
Outdoor Sports Facilities Audit

Land at Blakes Mead, Felpham

May 2022

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Outdoor Sports Facilities Audit has been prepared by Barton Willmore now Stantec's, Development Economics Team on behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes, to support development on Land at Blakes Mead, Felpham ("the Site") within the local authority of Arun District Council (ADC).
- 1.2 Consent for development was originally obtained in 2006 (with subsequent variations to the consents) for residential development and supporting community infrastructure, including the provision of sports pitches and changing facilities on-site via a S106 Agreement. The residential element of the proposed development is built out in-full (464 units) ("the Development").
- 1.3 One of the strategic objectives of ADC's Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted July 2018) is for health, recreation and leisure to "*promote strong, well-integrated and cohesive communities, through the promotion of healthy lifestyles, provision of good quality accessible community facilities and a safe environment, which delivers an enhanced quality of life to all.*"¹ Open space, outdoor sport and recreation are recognised as important to achieving this and therefore the Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance existing provision, improving the quality and management of existing sites to increase capacity. New outdoor sports provision is also supported where there is current or future demand to do so and ADC's preference appears to be for community sports hubs to provide for a number of outdoor sports, rather than piecemeal and incremental development.
- 1.4 Owing to the passage of the time since the development consent was originally obtained, Barratt David Wilson Homes are now looking to vary the S106 agreement in relation to sports pitches and changing facilities to align with ADC's preferred form of the delivery for outdoor sports provision by making a financial contribution towards enhancing existing off-site provision, in lieu of new provision on-site, to assist with ADC's wider delivery of outdoor sports provision. Such an approach would enable the immediate delivery of enhancements to existing outdoor sports provision.
- 1.5 The purpose of this Audit is therefore to identify existing sports pitches and changing facilities within proximity of the Site, determining quantity, accessibility and quality of any existing provision to identify opportunities for enhancements and to inform the value of any such financial contribution. However, should ADC accept a financial contribution in lieu of provision but seek to spend the monies in an alternative form (for example, pooling for hub provision) then the supporting S106 agreement will allow for such a method of a delivery.

¹ ADC, Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted July 2018), section 14.1

- 1.6 The Audit first considers ADC's evidence base for outdoor sports provision, identifying applicable standards to establish the criteria for identifying and assessing existing provision.
- 1.7 An audit of existing outdoor sports provision is then provided drawing on ADC's evidence base but also data published by the Ordnance Survey to determine any deficiencies or opportunities related to outdoor sports provision.
- 1.8 The Audit is structured as follows:
 - Section 2: **Arun District Council's Standards for Outdoor Sports Provision**, details ADC's evidence-base for outdoor sports provision including quantity, accessibility and quality standards;
 - Section 3: **Audit of Existing Outdoor Sports Provision**, details the existing provision within proximity of the Site, having regard to ADC' standards established within Section 2; and
 - Section 4: **Summary of Findings and Recommendations**.

2.0 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S STANDARDS FOR OUTDOOR SPORTS PROVISION

- 2.1 The Council's evidence base in respect of outdoor sports facilities comprises:
- Open Space, Playing Pitches and Built Facilities SPD (January 2020);
 - Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report and Action Plan (August 2016);
 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (March 2009); and
 - Arun Open Space and Sports Assessment (March 2006).
- 2.2 The 2006 and 2009 studies provide an audit of all open space typologies across the ADC area, including outdoor sports facilities, and provide recommended provision standards in respect of quantity, accessibility and quality.
- 2.3 The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (March 2009) sets the following standards for outdoor sports facilities:

Accessibility Standard

- 15-minute walk time (equivalent to 720m) to grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens; and
- 20-minute drive time to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses.

Quantity Standard

- Urban areas = 1.62 hectares per 1,000 population; and
- Rural areas = 1.88 hectares per 1,000 population.

Quality Standard

- All outdoor sport facility sites should be designed and maintained so as to provide the following features: Clean/litter free, well-maintained and level surface; changing facilities including toilets; and onsite security;
- This standard and subsequent recommendations should be used in relation to the recent Playing Pitch Strategy which highlights specific poor quality pitches.

3.0 AUDIT OF EXISTING OUTDOOR SPORTS PROVISION

- 3.1 Having regard to ADC's accessibility standards for outdoor sports provision (presented in Section 2), this section of the Audit identifies all outdoor sports provision within proximity of the Site to determine whether there is existing provision of sufficient quantity and quality.
- 3.2 ADC's accessibility standard for outdoor sports provision is that people should have access to grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens within a 15-minute walk of their homes (720 metres) and access to synthetic turf pitches and golf course within a 20-minute drivetime of their home.
- 3.3 To begin with, we consider all outdoor sports provision within a 20-minute drivetime of the Site, before drilling down to consider the provision closest to the Site.

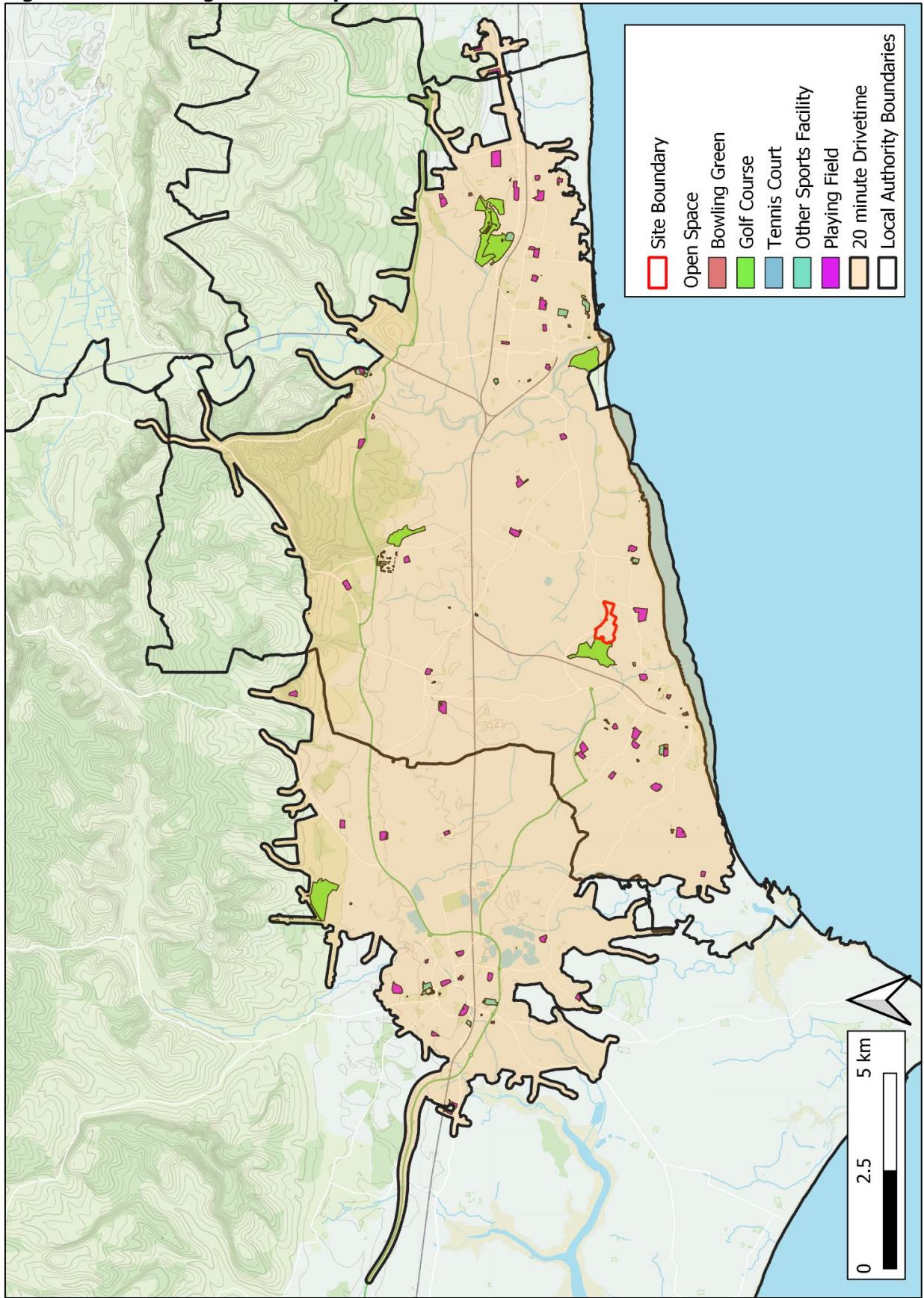
Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drivetime of the Site

- 3.4 Figure 3.1 illustrates existing outdoor sports facilities within a 20-minute drive time of the Site through reference to Ordnance Survey's (OS) Open Greenspaces² and in particular all open spaces identified as; 'Playing Field', 'Bowling Green', 'Golf Course', 'Tennis Courts', and 'Other Sports Facility'. Table 3.1 summarises the type of provision. The OS data excludes any provision within a school setting.

Table 3.1: Summary of Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drive Time of the Site

Type	No. of Sites	Total Area (Ha)
Bowling Green	11	3.9
Golf Course	8	234.5
Tennis Courts	52	39.5
Other Sports Facility	64	153.8
Playing Field	28	2.92
Total	163	434.4

² <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-government/products/open-map-greenspace>

Figure 3.1: Existing Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drive Time

Source: OS Openspace

- 3.5 Within a 20-minute drive time of the Development Site, there is a total of 434.4 Ha of outdoor sports provision. There are eight golf courses which comprise over half of the total outdoor sports provision. In addition, there are 11 bowling greens, 52 tennis courts, 28 playing fields, and 64 other sports facilities. Further provision is provided within school settings.
- 3.6 The 20-minute drive time extends beyond the ADC local authority boundary into the neighbouring local authorities of Chichester District and Adur District and whilst such provision in neighbouring authorities is accessible according to ADC's accessibility standards, the remainder of this assessment focuses on outdoor sports provision within the ADC area only.

Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drivetime of the Site (within the ADC area)

- 3.7 Figure 3.2 illustrates the existing provision within the 20-minute drive time that falls within the ADC boundary. A summary of the number of sites and the area (hectares), is provided in Table 3.2.

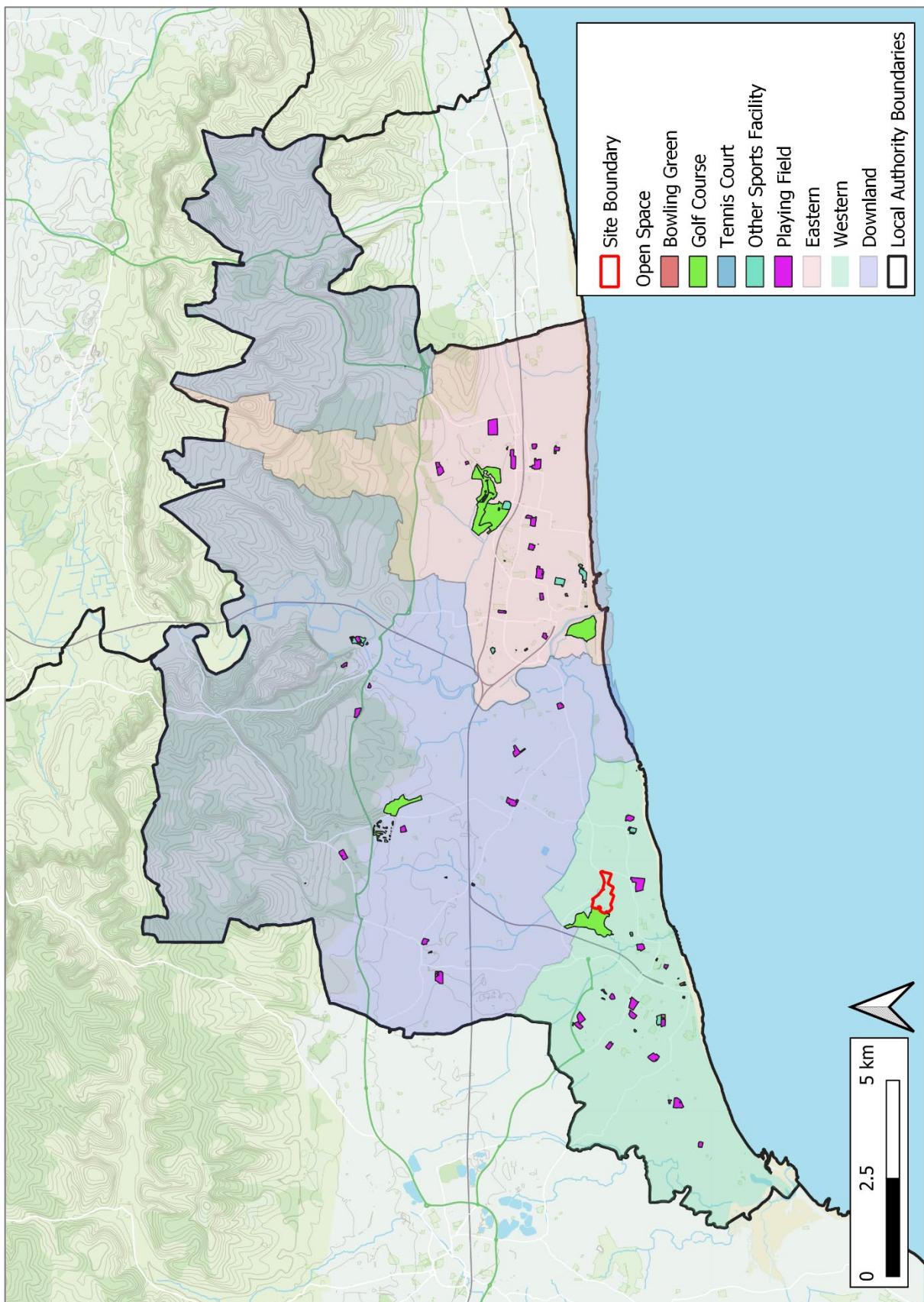
Table 3.2: Summary of Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drive Time of the Site (ADC area only)

Type	No. of Sites	Total Area (Ha)
Bowling Green	9	3.6
Golf Course	5	186.4
Tennis Courts	37	27.9
Other Sports Facility	43	110.8
Playing Field	11	1.3
Total	105	330.0

Source: OS Openspace

- 3.8 75% of the outdoor sports provision located within a 20-minute drivetime of the Site is located within the ADC area; which is 105 Sites totalling 330.0 Ha.

Figure 3.2: Existing Outdoor Sports Provision within 20-minute Drive Time (ADC area only)



3.9 ADC's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (March 2009) divides the ADC area into three sub-areas for assessment: Eastern Region (covering Littlehampton), Western Region (covering Bognor Regis and Felpham, in which the Site is located), and Downland Region (covering the northern, rural extent of ADC). The same sub-areas have been utilised in this assessment to provide consistency with ADC's evidence base. Table 3.3 indicates the outdoor sports provision within a 20-minute drivetime in the ADC area (Table 3.2) by the three sub-areas.

Table 3.3: Summary of Outdoor Sports Provision within a 20-minute Drive Time of the Site (ADC area only) by Sub-area

Type	Western Region (Bognor Regis)		Eastern Region (Littlehampton)		Downland Region	
	No. of Sites	Total Area (Ha)	No. of Sites	Total Area (Ha)	No. of Sites	Total Area (Ha)
Bowling Green	4	2.1	3	0.9	4	2.1
Golf Course	1	40.1	3	122.7	1	40.1
Tennis Courts	5	0.6	1	0.1	5	0.6
Other Sports Facility	13	6.9	18	14.4	13	6.9
Playing Field	16	42.5	13	40.6	16	42.5
Total	39	92.2	38	178.7	39	92.2

Source: OS Openspace

- 3.10 Table 3.3 illustrates that the majority (54%) of the existing outdoor sports provision is located in the Eastern Region. The larger quantum of outdoor sports provision in the Eastern Region is related to golf courses.
- 3.11 The Site is located in the Western Region and Table 3.3 identifies that there is 92.2 Ha of outdoor sports provision within this Region comprising: four bowling greens, one golf course, 13 tennis courts, five playing fields, and 16 other sports facilities. The provision in the Western Region caters for a range of sports clubs already in operation including Pagham Cricket Ground, Bognor Regis Golf Course, Arun Indoor Bowls and Tennis Club, and Middleton Sports Club.
- 3.12 In total, there are three full sized 3G pitches across the ADC area, of which two are located within the Western Region; one in the Arun Leisure Centre and one at the Arena Sports Centre (The Regis School). A further full sized 3G pitch is located at the Littlehampton Academy (Eastern Region). Further smaller 3G pitches are available at Arun Sports Arena and Waterworld (Butlins), both of which are in the Western Region. The smaller 3G pitches are not

suitable for match play but can be used to accommodate training demand, social use and small-sided commercial leagues.

- 3.13 ADC's Playing Pitch Strategy (2009) identifies that there is a shortfall of one full size 3G pitch in the Western Region and one in the Eastern Region to meet the demand. However, the Strategy identifies that improving pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites. The 3G pitch at Arun Leisure has been assessed in the Council's evidence base as being of poor quality and the Strategy concludes that priority should be placed on sustaining the current stock of pitches and potential sites that can suitably accommodate a 3G pitch should be highlighted.
- 3.14 ADC's accessibility standard requires access to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses within a 20-minute drivetime. The analysis presented above demonstrates that there is access to both within a 20-minute drivetime of the Site, albeit the quality of such provision could be improved in line with the adopted strategy of ADC.

Outdoor Sports Provision within a 15-minute Walk time (720m) of the Site

- 3.15 ADC's accessibility standards also require access to grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens within a 15-minute walk time (equivalent to 720m). For this reason, all existing outdoor sports provision within a 720m radius of the Site has been identified as illustrated in Figure 3.3, with Table 3.4 detailing the type of provision, total area and approximate distance from the Site.

Figure 3.3: Existing Outdoor Sports Provision within 720m of the Site

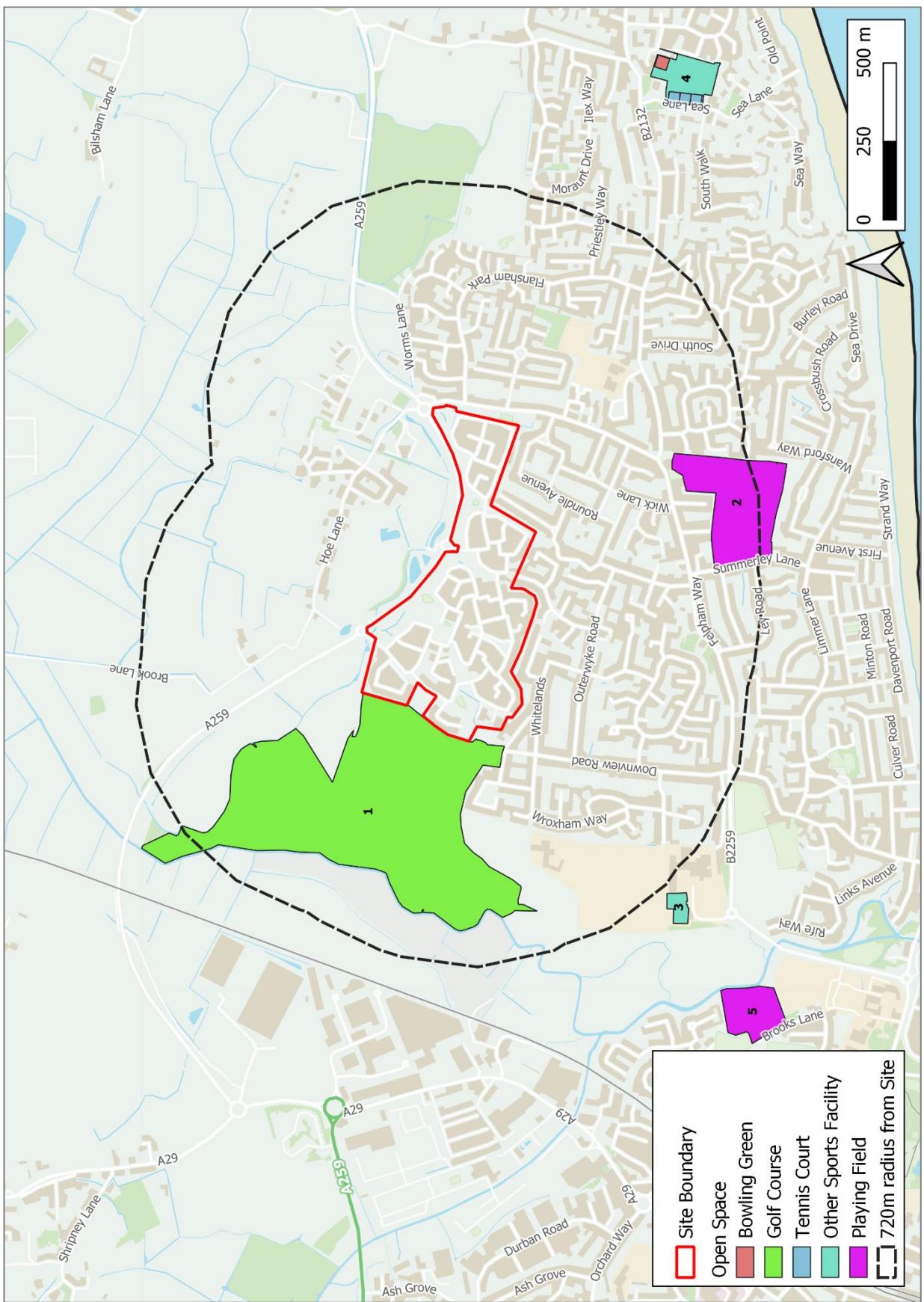


Table 3.4: Existing Outdoor Sports Provision within 720m of the Site

Map Ref	Name	Function	Area (Ha)	Distance from Site
1	Bognor Regis Golf Course	Golf Course	40.1	Adjacent to Site
2	King George V Recreation Ground	Playing Field	8.0	12 min walk time (1,500m)
		Other Sports Facility	0.05	
3	Arun Leisure Centre	Other Sports Facility	0.5*	25 min walk time (2,000m)
<i>Just beyond the 720m radius</i>				
4	Middleton Sports Club	Other Sports Facility	2.5	30 min walk time (2,500m)
5	Felpham Recreation Ground	Playing Field	2.7	27 min walk (1,900m)

Source: OS Openspace

* The area of Arun Leisure Centre relates to the leisure centre only and excludes the tennis courts and 3G pitches associated with Felpham Community College

- 3.16 Figure 3.3 illustrates that there are two sites providing outdoor sports provision within 720m of the Site: Bognor Regis Golf Club and King George V Recreation Ground.
- 3.17 Bognor Regis Golf Club adjoins the Site boundary. The golf course currently provides an 18-hole course which is available to members and visitors all year round. However, it is noted that a planning application (FP/274/21/OUT) has been submitted to redevelop the golf course for residential development, with a second planning application submitted (M/16/22/PL) to develop a brand-new golfing facility at the Grevatts Lane Site, to the north of Elmer. The purpose of the relocation of the golf course to reinvest the money from the sale of the current site, to build a state-of-the-art future proofed golf and hospitality facility that will be the benchmark for clubs in the local area and will ensure the long-term future of Bognor Regis Golf Club into the future.
- 3.18 The relocation of Bognor Regis Golf Course will displace the golf course beyond the 720m radius of the Site.
- 3.19 King George V Recreation Ground is located to the south of the Site within an approximate 12-minute walk time or 3-minute drive time. The open space comprises a playing field and 'other sports facility' which contains a surfaced basketball court with permanent basketball posts. The

playing field comprises 2no. full size football pitches and three junior football pitches (all grass pitches) with built in goal posts. The football pitches currently service Felpham Colts Football Club which is a youth football club for boys and girls aged 4 to 18 years old. The football pitches are not floodlit.

- 3.20 The ADC Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (March 2009) identifies the King George's Field as one of the most popular open spaces for outdoor sports facilities and open space for children in the District. Despite the high popularity of King George's Field, the frequent users of the open space report evidence of poor drainage at the site and that the ancillary facilities are poorly maintained and need updating.
- 3.21 Therefore, within ADC's Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy and Action Plan (August 2016), it is recommended to improve changing facilities at King George V Recreation ground. As such, ADC's recommended action includes: a review of the maintenance regime to sustain and improve quality, consider pitch reconfiguration to better accommodate youth 11v11 demand, and finally explore options for funding to improve changing facilities.
- 3.22 Just beyond the immediate 720m buffer, located southwest of the Site, is Arun Leisure Centre and the Felpham Recreation Ground, and to the southeast of the Site is Middleton Sports Club.
- 3.23 Arun Leisure Centre is approximately 2km in distance, which is equivalent to a 25-minute walk or 5-minute drive, from the Site and shares outdoor sports facilities Felpham Community College. The Leisure Centre offers a range of indoor sporting activities including a gym, fitness classes and swimming pool. The Leisure Centre (via Felpham Community College) also has outdoor sports provision with associated changing facilities including four floodlit tennis courts, a full size 3G pitch approved by the FA for hosting competitive football matches and which is World Rugby compliant and used by Bognor RUFC.
- 3.24 Felpham Recreation Ground is approximately 1.9km in distance, which is equivalent to a 27-minute walk or 5-minute drive, from the Site. The Recreation Ground provides a grass cricket pitch with non-turf wicket that is used by Aldwick Cricket Club. ADC's Playing Pitch Assessment (August 2016) states maintenance as an issue with this recreation ground and the clubhouse/changing facilities as poor as they are generally dated and in need of repair. A grass football pitch with fixed goals is available for informal use.
- 3.25 Middleton Sports Club is approximately 2.5km in distance, which is equivalent to a 30-minute walk or 6-minute drive, from the Site. The sports club is a members' only club but is an inclusive club, welcoming guests and new joiners. The Club offers both indoor and outdoor sports provision with ancillary changing room facilities. In respect of outdoor sports provision, the Club has: a grass cricket pitch with non-turf wicket, an artificial grass pitch (AGP) for

hockey, four floodlit and two non-floodlit tennis courts and one outdoor bowling green. Middleton Sports Club has been assessed in ADC's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (March 2009) as being the second highest scoring outdoor sports facility across the whole of the ADC area with regards to quality (with a quality score of 96%).

- 3.26 The analysis demonstrates that there is access to grass pitches within a 15-minute walktime of the Site as required by ADC's accessibility standard, and also a golf course. Access to tennis courts, a bowling green and cricket pitches are just beyond the required accessibility standard. The analysis has identified a range of quality in the existing outdoor sports provision, with opportunities for improvement.

4.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 This Audit has identified that there is a range of outdoor sports provision within proximity to the Site that meets ADC's accessibility standards.
- 4.2 ADC standards require access to grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens within a 15-minute walktime and access to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses within a 20-minute drivetime.
- 4.3 Within a 15-minute walktime of the Site there is access to the King George V Recreation Ground which provides grass pitches for football, along with changing facilities. However, the pitches are not floodlit and the Council's evidence base identifies that the quality of the facilities are poor and in need of improvement.
- 4.4 Bognor Regis Golf Club adjoins the Site and is therefore also within a 15-minute walktime of the Site; well within ADC's accessibility standard of a 20-minute drivetime.
- 4.5 There are no tennis courts or bowling greens within a 15-minute walktime of the Site as required by the ADC accessibility standard. However, floodlit tennis courts are available at two sites located just beyond the required distance: Arun Leisure Centre (x4 courts) and Middleton Sports Club (x4 floodlit and x2 non-floodlit courts). Middleton Sports Club also provides a hockey pitch and bowling green. Cricket pitch provision is available at Felpham Recreation Ground.
- 4.6 Within a 20-minute drivetime of the Site there is access to synthetic turf pitches; three of which are full-sized 3G pitches. One of the full-sized 3G pitches is located close to the Site at Arun Leisure Centre (Felpham Community College), however, the pitch is deemed to be of poor quality. There are a number of smaller 3G pitches within a 20-minute drivetime that are not suitable for match play but can be used to accommodate training demand, social use and small-sided commercial leagues.
- 4.7 Demand for outdoor sports provision will increase with further housing development and ADC's evidence base has identified the need to explore options to reduce identified deficiencies in outdoor sports provision across the District. However, this Audit has identified that the Site is well-served by outdoor sports provision, with access within or just marginally beyond the required accessibility standard.
- 4.8 The existing outdoor sports provision located closest to the Site provides for a full range of outdoor sporting activities and therefore plays a vital role in the delivery of outdoor sports

provision across the Western Region. However, some of the existing provision has been deemed of low quality and in need of improvement.

4.9 In light of these findings, there is considered the potential to improve the quality of the existing facilities, rather than provide new facilities. In particular, the Audit has identified opportunities to improve facilities at the King George V Recreation Ground, Arun Leisure Centre (Felpham Community College) and Felpham Recreation Ground.

4.10 Such an approach would align with ADC's Playing Pitch Outdoor Sports Strategy Action Plan (August 2016) which provides a series of recommendations for the Western Region (in which the Site is located) including:

- improving football pitch quality to alleviate overplay, reduce shortfalls and to increase future capacity;
- seek to improve quality of cricket pitches where possible;
- improve changing facilities servicing Felpham Recreation Ground;
- improve changing facilities at King George V Recreation Ground; and
- explore feasibility of increasing 3G pitch stock by one to alleviate training shortfall.

4.11 The Action Plan identifies that all sports related site development or enhancement is subject to financial viability.

4.12 Further discussions should take place with ADC to determine whether a financial contribution towards improving existing outdoor sporting facilities would suffice, in lieu of providing new playing pitches and changing facilities on-site within the Development.