and the relevant national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) regarding alterations in supply, quality (including ancillary provision) and affiliation data since the previous study.

Conducting annual reviews will help to keep the PPS live and up to date. This includes an update of the supply and demand data which is within this document (known as the Stage E process within the PPS guidance). There will come a point where the Steering Group will conclude that there have been significant changes to a sport or Study Area/Sub Area that require a full refresh of the Playing Pitch Strategy, or when the core data has aged beyond five years since its original capture.

The previous Rossendale PPS was finalised in 2020 and is thus five years old. Sport England agreed that a Stage E update would be acceptable for an interim update position on the sports included within the scope of work for the Authority. It is however accepted by the PPS steering group that a new PPS will be required in the near future which will involve following all stages and steps of Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance.

1.2: Local context

Rossendale Local Plan

The Rossendale Local Plan was adopted in December 2021 and designates land and buildings to meet the needs of the Borough through to 2036. It replaces the Rossendale Core Strategy (2011-2026). It contains specific policies on playing field (LT1 and HS7). The Council also has a Supplementary Planning Document which refers to the use of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator.

Rossendale Connected: Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Plan is a plan created by the people and partners of Rossendale to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community. The plan is based on the collective ambition of the people of Rossendale and is intended to be delivered by the community as a whole. One of the key areas of work is based on facility improvement which is led by the following priorities:

- ✦ Support the review of health, community and leisure facilities in Rossendale to understand how they can be improved to support wellbeing.
- ✦ Encourage and support schools to share their facilities with local people, organisations, groups and clubs.
- ✦ Work with partners to assess outdoor spaces for community access.
- ✦ Develop a long-term strategy for local parks with health and wellbeing at the heart.
- ✦ Increase the amount of good quality housing in Rossendale by working with social and private landlords.

Rossendale Connected: Our Places, Our Facilities, Our Plan

The plan sets a community vision for leisure and wellbeing facilities in Rossendale. It sets the following emerging visions which RBC hopes to achieve through working in partnership with local partners, national governing bodies of sport and local stakeholders. The two main emerging visions in the Strategy are:

- ◀ Local Activity Hubs: Provide high quality activity hubs in the Central, East and West areas of the Borough.
- ◀ Our Great Outdoors: Work to improve outdoor spaces and actively attract people to the outdoors.

Rossendale: Physical Activity & Sport Strategy

The Rossendale Physical Activity & Sport Strategy (2025-2030) represents a collaborative approach to health and has been developed through extensive consultation with residents, sports clubs, healthcare providers, schools, and community organisations.

The Strategy has a vision to “Create a more active Valley through enabling Rossendale residents to be more physically active”. The delivery of this vision will be underpinned by the following four principles:

- ◀ Ambition
- ◀ Collaboration
- ◀ Data and insight
- ◀ People

The Strategy is underpinned by a robust action plan which sets out precise deliverables to be actioned within Rossendale for all sports included within the PPS and for sports also outside of the Stage E update.

Match equivalent sessions

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use. One team accessing one whole pitch is considered to use the pitch for 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week based on them playing home and away fixtures on an alternate basis (therefore only requiring access to their home pitch every two weeks).

As a guide, the NGBs for football, cricket, and rugby union have set a standard number of matches that each pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality. Given how the sports operate, this is per week for football and rugby union and per season for cricket.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 1.1: Capacity of playing pitches in match equivalent sessions

Sport	Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	60 per season

More detailed sport specific capacity guidance is detailed within the relevant sections of this report.

Scope

The sports being updated are:

- ✦ Cricket
- ✦ Football
- ✦ Rugby union
- ✦ Third generational artificial grass pitches

As per the previous PPS, the RFL has confirmed that there are no dedicated rugby league pitches or clubs in Rossendale and on that basis has not been included within the report. England Hockey has also confirmed that there is no match suitable hockey pitches and no clubs locally, so it has also not been included in the update.

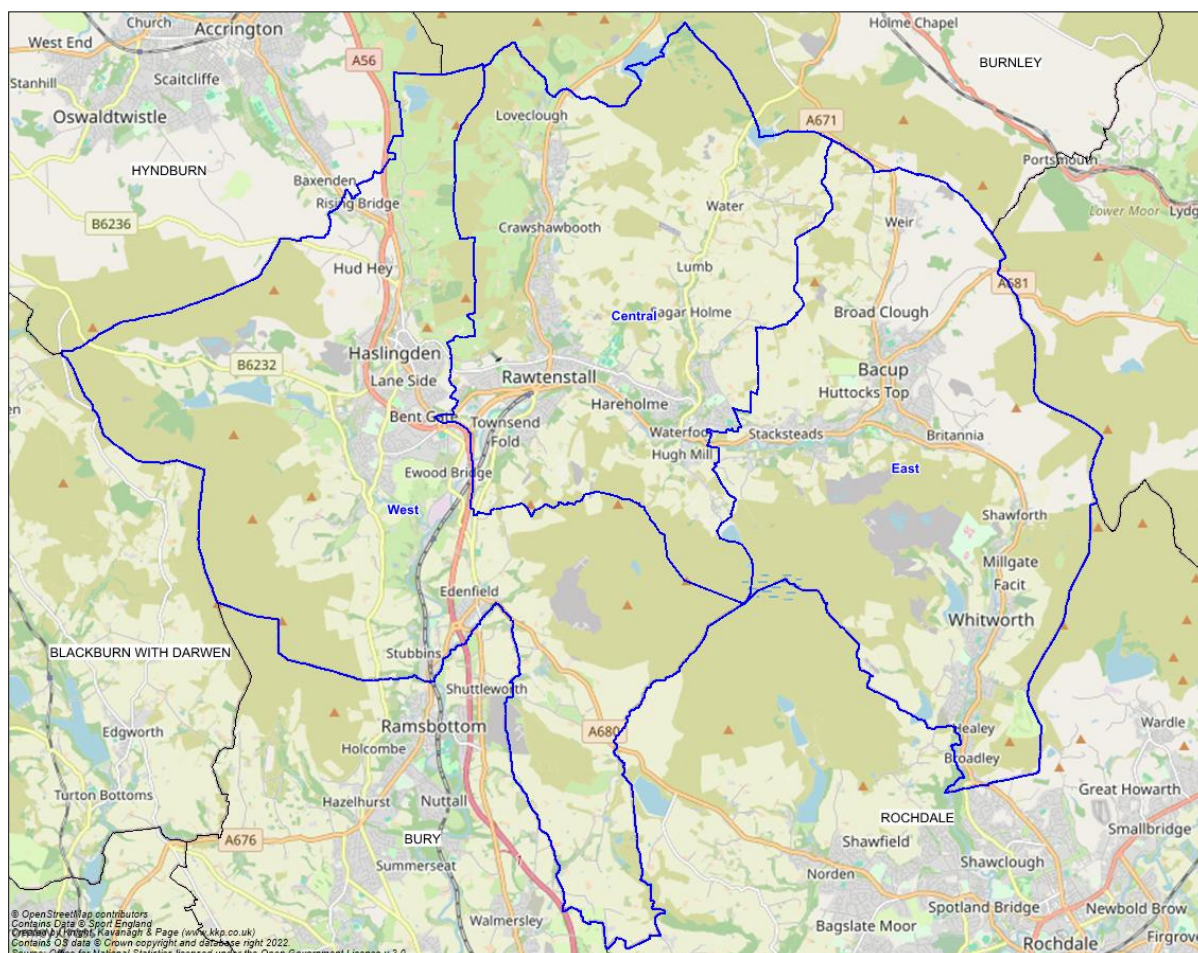
Study area

The study area for the update is consistent with the 2020 study. This is the Rossendale administrative boundary which has been sub divided into three areas to allow for a localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch supply and demand at a local level. These are:

- ✦ Rossendale Central
- ✦ Rossendale East
- ✦ Rossendale West

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Figure 1.1: Analysis area map



Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using ONS population projections (2018 – 2036) an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand, especially for non-pitch sports (where team generation rates are not applicable) include:

- Recent trends in the participation.
- The nature of the current and likely future population and their propensity to participate.
- Feedback from clubs on their plans to develop additional teams/attract additional members.
- Any local and NGB specific sports development targets (e.g. increase in participation).

PART 2: FOOTBALL

2.1: Introduction

Lancashire FA is responsible for governing and developing football in Rossendale. It is responsible for growing participation, promoting diversity and regulating the sport for everyone to enjoy.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches, where formal demand is generally defined through five formats of play and five pitch types, linked to the age of teams and players. Please refer to the table below for more detail relating to this.

Table 2.1: Football grass pitch formats

Format/pitch type	Age range	Recommended pitch size (metres)
Adult	U17s+	100 x 64
Youth 11v11	U15s-U16s	91 x 55
Youth 11v11	U13s-U14s	82 x 50
Youth 9v9	U11s-U12s	73 x 46
Mini 7v7	U9s-U10s	55 x 37
Mini 5v5	U7s-U8s	37 x 27

Part 3 captures supply and demand for third generation artificial turf pitches (3G pitches), which is the preferred artificial surface type for football. There is a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, in addition to training needs, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Game Strategy, the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project which has now been completed. As part of this, a LFFP has been produced for every local authority across England, with each plan being unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

The LFFP is strategically aligned to the National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS); a 10-year plan to change the landscape of football facilities in England. The NFFS represents a major funding commitment from the national funding partners (the FA, Premier League and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)) and is delivered through the Football Foundation (FF) to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next ten years.

Each LFFP builds upon PPS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game. The LFFP also incorporates consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as under-represented communities. This includes those which may be key partners with regards to using football for behavioural change, plus groups which may be key drivers of FA priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football and disability football.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential FF investment; it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPOSS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal. An LFFP does, however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The Rossendale LFFP is due to be updated by the Football Foundation in 2025 and will be informed by this PPS update.

Consultation

To update this section of the report, consultation was undertaken with RBC, Lancashire FA, and the Football Foundation.

2.2: Supply (2024)

The 2020 PPS identified a total of 66 pitches across 34 sites of which 57 were available for community use. Using updated supply information from PitchPower reports and information on pitch layouts provided by RBC, the supply of pitches as of December 2024 can be seen in the table below, with 66 pitches identified at 36 sites of which 58 are available for community use. Therefore, 88% of pitches in Rossendale are available for community use.

A mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch are also overmarked on a youth 9v9 pitch at St Peters Playing Field, Haslingden (Rossendale West). These are not accounted for in the below figures.

Table 2.1: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
2020	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale Central	8	1	5	4	4	22
Rossendale East	5	5	1	2	1	14
Rossendale West	7	3	1	7	3	21
Rossendale	20	9	7	13	8	57
2024	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale Central	7	2	5	5	3	22
Rossendale East	4	5	3	4	2	18
Rossendale West	3	4	3	4	4	18
Rossendale	14	11	11	13	9	58

The number of pitches has remained broadly the same. No new playing field sites have been established in Rossendale since 2020, and data changes are the result of pitch layouts changing on a site-by-site basis to cater for club demand.

The two sites which were not captured in the 2020 PPS but are now captured within this report are Britannia Community Primary School and Whitewell Bottom Community Centre. Both have one pitch marked on previous unmarked playing field.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for adult football is 100x64 metres.

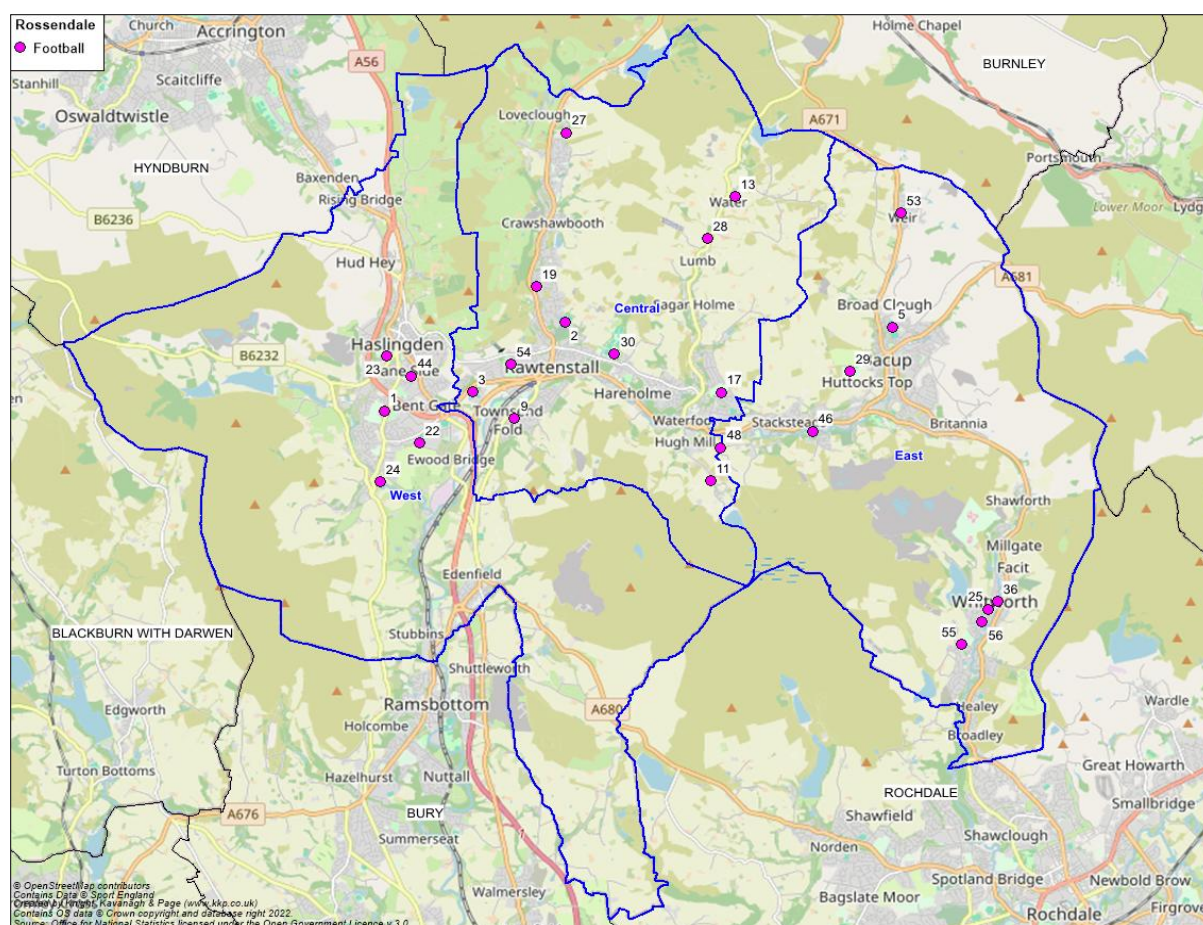
ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.2: FA recommended grass/3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

Figure 2.1 below identifies all football pitches servicing Rossendale. For a key to the map, see Table 2.12.

Figure 2.1: Football pitch locations (community use pitches)



Disused provision

There is one disused football site in Rossendale at Ewood Bridge (BB4 6JY). The site does contain a dilapidated clubhouse with changing facilities, a dilapidated small sided AGP.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches was originally assessed in 2020 via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%). These quality ratings have been reviewed via consultation with Lancashire FA, the Football Foundation and the utilisation of PitchPower reports.

Pitch quality primarily influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use.

Pitches that receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work are likely to be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games they can accommodate each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality.

Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

The table below compares the quality of pitches that are available for community use in Rossendale from 2020 to 2024. Information has been updated using information provided by the Football Foundation (in the form of PitchPower assessments) for the following sites:

- ◀ Adrenaline Centre
- ◀ Haslingden St Marys FC
- ◀ Loveclough Park
- ◀ Maden Recreation Ground
- ◀ Marl Pits
- ◀ St Peters Playing Field
- ◀ Stacksteads Recreation Ground
- ◀ Whitaker Park
- ◀ Whitworth Valley Football Club

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.3: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
2020									
Rossendale Central	-	2	7	-	3	3	-	4	4
Rossendale East	2	-	3	-	2	4	-	2	1
Rossendale West	1	2	4	-	-	4	-	3	7
Rossendale	3	4	13	-	5	11	-	9	12
2024									
Rossendale Central	1	1	5	-	5	2	1	2	5
Rossendale East	1	1	2	-	6	2	-	4	2
Rossendale West	-	2	1	1	4	2	1	5	2
Rossendale	2	4	8	1	15	6	2	11	9

Based on the above, the following comparison can be made:

- ◆ The number of good quality pitches has increased from three to five (67% increase).
- ◆ The number of standard quality pitches has increased from 18 to 30 (67% increase).
- ◆ The number of poor-quality pitches has decreased from 36 to 23 (38% decrease).

As the table above highlights there has been improvement to the quality of pitches in Rossendale since the PPS was produced in 2020. A site-by-site breakdown of where changes have been implemented from PitchPower are in the following table.

It should be noted that the format of pitches on each site is not consistent with the position that was identified in 2020. This is based on club usage patterns. Where clear cells are present in the table below, this refers to this pitch format not being marked for this format of football during the 2020 audit.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.4: PitchPower report feedback

Site ID	Site name	Management	Pitch type	PitchPower rating	PPS rating (2020)
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Mini 7v7	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Mini 7v7	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Mini 5v5	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Mini 5v5	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Mini 5v5	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Youth 9v9	Basic	-
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	Poor
1	Adrenaline Centre	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	-
23	Haslingden St Marys FC	Sports Club	Adult	Basic	Good
23	Haslingden St Marys FC	Sports Club	Adult	Basic	Standard
27	Loveclough Park	RLT	Youth 9v9	Basic	Poor
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	Poor
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	Poor
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Youth 11v11	Basic	Poor
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Mini 7v7	Basic	-
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Youth 9v9	Basic	-
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RLT	Mini 5v5	Basic	-
30	Marl Pits	RLT	Adult	Basic	Poor
30	Marl Pits	RLT	Adult	Poor	Poor
30	Marl Pits	RLT	Adult	Good	Poor
44	St Peters Playing Field	RLT	Youth 9v9	Advanced	Poor
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	RLT	Adult	Basic	Poor
54	Whittaker Park	RLT	Mini 5v5	Good	Poor
54	Whittaker Park	RLT	Mini 7v7	Poor	Poor
56	Whitworth Valley FC	Sports Club	Adult	Poor	Good

Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF)¹

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country. This has resulted in the creation of the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF). As part of this, grass pitches identified as having quality issues by the Grounds Maintenance Association (GMA) via PitchPower assessment can apply to access funding to improve pitches to good quality or sustain them at good quality.

Once a PitchPower grass pitch assessment report has been produced for the site, eligible organisations can then apply for grant funding support through the FF Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund, a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help eligible clubs/organisations enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches.

The fund is a key part of the FF's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 12,000 quality grass pitches by 2028. If a site is categorised as 'poor' or 'basic' then organisations can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good or standard quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

¹ <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

All applicants must have the landowner's permission (as a minimum) and have received a PitchPower Pitch Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs, leagues, education establishments, Parish & Town Councils, National League System Clubs (excluding the stadia pitch) at (Steps 1-6) and Women's Football Pyramid (Tiers 1-4) and charities.

Of all the sites in Rossendale with a PitchPower report only one (as of October 2024) is accessing GMPF. This is Whitworth Valley FC which has one poor quality adult pitch on its site. It is expected that the quality of this pitch will improve through received funding over the next several football seasons.

Pitch improvement

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the FF's PitchPower web app to carry out an on-site assessment of their pitches. This then provides the GMA with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships.

The web app is open to access by all providers, including clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Applicants are also required to submit a PitchPower assessment for each of their pitches as a condition of any grant funding application for FF grass pitch investment, such as the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund.

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments within the PPS guidance, instead being able to be undertaken within a 10-month period, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: September - October, November – March or April – June. Organisations receiving FF funding to improve their grass pitches must carry out two assessments a year, with at least one in the mandatory November – March window.

As well as the completion of other supporting information such as detail of volunteer training and what maintenance equipment is available, the assessment requires the taking of images and a single soil sample at each assessment site. There are three assessment sites for adult and youth pitches at each goal area and the centre circle, whilst for mini pitches there are two sites at the centre circle and one goal area.

The PitchPower assessments use a new five step Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating system developed by the GMA, with the FF and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS Guidance. This alignment is shown in the table below.

Table 2.5: Agreed equivalent PPS quality rating for PQS ratings.

PQS rating	PPS quality rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Ancillary facilities

Broadly speaking the quality of ancillary facilities accompanying grass football pitches has not altered since 2020. Lancashire FA reports that the changing facilities at Bacup Borough FC should be rated as standard as opposed to poor quality (which was the case in 2020) and this has been updated in the table below.

Table 2.6: Summary of ancillary facility quality (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Management	Ancillary facility quality
5	Bacup Borough FC	Sports Club	Standard
23	Haslingden St Marys FC	Sports Club	Good
30	Marl Pits	RBC	Poor
29	Maden Recreation Ground	RBC	Poor
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	Sports Club	Good
56	Whitworth Valley FC	Sports Club	Poor

There are several key playing field sites in Rossendale which are not accommodated by ancillary provision. These are as follows:

- ◆ Haslingden High School
- ◆ St Peters Playing Field
- ◆ The Glen Playing Field

Security of tenure

Tenure arrangements in Rossendale are generally secure for clubs. Nearly all clubs either have long term lease arrangements in place or alternatively have long standing rental arrangements in place with RBC. The only exception to this is where clubs are accessing education sites. This is applicable at two sites; Haslingden High School (Rossendale West) is a key site for community football, and it provides no long-term tenure for clubs which access the site.

The Glen Playing Fields in Waterfoot (Rossendale Central) is one of the few sites in Rossendale at which there is an issue regarding tenure. The field is owned by Bacup & Rawtenstall School and is a detached playing field. The School has no use of the pitches as has been the case for many years. The site user Rossendale United Juniors FC has no formal tenure arrangement on the site and uses the pitches as its home ground on a historical arrangement with the School.

One of the notable changes in tenure since the 2020 PPS is that Haslingden Ladies and Girls FC has acquired a short lease on football facilities which are at Alder Grange High School. This consist of one grass pitch (or two dependent on format which is marked) and a 3G pitch which does not have sports lighting.

As of 2024, RBC is working to grant leases to several clubs as detailed in the table below. The length of each specific agreement is yet to be confirmed but it is likely they will be of a sufficient length to enable clubs to gain funding from funding bodies.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.7: Leases in development (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Club
27	Loveclough Park	Rossendale Valley Juniors FC
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale FC
44	St Peters Playing Field	Rossendale Valley Juniors FC
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	Bacup CFC

RBC is also working with Junior Hoops FC to secure the club a dedicated home venue. This work is it in infancy.

National League System

The National League System is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It sits below the football league (the National League) and comprises six steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. These are then supported by regional feeder leagues, which were previously known as Step 7 of the pyramid but are now not included.

Clubs playing within the NLS must adhere to Stadium Accreditation² requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground grading requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Stadium Accreditation assesses grounds from Grade 1 to 7, which aligns with Step 1 clubs down to Step 6 clubs making the transition from regional feeder League. Please refer to the FA website³ for the full specifications for each.

There is one club in Rossendale which compete in the National League system; Bacup Borough FC (Step 6). Two compete in regional feeder leagues; Rossendale FC and Haslingden St Marys FC. LFA reports that neither club has current aspirations to compete at Step 6.

Women's National League System

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System similar to the adult men's which provide structure to the women's game. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6 with each Tier requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Although women's clubs still need to meet ground requirements set out by the FA these differ from the men's National League System.

Ratings range from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements. Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Tier 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, although not exactly the same. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

There is one team in Rossendale which compete in the Women's National League System: Haslingden Ladies & Girls FC. It competes in the North West Women's Regional League Whilst there are no specific ground grading requirements to be met at this level, most women's senior leagues nationally do have strict league requirements regarding appropriate changing facilities.

² <https://premierleaguestadiumfund.co.uk/stadium-accreditation-programme>

³ <http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading>

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

2.3: Demand

Lancashire FA provided team affiliation data for the 23/24 football season. It identifies a total of 156 community football teams as playing within Rossendale. This is an increase from the 107 which were identified in 2020 as shown below. This equates to a 46% increase in demand.

Table 2.8: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in Rossendale

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Rossendale Central	7	8	7	6	2	30
Rossendale East	6	9	6	6	5	32
Rossendale West	2	13	9	11	10	45
Rossendale (19/20)	15	30	22	23	17	107
Rossendale Central	12	16	10	10	9	57
Rossendale East	8	11	3	1	2	25
Rossendale West	3	12	19	24	16	74
Rossendale (23/24)	23	39	32	35	27	156
%change	53%	30%	45%	52%	59%	46%

As was the case in 2020, youth 11v11 football is the most prominent format of play, whilst adult is the least common.

Women's and girls' demand

There are 16 dedicated women/girls' teams playing in Rossendale, representing just over 10% of the total number of teams. All 16 teams are from Haslingden Ladies and Girls FC. This is an increase of five dedicated teams across this demographic since 2020.

Exported demand/imported

There are no known cases of imported/exported into or outside of Rossendale for match play (other than accessing central venue sites).

Future demand

Population increases

Team generation rates (TGRs) are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group), in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change in the study area. ONS population growth is applied to the TGRs to identify a predicted number of teams that will be generated.

For reference total current population in 2024 of 70,865 will increase to 77,568 by 2036 (ONS 2018 projections). The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.9: Team generation rates (2036)

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	No. of match equivalent sessions per week ⁴
Adult Men's (18-45)	2,068.69	0.39	0	0
Adult Women's (18-45)	4,302.27	0.20	0	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	57.58	2.22	2	1
Youth Girls (12-17)	372.43	0.33	0	0
Youth Boys (10-11)	39.35	1.64	1	0.5
Youth Girls (10-11)	134.74	0.46	0	0
Mini Mixed (8-9)	46.22	2.62	2	1
Mini Mixed (6-7)	80.67	1.44	0	0

Application of TGRs forecasts that there will be a potential increase of five teams across Rossendale by 2036. This consist of three junior boys' teams and two mini 7v7 teams.

It should be noted that the population-based model used above is a conservative approach at considering future growth (though the typical method used for a PPS). As identified earlier in this report section, the growth of football teams since the 2020 PPS equates to 49 teams which is a 48% growth rate.

Whilst this growth rate over the previous five years may not be sustainable, it provides an indication of the localised trend for football participation.

2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times.

As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without it adversely affecting its quality.

Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity, the following ratings were used.

Table 2.10: Capacity guidelines

Adult pitch quality	Matches per week	Youth pitch quality	Matches per week	Mini pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

⁴ Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.12 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overplayed	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

Match equivalent sessions per week

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use.

Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the usage at such sites will need to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all, and the sole use is community use.

The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches onsite and whether there is access to an onsite AGP.

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is a little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cuttings and line marking.

Table 2.11 shows community usage of available pitches. Where not overplayed because of community use, school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further usage based on assumed curricular and extracurricular activity.

For school sites which are available for community use but that currently do not have any external hirers, one match equivalent session per week, per pitch has been accredited to indicate use for curricular and extracurricular activity as opposed to them being completely unused.

As mentioned earlier, all education sites are currently classified as having unsecure tenure as no schools through consultation (in 2020) report having a community use agreement in place.

Peak time (2024)

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time. In Rossendale, peak time per pitch format is as follows:

Adult = Saturday PM
Youth 11v11 = Saturday AM
Youth 9v9 = Saturday AM
Mini 7v7 = Saturday AM
Mini 5v5 = Saturday AM

A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of play. Any pitch not meeting this criterion is therefore not considered to have additional capacity, although it may have capacity outside of peak time.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

There may also be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to the already low carrying capacity of the pitches. Any identified spare capacity should be retained to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn will aid the improvement of pitch quality. Furthermore, any pitches with unsecured tenure are not considered to have actual spare capacity as no further play should be encouraged on such sites given that future access cannot be guaranteed.

The table below identifies the way capacity balance is represented in Table 2.12.

Table 2.11: Capacity balance examples

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of capacity balance
1	Highlighted in green with a number denotes that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	With a dash, this indicates that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it were to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	Highlighted in orange with a zero, this indicates the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	Not highlighted by with a value, this indicates that the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, capacity has been discounted. This may be due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.
1	Highlighted in red with a number denotes that the pitches are overplayed and have no spare capacity across the week. This includes at peak time, despite any availability at peak time which may exist.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.12: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Ownership	Operational Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity ⁵ (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
1	Adrenaline Centre	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	3	Standard	2.5	6	3.5	1	Spare capacity of 1 MES in peak period.
1	Adrenaline Centre	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	4	2	2	-	No capacity in peak period.
1	Adrenaline Centre	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	3	Standard	4	12	8	-	No capacity in peak period.
1	Adrenaline Centre	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	5.5	8	2.5	-	No capacity in peak period.
2	Alder Grange School	Rossendale Central	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Pitch at capacity with curricular use.
3	All Saints Catholic High School	Rossendale Central	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Adult		2	Poor	2	2	-	-	Pitches at capacity with curricular use.
5	Bacup Borough Football Club	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	1	-	No capacity in peak period. The site is also a stadia site with protected access.
9	Barlowfold Recreation Ground	Rossendale Central	Yes - unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
11	Cowpe Recreation Ground	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
13	Dean Lane Playing Field	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
17	Edgeside Park	Rossendale Central	Yes - unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
19	Fairview Recreation Ground	Rossendale Central	Yes - unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
20	Valley Leadership Academy (Fearn)	Rossendale Central	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch at capacity.
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	-	Pitch at capacity
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	-	Pitch overplayed by 2.5 MES per week.
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	2.5	1	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed by 0.5 MES per week.
23	Haslingden St Mary's FC	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No capacity in peak period.
23	Haslingden St Mary's FC	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity of 1 MES in peak period.
24	Helmshore Park	Rossendale West	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
25	John Street Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
27	Loveclough Park	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	-	2	2	1	Spare capacity of 1 MES in peak period.

⁵ Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Ownership	Operational Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity ⁵ (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
28	Lumb Millennium Green	Rossendale Central	Yes - unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
29	Maden Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	3	Standard	4.5	6	1.5	-	No capacity in peak period.
29	Maden Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5 MES in the peak period.
29	Maden Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	-	4	4	1	Spare capacity of 1 MES in peak period.
29	Maden Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No capacity in peak period.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Adult		1	Good	1	3	2	-	No capacity in peak period.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	2	2	-	-	No capacity in peak period.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed by 0.5 MES per week.
36	Our Lady St Anselms School Playing Field	Rossendale East	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
44	St Peters Playing Field	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Youth <i>Mini</i>	(9v9) (7v7) (5v5)	1	Good	9.5	4	5.5	-	Pitch overmarked by two mini pitches. Significant overplay on pitch.
44	St Peters Playing Field	Rossendale West	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	3	6	3	-	Pitch played to capacity.
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	RLT	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Pitch overplayed by one MES per week.
48	The Glen Playing Fields	Rossendale Central	Yes	LCC	Sports Club	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	5	4	1	-	No capacity in peak period.
48	The Glen Playing Fields	Rossendale Central	Yes	LCC	Sports Club	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	1.5	Space capacity which has been discounted due to unsecure tenure on the site.
48	The Glen Playing Fields	Rossendale Central	Yes	LCC	Sports Club	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Space capacity which has been discounted due to unsecure tenure on the site.
53	Weir Playing Field	Rossendale East	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
54	Whitaker Park	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
54	Whitaker Park	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	RBC	RBC	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	-	6	6	1	Spare capacity of 1 MES per week.
55	Whitworth Community High School	Rossendale East	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	Capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
55	Whitworth Community High School	Rossendale East	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	Capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
55	Whitworth Community High School	Rossendale East	Yes	LCC	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	2	4	2	-	Capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
56	Whitworth Valley Football Club	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Pitch played to capacity.
57	Britannia Community Primary School	Rossendale East	Yes	LCC	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	No capacity due to poor quality.

**ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Ownership	Operational Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity ⁵ (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
58	Whitewell Bottom Community Centre	Rossendale East	Yes	RBC	Community Organisation	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	No capacity due to poor quality.
8	Balladen Community Primary School	Rossendale Central	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
12	Crawshawbooth Primary School	Rossendale Central	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
14	Edenfield C of E Primary School	Rossendale West	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
20	Valley Leadership Academy (Fearn)	Rossendale Central	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
35	Northern Primary School	Rossendale East	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
41	St Johns Stonefold C of E Primary School	Rossendale West	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
45	St Veronicas RC Primary School	Rossendale West	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
47	Stubbins Primary School	Rossendale West	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.
50	Tonacliffe County Primary School	Rossendale East	No	LCC	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch unavailable for community use.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Spare capacity

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch. It totals 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across six pitches and five sites.

Table 2.13: Summary of actual spare capacity (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
1	Adrenaline Centre	West	Youth 11v11	1	1
23	Haslingden St Mary's FC	West	Adult	1	1
27	Loveclough Park	Central	Youth 9v9	1	1
29	Maden Recreation Ground	East	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
29	Maden Recreation Ground	East	Mini 7v7	1	1
54	Whittaker Park	Central	Mini 5v5	1	1

Table 2.14: Summary of actual spare capacity by analysis area

Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)					
Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Rossendale Central	-	-	1	-	1
Rossendale East	-	-	0.5	1	-
Rossendale West	1	1	-	-	-
Rossendale	1	1	1.5	1	1

Overlay

The table below identifies overlay by site and pitch. It totals ten match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across five pitches and four sites.

Table 2.15: Summary of overlay (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match sessions)
22	Haslingden High School	West	Youth 11v11	1	2.5
22	Haslingden High School	West	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
30	Marl Pits	Central	Adult	1	0.5
44	St Peters Playing Field	West	Youth 9v9	1	5.5
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	East	Adult	1	1

Table 2.16: Summary of overlay

Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)					
Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Rossendale Central	0.5	-	-	-	-
Rossendale East	1	-	-	-	-
Rossendale West	-	2.5	6	-	-
Rossendale	1.5	2.5	6	-	-

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify current demand (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand in Rossendale is based on ONS projections to 2036. This equates to the potential growth of three junior boys and two mini 7v7 teams.

As previously stated, this level of future demand is conservative and not aligned to the current growth rate for football which Rossendale has seen in the previous five seasons.

Adult pitch analysis

Table 2.17: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁶	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Rossendale Central	-	0.5	0.5		0.5
Rossendale East	-	1	1		1
Rossendale West	1	-	1		1
Rossendale	1	1.5	0.5	-	0.5

The table above highlights that there is an insufficient supply of adult pitches both now and in the future. No future demand is identified for this format of football.

Youth 11v11 pitch analysis

Table 2.18: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁷	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Rossendale Central	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale East	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale West	1	2.5	1.5	-	1.5
Rossendale	1	2.5	1.5	1	2.5

The table above highlights that there is an insufficient supply of youth 11v11 pitches both now and in the future. Future demand of two youth 11v11 teams exacerbates shortfalls by one match equivalent session per week.

Youth 9v9 pitch analysis

Table 2.19: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁸	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Rossendale Central	1	-	1	-	1
Rossendale East	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
Rossendale West	-	6	6	-	6
Rossendale	1.5	6	4.5	0.5	5

⁶ In match equivalent sessions

⁷ In match equivalent sessions

⁸ In match equivalent sessions

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The table above highlights that there is an insufficient supply of youth 9v9 pitches both now and in the future. Future demand of one youth 9v9 team exacerbates shortfalls by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Mini 7v7 pitch analysis

Table 2.20: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Rossendale Central	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale East	1	-	1	-	1
Rossendale West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	1	-	1	1	-

The table above highlights that there is a sufficient supply of mini 7v7 pitches both now and in the future.

Mini 5v5 pitch analysis

Table 2.21: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁰	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Rossendale Central	1	-	1	-	1
Rossendale East	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	1	-	1	-	1

There is currently a sufficient supply of mini 5v5 pitches in Rossendale to accommodate for current demand. No future demand is identified for this pitch format.

2.6: Conclusions (2024)

Using the supply and demand analysis tables, it is determined that there are current shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches. All remaining formats have spare capacity. When considering future demand (ONS population forecasts to 2036), shortfalls are slightly increased.

Table 2.22: Summary of supply and demand in Rossendale

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity ¹¹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
2023/24 season					
Adult	1	1.5	0.5	-	0.5
Youth 11v11	1	2.5	1.5	1	2.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	6	4.5	0.5	5
Mini 7v7	1	-	1	1	-
Mini 5v5	1	-	1	-	1

⁹ In match equivalent sessions

¹⁰ In match equivalent sessions

¹¹ In match equivalent sessions

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity ¹¹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
2019/20 season					
Adult	1	0.5	0.5	2	1.5
Youth 11v11	-	3.5	3.5	2	5.5
Youth 9v9	0.5	3.5	3	1	4
Mini 7v7	1.5	-	1.5	0.5	1
Mini 5v5	2	-	2	2	-

When compared to the findings of the 2020 PPS the following position is identified:

- ◆ A shortfall of 0.5 MES has emerged for adult pitches (a negative swing of one match equivalent session per week).
- ◆ Youth 11v11 pitches are overplayed by two match equivalent sessions less than in 2020.
- ◆ Shortfalls on youth 9v9 pitches have increased by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- ◆ Spare capacity remains for both mini pitch formats.

Demand for football has increased by 46% since 2020. The conclusive supply and demand balance has not majorly changed based on the changes to the quality scoring of pitches, with key grass pitch sites. In effect, the improvement on pitch quality (as defined through PitchPower) has broadly offset the impact of the growth in football.

Football – grass pitch summary

- ◆ **Current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with shortfalls evident on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch formats.**
- ◆ **Future demand of five teams will exacerbate shortfalls by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week.**
- ◆ **Grass football pitch supply:**
 - ◆ The audit identifies a total of 66 grass football pitches in Rossendale across 36 sites. Of the pitches, 58 are available, at some level, for community use across 27 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites.
- ◆ **Grass football pitch quality:**
 - ◆ In total, five pitches are assessed as good quality, 30 as standard quality and 22 as poor quality
- ◆ **Affiliated football demand:**
 - ◆ Through the audit and assessment, 156 teams are identified as playing in Rossendale. This consists of 23 adult teams, 39 youth 11v11 teams, 32 youth 9v9 teams and 62 mini teams. Of these 16 are dedicated women's and girls' teams.
 - ◆ In 2020 there was 107 football teams playing in Rossendale. With there currently being 156 this represents an overall growth of 46%.
 - ◆ Future demand (defined through team generation rates) equates to three youth teams and two mini teams.
 - ◆ Since the 2020 PPS, the growth rate of football in Rossendale equates to 46%. This is over and above what was forecast in the 2020 PPS via population growth.
- ◆ **Supply vs demand analysis conclusions:**
 - ◆ There are current shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches.
 - ◆ Spare capacity is available on both formats of mini pitch.
 - ◆ Future demand (through population increases) forecasts limited future growth.

PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (AGPS)

3.1: Introduction

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces that have been FIFA or International Matchball Standard tested and approved by the FA for inclusion on the FA 3G Pitch Register. As such, in addition to training demand, a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play, providing that the performance standard meets FIFA quality requirements.

World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22', which provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the required standard, meaning full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts, can take place.

Competitive rugby league play and contact practice is permitted to take place on 3G pitches which are deemed by the Rugby Football League (RFL) to meet its Performance Standard. Pitches fall under two categories; community club pitches which require retesting every two years and elite stadia pitches which require an annual retest. Much of the criteria within the RFL performance standard test also forms part of the World Rugby test, meaning World Rugby certified 3G pitches are considered by the RFL to be able to meet rugby league requirements, subject to passing an additional RFL performance standard test.

Many test contractors offer reduced rates through efficiency savings to carry out multiple performance tests in the same session, therefore providers seeking 3G pitch compliancy for a number of sports would be recommended to consider this opportunity. Other sports that are known to use 3G pitches for training and match play include American football and lacrosse.

EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy (June 2016) advises that 3G pitches should not be used for hockey matches or training and that they can only be used for lower level hockey (introductory)

3.2: Supply (2024)

The recommended dimensions for an 11v11 size 3G artificial grass pitch for football are 100 x 64 metres. This extends to an area of 106 x 70 metres with the recommended minimum three metre run off area included. These dimensions allow for all age group match play to take place including adults, youth under 17/18 and younger age groups via overmarked pitches, e.g., the marking out of two 9v9 pitches for under 11/12s.

From the perspective of this PPS (on the basis demand for 3G pitches for rugby union is limited and there is no rugby league activity in the Borough) any pitch which meets the dimensions of 91x55m (the minimum dimensions for adult football) is referenced as being 11v11 size.

For rugby union, a 3G pitch must measure 106 x 68 metres for senior match play, with a 5-metre run off around the full perimeter. Smaller sized pitches can, however, be used to support training demand providing that they are installed to the correct specifications.

If a new pitch is proposed to measure below the recommended dimensions for the relevant sports, then justification must be provided for this in relation to the identified needs it will provide for and/or site constraints.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

In doing so, the impacts of a reduced pitch size in meeting current and future needs must be considered e.g., for football, a pitch not providing the recommended dimensions for adult match play and/or only being able to accommodate one rather than two overmarked 9v9 pitches. This justification needs to be included in the planning application details submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the new pitch.

Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPS for any new 11v11 3G pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions for the sports that they will be established to cater for.

On the above basis, there are two 11v11 3G pitches in Rossendale located at Alder Grange School and the Valley Leadership Academy. Details of these are summarised in the table below. Further to this, there are six small sided pitches provided across three sites.

Table 3.1: 3G pitch supply summary (2024)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Pitch size	Surface type	Number of pitches	Sportslit?
2	Alder Grange School	Rossendale Central	No	92 x 57m	Medium pile 3G (55-60mm)	1	No
20	Valley Leadership Academy	Rossendale Central	Yes	97 x 55	Medium pile 3G (55-60mm)	1	Yes
4	Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School	Rossendale Central	No	67 x 43m	Medium pile 3G (55-60mm)	1	No
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	No	57 x 40m	Medium pile 3G (55-60mm)	1	No
31	Marl Pits Leisure Centre	Rossendale Central	Yes	30 x 20m	Medium pile 3G (55-60mm)	4	Yes

The small sided pitch at Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School is not available for community use, nor is it sportslit. This is the same position at Haslingden High School. The four small sided pitches at Marl Pits Leisure Centre are not suitable for adult or youth football due to their sizing, with these designed to accommodate commercial football leagues and social match play.

All 3G pitch provision in Rossendale is in the Central Analysis, there is no existing provision in either the East or West analysis areas.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Future supply (2024)

RBC is progressing a scheme for the delivery of an 11v11 3G pitch at The Adrenaline Centre (Rossendale West). The scheme has been developed in partnership with the Football Foundation. The pitch (if delivered) will have a focus on providing high quality and priority outcomes to support the growth and development of women and girls football participation.

FA 3G pitch register

In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches, the pitch should be FIFA or IMS tested and approved and added to the FA 3G Pitch Register, which can be found at: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>.

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA Quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard. Generally, FIFA Quality pitches can be typically used for 60-85 hours per week, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are able to accommodate 20-30 hours.

To remain on the Register, pitches must be re-assessed every three years to ensure that quality has not deteriorated beyond acceptable levels, although this is required annually for clubs using 3G pitches within the National League System (Step 1-6).

The pitch at the Valley Academy is the sole pitch on the FA 3G pitch register in Rossendale. Its certification expires on at the end of May 2025.

World Rugby compliant pitches

To enable 3G pitches to host competitive rugby union matches, World Rugby has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification. This is to ensure that the surfaces replicate the playing qualities of good quality grass pitches, provide a playing environment that will not increase the risk of injury and are of an adequate durability.

The specification includes a rigorous test programme that assesses ball/surface interaction and player/surface interaction and has been modified to align the standard with that of FIFA. Any 3G pitch used for any form of competitive rugby must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

There are no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Rossendale. The nearest available pitch is located at the Prairie Sports Village in Burnley. This is not accessed by Rossendale RUFC.

Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an 3G pitch usually lasts for approximately ten years', and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. It is therefore recommended that pitch replacement funds be put into place by providers to enable long-term sustainability, ongoing repairs and future refurbishments beyond this period.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 3.2: Age and quality of 3G pitches in Rossendale

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Year installed/resurfaced	Quality
2	Alder Grange School	Rossendale Central	2010	Poor
4	Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School	Rossendale Central	2016	Standard
20	Valley Leadership Academy	Rossendale Central	2009	Standard
30	Marl Pits Leisure Centre	Rossendale Central	2012	Poor

The four small sided pitches at Marl Pits Leisure Centre are poor quality. There is evidence of patched repair work on one pitch and their collective main purpose is to provide for recreational football as opposed to providing opportunities for affiliated football.

The pitch at Alder Grange School has reached the end of its anticipated life expectancy, it has had limited maintenance undertaken in the past ten years and there is evidence of wear and tear on the pitch. The pitch at Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School is standard quality, no major issues were identified during the non-technical audit.

The key issue of the above pertains to the Valley Leadership Academy. As it stands, it is the only 11v11 3G pitch in Rossendale and is used as the primary home match day venue for Haslingden Women's and Girls FC. If this was to be lost, or come out of use for match play purposes, it would exacerbate current shortfalls on grass football pitches and further limit opportunities for access to 3G pitches locally. The pitch is currently standard quality based on it passing FA certification tests for match play but it is in need of a replacement surface to ensure its longevity.

Ancillary facilities

All 3G pitches which offer community use are accompanied by ancillary facilities that are considered adequate. Consultation with RBC and LFA did not highlight any issues pertaining to ancillary facilities (aligned to existing 3G pitches) as of 2024.

Management

The Valley Leadership Academy is the only 11v11 pitch available to residents in Rossendale. It is managed by RLT. Of the small sided pitches, the four available at Marl Pits are also managed by RLT.

3.3: Demand

The following table summarises the availability of the 3G pitches in Rossendale which are available for community use. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 3.3: Current usage of community available 3G pitches (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Club user	Midweek availability (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)
20	Valley Leadership Academy	Rossendale United, Bacup CFC, Kay Street Baptist FC, Rossendale FC, Haslingden Girls and Ladies FC, Rossendale Valley Juniors FC, Rossendale RUFC	14	14	14	10.5
30	Marl Pits Leisure Centre (four small sided pitches)	Junior Hoops FC, Rossendale Valley Juniors FC, Sunnybank FC, Waterfoot Wanderers FC, FC Hinch	18	15	-	N/A (Not certified)
-		Totals	32	29	14	10.5

The information above is based on the 11v11 3G pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy and four small sided pitches at Marl Pits Leisure Centre.

The pitch at Valley Leadership Academy is operating at capacity midweek and there is no capacity for increased levels of use. On weekends, the pitch is the primary home venue of Haslingden Girls and Ladies FC and Kay Street Baptist FC. There are very limited slots for additional use within the peak period. There is a small amount of use on the pitch, which is not football activity, this is by Rossendale RFC. The Club use the pitch on an ad-hoc basis throughout winter for non-contact training if its grass pitches are not suitable for midweek training (due to inclement weather and waterlogging). This use typically equates to one hour per week.

The small sided pitches are not certified for match play and have limited weekend use from an affiliated standpoint. It is recognised that these pitches are not conducive to structured training for affiliated football teams due to being of an inappropriate size and for this reason they do not count towards the supply of 3G pitches in Rossendale.

3.4: Supply and demand analysis

Football

The FA considers high quality 3G pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development, with the pitches considered to be great assets on account of being able to support intensive use and use during inclement weather. Primarily, such facilities have been installed for social use and training; however, they are increasingly being used for competition, which the FA wholly supports.

Training demand (2024)

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at sports/leisure facilities.

To quantify the 3G shortfall for football, the FA has established a training model, which suggests that one 11v11 3G pitch can accommodate 38 affiliated teams (with capacity built in for other forms of demand).

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

It also has an aspiration for all teams to train once per week on a 3G pitch, although it is recognised that nationally some activity may need to be retained on sand-based pitches to ensure the sustainability of them.

For the model, in addition to 11v11 pitches being included, some smaller size pitches can also be incorporated as nationally many are suitable for accommodating training demand, especially larger ones. However, in Rossendale that is not the case due to the existing small sided pitches at Marl Pits Leisure Centre being too small to accommodate any meaningful training for affiliated football.

Given the above, with 156 teams currently affiliated to Rossendale there is a theoretical need for four 11v11 3G pitches equivalents (rounded down from 4.1). As there is currently one 11v11 pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy servicing football, it is considered that there is a theoretical need an additional three 11v11 pitches in Rossendale to accommodate all affiliated football demand. If no improvements are made to the pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy and it is to become unusable in the future, the current theoretical shortfall of three 11v11 pitches will increase to four.

The table below considers the number of 11v11 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play.

Table 3.4: Current demand for 3G pitches in Rossendale (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Rossendale Central	56	1.5	1	0.5
Rossendale East	23	0.5	0	0.5
Rossendale West	75	2	0	2
Rossendale	156	4	1	3

When accounting for future demand through population growth (overall forecasted growth of five teams) the shortfall does not increase. As previously mentioned, population growth is not indicative of the increasing participation trend in football in Rossendale which over the last five years has equated to 46%.

On this basis, the future position of 3G pitches may be over and above what has been identified here and should be monitored through a new PPS or subsequent Stage E update.

Match play demand

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches, providing that the pitch is FA approved, sportslit and available for community use during the peak period, and the location does not have an impact on other pitch sports.

The pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy is on the FA 3G pitch register and is at capacity on weekends for competitive match play. It is the home venue for Haslingden Girls & Ladies FC and Kay Street Baptist FC.

Rugby

As mentioned previously, there are no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Rossendale. Rossendale RUFC states it would use such a facility if it were to be provided in Rossendale and that it would be beneficial for the development of its mini and junior section. Currently, Rossendale is not considered to be a strategic priority area for World Rugby compliant 3G pitch provision by the RFU.

The Club access the existing 11v11 3G pitch for one hour per week on Tuesdays at Valley Leadership Academy to accommodate a proportion of its senior training demand. This activity is non-contact based.

3.5: Conclusion (2024)

In conclusion, there is an insufficient supply of 11v11 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football training demand based on the FA training model in Rossendale. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required, with future provision needed in all analysis areas.

In total, the current (and future) shortfall equates to a need to develop an additional three 11v11 3G pitches in Rossendale. This will increase to four 11v11 pitches if quality improvements are not undertaken at the Valley Leadership Academy.

The current key issue, over and above the known shortfall of provision is the condition of the existing 3G pitch at The Valley Leadership Academy. If this is to be lost the existing shortfall will be exacerbated will result in Haslingden Girls and Ladies FC and Kay Street Baptists FC needing to find a new home venue.

To ensure the current supply and any future supply is of a good enough standard to accommodate demand, providers are encouraged to put pitch replacement funds in place to ensure long-term sustainability. This will allow for resurfacing to take place when required and will ensure that FA registration remains in place or can be achieved.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

3G pitch summary

Supply:

- There is one 11v11 sportslit 3G pitch in Rossendale which is available for community use and is located at the Valley Leadership Academy.
- There is one further 11v11 3G pitch which is unavailable for community use (because of it not being sportslit) at Alder Grange High School.
- There are also six small sided pitches located across three sites.
- There are no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Rossendale. Based on the supply and demand analysis there is no significant need to provide one to service rugby union demand.

Quality:

- The 11v11 pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy is on the FA 3G register and can therefore be used for competitive match play. The pitch is standard quality but is on the verge of being poor.
- The certification expires in May 2025 and it is uncertain if it will be of a sufficient quality to retain its certification for match play for a further year.

Supply vs demand analysis:

- With 156 teams currently affiliated to Rossendale there is a need for four 11v11 3G pitches to service current levels of demand. Future demand does not increase this shortfall.
- The current shortfall equates to three 11v11 3G FTPs overall but will increase to four if the 3G pitch at the Valley Leadership Academy falls out of use.

PART 4: CRICKET

4.1: Introduction

The Lancashire Cricket Foundation (LCF) is the main governing and representative body for cricket within the County, including Rossendale. Its aim is to promote the game at all levels through partnerships with professional and recreational cricketing clubs as well as other appropriate agencies. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children within the area. It is also currently working with the ECB on delivering its refreshed Strategy, Inspiring Generations.

County Facilities Strategy (CFS)

In 2022, to build upon the ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy, the ECB has started the process of producing County Facilities Strategies (CFS). A CFS will be produced by each individual county cricket board and will be unique to its geographical area as well as being diverse in its representation.

The CFS will be a 'long-term' plan with county boards ensuring the Strategy provides a ten-year view of facility needs. Like a PPS, the county cricket boards will establish key stakeholders (clubs, leagues, county sports partnerships, county pitch advisors & Sport England etc) within its locality to consult during the development of the Strategy.

Each county cricket board will utilise up to date PPS within its locality to support the development of the CFS, utilising the PPS findings as a 'high-quality' evidence base. The CFS will look at a range of facilities which support cricket across its region, with the ECB setting out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the CFS:

Types of facility

- ◀ "Traditional" outdoor facilities:
 - ◀ Pitches and Outfields.
 - ◀ Pavilions.
 - ◀ Practice.
- ◀ "Non-traditional" facilities:
 - ◀ Multi Use Games Areas.
 - ◀ Tapeball/softball spaces.
 - ◀ Courts or cages.
- ◀ Indoor facilities:
 - ◀ Practice (multi use halls).
 - ◀ Performance (cricket specific).
 - ◀ Matchplay (6 or 8 a side).

Each CFS will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, particularly how each county cricket board will use the devolved budget within the County Grants Fund and prioritise larger scale strategic projects.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the CFS is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment; it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPS and is not an accepted evidence base for development proposals that need to be judged against the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.

Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with LCF to inform this section of the report. It builds on consultation with community clubs which was undertaken in 2020. The key consultation findings are summarised below:

- Stacksteads CC has folded.
- New Hall Hey Cricket Ground has been leased to Inspire Support Sports Empower (ISSE).
- A parcel of land (used for carparking) at Haslingden CC is listed in the Rossendale Local Plan for housing; allocation H47.
- Improvements to the outfield at Edenfield CC aligned to the Rossendale Green Belt Release Compensation Measures.

4.2: Supply (2024)

There are four natural turf wicket squares in Rossendale spread across four sites. All squares are available for community use.

Table 4.1: Cricket square supply

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	Number of grass wickets
59	Bacup CC	East	Yes	1	20
60	Edenfield CC	Central	Yes	1	12
61	Haslingden CC	Central	Yes	1	19
62	Rawtenstall CC	West	Yes	1	9

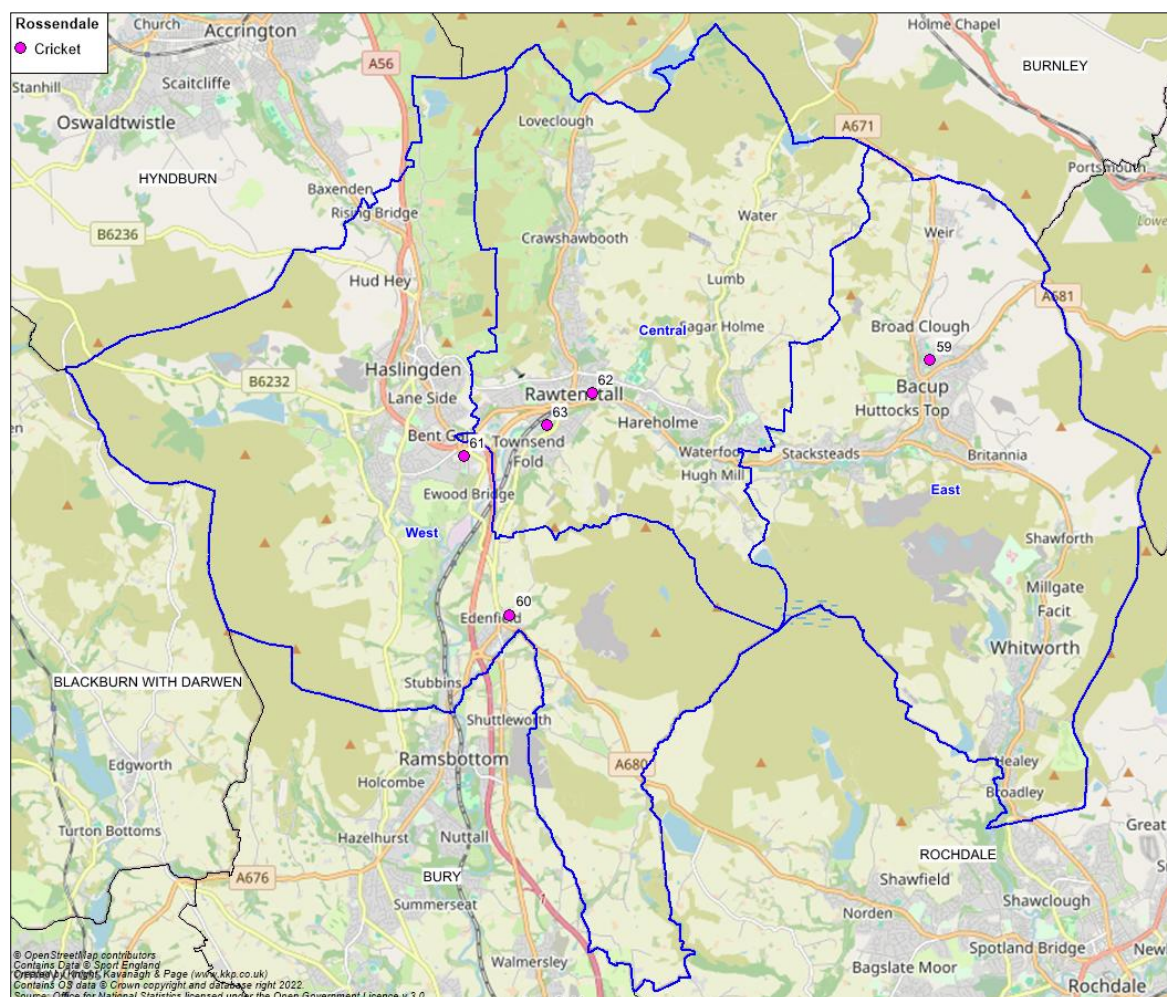
Further to the above, Rawtenstall CC also prepares four junior wickets on its outfield at the beginning of each season. This is not included within the above data on the basis the above this is a temporary junior offer to facilitate dedicated junior demand. This is explored further within the capacity analysis for Rawtenstall CC.

In relation to the distribution of facilities across Rossendale, each analysis area has access to at least one natural turf cricket square.

Figure 4.1 identifies all cricket squares currently servicing Rossendale. For a key to the map, see Table 4.2.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Figure 4.1: Cricket square locations



Ball strike

Where there is either new cricket provision being put in place, or more commonly a development which may prejudice the use of the cricket facility, there is a requirement for a full ball strike risk assessment to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place as part of the development. As such, the ECB recommends that the clubs and organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken; further information can be provided by the ECB.

There are no known ball-strike issues identified in Rossendale.

Disused provision

There is one disused cricket ground in Rossendale located at Waterbarn Recreation Ground. The site was the former home to Stacksteads Cricket Club prior to 2012. The site is owned by a private landowner and has been sat dormant ever since Stacksteads CC left the site.

There is one disused cricket square (not site) at New Hall Hey Cricket Ground. The square on the site has been unused since Stacksteads CC folded in 2023. The ground has, however, been used to accommodate recreational football demand and has remained open to residents. As of the 2025 cricket season, it is expected that the square will be in active use from Inspire Support Sports Empower (ISSE).

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Non-turf pitches (NTPs)

The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance¹² on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to take 60 matches per season, although this may include training sessions via the use of mobile nets.

In Rossendale there are no standalone NTPs identified. There are two NTPs which accompany existing cricket squares based at club sites, these are located at New Hall Hey Cricket Ground and Bacup Cricket Club.

Future provision

There are no identified plans to establish new cricket provision in Rossendale.

New Hall Hey Cricket Ground is expected to become an active site again in 2025 and be fully active for cricket. As mentioned, it is set to be leased to ISSE which is a not for profit organisation which operates throughout Leeds, Bradford and Lancashire. It provides a range of recreational cricket and football offers and is expected to use the site heavily throughout Monday to Fridays.

As it stands, the site is expected to be available on weekends which will ensure it can become a strategic reserve for local cricket clubs to use if they have an increase of demand during the peak periods.

Security of tenure

The table below shows the tenure arrangement of cricket clubs in Rossendale. It includes detail on the lease which has been arranged with ISSE which commenced in 2024.

Table 4.2: Club tenure arrangements

Site ID	Site name	Club	Tenure arrangement
59	Bacup CC	Bacup CC	Freehold
60	Edenfield CC	Edenfield CC	Freehold
61	Haslingden CC	Haslingden CC	Freehold
62	Rawtenstall CC	Rawtenstall CC	Freehold
63	New Hall Hey Cricket Ground	ISSE	25-year lease from RBC

Pitch quality

The quality of cricket pitches was assessed in 2020 via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the ECB) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-79%), Poor (<49%).

¹² <https://www.ecb.co.uk/be-involved/club-support/club-facility-management/surface-types>

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket; if the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. As an example, if a square is poor quality, a ball can bounce erratically on a wicket and become a danger to nearby players.

Table 4.3: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares (2020)

Site ID	Site	No. of squares	Square quality
6	Bacup CC	1	Good
15	Edenfield CC	1	Standard
21	Haslingden CC	1	Good
37	Rawtenstall CC	1	Good

Grass Pitch Improvement Fund¹³

To coincide with the utilisation of PitchPower (PP) for cricket the ECB in partnership with Sport England and National Lottery has released the Grass Pitch Improvement Fund (GPIF). The GPIF aims to tackle inequalities by providing improved access to good quality, safe playing facilities for targeted groups. The Sport England Lottery Fund will provide funding for projects in England with projects in Wales supported by the England and Wales Cricket Trust.

Priority will be given to applications which support cricket for the following groups:

- ◆ Women's and girls' cricket.
- ◆ Cricket in diverse communities.
- ◆ Disability cricket.
- ◆ Low socio-economic groups (LSEG).

Investment will be targeted into three main areas:

- ◆ Improving the quality of squares and outfield (for grass pitches rated 'unsuitable' or 'basic' to improve to at least 'good').
- ◆ Creating sustainable management of sites (through irrigation and machinery improvements).
- ◆ Installing hybrid pitches to increase playing capacity.

The fund will run until March 2027, or whenever the funding is full allocated, whichever is sooner.

PitchPower Assessment

PitchPower (a technical assessment of quality) for cricket began to be used in 2024 with the initial reports being produced towards the end of the season. More information surrounding PitchPower, and its functionality is available in Part 2: Football. The main difference for the analysis of cricket is that both the outfield and square are assessed for quality.

The outfield focusing on analysing grass height, grass coverage, weed coverage, root depth, thatch depth, undesirable grasses, surface debris and percentage of pest and disease. In comparison the square evaluation includes most of the above in addition to surface evenness, core profile, root break, worm casts, pitch markings and post-match repairs.

¹³<https://resources.ecb.co.uk/ecb/document/2024/07/23/a754a60b-a11a-4dee-aa7e-06fbdc040297/GPIF-guidance-notes.pdf>

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

PitchPower assessments use a new five step Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating system developed by the GMA, with the FF and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS guidance. This alignment is shown in the table below.

Table 4.4: Agreed equivalent PPS quality rating for PQS ratings

PQS Rating	PPOSS Quality Rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

All four active cricket clubs in Rossendale have received a PitchPower assessment which were carried out in 2024. The results of these, shown below, indicate that three of the four clubs have basic quality squares which is a reduction in quality to that identified in the 2020 PPS.

Table 4.5: Summary of PitchPower findings compared to PPS quality ratings (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Club users	PitchPower rating
6	Bacup CC	Bacup CC	Basic
15	Edenfield CC	Edenfield CC	Basic
21	Haslingden CC	Haslingden CC	Advanced
37	Rawtenstall CC	Rawtenstall CC	Basic

PitchPower quality scores will be the ones used in the pitch capacity analysis to follow.

Ancillary facilities

The extent of ancillary facilities required differs between times of play. For example, senior teams playing at weekends typically need to access clubhouse and kitchen facilities to provide teas, whereas this is often not required for junior and short format senior matches, where the need is more for access to suitable changing and/or toilet facilities.

Quality and access to required match day and preparatory facilities across the Borough's is varied, with clubs playing at privately managed or sports club sites generally better served than those playing at community managed provision.

Ancillary facility rating is primarily influenced by the type and quality of amenities which are available on a site, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated umpire, spectator facilities and boundary fencing. Provision of high quality ancillary facilities is a key aspect of the ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy, to meet the expectations of the core participation base as well as key growth markets such as women and girls, South Asian and BAME communities and All Stars and Dynamos cricket.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.6: Site by site breakdown of ancillary quality (2020)

Site ID	Site	Club	Clubhouse quality	Changing pavilion quality
59	Bacup CC	Bacup CC	Good	Poor
60	Edenfield CC	Edenfield CC	Standard	Standard
61	Haslingden CC	Haslingden CC	Standard	Poor
63	New Hall Hey Cricket Ground	Stacksteads CC	-	Poor
62	Rawtenstall CC	Rawtenstall CC	Good	Poor

Since the PPS was written in 2020, there has been no significant investment into clubhouses and changing facilities which support clubs. LCF report that the changing pavilion at Bacup CC should be updated to standard quality from poor quality and that the changing pavilion at Edenfield should be downgraded to poor quality.

Table 4.7: Site by site breakdown of ancillary quality (2024)

Site ID	Site	Club	Clubhouse quality	Changing pavilion quality
59	Bacup CC	Bacup CC	Good	Standard
60	Edenfield CC	Edenfield CC	Standard	Poor
61	Haslingden CC	Haslingden CC	Standard	Poor
63	New Hall Hey Cricket Ground	Stacksteads CC	-	Poor
62	Rawtenstall CC	Rawtenstall CC	Good	Poor

Moving forward, the ECB is expecting to receive an application from ISSE for a £50,000 grant which would be used to improve the pavilion at New Hall Hey Cricket Ground. The award will be used to transform the existing pavilion into a welcoming environment which will enable it to be a welcoming, inclusive environment for all users and enable it to delivery on a range of activities and social programmes which includes:

- Cricket Development Centre: Programs for skill-building and youth engagement through partnerships with the Lancashire Cricket Foundation, including All Stars and Dynamos.
- Community Hub: The site will support various local initiatives, such as the Holiday Activity Fund, Household Support Fund, and environmental programs, making it a vibrant resource for well-being and personal growth.
Community and Cultural Programs: From inter-generational activities to environmental initiatives, the project aims to serve as a focal point for community connection, creativity, and sustainability.
- Food Projects: Implementing food projects, such as community gardens or cooking classes, will promote healthy eating habits and food sustainability while bringing residents together around a common interest.

4.3: Demand

During the 2020 PPS, there was five clubs competing in Rossendale generating 32 teams. Information on this is detailed in the table overleaf.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.8: Summary of teams (2020)

Club	No. of senior men's teams	No. of senior women's teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams
Bacup CC	3	-	5	-
Edenfield CC	3	-	3	-
Haslingden CC	3	-	5	-
Stacksteads CC	2	-	-	-
Rawtenstall CC	3	-	5	-
Total (2020)	14	-	18	-

As of the 2024 season, Stacksteads CC has folded and is no longer in operation. The Club did not compete in the 2024 cricket season ending its existence at the conclusion of the 2023 season.

In relation to the remaining clubs, demand has remained static across the board, except for Haslingden CC which has added an additional senior men's team. There are no women's and girls' team established in Rossendale despite it being a key focus area for the ECB and the LCF.

Two clubs have an aspiration to promote women and girls' activity but have been unable to substantiate demand into formal teams; these being Bacup and Haslingden cricket clubs.

Table 4.9: Summary of teams (2024)

Club	No. of senior men's teams	No. of senior women's teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams
Bacup CC	3	-	5	-
Edenfield CC	3	-	3	-
Haslingden CC	4	-	5	-
Rawtenstall CC	3	-	5	-
Total (2024)	13	-	18	-

Softball cricket

Softball is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase participation in cricket as a sport. The aim of softball cricket sections is enjoyment and participation, without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and with limited rules. Sessions are played on the outfield and follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

Bacup and Haslingden cricket clubs have both worked to deliver softball sessions and have had softball festivals since the 2020 PPS. Currently, both clubs have been unable to substantiate this demand into dedicated teams but continue working to deliver this.

All Stars cricket

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine cricket clubs in Rossendale can register to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre. Once registered, a club can deliver the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight.

Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs. The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ✦ Increase cricket activity for five to eight year olds in the school and club environment.
- ✦ Develop consistency of message in both settings to aid transition.
- ✦ Improve generic movement skills for children, using cricket as the vehicle.
- ✦ Make it easier for new volunteers to support and deliver in the club environment.
- ✦ Use fun small sided games to enthuse new children and volunteers to follow and play the game.

Dynamos cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' will be the Dynamos programme for 8–11 year olds which originally aimed to launch in 2020. It plans on building on the significant growth of the All Stars Cricket programme for 5-8 year olds and will develop the pathway to retain juniors progressing from All Stars into Dynamos. Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamos seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified soft ball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket. The programme will be strongly linked to The Hundred, a new short format competition which launched in 2021.

Exported/imported demand

Exported demand refers to Rossendale based teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities. Likewise, imported demand refers to clubs from outside of Rossendale accessing provision inside Rossendale for similar reasoning. There is no identified exported or imported demand for cricket facilities in or outside of Rossendale as of the 2024 season.

Unmet/latent demand

Unmet demand is existing demand at clubs which is not able to access sufficient supply of pitches for match play or training. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league or club operates a waiting list.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision.

The ECB or LCF did not highlight any unmet or latent demand in Rossendale.

Future demand

Future demand is defined by population forecasts to 2036 to align to the Rossendale Local Plan.

Population forecasts

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2036) based on population growth. When team generation rates are applied across Rossendale, ONS population increases do not forecast the creation of any new teams being created.

For reference total current population in 2024 of 70,865 will increase to 77,568 by 2036 (ONS 2018 projections). The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.10: Team generation rates (2036)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate ¹⁴	Population increase (2036)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (18-55)	16,712	14	1:928	1,092.99	15	1
Senior Women's (18-55)	17,363	0	1:0	1,135.52	0.0	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	5,637	18	1:313	368.68	19	1
Junior Girls (7-18)	5,366	0	1:0	350.91	0.0	0

Although no women and girls' teams are predicted to be created via population growth alone, consultation with the ECB suggests that further development of female cricket in Rossendale is likely as it is currently a national priority to increase women and girls' participation.

It is important to acknowledge that whilst team generation rates project team growth as a factor of population and existing teams, there are plans and strategies to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends suggest, due to a desire to change such trends.

For example, female growth at women's and girls' age groups is minimal, however, there are planned increases in activity around female participation through both All Stars Cricket and Dynamos Cricket which are likely to reflect in growth above levels shown through team generation rates.

Future demand summary

Anticipated future demand equates to one senior men's team and one junior boys' team.

Peak time demand

Bacup, Rawtenstall and Haslingden cricket clubs compete in the Lancashire Cricket League. Peak time for this league is Sundays where club's 1st and 2nd teams compete. Saturday is typically the day in which club's 3rd and 4th teams compete.

Edenfield CC compete in the Greater Manchester Cricket League which peak time is on Saturday for 1st and 2nd teams. Sunday is typically the day in which 3rd and 4th teams compete.

Based on the above, six teams require access to a square on Saturdays and seven on Sundays.

For junior cricket, peak time demand is midweek, with all clubs' youth sections playing between Monday and Friday (and occasional Sundays before senior matches). As a result, squares have greater capacity to carry junior demand as play can be spread across numerous days (providing the squares are not overplayed).

¹⁴ Please note TGR figures are rounded up to the nearest whole number.

4.4: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than a weekly basis. This is due to playability (as only one match is generally played per pitch per day at weekends or weekday evening) and because wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and tear and to allow for repair.

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive matches per season per square.

For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not deemed safe for play.

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from PlayCricket statistics. On average, most 1st and 2nd senior men's teams play between 14 - 12 home games per season whilst 3rd and 4th teams play ten.

For junior teams, there is a wider range of average matches dependent on age group. On average it varies between 4-6 home matches per season.

To help calculate spare capacity, the ECB suggests that a good quality grass wicket should be able to take five (senior) matches per season.

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overused	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

Please note that NTPs have been discounted from the table overleaf. No NTPs are recorded as accommodating more than 60 matches per season; therefore, all NTPs are considered to have spare capacity. This translates to actual spare capacity for junior cricket as peak time is midweek, whereby non-turf wickets are more commonly used and matches can be played on a variety of days.

The capacity analysis assumes that all clubs rotate their wickets evenly. However, this may not be the case at all sites, with central wickets potentially used more commonly than outer wickets that are closer to a boundary, especially for senior matches. The idea is to showcase what the capacity is or could be if best practice is followed for the whole square, rather than doing it on a wicket-by-wicket basis.

Table 4.11: Capacity of cricket squares (based on 2024 cricket season data)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Site users	Security of tenure	Community use?	No. of squares	Pitch quality	No. of adult grass wickets	Recommended ECB capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior Saturday cricket?	Potential spare capacity for senior Sunday cricket?	Potential spare capacity for midweek junior cricket?
59	Bacup CC	East	Bacup CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	20	80	60	20	Yes	No	Yes
60	Edenfield CC	Central	Edenfield CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	12	48	46	2	No	No	No
61	Haslingden CC	Central	Haslingden CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	19	95	76	19	No	No	Yes
62	Rawtenstall CC	West	Rawtenstall CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	9	36	36	-	No	No	No

Rawtenstall CC also has four junior wickets on the site which sits adjacent to the main square. These are prepared at the beginning of each season and support the five junior teams which the club operates. This is not considered as part of the above data on the basis that they are unfit for senior cricket. This is because of bowler run up dimensions and boundary restraints. These wickets are standard quality but are in essence prepared on the outfield of the main cricket square so are not conducive to high level junior cricket. These broadly operate to capacity.

New Hall Hey Cricket Ground was unused for cricket during the 2024 season and the square was not prepared for cricket activity. On this basis, it does not feature in the above table.

A site-by-site overview for each club is provided below:

Bacup CC

Bacup is at capacity at peak time on Sundays and has the scope for an increase in demand on Saturdays. As it competes in the Lancashire League, this equates to a potential opportunity for an increase in play for a senior men's fourth team or potential scope for a women's team to be established dependent on what league structure it would be entering. From a junior perspective, the site has capacity for an increase in play during midweek. Based on the size of the square, it may have scope for accommodate two junior games on either end of the square which will provide further opportunities for participation increases.

Edenfield CC

Edenfield CC is broadly at capacity based on the number of games played on its square throughout the cricket season. If the Club was to expand the number of teams it operates then it is likely that the square would become overplayed, and shortfalls would emerge on the site.

Haslingden CC

From a senior cricket perspective, Haslingden CC is at capacity based on four senior men's teams accessing the site for across Saturday and Sunday. Similarly to Bacup, it has capacity for one additional junior team to be accommodated for on the site, but there may be further opportunities to increase this based on the size of its square and the ability for teams to play on either end of the provided wickets.

Rawtenstall CC

Rawtenstall CC is at capacity based on senior cricket activity using the main square on the site. It has a reliance on preparing additional wickets on its outfield to accommodate for junior cricket demand. The site would struggle to accommodate additional teams and if it was too, similarly to Edenfield, shortfalls would emerge on the site.

Spare capacity – Saturday cricket

A square is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage. For senior men's cricket, peak time is Saturday as this is when most demand exists. As only one match can be played on each square per day, only two Saturday teams can be assigned to play home matches on one square (based on matches being played on an alternate home and away basis). As such, if a square has two Saturday teams already playing home fixtures on it, no actual spare capacity is perceived to exist for additional senior usage. If one or no teams are playing on a square on a Saturday, and it has overall capacity, actual spare capacity for senior demand is generally identified.

Notwithstanding the above, there may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as actual spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site. As such, no sites that are over, at, or close to capacity are considered to have actual spare capacity (at least 12 match equivalent sessions per season of spare capacity are required for an additional senior team to be accommodated) and neither are sites with unsecure tenure as future usage cannot be guaranteed.

Taking the above into consideration, Bacup CC has the capacity to accommodate one additional senior team on a Saturday. No other clubs have either peak time capacity to accommodate demand or overall capacity for an increase in cricket activity at their respective site.

Spare capacity – Sunday cricket

Like Saturday cricket, a square on a Sunday is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage. As only one match can be played on each square per day, only two Sunday teams can be assigned to play home matches on one square (based on matches being played on an alternate home and away basis). As such, if a square has two Sunday teams already playing home fixtures on it, no actual spare capacity is perceived to exist for additional senior usage. If one or no teams are playing on a square on a Sunday, and it has overall capacity, actual spare capacity for senior demand is generally identified. As such, no sites that are over, at, or close to capacity are considered to have actual spare capacity (at least 12 match equivalent sessions per season of spare capacity are required for an additional senior Sunday team to be accommodated) and neither are sites with unsecure tenure as future usage cannot be guaranteed.

Taking the above into consideration there is no actual spare capacity to accommodate further senior demand at peak time on a Sunday in Rossendale.

Midweek cricket - spare capacity

For midweek cricket, most squares with spare capacity have actual spare capacity for an increase in demand. This is because usually most of the demand is from junior matches which are generally played during midweek, where matches can be spread across numerous days, meaning capacity is not limited to two teams.

For a square to have actual spare capacity for junior cricket, it must not be poor quality, have secure tenure, not be overplayed and have at least six match equivalent sessions per season of spare capacity, the average number of home matches an additional junior team would play.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Furthermore, a square is not considered to have capacity for an increase in demand if it is already used by six midweek teams or more, as availability is then assumed to be limited. On average, clubs can play junior fixtures on three nights per week, with other nights reserved for other activity such as square remediation/preparation, training activity or All Stars and Dynamos cricket activity.

There is actual spare capacity to accommodate additional match play demand midweek in Rossendale at two sites: Bacup CC and Haslingden CC. Each square, based on the above methodology can in theory accommodate one additional team.

Table 4.12: Sites with actual spare capacity to accommodate midweek cricket

Site ID	Site	Capacity rating	Number of additional teams	Actual spare capacity required for additional teams
59	Bacup CC	20	1 x junior team	6-8
61	Haslingden CC	19	1 x junior team	6-8

Total actual spare capacity midweek equates to 16 match equivalent sessions per season.

Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain. While it is possible to sustain certain minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a resolution is recommended to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

In Rossendale, no sites are overplayed.

4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Consideration must be given to the extent in which provision can accommodate current and future demand.

The table below looks at actual spare capacity during the peak period (Sunday) for senior cricket as well as senior demand on Saturday to give a reflective view of the supply and demand balance in Rossendale. Future demand is based on population projections to 2036.

In total, future demand equates to one senior men's team and one junior boys' team.

For this, please note that actual spare capacity is converted from squares to match equivalent sessions. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (one team per 0.5 squares that are available). The entirety of spare capacity available at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time (the maximum amount of spare capacity that can be accommodated on one square at peak time is 24 match equivalent sessions). Any remaining spare capacity could be used outside of this (midweek or Sunday).

Similarly, match equivalent sessions for future demand are based on the average number of matches played per season by the respective team type.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.13: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior Sunday cricket

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Demand (match sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
East		-	-	-	-
Central	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	-	-	-	-	-

The analysis identifies that there is no spare capacity available for an increase for cricket on Sundays in Rossendale for senior cricket.

The analysis for Saturday cricket is detailed below. It highlights that there is spare capacity at Bacup CC for an increase in play. No other club has spare capacity for an increase in senior demand. Future demand of one senior team, if established, will utilise all spare capacity.

Table 4.14: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior Saturday cricket

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Demand (match sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
East	12	-	12	-	-
Central	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	12	-	12	12	-

Junior cricket capacity balance

As highlighted in Table 4.11 two clubs have spare capacity to accommodate for an increase in junior demand: Bacup Haslingden cricket clubs. No other clubs have a sufficient theoretical capacity to accommodate for an increase in demand. Future demand of one junior boys' team can therefore be theoretically accommodated for.

4.6: Conclusion (2024)

All clubs are playing within the capacity offered by their respective sites. On an individual basis it is however a mixed picture of restraint or opportunities to expand. On a site-by-site basis the following conclusions can be drawn:

- ✦ Bacup CC has capacity to grow participation with its current facilities.
- ✦ Edenfield CC is at capacity and cannot expand with the quality/quantity of its existing facilities
- ✦ Haslingden is at capacity for senior cricket but has growth opportunities for junior cricket.
- ✦ Rawtenstall CC is at capacity and cannot expand with the quality/quantity of its existing facilities.

The one caveat to the above information is that the changing pavilions at Edenfield, Haslingden and Rawtenstall CC are poor quality and not appropriate to enable the growth of women and girl's cricket.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

As previously mentioned, the square at New Hall Hey is expected to be ready for use in 2025. No formal clubs are associated with the square during Saturdays and Sundays and on this basis will be able to provide capacity to other clubs from the local area for all formats of the game.

Cricket summary

- ◀ **There is a sufficient supply of cricket provision in Rossendale to accommodate both current and anticipated future levels of demand.**
- ◀ **Cricket square supply:**
 - ◀ There are four natural turf wicket squares in Rossendale spread across five sites. All squares are available for community use.
 - ◀ There are two disused cricket squares in Rossendale at New Hall Hey and Waterbarn Recreation Ground.
 - ◀ It is expected that the square at New Hall Hey will be re-established and in use for the 2025 cricket season.
- ◀ **Cricket quality:**
 - ◀ PitchPower reports for each of the clubs in Rossendale state three squares are standard quality and one is good quality.
 - ◀ The changing facilities at New Hall Hey Cricket Ground, Rawtenstall CC, Haslingden CC and Edenfield are all poor quality.
- ◀ **Affiliated demand:**
 - ◀ There are four clubs competing in Rossendale generating 32 teams. As a breakdown, this equates to 13 senior men's and 18 junior boys' teams as seen below. There are no recorded senior women's or junior girls' teams identified in Rossendale.
 - ◀ Since 2020, this equates to the reduction of one senior team. This is because of Stacksteads CC folding. Demand at all other clubs has been static.
 - ◀ Future demand through population changes to 2036 identifies the potential growth of one senior men's team and one junior boys' team.
- ◀ **Supply vs demand analysis conclusions:**
 - ◀ Based on current demand levels, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate existing demand for cricket provision.
 - ◀ Identified future demand is also likely to be accommodated for on the existing stock.
 - ◀ New Hall Hey will provide a strategic reserve site for weekend cricket which will be able to accommodate potential weekend demand for local clubs.

PART 5: RUGBY UNION

5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. As part of this, Club Developers and a team of community rugby coaches deliver core programmes for clubs across Rossendale.

The RFU governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side and Tag rugby as well as the Touch Union programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

Consultation

The RBC and the RFU was consulted to update this section of the report.

5.2: Supply (2024)

In Rossendale there are six rugby union pitches across three sites. All pitches are available for community use, although only pitches located at Marl Pits are currently used by community clubs.

There has been the reduction of one junior rugby union pitch since 2020. The pitch, located at Marl Pits is now used for football.

Table 5.1: Supply of rugby union pitches available for community use

Analysis area	No. of rugby union pitches
Rossendale Central	5
Rossendale East	-
Rossendale West	1
Rossendale	6

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches with posts. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please refer to Table 6.2 below.

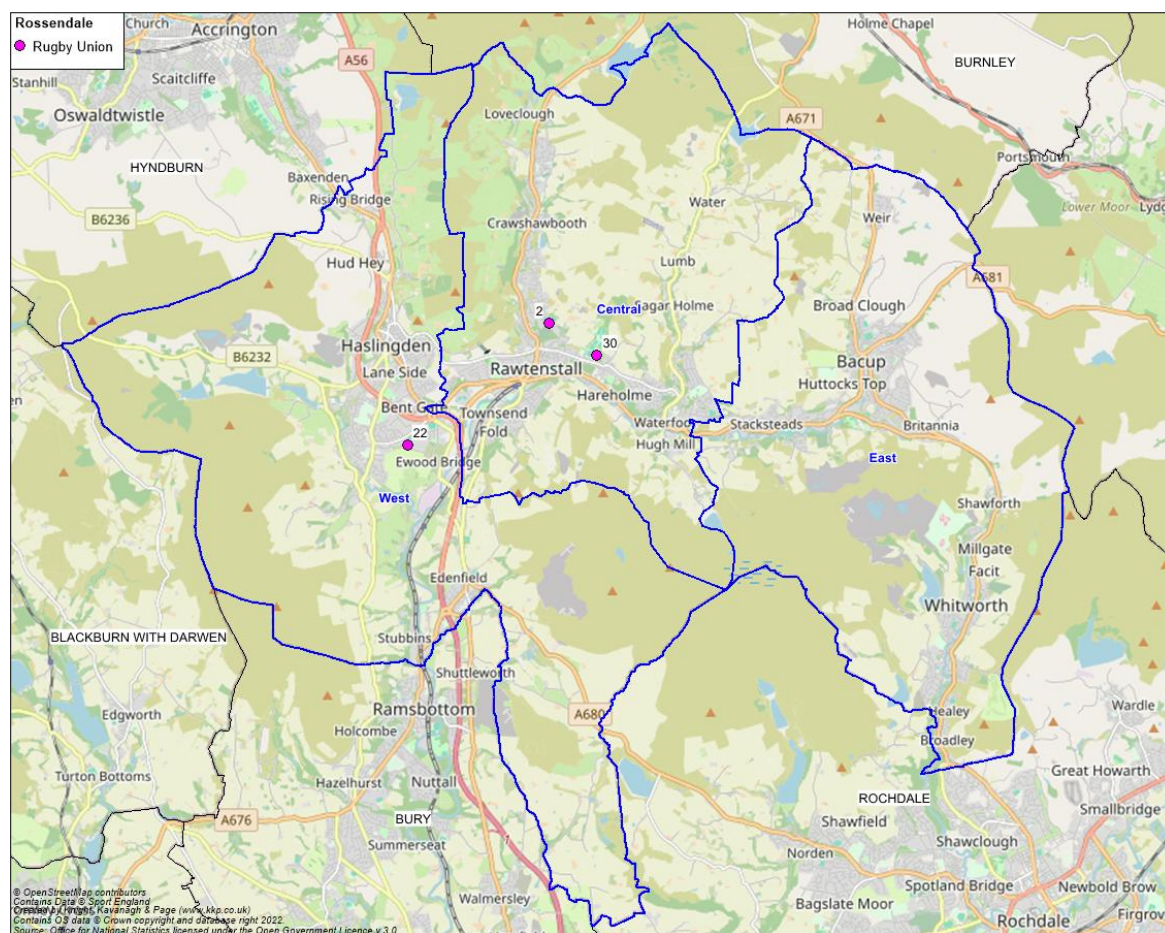
ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.2: Pitch dimensions

Age	Playing format	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) ¹⁵
U7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
U8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22
U9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
U10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
U11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U12	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U13	Age grade boys/girls	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U15	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U16	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U17	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U18	Colts	100 x 70
Senior	Senior	100 x 70

Figure 5.1 below identifies all rugby union pitches servicing Rossendale. For a key to the map, see Table 5.6.

Figure 5.1: Rugby union grass pitch locations



¹⁵ Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Security of tenure

Rossendale RUFC has secure tenure of all the facilities it accesses through a mixture of long-term leases and one licence agreement. Since the 2020 PPS, the Club has secured a long-term lease on one further pitch at Marl Pits. This was an aspiration of the Club to acquire in 2020 and was identified a key action in the PPS.

Pitch quality

The quality of rugby pitches across Rossendale was in 2020 assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◆ Good
- ◆ Standard
- ◆ Poor

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements: the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated. The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. Quality scores have been reviewed with the RFU to determine the following scoring in the report.

Table 5.3: Definition of maintenance categories

Category	Definition
M0	Action is significant improvements to maintenance programme
M1	Action is minor improvements to maintenance programme
M2	Action is no improvements to maintenance programme

Table 5.4: Definition of drainage categories

Category	Definition
D0	Action is pipe drainage system is needed on pitch
D1	Action is pipe drainage is needed on pitch
D2	Action is slit drainage is needed on pitch
D3	No action is needed on pitch drainage

Table 5.5: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	Poor	Poor	Standard
	Natural Adequate (D1)	Poor	Standard	Good
	Pipe Drained (D2)	Standard	Standard	Good
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	Standard	Good	Good

The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.6: Site quality ratings (2020/2024)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of pitches	Sportslit	Non-technical assessment score (2020)	Quality rating (2020)	Non-technical assessment score (2024) ¹⁶	Quality rating (2024)
2	Alder Grange School	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	1	No	M0/D0	Poor	M0/D0	Poor
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes – unused	1	No	M0/D1	Poor	M0/D1	Poor
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	1	No	M2/D3	Good	M2/D1	Good
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	1	Yes	M1/D2	Standard	M1/D1	Standard
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	1	Yes	M1/D1	Standard	M1/D1	Standard
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	1	No	M0/D0	Poor	M1/D1	Standard

Changes to quality

Three pitches have alternate quality scores from what was captured in the 2020 PPS. These are the 1st xv pitch and 2nd xv pitch at Marl Pits as well as a further pitch which has recently been acquired as part of a lease agreement with RBC.

The 1st xv pitch has had its scoring rating reduced from M2/D3 to M2/D1. The rationale for this is that the PPS methodology states that pipe drainage systems need to have been installed within the last eight years to count towards the scoring mark. The drainage system on this pitch was installed at least ten years ago. This is also the case for the 2nd xv pitch.

A further pitch is now leased to Rossendale RUFC since the 2020 PPS and is maintained in-house by the Club. It has also invested into the pitch and has installed a small-scale drainage system. As a result of this, the quality of the pitch has improved to M1/D1.

Whilst not impacting quality, there has been sportslighting equipped to the 3rd xv pitch on the top plateau of Marl Pits.

¹⁶ Updated via consultation with the RFU.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Ancillary facilities

The term ancillary facility relates to built facility infrastructures at sites. Typically, this includes (but is not limited too) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, carparking and toilet facilities.

The clubhouse used by Rossendale RUFC is primarily built to service the social element of sport at Marl Pits. It consists of a committee room, private bar, a kitchen, and toilets. It is often used as a facility for matchday and private functions. The 2020 PPS identified the facility as being outdated and unable to fully accommodate peak time demand. Since then, the facility has been updated with a refurbished kitchen and committee room provided.

The changing rooms are adjacent to the clubhouse and are operated by Rossendale Leisure Trust and owned by Rossendale Borough Council. The changing rooms service demand from Rossendale RUFC, but also from several football clubs and Rossendale Harriers Athletics Club. The facility consists of several changing rooms which share communal showering facilities, with several sports accessing these simultaneously it represents a potential safeguarding issue. It further limits opportunities for women and girls.

In effect, the quality of the changing rooms servicing the site is poor and inadequate for existing users but also in providing opportunities for growth in sport.

The changing rooms are identified in Rossendale Local Football Facility Plan (2019) for improvement/replacement and any investment through this plan needs to take into the multi-sport offer at Marl Pits.

5.3: Demand

Demand for rugby pitches in Rossendale tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

Competitive play

There is one community rugby union club in Rossendale; Rossendale RUFC. The number of teams it operated in 2020 and does as of the 24/25 season are detailed in the tables below.

Table 5.7: Summary of club demand (2019/20 season)

Season	Senior Men's (19+)	Senior Women's (19+)	Age Grade Boys' (13-17)	Age Grade Girls' (13-17)	Mixed Age Grade (6-12)
2019/2020	3	0	5	0	7
2024/2025	3	0	4	0	7
Changes	-	-	-1	-	-

As can be seen in the table above, the Club has one less junior boys' team. Outside of this, demand has been static.

Training demand

Throughout the Country, many rugby teams train at their home ground on match pitches. As a result, usage is concentrated which reduces the capacity for match play on these pitches and means they are more likely to be overplayed. A key factor in determining the extent of training on match pitches is the presence of sports lighting.

Rossendale RUFC has access to two sportslit pitches at Marl Pits which it uses for midweek training. This is an increase in provision since 2020 where it had one pitch with sportslighting to service midweek demand.

The Club's three senior teams train on the pitch on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 1.5 hours per night and its four junior teams train for 1.5 hours on Wednesday evenings. Mixed age grade teams either train on Sundays or play matches and have no midweek training need.

When equating this to match equivalent sessions per week, the midweek training demand for senior rugby equates to three match equivalent sessions for senior training and two for junior training.

Use of artificial pitches

The alternative to training on grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches. World Rugby (WR) produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22' that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. A WR compliant pitch also enables the transfer of match demand from grass pitches onto 3G pitches, which alleviates overplay of grass pitches and as a result protects quality.

Nationally, clubs with access to 3G pitches for training utilise them as a method of protecting grass pitches for matches and providing a high quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play generally continues to take place on grass pitches, although there is occasional use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of grass pitch quality or capacity issues (especially during bad weather spells).

Currently, there are no WR compliant 3G pitches identified in Rossendale and it is not considered to be an area by the RFU to have an overwhelming strategic need

Exported/imported demand

Exported demand refers to existing demand which is transferred outside of the study area; whilst imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities in Rossendale due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

There is no exported demand out of Rossendale and no clubs or teams from outside of Rossendale use provision within Rossendale from other local authorities.

Latent demand

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. In 2020, Rossendale RUFC stated it would look to develop a dedicated women's and girls' section if it had access to better quality ancillary provision was provided.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Future demand

Future demand is defined using population forecasts.

Population increases

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth (2036).

For reference total current population in 2024 of 70,865 will increase to 77,568 by 2036 (ONS 2018 projections). The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

Table 5.8: Team generation rates (2036)

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	No. of match equivalent session ¹⁷
Men (19-45yrs)	1:3712	0.20	0	-
Women (19-45yrs)	0		0	-
Boys (13-18yrs)	1:544	0.33	0	-
Girls (13-18yrs)	0		0	-
Mixed (7-12yrs)	1:806	0.46	0	-

When team generation rates are applied to Rossendale, it is not anticipated that there will be the growth of additional teams.

It is important to note that team generation rates are based exclusively on current team numbers and do not account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as coaching activity within schools linking to local clubs or specific RFU targets.

Consultation with the RFU states that a modest level of growth at Rossendale should be expected over the next 3-5 years. Specifically, this translates to adding an additional junior boys' team and beginning initial work to begin a women's and girls' offer with a minimum target aspiration of one dedicated U12 team.

Future demand summary

Total future demand equates one junior boys' team, and one junior girls team based on RFU feedback.

5.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing rugby. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times.

¹⁷ Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of rugby union pitches, the following assumptions are applied to the site-by-site and pitch-by-pitch analysis:

- ✦ All sites that are or could be used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ✦ All competitive play is on marked pitches (except for when explicitly identified by the clubs).
- ✦ From U13s upwards, teams play 15 v 15 and use a full pitch.
- ✦ Mixed age grade teams (U6s-U12s) play on half of a pitch, meaning two matches and four teams can be accommodated at any one time; this means that play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on teams operating on a home and away basis.
- ✦ For senior and single gender age grade teams, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a home and away basis.
- ✦ Senior men's rugby generally takes place on Saturday afternoons.
- ✦ Senior women's rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons.
- ✦ Age grade rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ✦ Training that takes place on marked pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels.
- ✦ Internal use of school pitches is added to current play, as determined on a site-by-site basis depending on levels of activity.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate, based on quality, as set out below.

Table 5.9: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and consultation. This guide, however, is only a very general measure of potential pitch capacity. It does not account for specific circumstances at time of use, and it assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established for all types of rugby. For senior teams, it is Saturday PM, as all senior men's teams play at this time, with senior women's teams playing on Sunday afternoons.

Peak time for mini and junior rugby is Sunday AM.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.10: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Rossendale

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Quality rating	Sportslit?	Match demand (MES)	Training demand (MES)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
2	Alder Grange School	Rossendale Central	Yes – unused	Unsecure	1	Poor (M0/D0)	No	0.5	-	0.5	-	At capacity with curricular use.
22	Haslingden High School	Rossendale West	Yes – unused	Unsecure	1	Poor (M0/D1)	No	1.5	-	1.5	-	At capacity with curricular use.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	Secure	1	Good (M2/D1)	No	1.5	-	3	1.5	First team pitch. Accommodates on average three matches per week. No training on this pitch.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	Secure	1	Standard (M1/D1)	Yes	0.5	3	2	1.5	The pitch largely accommodates for midweek training for senior teams and one match per week (on average) from a junior team.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	Secure	1	Standard (M1/D1)	Yes	1.5	2	2	1.5	The pitch is largely used for junior matches and midweek training.
30	Marl Pits	Rossendale Central	Yes	Secure	1	Standard (M1/D1)	No	1.75	-	2	0.25	Pitch largely accommodates mixed aged grade demand.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Actual spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'actual capacity'. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Using the above criteria, there is no spare capacity on any pitch in Rossendale for senior men's activity. There is minimal actual spare capacity for an increase of one mixed age grade team and for either a U18 team or senior women's team (which play Sunday afternoons).

The above is based on opportunities for match play and not training. If additional teams were operational, training shortfalls would become exacerbated.

Overplay

Two pitches in Rossendale are overplayed by a combined three match equivalent sessions per week.

5.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week.

Future demand is identified by the RFU and equates to one junior boys' team and one junior girls' team. This equates to one match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 5.11: Summary of supply and demand balance on rugby union pitches

	Actual spare capacity ¹⁸	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Rossendale Central	-	3	3	1	4
Rossendale East	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	-	3	3	1	4

As can be seen in the table above, there are clear shortfalls both now and in the future for rugby union provision in Rossendale.

5.6: Conclusions (2024)

There is an insufficient supply of provision to cater for Rossendale RUFC. Shortfalls are due to a mixture of pitch quality and high levels of midweek training demand. The changing facilities which support the Club are poor quality and not conducive to the development of women and girls' rugby union. This is an issue as the Club represents the only potential outlet for this activity for Rossendale residents.

¹⁸ In match equivalent sessions

Rugby union summary

- ◀ **There is currently an insufficient level of rugby union provision in Rossendale which equates to three match equivalent sessions per week on dedicated rugby union pitches.**
- ◀ **Future demand (if realised) will increase the existing shortfalls by one match equivalent session per week.**
- ◀ **Rugby union pitch supply:**
 - ◀ There is a total of six rugby union pitches across three sites.
 - ◀ All pitches are available for community use, although those at education sites are unused.
 - ◀ There are no WR compliant 3G pitches in Rossendale. Current demand does not warrant the need to develop a WR compliant pitch.
- ◀ **Rugby union pitch quality:**
 - ◀ There is one good quality rugby union pitch in Rossendale, three standard and two poor quality pitches.
- ◀ **Rugby union demand:**
 - ◀ Rossendale RUFC is the sole club operating in Rossendale. It operates with a total of 14 teams.
 - ◀ Rossendale RUFC has secure tenure on all provision it uses.
 - ◀ The changing facilities are poor with highlighted issues with showers and heating.
- ◀ **Supply vs demand analysis:**
 - ◀ There is one overplayed pitch in Rossendale located at Marl Pits, it is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

PART 6: SPORT SCENARIO TESTING (UPDATED 2024)

Where there have been notable changes in the supply and demand landscape since the 2020 PPS, updated scenario testing has been undertaken. This is applicable for football/3G pitches, cricket and rugby union. For the remaining sports included within the scope of work, the supply and demand positions are broadly the same as they were in 2020.

Dark Lane (LPA Ref:2016/0563)

The current S106 agreement for Dark Lane stipulates that a replacement pitch must be provided to compensate for the loss of the stadia football site at Dark Lane. At the time the S106 was signed, it was agreed that this replacement would take the form of a natural turf pitch at Marl Pits. Additionally, a secondary S106 agreement was signed, allocating £54,643 for improvements to the playing pitches at Marl Pits.

Following the replacement pitch being agreed via the S106, RBC has identified that one of its highest priorities for sport is to develop 3G pitches based on feedback received from local sports clubs. This scenario considers the current need for grass pitches in comparison to 3G pitches and what impact 3G pitches could theoretically play in reducing any shortfalls identified on grass pitches.

This is intended to equip stakeholders with the necessary information to make an informed decision on the optimal use of this S106.

Current grass pitch position (sport by sport)

The first three tables show the current position for grass football pitches, 3G pitches and rugby union pitches. They identify shortfalls for adult and youth football pitches, 3G pitches and rugby union pitches.

Table 6.1: Football grass pitches conclusion

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity ¹⁹	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	1	1.5	0.5	-	0.5
Youth 11v11	1	2.5	1.5	1	2.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	6	4.5	0.5	5
Mini 7v7	1	-	1	1	-
Mini 5v5	1	-	1	-	1

Table 6.2: 3G pitch conclusion

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Rossendale Central	56	1.5	1	0.5
Rossendale East	23	0.5	0	0.5
Rossendale West	75	2	0	2
Rossendale	156	4	1	3

¹⁹ In match equivalent sessions

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.3: Rugby union pitch conclusion

	Actual spare capacity ²⁰	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Rossendale Central	-	3	3	1	4
Rossendale East	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale West	-	-	-	-	-
Rossendale	-	3	3	1	4

3G pitches (match play opportunities)

There is a current shortfall of three 11v11 3G pitches to accommodate existing demand. This is based on the FA 3G model for midweek training. Pitches which are on the FA 3G Register can also be used to accommodate competitive match play.

The scenario below looks at the theoretical impact of providing both one 11v11 3G pitch and then three (to align to the known shortfall of provision) to understand what level of additional capacity this could generate for match play.

In Rossendale, peak time for mini and youth football is Saturday AM and for adult football it is Saturday PM. There is also high demand for football on Sundays with around 45% of activity played on this day. Sunday activity is particularly popular for youth football and women's and girls' activity. This enables any 3G pitch which is provided to be used across a full weekend.

The table below shows the potential capacity which can be generated for match play on a 3G pitch across various pitch formats based on a two-hour programme based on a pitch with dimension of 91 x 55m.

Table 6.4: 11v11 3G pitch – match capacity

Match format	No. of pitches that fit on a 11v11 3G pitch	No. of matches per hour on a 11v11 3G pitch	No. of matches per 2-hour period on a 11v11 3G pitch	MES equivalent per 2-hour period
5v5	4	4	8	8
7v7	2	2	4	4
9v9	1	1	2	2
11v11 Youth	1	0	1	1
11v11 Adult	1	0	1	1

As aforementioned, match play in Rossendale takes place on both Saturdays and Sundays. Assuming that any 11v11 3G pitch is available from 9am – 6pm on Saturdays for match play and 9am – 3pm on Sundays the following match equivalent session comparison can be concluded (shown in the tables below). It is based on a theoretical programme of use for all formats of play and based on typical times which local leagues play fixtures.

²⁰ In match equivalent sessions

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.5: Theoretical programme of use for a 3G pitch in Rossendale (Saturday)

Time (Saturday)	Match format	MES equivalent
9 – 10am	5v5	4
10 – 11am	7v7	2
11 – 12pm	9v9	1
12 – 1 pm	9v9	1
1 – 3pm	Youth 11v11	1
3 – 6pm	Adult	1

Table 6.6: Theoretical programme of use for a 3G pitch in Rossendale (Sunday)

Time (Sunday)	Match format	MES equivalent
9 – 10am	5v5	4
10 – 11am	7v7	2
11 – 12pm	9v9	1
12 – 1 pm	9v9	1
1 – 3pm	Adult	1

The impact of providing one 11v11 3G pitch using the theoretical programme of use above is shown below. In total, the following capacity would be generated:

- ♦ Two MES for adult match play
- ♦ One MES for youth 11v11
- ♦ Four MES for youth 9v9
- ♦ Four MES for mini 7v7
- ♦ Eight MES for mini 5v5

There is sufficient evidence to support the above programme of use being sustained, based on current league play. This includes adult women's activity on Sunday afternoons.

Table 6.7: Theoretical impact on grass pitches by providing one additional 11v11 3G pitch

Pitch format	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)			
	Current total	Future total	Potential current total	Potential future total
Adult	0.5	0.5	1.5	1.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	2.5	0.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	4.5	5	0.5	1
Mini 7v7	1	-	5	4
Mini 5v5	1	1	9	6

Overall, shortfalls on adult pitches would be alleviated and reduced on youth 11v11 pitches and youth 9v9 pitches. Additional spare capacity would be generated for both formats of mini pitch.

Where new capacity is generated for mini pitch types with the transfer of play onto a 3G pitch, it will, in theory, provide potential opportunities for existing mini pitches to be reconfigured into larger youth pitches thus also reducing shortfalls on these pitch types

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

As there is spare capacity of mini pitches in Rossendale, if the programme of use was centred around youth football (youth 9v9 and youth 11v11) it would further reduce the shortfalls identified above.

Providing one adult grass natural turf pitch

If the S106 is undertaken as originally planned, it would see the development of one playing pitch. Assuming this is an adult football pitch (based on that being a 'like for like' replacement of the former site) assuming it is good quality, it could provide a maximum of three match equivalent sessions of play per week.

Assuming this is used by four adult teams and two youth 11v11 teams (on a home vs away rotation) to maximise use, the 3G pitch would provide a significantly higher uplift in potential match capacity equating to four matches for youth 9v9 play and 12 for mini pitches over a weekend and throughout the local peak periods of play.

Providing three 11v11 pitches to meet known shortfall

The table below shows the impact of providing three further 11v11 3G pitches in Rossendale aligned to the existing shortfall for midweek training (using the same programme of use as used above). As stated before, evidence from Lancashire FA affiliation data suggests this approach would see usage of pitches on both Saturday and Sunday.

- ✦ Six MES for adult match play
- ✦ Three MES for youth 11v11
- ✦ 12 MES for youth 9v9
- ✦ 12 MES for mini 7v7
- ✦ 24 MES for mini 5v5

Table 6.8: Theoretical grass pitch conclusion is there was access to three additional 11v11 3G pitches in Rossendale utilised for match play

Pitch format	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)			
	Current total	Future total	Potential current total	Potential future total
Adult	0.5	0.5	5.5	5.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	2.5	1.5	0.5
Youth 9v9	4.5	5	6.5	7
Mini 7v7	1	-	13	12
Mini 5v5	1	1	25	25

Dark Lane S106 conclusion

There are shortfalls of football grass pitches, 3G pitches for football and rugby union grass pitches. Based on match equivalent sessions, the shortfalls are highest for football grass pitches. The shortfall for 3G pitches has also increased since the last PPS by one additional 11v11 pitch.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Using the theoretical programme of use for match play on 11v11 3G pitches identified in the preceding tables there is a clear capacity benefit generated from increasing the supply of this provision type which would be unattainable through providing one singular grass pitch.

To provide the same match play capacity equivalent as a singular 11v11 3G pitch, 11 good quality grass pitches would need to be provided to meet the equivalent capacity a 3G pitch could provide. This does not account for the midweek training benefit it would also provide.

The RFU confirms Rossendale RUFC would not be interested in using the 3G pitch so any development would not be able to support rugby union.

Taking the above into account, the compounded impact of opportunity for match play and a full programme of use midweek for midweek training a case can be made for this being the optimal outcome.

As identified in Table 6.14 below, rugby union shortfalls are resolvable via pitch improvements and therefore no new grass pitch provision (in this instance) is required for rugby union.

Taking everything into consideration, the following is recommended:

- ◆ Redirect the S106 sum to support the development of an 11v11 3G pitch at the Adrenaline Centre.
- ◆ Utilise the secondary S106 for pitch improvements at strategic playing field sites.

Alleviating football overplay/improving pitch quality

In total there are four pitches overplayed in Rossendale across three sites, equating to nine match equivalent sessions per week. Improving quality of these pitches (i.e., through increased maintenance or improved drainage) will increase capacity at the sites and consequently reduce both current and future shortfalls.

To illustrate the above, Table 6.1 highlights the current levels of overplay that would be alleviated if quality improved to good at each site. As a reminder, the capacity rating for each type and quality rating as detailed in the table below:

Adult pitch quality	Adult matches per week	Youth pitch quality	Youth matches per week	Mini pitch quality	Mini matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.9: Overplay if all pitches were good quality (match equivalent sessions)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Current quality	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (MES)	Good quality rating (MES)
22	Haslingden High School	West	Poor	Youth 11v11	1	2.5	0.5
22	Haslingden High School	West	Poor	Youth 9v9	1	0.5	1.5
30	Marl Pits	Central	Poor	Adult	1	0.5	1.5
44	St Peters Playing Field	West	Good	Youth 9v9	1	5.5	5.5 ²¹
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	East	Poor	Adult	1	1	1

The impact of improving overplayed pitches to good quality is shown in the table above. Overplay at Haslingden High School and Marl Pits would be alleviated. The pitch at St Peters Playing Field (which is overmarked with two mini pitches) is already good quality so there is no capacity benefit from pitch improvements. For this pitch, a transfer of play onto a 3G pitch or alternate pitches with spare capacity is the only solution to alleviate shortfalls.

Table 6.10: Impact of improving pitch quality on overall supply and demand

Pitch type	Current actual spare capacity	Current overplay	Current total	Potential total if improvements are undertaken
Adult	0.5	1	0.5	-
Youth 11v11	1	2.5	1.5	1
Youth 9v9	1.5	6	4.5	4

As seen in the table above, if quality was improved to good on overplayed pitches, shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 pitches would be alleviated.

3G pitches

There has been an increase of 49 community football teams playing in Rossendale since the 19/20 football season. As a result of this there is an increased associated need for 3G pitches to provide for midweek training opportunities.

Modelling is based on an FA model which suggests that for every 38 community football teams there is a need for one (11v11 size) 3G pitch with sports lighting.

Full details of the 3G pitch analysis can be found in Part 3 of this report, however, in summary, there is a shortfall of 5.5 11v11 3G pitches.

²¹ Pitch improvements won't theoretically increase the capacity of this pitch due to it already being good quality.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.11: Current demand for 3G pitches in Rossendale (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Potential shortfall
Rossendale Central	0.5
Rossendale East	0.5
Rossendale West	2
Rossendale	3

Based on the above, it can be deemed that the proposal at the Adrenaline Centre has sufficient evidence to support its development.

Ensuring there is a sufficient supply of 3G pitches in Rossendale is important to ensure clubs have sufficient access to both midweek training and match play opportunities.

As Rossendale has high amounts of inclement weather, providing further options for match play is essential to support the growth of the game.

3G pitch developments

The Adrenaline Centre

The Adrenaline Centre (owned by Rossendale BC and managed by Rossendale Leisure Trust) is working towards the development of an 11v11 (91x55m) 3G pitch. The site is in Rossendale West.

If built, it will reduce the shortfall in Rossendale West to one 11v11 3G pitch and reduce the Boroughwide shortfall down from three pitches to two.

Alder Grange High School

There is a pending planning application to provide sports lighting on the 3G pitch at Alder Grange High School. The pitch measures 92 x 57m and is classified as being an 11v11 pitch on the basis it can accommodate adult football. It is currently not available for community use on the basis it is not sportslit. If it was to be provided it would fully alleviate the shortfall of pitches in the Rossendale Central Analysis Area.

Table 6.12: 3G shortfalls if the Adrenaline Centre and Alder Grange High School are built/become available for community use

Analysis area	Potential shortfall
Rossendale Central	-
Rossendale East	0.5
Rossendale West	1
Rossendale	1.5

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Rugby union

Overplay has been identified on two pitches at Marl Pits (Rossendale RUFC).

Improving pitch maintenance and drainage

Maintenance and drainage solutions are an integral method in improving pitch quality at rugby union sites, ensuring that pitches can accommodate demand throughout the season. There are two sites which are identified as being overplayed and the following scenario explores what impact improving both the level of maintenance and installation of drainage solutions would have on the capacity of provision.

The table below illustrates the RFU pitch quality scoring methodology which ascertains the capacity of pitches based on the scoring criteria.

Table 6.13: RFU capacity guidance

	Maintenance Poor (M0)	Maintenance Adequate (M1)	Maintenance Good (M2)
Drainage natural inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
Drainage natural adequate or pipe drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
Drainage pipe drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
Drainage Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

The table below looks at what capacity benefits would be ascertained through improvement of both maintenance and drainage solutions in one increment on the above technical criteria. It further looks at the benefit of maximum improvements to both drainage and maintenance to explore maximum benefits.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.14: Improving maintenance on all sites by one increment (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site ID	Site name	Number of pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved technical score	Improved capacity rating
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	Yes	3.5	2	1.5	M2/D1	0.5
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	Yes	3.5	2	1.5	M2/D1	0.5

Improving the maintenance of overplayed pitches accessed by Rossendale RUFC would have a theoretical capacity benefit. It would reduce the current shortfall of three match equivalent sessions per week to one.

Table 6.15: Improving drainage on all sites by one increment (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site ID	Site name	Number of pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved Technical score	Improved capacity rating
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	Yes	3.5	2	1.5	M1/D2	1
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	Yes	3.5	2	1.5	M1/D2	1

A similar approach to improving maintenance has been undertaken in the table above for drainage installation (through improvement to pitches by one increment on the RFU technical criteria). This would have a small impact on reducing overplay reducing it from three match equivalent sessions per week to two. It is also noted that one pitch has an existing drainage system in place (which is over ten years old) but works effectively.

Table 6.16: Improving both maintenance and drainage to M2/D3 at all sites (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site ID	Site name	Number of pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved technical score	Improved capacity rating
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	Yes	7	2	1.5	M2/D3	-
30	Marl Pits	1	M1/D1	No	4.75	2	1.5	M2/D3	-

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The table above shows the impact of improving the two overplayed pitches at Marl Pits by the full technical criteria set by the RFU. Using this approach all overplay would be alleviated.

3G pitch provision

It is not always viable for community clubs to maintain pitch provision to an M2/D3. In this example, Rossendale RUFC would have to maintain both its sports lit pitches to the maximum quality threshold to make the site be at overall capacity. This is unrealistic for most community clubs and is unlikely to be achievable in this instance.

Alternate options are required if shortfalls are going to be met. The most simplistic option is to transfer a proportion of midweek training demand onto a World Rugby Compliant 3G pitch. Current midweek training demand equates to five match equivalent sessions per week so if three match equivalent sessions of this could be accommodated for on a 3G pitch then theoretically overplay would be alleviated.

On this basis of the above, the consideration of a multi-sport 3G pitch should be considered when future developments for 3G pitches advance.

Cricket

New Hall Hey

New Hall Hey Cricket Ground has been leased to ISSE and is expected to have a comprehensive programme of use midweek throughout the year. On weekends LCF reports it is likely to be available for hire from local community cricket clubs.

The potential impact of having this pitch available is shown in the table below. In theory, if the square is available on Saturdays and Sundays (peak time for the Lancashire Cricket league) then it would generate 48 match equivalent sessions across a weekend. This is based on a typical senior men's cricket team playing 12 home games per season and being available on to accommodate two teams on a Saturday (playing on a home vs away basis) and the same for Sunday.

Table 6.17: Capacity potential based on New Hall Cricket Ground being community available

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Demand (match sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Potential additional capacity in peak periods	Total
Saturday	12	-	12	24	36
Sunday	-	-	-	24	24
Rossendale	12	-	12	48	60

On the basis that the square is of a sufficient quality, an overall spare capacity of 12 match equivalent sessions per season (Rossendale-wide) is increased to 60 match equivalent sessions per season.

PART 7: SPORT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS (UPDATED 2024)

The findings of the Rossendale PPS update (2024) are broadly like that of 2020. There have, however, been significant pockets of growth in football which impact on the need for 3G pitches.

Based on the changes to the supply and demand position, as well as changes to infrastructure, and site quality, the sport specific recommendations in the Rossendale PPS (2020) have been updated for all sports within the scope and can be seen below. All recommendations set out in Part 5 Strategic Recommendations (2020 PPS) are still applicable and do not feature within this update.

Grass football pitch recommendations

- ✦ Protect the existing quantity of pitches (unless replacement provision meets NPPF and Sport England Playing Field Policy requirements and is agreed upon and provided).
- ✦ Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as poor or standard quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality.
- ✦ Utilise the Football Foundation's PitchPower app to assist in the improvement and ongoing maintenance of provision.
- ✦ Work to accommodate future demand at sites which are not operating at capacity.
- ✦ Consider opportunities to secure community use agreements for education sites which are used by community football clubs.
- ✦ Work to alleviate identified overplay on grass football pitches, particularly those at youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch format.
- ✦ Improve ancillary facilities where there is a demand to do so and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer with a priority on multi-pitch sites, club led sites, strategic site for adult football and sites which promote participation in women and girls football.
- ✦ Support clubs in securing lease arrangements from RBC on single pitch sites (and larger sites if opportunities become available) ensuring clubs are FA Accredited and have a football development in place.
- ✦ Work with Lancashire FA and the Football Foundation to update the current LFFP as to have a more up-to-date picture for the future of football in Rossendale.

3G pitch recommendations

- ✦ Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- ✦ Work with relevant partners to deliver additional 3G pitches in the Borough to cater for football training demand.
- ✦ Work with partners such as the FA, FF, RFL, RFU, Sport England and other NGBs as applicable to identify the most suitable locations to build new 3G pitches to alleviate known shortfalls.
- ✦ Ensure that any new 3G pitches have community use agreements in place and that long term access to the pitch at Valley Leadership Academy is secured.
- ✦ Ensure that all 11v11 and smaller size pitches where compliant are on the FA 3G Pitch Register and are re-tested every three years or when required to sustain certification.
- ✦ Ensure all current and future providers have in place a pitch replacement fund to ensure long-term sustainability.
- ✦ Ensure that all new 3G pitches are constructed to meet FA quality performance standards.
- ✦ Look to increase the number of 3G pitches within Rossendale at relevant sites by using the findings from the PPS.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ◀ Look to transfer mini soccer demand from grass pitches to 3G in line with the FA ambition for 50% of all mini match play to take place on 3G pitches (where it is appropriate to do so).
- ◀ Work with Lancashire FA and the Football Foundation to update the current LFFP.

Cricket recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of cricket squares.
- ◀ Improve quality at sites assessed as standard quality and ensure quality is sustained at sites assessed as good through partnership working with LCF.
- ◀ Ensure New Hall Hey Cricket Ground has an extensive usage programme and provides opportunities for peak time cricket to be played by local clubs if they are to need a secondary ground in future years.
- ◀ Install additional NTPs and/or hybrid wickets to accompany grass wicket squares (where space allows) at sites with capacity challenges.
- ◀ Improve the changing and ancillary facilities where there is a need to do so.
- ◀ Consider options to increase and improve stock of suitable practice facilities.
- ◀ Continue to support ECB initiatives such as All Stars and Dynamos and ensure unaffiliated demand and recreational cricket is provided for.
- ◀ Work to increase women and girls' participation in line with the Inspiring Generations ECB Strategy and protect existing provision so that women and girls have a suitable place to practise and play.

Grass rugby union recommendations

- ◀ Protect the existing quantity of rugby union pitches including those used for curricular and extra-curricular demand.
- ◀ Explore options to improve the changing pavilion accessed by Rossendale RUFC and other sports club as part of a multi-sport led approach.
- ◀ Support clubs in taking part in the GMA pitch advisory service to explore technical requirements to improve pitch quality to address overplay.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

PART 8: ACTION PLAN (UPDATED 2024)

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the preceding Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. It should be reviewed in the light of staff and financial resources in order to prioritise support for strategically significant provision and provision that other providers are less likely to make. The Action Plan is separated by analysis area.

The Council should make it a high priority to work with NGBs and other partners to produce a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding. To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of outdoor facility sites and associated provision.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance i.e. they accommodate the majority of demand, or the recommended action has the greatest anticipated impact on addressing shortfalls (identified either on a sport-by-sport basis or across the Council area as a whole).

Table 8.1: Proposed tiered site criteria

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategically located in the Borough. Priority sites for NGBs.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Site layout	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, including provision of an AGP.	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or more pitches.
Type of sport	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.
Management	Management control remains within the local authority/other provider or with an appropriate lease arrangement through a committee or education owned.	Management control remains within the local authority with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.	Management control remains within the local authority/provider or with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.
Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	No changing room access on site or appropriate access to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).

Hub sites are of strategic Borough-wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. These have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

Key centres are more community focussed sites, although some are still likely to service a wider analysis area. There may be more of a focus on a specific sport.

Additionally, it is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both hub sites and key centre sites to complement the pitches in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

Local sites refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one facility or a low number of facilities that service just one or two sports. The level of priority attached to them for external investment may be relatively low.

For local authority sites, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities, and it is anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that the Club would be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

Some local sites are suitable for rationalisation providing that capital receipts are allocated to replace the lost provision at larger, multi-pitch sites.

Management and development

The following issues should be considered when undertaking sports related site development or enhancement:

- ◀ Financial viability.
- ◀ Security of tenure.
- ◀ Planning permission requirements and any foreseen difficulties in securing permission.
- ◀ Adequacy of existing finances to maintain existing sites.
- ◀ Business Plan/Masterplan – including financial package for creation of new provision where need has been identified.
- ◀ Analysis of the possibility of shared site management opportunities.
- ◀ The availability of opportunities to lease sites to external organisations.
- ◀ Options to assist community groups to gain funding to enhance existing provision.
- ◀ Negotiation with landowners to increase access to private hub sites.
- ◀ Football investment programme/3G pitch development with the FA and Football Foundation

Partners

The column indicating partners refers to the main organisations that the Council would look to work with to support delivery of the actions. Given the extent of potential actions it is reasonable to assume that partners will not necessarily be able to support all of the actions identified but where the action is a priority and resource is available the partner will endeavour to provide support.

Priority

Although hub sites are mostly likely to have a high priority level as they have wide importance, high priority sites have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the assessment. Therefore, some key centres and local sites are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally, if possible, be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

The majority of key centres are a **medium** priority, have analysis area importance and have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

The **low** priority sites tend to be single pitch or single sport sites and often club or education sites with local specific importance but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment for specific users.

Costs

The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium or high based on cost. The brackets are:

- (L) - Low - less than £150k
- (M) - Medium - £150k-£750k
- (H) - High £750k and above

These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at:

Timescales

The Action Plan has been created to be delivered over a ten-year period. The information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur.

The indicative timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based:

- ♦ (S) -Short (1-2 years).
- ♦ (M) - Medium (3-5 years).
- ♦ (L) - Long (6+ years).

Aim

Each action seeks to meet at least one of the three aims of the Strategy; **Enhance, Provide, Protect.**

ROSSENDALE EAST ANALYSIS AREA

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
5	Bacup Borough Football Club	Football	Sports Club	One good quality stadia adult football pitch. The pitch has actual spare capacity but this has been discounted as it is a private stadia site. The site has good quality changing rooms and a standard quality clubhouse.	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime.	CFA FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	M	Protect
6	Bacup CC	Cricket	Sports Club	One basic quality grass cricket square with 20 wickets. The Club has freehold of the site. The site has a good quality clubhouse and adequate changing facilities.	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of improving changing facilities on site.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
25	John Street Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	One poor quality adult football pitch. The pitch is unused. It has no changing facilities and cannot be used for adult football.	Reconfigure to mini or youth football pitch formats to cater for demand from Whitworth Valley FC. Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
29	Maden Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	Four youth pitches and two mini pitches which are standard quality. The site is serviced by poor ancillary facilities. No overplay present on the site but most pitches are at or near capacity.	Ensure appropriate maintenance levels to sustain current usage. As a key site for football, focus on improving quality where possible. Explore funding options to improve the quality of the ancillary facilities which service the site.	FA FF RBC	Key Site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
35	Northern Primary School	Football	School	One mini 5v5 pitch of poor quality which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
36	Our Lady St Anselms School Playing Field	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which is played to capacity.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
46	Stacksteads Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	One standard quality adult football pitch supported by good quality ancillary facilities. RBC is working on potentially offering the pitch to a community football club on a 10-year lease arrangement.	Work to improve the quality of the grass pitch at the site and sustain the good quality ancillary facility at the site. Support a club led approach to management of the site.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
50	Tonacliffe County Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 football pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
53	Weir Playing Field	Football	RLT	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is unused. Spare capacity has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
55	Whitworth Community High School	Football	School	Two youth 11v11, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, all standard quality. The site has no current community use but previously had use from Whitworth Valley FC.	Sustain quality of pitches by upholding the current maintenance regime. Seek to access again for community use when required to meet future growth in demand	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
				The School has permission consent granted for a partial rebuild of which a parcel of playing field is expected to be lost							
56	Whitworth Valley Football Club	Football	Sports Club	One poor quality adult football pitch which is played to capacity at peak time. The Club is in receipt of GPMF.	Utilise the funding of GPMF to improve pitch quality.	CFA FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
-	Leven Greive Sports Field	-		Disused playing field site. Previously contained one adult football pitch. There is no accompanying ancillary provision or car parking.	The site should be protected from development or replacement (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4), as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.	RBC SE	Local Site	-	-	-	-
-	Waterbarn Recreation Ground	-		Disused cricket ground. Former home of Stacksteads Cricket Club (prior to its relocation to New Hall Hey and it folding in 2023). The site has a dilapidated clubhouse and no carparking facilities.	The site should be protected from development or replacement (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4), as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.	RBC SE	Local Site	-	-	-	-

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

ROSSENDALE CENTRAL ANALYSIS AREA

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
2	Alder Grange School	Football	School	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is played to capacity through curricular use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
2	Alder Grange School	3G	School	One 11v11 3G pitch (92 x 57m) which is without sports lighting and unavailable for community use (largely due to not having sports lighting). The site has an active planning application to provide sports lighting at the site.	Retain for school use. Support application for sports lighting and ensure a Community Use Agreement is activated at the site to increase the supply of provision available to clubs in the local area.	CFA FF School	Local Site	M	M-L	M	Protect Provide
2	Alder Grange School	Rugby Union	School	One poor quality (M0/D0) junior rugby pitch which is played to capacity through curricular use.	Retain for school use.	RFU School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
3	All Saints Catholic High School	Football	School	Two poor quality adult football pitches that are played to capacity through curricular use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
4	Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School	3G	School	One small size 3G pitch (67 x 43) which is without sports lighting and unavailable for community use. The pitch is of standard quality.	Retain for school use. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment/resurfacing when necessary. Explore opportunity to install sports lighting and to establish community use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Provide
4	Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School	AGP	School	One small-size, sand filled AGP which is unavailable for community use. The pitch is of standard quality.	Retain for school use.	EH School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
8	Balladen Community Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
9	Barlowfold Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	One poor quality adult pitch that has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality. Consider reconfiguration of alternate football pitch formats.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
11	Cowpe Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch that has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Sustain current maintenance regime.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
12	Crawshawbooth Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
13	Dean Lane Playing Field	Football	RLT	One poor quality mini 5v5 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
17	Edgeside Park	Football	RLT	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
19	Fairview Recreation Ground	Football	RLT	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
20	Valley Leadership Academy	Football	School RLT	One poor quality adult pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF, RBC	Hub Site	L	L	L	Protect
20	Valley Leadership Academy	3G	School RLT	One 11v11 sportslit, 3G pitch which is available for community use and on the FA register. The pitch is of standard quality but it is past its recommended life expectancy and needs a replacement surface providing. The pitch is the only 11v11 3G pitch in Rossendale and the loss of this facility would be detrimental to existing user groups and the growth of football locally.	Ensure pitch quality improvements are made as soon as feasibly possible to prevent the pitch becoming unusable and current 3G shortfalls being exacerbated.	CFA FF RBC	Hub Site	H	S	H	Protect Enhance
20	Valley Leadership Academy	AGP	School RLT	One small-size AGP which is available for community use. The AGP is reported to be in poor condition. The school is expected to go through a rebuild soon.	Improve quality of pitch through resurfacing as soon as feasibly possible, possibly to a 3G surface. Ensure sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment/resurfacing. Ensure the pitch is retained to support community sport and is not negatively impacted by the school rebuild.	EH RBC School	Hub Site	L	L	L	Protect
27	Loveclough Park	Football	RLT	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which is currently unused. RBC is working on potentially offering the pitch to a community football club on a 10-year lease arrangement.	Sustain current maintenance regime. Support any lease arrangement which provides a higher usage programme on the pitch.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
28	Lumb Millennium Green	Football	RLT	One poor quality mini 5v5 pitch. No current use.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF, RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
30	Marl Pits	Football	RLT	Three adult pitches are of a mixed quality. There is one good, one standard and one poor pitch at the site. The poor-quality pitch is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. The good quality pitch supports regional feeder league level football. Rossendale FC is the main user of the site. RBC is currently working with the Club to understand the potential to offer it a lease arrangement on football pitch provision on the site to enable it to have an improved tenure position. The changing facilities servicing the site are poor quality.	Ensure appropriate maintenance levels to sustain current usage and aim to improve the poor-quality pitch to alleviate overplay. Work to improve the changing facilities which support the site as part of a multi-sport approach.	CFA FF RBC	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
30	Marl Pits	3G	RLT	Four small-sided sports lit 3G pitches that are of standard quality. The pitches are circa 12 years old and will need replacement soon.	Consider plans to resurface the pitches when they are in a position of need for replacement. Ensure sinking fund is in place for further refurbishment/replacement	CFA FF RBC	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
30	Marl Pits	Rugby Union	Sports Club RLT	Home venue of Rossendale RUFC. It has access to four pitches. Pitches range from good to standard quality. All pitches are currently leased to Rossendale RUFC from RBC. Two	Where possible, support the club with its inhouse maintenance programme. Work with the Club to improve quality across its sportslit pitches to reduced overplay and grow capacity for any increases in demand.	CFA FF RBC	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
				pitches have sports lighting which are both on meadowhead. The Club maintains all its grass pitches inhouse. The two sportslit pitches are overplayed by a combined three match equivalent sessions per week. The changing facilities supporting the site (shared with football and athletics) is poor quality and unsuitable for women's and girls' participants and a safeguarding challenge for younger participants.	Work with the Club and other sports clubs at Marl Pits to refurbish/replace the existing pavilion to establish a high-quality multi-sport offer on the site.						
33	New Hall Hey Cricket Ground	Cricket	Sports Club	A disused cricket ground and former home of Stacksteads CC which folded in 2023. The site had nine natural turf wickets and one NTP. The ancillary provision which services the site is poor quality. The site is set to be leased to Inspire Support Sports Empower (ISSE) on a 25-year agreement. It is looking to apply for a grant award for £50,000 from the ECB to improve the quality of the existing pavilion. It is expected that the ground will be available for hire during the cricket peak period (Saturday and Sunday) which will enable access from other community club if demand warrants the need to access a secondary site.	Ensure that ISSE provides a strong range of recreational sport programmes which generates social value to residents. Ensure the cricket square and pavilion is available during peak periods to accommodate any demand from cricket local clubs.	ECB LCF ISSE RBC	Local Site	H	S	L	Protect Enhance
37	Rawtenstall CC	Cricket	Sports Club	One basic quality grass cricket square with nine senior wickets and four junior wickets marked on the outfield. The square is broadly operating at capacity. The square is supported by good quality ancillary provision but poor-quality changing facilities.	Support the Club in improving the quality of its square to increase overall site capacity. Explore the feasibility of improving changing facilities on site.	ECB LCF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	H	Protect Enhance
48	The Glen Playing Fields	Football	Sports Club	Two youth 11v11, two youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches which are all standard quality. The site has limited spare capacity in the peak period. The site is not serviced by ancillary facilities. It is the home venue of Rossendale United Juniors FC. The Club does not have secure tenure of the site. It is owned by Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School and is its off-site playing field.	Sustain existing maintenance regime but work to increase quality where opportunities are present. Aim to formalise a community use agreement to secure tenure and if achieved, explore funding options to provide a good quality ancillary offer on the site. Explore funding opportunities to provide a good quality ancillary offer at the site to support to growth of football.	CFA FF Sports Club School	Key Centre	M	M	M	Protect Provide Enhance
54	Whittaker Park	Football	RLT	Two mini football pitches, one is good quality the other poor. No current formal use.	Improve quality of pitch by undertaking a more dedicated maintenance regime.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect

**ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
-	Rossendale FC – Dark Lane	-		Disused stadia football site. The site is now partially developed and has consent for 100 dwellings. A S106 agreement for this scheme was signed several years ago but has yet to be used. This is for a replacement pitch to be provided at Marl Pits. It has been determined by the PPS that this is not required and the monies should be directed towards the Adrenaline 3G project. A secondary S106 is also in place for pitch improvements at Marl Pits.	Redirect the existing S106 monies aligned to this site to help fund the development of a 3G FTP at the Adrenaline Centre. Utilise the secondary S106 as originally intended. To improve the quality of pitches at Marl Pits.	RBC SE	-	-	-	-	-
-	Former Alder Grange Playing Field	-		Disused playing field site. Previous playing field for Alder Grange High School which relocated to a different part of Rawtenstall several decades ago. The site formerly contained one adult football pitch and a cricket wicket. It has no accompanying changing facilities and no car parking.	The site should be protected from development or replacement (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4), as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.	RBC SE	-	-	-	-	-

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

ROSSENDALE WEST ANALYSIS AREA

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
1	Adrenaline Centre	Football	RLT	Three youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and five mini pitches which are all standard quality. Most pitches are played to capacity during the peak periods The pitches are reported to suffer from regular issues with waterlogging. RBC/RLT is progressing with plans to develop an 11v11 3G pitch at the site. The FF is supportive of the scheme and has offered a grant award to support the application.	Improve quality of the sites grass football pitches by undertaking a more dedicated maintenance regime. Work to develop a 11v11 3G project on site to support midweek training demand from local clubs.	CFA FF RBC	Hub Site	H	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide
1	Adrenaline Centre	AGP	RLT	One small-size AGP which is available for community use. Currently used as a key venue for community netball.	Sustain quality of the pitch to ensure it can provide a consistent multi-sport surface. Ensure sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment/resurfacing.	RBC	Hub Site	L	S	H	Protect
14	Edenfield C of E Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
15	Edenfield CC	Cricket	Sports Club	One standard quality grass cricket square with 12 wickets. The square is broadly played to capacity throughout the cricket season. The changing rooms which support the Club are poor quality. The site could see its greenbelt improved through the Rossendale Green Belt Compensation Measures.	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore potential opportunities to improve the quality of the changing facilities at the site.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
21	Haslingden CC	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass cricket square with 19 wickets. The square is supported by standard quality ancillary provision and poor-quality changing facilities. The site has an overall spare capacity but non in the senior peak periods of Saturdays and Sundays. The Club is actively trying to develop women's and girls' cricket and has a softball offer.	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore potential funding opportunities to enhance the quality of the changing facilities at the site	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
22	Haslingden High School	Football	School	One adult, one youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch. All pitches are poor quality. The youth pitches on the site are overplayed by community club demand. There are plans for the school to be rebuilt and the DfE is yet to determine where the proposed new school buildings will be developed. Part of the playing field could be at risk. The School has a long standing position of allowing	Work to improve pitch quality and increase the capacity of the pitches. Work with DfE to protect playing field or to ensure any proposal ensures full and adequate mitigation inline with SE Playing Field Policy. Ensure any playing field application is tied in with a secure community use agreement. The site (following the rebuild) could be explored by the PPS steering group	CFA FF School	Key Centre	H	L	M	Protect Enhance

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
				community use and is a valuable asset to community football in Rossendale	as a potential option to alleviate the known shortfall of 3G pitches in Rossendale West.						
22	Haslingden High School	Rugby Union	School	One poor quality (M0/D1) junior rugby union pitch that is available for community use. The pitch is currently played to capacity through curricular use.	Retain for school use.	RFU School	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
22	Haslingden High School	3G	School	One small sided 3G pitch which is not sportslit. The pitch is available for community use but offers a limited sporting offer midweek due to not being sportslit.	Ensure sinking fund is in place for future replacement. Consider options to provide sportslighting on the pitch to provide a midweek offer to community clubs and that the pitch is certified for match play opportunity.	CFA FF School	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect Provide
23	Haslingden St Mary's FC	Football	Sports Club	Two adult football pitches, both are standard quality. One pitch has spare capacity in the peak period. Ancillary facilities supporting the site are good quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use and to improve the user experience at one of the leading football clubs in Rossendale.	CFA FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
24	Helmshore Park	Football	RLT	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to enable opportunities for increased use.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
38	Rossendale School	AGP	School	One small-size AGP which is unavailable for community use. The pitch is sand dressed and considered to be standard condition.	Retain for school use. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment/resurfacing when necessary.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
41	St Johns Stonefold C of E Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
44	St Peters Playing Field	Football	Sports Club	The site contains one youth 9v9 pitch which is overmarked by two mini pitches and one further dedicated mini 5v5 pitch. Both pitches are good quality. The site is not accompanied by any ancillary facilities. The youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by 5.5 MES per week. RBC is working on potentially offering the pitch to a community football club on a 10-year lease arrangement.	Ensure pitch quality on the site is maintained. Explore options to reduce identified overplay through transfer of demand to pitches with spare capacity or to a suitable 3G pitch. Support transfer of management to club led model.	CFA FF RBC	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect
45	St Veronicas RC Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
47	Stubbins Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	CFA FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
-	Ewood Bridge	-	Private	Disused stadia football site. The land is on sale through private lettings agency. The site does contain a dilapidated clubhouse with changing facilities, a dilapidated small sided AGP.	The site should be protected from development or replacement (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4), as there is potential need for playing field	RBC SE	Local Site	-	-	-	-

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
					land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.						

APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

Department of Media Culture and Sport Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)

The Government published its new strategy for sport in August 2023. The 2015 government sport strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for a More Active Nation, was a fundamental re-framing of sport and physical activity in the UK. It set out five outcomes delivered by sport and physical activity:

- ◀ Physical wellbeing
- ◀ Mental wellbeing
- ◀ Individual development
- ◀ Social and community development
- ◀ Sustainable economic development

This new strategy builds on the foundations of Sporting Future and retains these five outcomes at its core. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of three core priorities, with seven indicators to achieve these priorities as follows:

- ◀ **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active**
 - ◀ Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030
 - ◀ Focusing on evidence, data and metrics
 - ◀ Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active
- ◀ **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport**
 - ◀ Helping the sector to be welcoming to all
 - ◀ Improving how issues and concerns are dealt within the sector
- ◀ **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust**
 - ◀ Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment
 - ◀ Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector

Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences. The vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Sport England Uniting the Movement: Our 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport (2021-2031)

Sport and physical activity makes people happier and healthier, and movement is the lens through which we can make that happen. It does the same thing for our communities, with life-changing, sustainable benefits that have huge economic and social value. That's why Sport England wants sport and physical activity to be recognised as essential to help overcome these national challenges.

The Strategy recognises the need to invest in sport and physical activity through NGBs, other sports bodies and local sports clubs, organisations and community groups to increase engagement for different groups as part of our core purpose. It states that there is now a need to go further in promoting movement in general as the means to unlock sport and activity for some people.

Tackling inequalities

There are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which means that there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities aren't there. These inequalities are at the very core of the Uniting the Movement.

Sport England plans on having a laser focus on tackling inequalities in all that it does, because providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity is vitally important.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

Paragraph 104 sets three criterion that ensures existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown that the open space, buildings or land is surplus to requirements.
- ◀ 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.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ◀ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA has commissioned a national project. Over the next two years to 2020, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all will be identified via LFFPs. LFFPs will guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Therefore, it cannot be used as a replacement for a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and it will not be accepted as an evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

The FA: Survive. Revive. Thrive. (2020-24)

This new strategy aims to ensure the grassroots game in England will survive, revive, and thrive over the next four years.

The strategy outlines seven transformational objectives through to 2024:

- ◆ **Male Participation:** Modernised opportunities to retain and re-engage millions of male participants in the game.
- ◆ **Female Participation:** A sustainable model based on a world-class, modernised offer.
- ◆ **Club Network:** A vibrant national club network that delivers inclusive, safe local grassroots football and meets community needs.
- ◆ **Facilities:** Enhanced access to good quality pitches across grassroots football.
- ◆ **Grassroots Workforce:** A transformation in community football by inspiring, supporting and retaining volunteers in the game.
- ◆ **Digital Products and Services:** An efficient grassroots digital ecosystem to serve the administrative and development needs of players, parents, and the workforce.
- ◆ **Positive Environment:** A game that's representative of out diverse footballing communities, played in a safe and inclusive environment.

This strategy was launched as grassroots football was able to safely return after lockdown from Monday 29 March, it also identifies the immediate challenge, in light of COVID-19, to get grassroots football back on its feet.

The new strategy sets out a number of goals to revive the game by addressing the areas that require particular attention. This includes increasing opportunities to ensure girls have the same access as boys to football in schools and clubs, and improving quality of pitches, with the aim of seeing 5000 good quality pitches added to the current number by 2024.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The FA: Inspiring Positive Change Through Football (2024-28)²²

The FA launched its new Strategy which aims to 'take English football forward, with clear focus on the biggest opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed'.

To achieve this, eight key strategic priorities are identified which include four 'Game Changer' objectives and four 'Drivers' objectives as detailed below. The strategy also outlines how The FA's plans to achieve these objectives.

Game Changers:

- ◀ Win tournaments
 - ◀ Develop pathways
 - ◀ Support elite players
 - ◀ Enhance environments
 - ◀ Collaborate and influence
- ◀ A game free from discrimination
 - ◀ Boost representation
 - ◀ Drive more inclusion
 - ◀ Tackle discrimination
- ◀ Equal opportunities for women & girls
 - ◀ Increase school participation
 - ◀ Increase club participation
 - ◀ Enhance women's competitions
 - ◀ Support female coaches and referees
- ◀ Transform the pitch landscape
 - ◀ Sustain and grow high-quality grass pitches
 - ◀ Deliver new 3G pitches
 - ◀ Support inclusivity accessibility and environmental sustainability of facilities

Drivers:

- ◀ Thriving community clubs
 - ◀ Develop club opportunities
 - ◀ Support the current and future generation of club leaders
 - ◀ Equip clubs to add long-term value to local communities
- ◀ World-class FA cups
 - ◀ Broaden commercial appeal
 - ◀ Evolve the Adobe Women's FA Cup format
- ◀ Participant led
 - ◀ Place participants at the centre of decision making
 - ◀ Create flexible models to meet participants needs
 - ◀ Provide digital tools to improve experiences
- ◀ Progressive governance
 - ◀ Support integration of women's and girls' football
 - ◀ Support governance of the NLS
 - ◀ Support our County Football Associations (CFAs)

The FA: Reaching Higher (2024-28)²³

The FA's 2020-2024 strategy, 'Inspiring Positive Change', coincided with record growth across the sport, with more women and girls playing, coaching, officiating and supporting the flourishing professional game than ever before.

²² [FA Strategy 2024-2028: The Football Association](#)

²³ [The FA Womens & Girls Football Strategy 2024-28](#)

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

This strategy aims to build on the success achieved to date and strives to continue working to unlock the full potential of the women's and girls' game. The strategy outlines four strategic priorities as seen below.

1. **Build and Protect the Uniqueness of the Women's Game:** Continue to honour the history of women's football and recognise those who have contributed towards making it so unique, whilst ensuring the distinct qualities and unique culture of the women's game are valued and protected.
2. **Win a Major Tournament:** Continue to be world-leaders both on and off the pitch, developing players and building an inclusive talent pathway system to make football more equal and accessible at every level of the game, ensuring the England pathway and teams represent society.
3. **Build Robust, High-Quality Competition:** Create compelling competition structures and support clubs to develop to the appropriate level within the game, while enabling people to grow and develop within The FA's competition structures.
4. **Deliver Equal Opportunities for Women and Girls to Play:** Sustain growth in schools whilst tackling inequalities. Continue to grow the number of female teams and deliver vibrant league offers whilst extending and enhancing the sessional football offer. The ambition is for 90% of schools to deliver equal access for girls to play football in key stages two and three.

There are five golden threads which weave through each of the four strategic priorities and across all levels of the women's and girls' game, which will be instrumental for delivering the next phase of growth by 2028:

1. **Female Health and Wellbeing:** Develop the game to support women and girls with their health and wellbeing needs, providing them with environments in which they can thrive.
2. **Safeguarding:** Support the evolution of an ever-safer culture across the women's and girls' game.
3. **Refereeing:** Grow and nurture a new generation of referees who are representative of our society.
4. **Coaching:** Support and develop brilliant coaches capable of unleashing every player's potential in a safe and inclusive game.
5. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensure the game is more reflective of our society.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ◀ **Grow and nurture the core**
 - ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
 - ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
 - ◀ Invest in club facilities
 - ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
 - ◀ Further invest in County Competitions

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ◀ **Inspire through elite teams**
 - ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
 - ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
 - ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
 - ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ◀ **Make cricket accessible**
 - ◀ Broaden cricket's appeal through the New Competition
 - ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
 - ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
 - ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
 - ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- ◀ **Engage children and young people**
 - ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
 - ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
 - ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people
- ◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**
 - ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
 - ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
 - ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
 - ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme
- ◀ **Support our communities**
 - ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
 - ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
 - ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
 - ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

The Rugby Football Union Strategy 2021 Onwards

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ✦ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ✦ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ✦ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

England Hockey Strategy (2023 – 2028)

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

Aiming to make hockey more noticeable, relevant, and accessible to all, England Hockey have launched their new strategy 'Creating a Future for Our Game Together' on 3rd October. The new strategy is a continued effort to re-engage with the current hockey community and to reach out to potential newcomers to introduce them to hockey.

Underpinning the strategy and of importance to the hockey community are four values, "collaborate inclusively, care for people and places, play with spirit win with grace and resilient in everything we do".

The strategy is the culmination of two years consultation with various stakeholders across the sport and larger sporting sector. Hockey will be guided by five key objectives over the next five years.

1. Lead Positive Change: to create and champion positive change within the community by broadening and widening the engagement of the sport and making it more ethnically and culturally diverse.
2. Meaningful Growth: to make sure that our sport thrives and grows into the future, we want to nurture a love of hockey within a more diverse group of young players and communities to reflect society.
3. Drive Visible Impact: to produce and release high-quality, engaging content that shares the love of the game, captures the passion, builds a deep connection and amplifies the voices of the hockey community with new and existing participants.
4. Responsible Leadership: to provide forward thinking, compassionate and inclusive leadership. Leadership that fosters trust within physically and psychologically safe environments and which puts players, the community and sustainability at heart of every decision.
5. Inspirational International Success: inspirational club and national teams delivering podium success in Europe and on the world stage, underpinned by a thriving talent system and domestic game.

The strategy aligns with Sport England's 'Uniting the movement' strategy and UK Sport's Powering Success, Inspiring Impact' strategic plan.

Rugby Football League – National Community Facilities Strategy (2024 – 2030)

The RFL has developed a new National Facilities Strategy which will guide investment into the game from 2024 through to 2030. The proposed investment package aligned to the Strategy will not only transform facilities, but also bolster the sport's social impact, reinforcing its position as a vital part of the nation's sporting and social fabric.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The four focus areas of the Strategy are:

- ◀ **Security of Tenure** – allowing clubs to plan for the long-term
- ◀ **Accessible and Inclusive Facilities** – providing suitable facilities for all and creating safe spaces for the wider community
- ◀ **Adequate and Appropriate Pitch Provision**– investment both in playing surfaces, and in upskilling a volunteer workforce to maintain them
- ◀ **Sustainability**– both environmental and financial

The Strategy will deliver on the four focus areas by delivering against a set of five recommendations which are set within the Strategy and are detailed below. These recommendations reflect the wider strategic aspirations across the sport and are for the RFL to work to deliver.

◀ **Focus Community Clubs**

- ◀ Ensure the RFL has sufficient capacity and resource to deliver the recommendations identified within this Strategy to support its community clubs.
- ◀ Ensure all community clubs have the knowledge and resource to provide good quality grass pitches.
- ◀ Supporting clubs to have good quality changing and social facilities which can support the scale of need at each club. These must be inclusive for all participants and benefit target user groups such as women and girls' participants.
- ◀ Ensure clubs can accommodate a sustainable operational programme for clubhouses to ensure the longevity of provision.
- ◀ Work with clubs and key partners to increase the number of clubs with secured tenure of their club facilities.
- ◀ Develop a dedicated funding programme which is specifically aimed at supporting clubs to gain security of tenure at their respective site.
- ◀ Highlight success stories and best practices from community clubs to inspire others and showcase the positive impact of these efforts.

◀ **Deliver positive social and environmental impact**

- ◀ Support clubs through training and advice on how to promote facilities for non-rugby league purposes.
- ◀ Work with Active Partnerships across England to enable higher usage and activation of rugby league assets for non-rugby league activity.
- ◀ Prioritise clubs for wellbeing hubs which may offer the widest social benefit (relative to local need) – particularly those in high deprivation areas.
- ◀ Use the activation of club facilities as a prerequisite to capital funding for club house improvements / new development.
- ◀ Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies

◀ **Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies**

- ◀ Ensure continued working with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of other sports to capitalise on shared investment opportunities.
- ◀ Work with the Football Foundation to maximise Multi-Sport funding opportunities – utilising the framework provided in this Strategy as the baseline of shared investment.
- ◀ Work closely with Active Partnerships in areas with high club densities to establish opportunities for pitch access via the Open School Facilities programme.

◀ **Technological solutions**

- ◀ Ensure the RFL gathers greater levels of information from clubs via affiliation. To include (e.g.) security of tenure information and an integrated self-assessment audit of community facilities.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

- ◀ Continue expanding the use and application of PitchPower so all clubs can self-assess provision and support clubs to make positive contributions to improving the quality of grass pitches.
- ◀ Promote technological solutions which progress clubs into being more sustainable, energy efficient and ensure their long-term viability as community assets.
- ◀ Create a platform or resource hub where clubs can access information on funding opportunities, facility management, and sustainable operational practices.
- ◀ **Working with Charitable Community Organisations and Wheelchair Rugby League**
 - ◀ Develop an investment package to support the operational delivery of professional club foundation led wheelchair activity focusing on storage and logistical solutions.
 - ◀ Prioritise capital investment into community club sites which also accommodate professional club foundations as tenants for community Rugby League activity.
 - ◀ Begin work on the feasibility of developing a national wheelchair centre which includes exploring partnership opportunities with other sports to maximise multisport value and return on investment.
 - ◀ Consult with professional club foundations, where possible, to understand the need for 3G access and work to ascertain sufficient access hours during peak times of need.