

Appendix A: Summary Information on the process to develop the Pitch and Recreational Spaces Five Year Strategic Plan.

During this process, the project team have carried out detailed visits and assessments on all Council operated sites relating to association football, bowls, gaelic games, hockey and rugby and have focused on current condition/quality, location, size, usage profile, accessibility and ancillary facilities (ie. changing provision).

Arising from these visits, in terms of Council ownership/responsibility, it has been established that there are:

- 38 sites; 55 pitches (35 grass, 17 Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP's), 3 shale)
- 16 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA's)
- 4 Bowling Greens

An extensive process of consultation was carried out with individual Council Officers, Council elected members, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), and sporting clubs. In addition, four public consultation events took place alongside a comprehensive survey being issued.

Public focus groups:

- Magherafelt, 7th June (25 attendees)
- Cookstown, 8th June (8 attendees)
- Dungannon, 9th June (25 attendees)
- Cookstown, 27th September (19 attendees)

The focus groups sought to establish the attendees views on:

- Quality of council's pitches / changing accommodation
- Need for Council pitches
- Sports development aspirations
- Future need for facilities
- Open discussion

During this period, a comprehensive survey was commissioned and promoted via social media, website along with targeted emails to relevant Council distribution lists. A number of stakeholder interviews also took place to include the Education Authority. The survey sought to establish clubs/groups and schools views on:

- Training and match facilities
- Membership and usage profile
- Teams profile
- Leagues/competitions
- Match and training venues
- Demand, pitch quality, leases
- Attitude to synthetic surfaces
- Development plans

The survey engagement was extremely high with 87 of the 89 District's clubs and 18 of the Districts 20 post primary schools submitting a return:

Sport	No of Clubs	No of Survey Returns	% Returns
Association Football	31	29	94%
Gaelic Games	47	47	100%
Rugby	3	3	100%
Hockey	3	3	100%
Lawn Bowls	5	5	100%

Various workshops have been arranged for elected Members during this process - 25th October 2021 and also workshops within each of the 7 DEA's during late August/early September 2022.

Inspection Findings

During this process, the project team have carried out detailed visits and assessments on all Council operated sites relating to association football, bowls, gaelic games, hockey and rugby and have focused on current condition/quality, location, size, usage profile, accessibility and ancillary facilities (ie. changing provision).

- 38 Council sites; 55 pitches (35 grass, 17 ATP, 3 shale)
- Grass Pitch Ratings: Good 16; Standard 13; Poor 5
- Grass Pitch Dimensions: 40 full/youth size; 15 small size
- Changing Facilities Ratings: Good 7; Standard 13; Poor nil
- 4 Council Bowling Greens (7 Bowling Clubs) - Condition of playing surfaces generally satisfactory.
- 2 x pavilions in need of immediate investment
- 16 MUGAs - Small – 18m x 10m; Big 60m x 30m - Surfaces mostly bitmac (Ratings: Good 4; Satisfactory 8; Poor 4)

Surveys Findings

The survey of sports clubs presented an opportunity to obtain a profile of participation across the five sports in terms of numbers of clubs, teams and players, as follows:-

Table 1.1: Clubs and Teams							
Sport	No of Clubs	Male		Female		Totals	
		Teams	%	Teams	%	Teams	% of Total Teams
Association Football	31	201	25	31	6	232	18
Gaelic games	47	514	64	393	80	907	70
Rugby	3	63	8	5	1	68	5
Hockey ¹	4	21	2	60	12	81	6
Lawn Bowls ²	5	5	1	2	1	7	1
Totals	90	804	100%	491	100%	1,295	100%

A summary of players reveals there are 13,555 male players and 7,278 female players across the five sports, giving a total of 20,833 players in these sports within the club environment. The breakdown is as follows:-

Table 1.2: Players by Sport						
Sport	Male		Female		Totals	
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	Players	% of Total Players
Association Football	2,464	1,142	414	71	4,091	20
Gaelic games	5,841	2,732	4,312	1,463	14,348	69
Rugby	623	310	124	27	1,084	5
Hockey	158	150	610	190	1,108	5
Lawn Bowls	3	132	2	35	172	1
Totals	9,089	4,466	5,462	1,786	20,803	100%

It was considered important to prepare and present an inventory of all pitches for the five sports under consideration – multi use games areas are addressed separately. The following summary shows there are 212 ‘pitches’ across the five sports:-

Table 1.3: Summary of All Pitches								
Sport	Grass		ATP		Shale		Totals	
	Full	Small	Full	Small	Full	Small	No	%
Association Football	41	4	9	3	-	-	57	27
Gaelic Games	74	37	3	8	-	-	122	57
Rugby	15	2	-	-	-	-	17	8
Hockey	-	-	6	-	2	4	12	6
Lawn Bowls	3	-	1	-	-	-	4	2
Totals	133	43	19	11	2	4	212	100%

Table 1.4 below presents a breakdown of the ownership of pitches by sport, type and ownership:-

Table 1.4: Ownership of Pitches – All Sizes													
Ownership	Grass				ATPs							Totals	
	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Rugby	Lawn Bowls	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Rugby	Lawn Bowls	Hockey			No	%
									Water-Based	Astro	Shale		
Club/Community	9	88	6	0	3	9	0	1	1	0	0	117	55
Education	7	15	10	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	6	46	22
Mid Ulster DC	27	5	1	3	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	43	20
Leased from Mid Ulster DC	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3
Totals	45	111	17	3	12	11	0	1	1	5	6	212	100%

Proposed Summary of Investment Plan

	Facility Maintenance (Council-owned assets)	Development (including non-Council assets)	Facility Development (Council-owned assets)	Pitch De-classification from Commencement of Strategy
Number of Council Owned Assets	12 sites	N/A	22 sites (funded via Council) 8 sites (external funding needed)	6 sites <i>(therefore unavailable for booking – grounds maintenance department to maintain as biodiversity/set aside areas until future use is determined either via leasing or disposal)</i>
Supporting Details	Ballygawley, Beechway, Benburb, Cahore, Castlecaufield, Clady, Drumcoo, Dungannon Park, King George V, Meadowbank, Newmills, Tobermore	<p>Aughnacloy partnership development</p> <p>Hockey SLA's (Cookstown, Dungannon)</p> <p>Financial Assistance: Increase School's Sports Facilities Access fund to £15,000 annually (currently £10k)</p> <p>Financial Assistance: Sports Capital fund (4 Years) at £50k annually to include assistance for feasibility studies/economic appraisals/equipment (consider eligibility criteria)</p> <p>Financial Assistance: Capital Match Funding Scheme (4 Years) to be introduced to assist with groups larger projects/developments - £150,000 annually (consider eligibility criteria)</p>	<p>Benburb Development, Drumcoo Bowls, Fairhill Bowls, Magherafelt Bowls, Monrush Development, MUSA/MSA Development, Newmills Development, Riverside Castledawson</p> <p><u>MUGA's:</u> Blackhill, Broacagh, Caledon, Clogher, Donaghmore, Gortnasoar, Gortalowry, Gulladuff, Henderson Park Stewardstown, Killymerron, Meadowview, Millburn, Moygashel, Money more Recreation Centre</p> <p><u>External Funding</u> Benburb 3G, Castlecaufield Facility Development, King George V 3G, Fairhill Recreation Development, Maghera LC Facility Development, Moy 3G, MUSA Facility Development, Riverside Castledawson Recreation Development</p>	<p>Aughnacloy Playing Fields <i>(also potential for lease/disposal)</i></p> <p>Bellaghy <i>(subject to future re-development)</i></p> <p>Boyne Row Castledawson <i>(also potential for lease/disposal)</i></p> <p>Clady <i>(also potential for lease/disposal)</i></p> <p>Fairhill Playing Fields <i>(subject to future re-development but will continue to be maintained as a pitch until new 3G at MUSA opened)</i></p> <p>Glenone <i>(also potential for lease/disposal)</i></p> <p>Knockloughrim <i>(also potential for lease/disposal)</i></p>

In addition, it is proposed that the following sites are recommended to be made available for future leasing via public expressions of interest:

- Beechway
- Moneymore
- Newmills

The estimated value of the draft strategy totals £9,582,792 of which approx. 51.1% is to be secured from external sources and the remaining 48.9% to be financed through the Council.

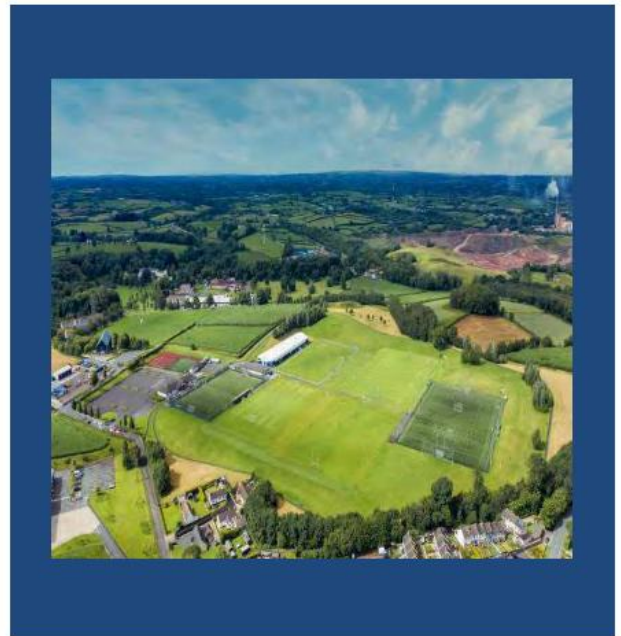
It is envisaged that the vast majority of this strategy will be via capital expenditure with approx. £354k required from an ongoing revenue perspective over the term of the 5 years.

Whilst costs are set against the actions it is emphasised that they are intended as a high level indication of cost based on industry knowledge and experience. In taking forward any of the actions a comprehensive analysis should be carried out, not only to estimate costs but also to assess affordability and sustainability as well as the community benefit that will be achieved.



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

DRAFT
Development Committee
Consideration, February 2023



Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy

**Part 1 of 2: Executive
Summary, Strategic
Recommendations and
Costed Actions**

February 2023



This project has been supported by The Executive Office funded through its District Council Good Relations Program in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council.



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Executive Summary

Introduction

Mid Ulster District Council has commissioned a Condition Survey of Council pitches and Council Pitches Strategy. The Council set out a two-part study to look at current pitch and associated changing provision; the first part is a condition survey and audit of all Council pitches and recreational spaces and the second part is to make recommendations for a Council pitches/spaces strategy. The objective of the study is to *‘create a Strategy that could be used to further develop the pitch infrastructure in the district in a way that is affordable, sustainable, inclusive, high quality and consistent with current best practice in public pitch provision.’* The facilities under consideration are for the sports of association football, gaelic games, hockey, lawn bowls, rugby.

The methodology for the study is based on Sport England’s Towards a Level Playing Field: Playing Pitch Model. This model is used to look at facilities for association football, gaelic games, hockey and rugby; the principles of the model are also applied to lawn bowls and multi use games areas. GIS mapping is used to look at the distribution of facilities.

From the outset an emphasis was placed on getting an accurate picture of activity in each sport; this was achieved by obtaining a high response to a survey of the clubs in each sport across the district, as follows:-

Sport	No of Clubs	No of Survey Returns	% Returns
Association Football	31	29	94%
Gaelic Games	47	47	100%
Hockey	3	3	100%
Lawn Bowls	5	5	100%
Rugby	3	3	100%

Post-primary schools were also surveyed, with 18 returns received from the 20 schools in the district.

Pitches’ Profile and Quality

The quality of the Council-owned pitches and changing facilities was scored using a Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment produced by Sport England. The aim of the assessment is to rate the pitches and changing facilities based on several factors. For the pitches, the assessment is based on:

Part 1 of 2 – Executive Summary, Strategic Recommendations and Costed Actions

- a) A visual inspection of the pitch including grass cover, slope of pitch (gradient and cross-fall); evenness of the ground, length of grass, problem areas: evidence of dog fouling/ litter/ glass/ vehicle tracks/ unofficial use/ damage to the surface and evidence of poor drainage.
- b) Maintenance of the pitch including grass cutting, seeding, aeration, sand-dressing, fertilisation and weed killing.
- c) This information is collated, and a formula applied resulting in a percentage score and a rating.

Pitch Score %	Rating
80-100	Good
50-79	Standard
0-49	Poor

The changing facilities were also rated using the Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment. The assessment is based on:

- a) The existence of a changing facility, clubhouse and kitchen, exterior and interior quality, showers and toilets, official's changing area, spectator toilets, dedicated medical room.
- b) Are DDA compliant facilities provided?
- c) Boundary fence and parking

Changing Facilities Score %	Rating
65-100	Good
35-64	Standard
0-34	Poor

The results of the quality assessments are outlined below. The scores provide a starting point when considering the condition of each pitch and changing facility.

Table 1.1: Pitches' Profile Summary

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Aughnacloy	Grass	Association Football	91 x 60	Full	42.9	Poor	-	-
Ballygawley Playing Fields 1	Grass	Association Football	92 x 62	Full	78.6	Standard	50.8	Standard
Ballygawley Playing Fields 2	Grass	Gaelic Games	126 x 72	Training	LEASED	LEASED		
Ballygawley Playing Fields 3	Small 3G	Multi Sport	40 x 20	n/a	-	-		
Beechway 1	Grass	Association Football	95 x 56	Full	78.6	Standard	43.1	Standard
Beechway 2	Shale	Multi Sport	74 x 44	n/a	-	-		
Bellaghy	Grass	Association Football	90 x 45	Full	31.4	Poor	-	-
Benburb 1	Grass	Association Football	90 x 55	Full	71.4	Standard	55.4	Standard
Benburb 2	Small 3G	Multi Sport	40 x 20	n/a	-	-		
Boyne Row	Grass	Association Football	94 x 62	Full	67.1	Standard	40	Standard
Cahore Road 1	Grass	Gaelic Games	133 x 82	Full	91.4	Good	70.8	Good
Cahore Road 2	Grass	Association Football	96 x 64	Full	67.1	Standard		
Cahore Road 3	Grass	Association Football	100 x 61	Full	80	Good		
Castlecaulfield Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	100 x 63	Full	85.7	Good	44.6	Standard
Clady	Grass	Gaelic Games	94 x 66	Training	11.4	Poor	-	-
Drumcoo 1	3G	Multi Sport	90 x 54	n/a	-	-	52.3	Standard
Drumcoo 2	Grass	Association Football	83 x 58	Youth	85.7	Good		
Drumcoo 3	Grass	Association Football	75 x 60	Under 12s	51.4	Standard	55.4	Standard
Drumcoo 4	Grass	Association Football	100 x 44	Full	81.4	Good		

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Drumcoo Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Good	n/a	Good
Dungannon Park 1	Grass	Rugby	120 x 68	Full	84.3	Good	70.8	Good
Dungannon Park 2	Grass	Association Football	102 x 58	Full	87.1	Good		
Fairhill Recreation Grounds 1	Grass	Association Football	94 x 60	Full	72.9	Standard	40	Standard
Fairhill Recreation Grounds 2	Grass	Association Football	94 x 56	Full	72.9	Standard	55.4	Standard
Fairhill Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Satisfactory	n/a	Standard
Glenone, Portglenone	Grass	Association Football	90 x 60	Full	32.9	Poor	-	-
Gortgonis Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	105 x 59	Full	84.3	Good	58.5	Standard
Gulladuff	Grass	Association Football	28 x 21	Small Kick-about	42.9	Poor	-	-
Henderson Park	Grass	Association Football	31 x 23	Small Kick-about	42.9	Poor	-	-
King George V 1	Grass	Association Football	91 x 55	Full	77.1	Standard	43.1	Standard
King George V 2	Grass	Association Football	90 x 50	Full	61.4	Standard		
King George V Bowling Green	Synthetic	Lawn Bowls	25 x 37	5 rinks	n/a	Satisfactory	n/a	Standard
Knockloughrim	Grass	Association Football	110 x 52	Full	68.6	Standard	-	-
Maghera Leisure Centre 1	3G	Multi Sport	115 x 65	n/a	-	-	70.8	Good
Maghera Leisure Centre 2	Small 3G	Multi Sport	30 x 27	n/a	-	-		

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Magherafelt Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Good	n/a	Good
Meadowbank 1	Indoor Astro	Hockey/ Multi Sport	100 x 65	n/a	-	-	76.9	Good
Meadowbank 2	Grass	Association Football	98 x 56	Full	94.3	Good	52.3	Standard
Meadowbank 3	3G	Multi Sport	145 x 88 (Gaelic) 100 x 68 (Rugby) 90 x 66 (A. Football 1) 90 x 60.5 (A. Football 2)	Full Full Full	-	-		
Meadowbank 4	Small Astro	Multi Sport	34 x 37	n/a	-	-		
Meadowbank 5-8	Small indoor 3G	Multi Sport	30 x 16	n/a	-	-		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 1	Grass	Association Football	100 x 55	Full	88.6	Good	76.9	Good
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 2	Grass	Gaelic Games	138 x 86	Full	88.6	Good	76.9	Good
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 3	3G	Multi Sport	130 x 80 (Gaelic) 120 x 70 (Rugby)	Full Full	-	-		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 4	Grass	Gaelic Games	120 x 76	Training	91.4	Good		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 5	Grass	Association Football	101 X 64	Full	82.9	Good		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 6	3G	Association Football	93 x 55	Full	-	-	-	-

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 7	Small 3G	Multi Sport	34 x 29	n/a	-	-	-	-
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 8	Indoor 3G	Multi Sport	57 x 22	n/a	-	-	-	-
Mill Park, Tobermore	Grass	Association Football	97 x 68	Full	57.1	Standard	36.9	Standard
Millburn, Cookstown	Small Shale	Association Football	25 x 18	Small Kick-about	-	-	-	-
Moneymore Recreation Centre	Grass	Association Football	95 x 47	Full	80	Good	81.5	Good
Monrush 1	Small Grass	Association Football	38 x 20	Small Kick-about	45.7	Poor	-	-
Monrush 2	Shale	Multi Sport	42 x 30	n/a	-	-	-	-
New Mills Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	91 x 53	Full	85.7	Good	47.7	Standard
Riverside, Castledawson	Grass	Association Football	91 x 60	Full	68.6	Standard	-	-
Tobermore Golf Centre	Grass	Association Football	99 x 52	Full	82.9	Good	35.4	Standard

Multi Use Games Areas

Multi use games areas (MUGAs) are developed by local authorities to supplement play areas and complement training facilities for outdoor team sports such as association football and hockey. Depending on markings and equipment they may also facilitate basketball. There is no 'one size fits all' in terms of design (size, type of surface, lighting, fencing, markings, equipment) and accessibility. Some of the Council's MUGA's are more suited to recreational play by older children whilst others are also capable of use for sports training. Some are located alongside play areas and sports pitches whilst others are unconnected to any other play or sports facilities. MUGAs tend to fall between two stools; on the one hand they are viewed primarily as play facilities, on the other hand they are viewed primarily as sports facilities. There are 16 MUGAs in the Mid Ulster District.

Table 1.2: MUGAs Profile Summary

Site	Size	Surface	Fixed Equipment	Surface Condition
Blackhill Play Area, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Boyne Row, Castledawson	-	-	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	New
Brocagh	18 x 10m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Caledon	37 x 20m	Tarmac with light shale covering	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Clogher	30 x 20m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Donaghmore	38 x 20m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Gortgonis	40 x 20m	Astro	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Gortalowry, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Gortnasoar, Dungannon	30 x 14m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Killymerron, Dungannon	18 x 10m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Meadowview Park, Dungannon	22 x 15m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Milltown, Dungannon	28 x 15m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good
Moneymore Recreation Centre	60 x 30m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 2 sets basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Monrush, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good
Moygashel, Dungannon	40 x 24m	Tarmac	Small fixed association football goals	Satisfactory
Upperlands	28 x 14m	Astro	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good

Clubs, Teams, Participants, Pitches

The survey of sports clubs presented an opportunity to obtain a profile of participation across the five sports in terms of numbers of clubs, teams and players, as follows:-

Table 1.3: Clubs and Teams							
Sport	No of Clubs	Male		Female		Totals	
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Totals	90	804	100%	491	100%	1,295	100%

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Rugby	623	310	124	27	1,084	5
Totals	9,089	4,466	5,462	1,786	20,803	100%

It was considered important to prepare and present an inventory of all pitches for the five sports under consideration – multi use games areas are addressed separately. The following summary shows there are 212 ‘pitches’ across the five sports.

¹ Rainey Endowed School is included here as a hockey ‘club’ as it plays most of its hockey at Meadowbank Arena in Magherafelt.

² Magherafelt Bowling Club and Dungannon Bowling Club each have Men’s and Ladies sections but are viewed as single clubs.

Table 1.5: Summary of All Pitches

Sport	Grass		ATP		Shale		Totals
	Full	Small	Full	Small	Full	Small	
Association Football	41	4	9	3	-	-	57
Gaelic Games	74	37	3	8	-	-	122
Hockey	-	-	6	-	2	4	12
Lawn Bowls	3	-	1	-	-	-	4
Rugby	15	2	-	-	-	-	17
Totals	133	43	19	11	2	4	212

Table 1.6 presents a breakdown of the ownership of pitches by sport, type and ownership.

Table 1.6: Ownership of Pitches – All Sizes

Ownership	Grass				ATPs							Totals
	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Lawn Bowls	Rugby	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Lawn Bowls	Rugby	Hockey			
									Water-Based	Astro	Shale	
Club/Community	9	88	0	6	3	9	1	0	1	0	0	117
Education	7	15	0	10	4	0	0	0	0	4	6	46
Mid Ulster DC	27	5	3	1	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	43
Leased from Mid Ulster DC	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Totals	45	111	3	17	12	11	1	0	1	5	6	212

Further breakdown of the supply of pitches is presented in each sport-specific section. In presenting the above summary tables it's useful to note:-

- ❖ Pitches are counted within the sport that best suits their size. So, for example, the Council's full-size multi sports pitches at Meadowbank and Mid Ulster Sports Arena are counted in gaelic games.
- ❖ AstroTurf pitches are all allocated to hockey as hockey is their primary purpose, however, it's recognised they are also used by other sports for training and recreational play.

Adequacy of Provision

So how is adequacy of provision assessed? There are two assessment models relevant to this project.

- ❖ 'Playing Pitch Model' – Sport England
- ❖ 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport, Play and Recreation: Beyond the Six Acre Standard' – Fields in Trust

Sport NI's 'Bridging the Gap: Active Places Research Report' (2009 with 2014 update) uses Fields in Trust guidance to assess the provision of grass and artificial turf pitches in each local authority. Field in Trust's guidance resonates with national planning policy, in particular *'the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the promotion of its economic, social and environmental roles and the seeking of positive improvements in the quality of the environment and people's quality of life.'* It further states that *'quantity guidelines should not be interpreted as either a maximum or minimum level of provision; rather they are benchmark standards that can be adjusted to take account of local circumstances.'* The Sport England Playing Pitch Model (PPM) effectively examines local circumstances by assessing actual demand through consultation and survey work with local sports clubs, schools and local community groups. The result is an accurate assessment of adequacy of provision that is locally specific, enabling development of the most beneficial investment strategy.

Sport England

Sport England's *Playing Pitch Model* (PPM) has been applied to the assessment of provision relating to association football, gaelic games, rugby and hockey; PPM principles been applied in the assessment of adequacy of provision for lawn bowls. The assessment process matches the number of pitches available (supply) against the demand for competitive play. Three scenarios of supply are considered in accordance with the PPM as follows:-

Reference	Description
Scenario 1	All pitches
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).
Scenario 3	Council pitches only

Provision across the district for each of association football, gaelic games, rugby and hockey is summarised for each scenario, where a *positive* result indicates supply exceeds demand and a *negative* result indicates supply fails to meet demand. It is suggested that in each case Scenario 2 is the most realistic picture of provision across these sports given that it includes all pitches that are available for matches, regardless of ownership. For lawn bowls the PPM principles have been applied in an assessment of provision.

A summary of adequacy of provision using the Sport England PPM model looks like this:-

Table 1.7: Playing Pitch Model – Adequacy of Provision (Scenario 2)

Sport	Adequacy of Provision
Association Football	+ 9 pitches
Gaelic Games	- 10 pitches
Hockey	+ 1 pitch
Lawn Bowls	Surplus hours across all sites
Rugby	+ 1 pitch

Fields in Trust

Fields in Trust's³ 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport, Play and Recreation: Beyond the Six Acre Standard' is used to highlight adequacy of provision for formal space for association football, rugby, hockey, lawn bowls and multi use games areas. The following table compares Fields in Trust's guidance for level of provision of open space based on the district's population of 146,427 against the current stock of facilities that are available for community use for matches. For the purposes of this comparison the stock of gaelic games pitches is included in the calculations given that gaelic games is integral to the district's sporting culture.

Table 1.8: Comparison of Fields in Trust with Current Stock

Type of Open Space (FiT categories)	FiT Guidance (ha per 1,000 population)	Level of provision required to meet FiT Guidance (ha)	Current Stock (ha)	Difference (ha)	Number of Pitches ⁴
Playing pitches (association football, gaelic games, hockey, rugby)	1.20	175.71	115.33	-60.38	-60 pitches
All outdoor sports (all above plus lawn bowls, athletics, tennis)	1.60	234.28	120.33	-113.95	n/a
Other outdoor provision (MUGA's, skateboard parks)	0.30	43.93	0.67	-43.26	n/a

Sport NI's 'Bridging the Gap' (2014 update) report assessed adequacy of provision (grass and artificial turf pitches combined) for the Mid Ulster district to be an over-supply of 6 pitches when

³ The National Playing Fields Association is re-named Fields in Trust.

⁴ Sport NI estimates an average pitch size to be 2.5 acres (association football, gaelic games, rugby); 1 acre = 0.40468 hectares. In reality a full size gaelic games pitch (145mx90m) is 3.22 acres, or 1.30 hectares.

artificial turf pitches in the education sector are included but education's grass pitches are excluded.

Association Football

Quantity

There are 31 association football clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players:-

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	2,464	1,142	414	71	4,091

The 4,091 players represent 20% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

There is a total of 47 full size grass association football pitches suitable for adult, youth and small sided games matches and 10 full size 3G pitches. In addition there are a number of pitches of various sizes used for training.

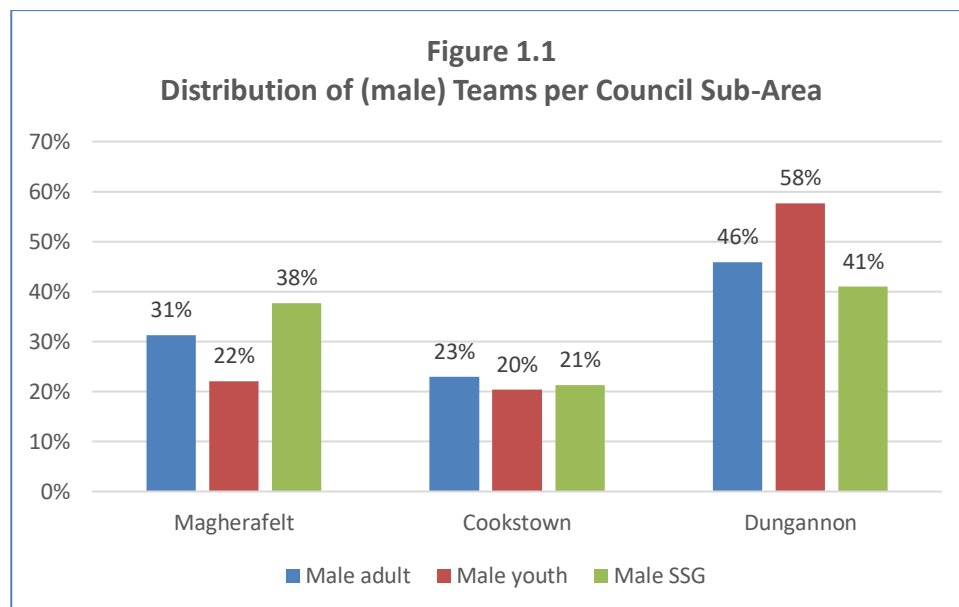
Ownership	Full & SSG Match Pitches			Pitches used for training – varying sizes		
	Grass Full	3G Full	SSG Grass + 3G	Grass	AstroTurf	3G
Clubs/Community	9	1	2 x 3G	3	0	4
Education	5	4	3 x grass	3	1	5
MUDC	25	4	1 x grass	16	1	4
Leased from MUDC	2	1	0	2	0	1
Total	41	10	6	26	2	14

An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for association football matches reveals the following:-

Adequacy of Provision	+9 pitches	Supply Surplus
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The assessment suggests that, for adult matches on a Saturday afternoon there is a surplus of pitches. This picture is of course impacted by a number of variables including pitch condition, cancellations and changing accommodation being available. A 'buffer' of pitches is needed to cover maintenance closures, resting pitches, events/competitions and increased demand in the future.

It was deemed of interest to assess *adequacy of provision* in each of three sub-areas in the district; Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon. Figure 1.1 shows the Dungannon sub-area as having the greater percentage of teams across each of three male age categories.



Adequacy of provision for adult and youth football at peak demand time – Saturday afternoons – across these three sub-areas is:-

Magherafelt	+5 pitches
Cookstown	+3 pitches
Dungannon	+2 pitches

Looking at *adequacy of provision* of facilities for training for association football, it has been calculated (see Part 2: Section 6) that the 232 association football teams in the district (a combination of male and female at all ages) require 247 one hour training slots each week; currently there are 247 slots available, an under-supply of 36 slots or 12% of the total requirement. If AstroTurf facilities are removed from the calculation the under-supply increases to 56 slots. AstroTurf is rapidly becoming less desirable as a training surface for any 'large ball' sport due to the growth in availability of 3G facilities; in the survey of clubs just 15% of clubs responded 'favourable' when asked about AstroTurf surfaces for training. It's also noted that this analysis of training requirements does not take into account any training needs required for elite pathway development squads, social football programmes or five-a-side recreational activity.

Quality

For association football all Council pitches and ancillary accommodation were inspected and given a quality rating in accordance with Sport England's non-technical inspection system; facilities in other ownerships were assessed through the club and schools survey.

Pitches

Summary of Quality Rating for Full Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total No of Pitches
Clubs/Community	7	2	0	3	12
Education	6	2	2	2	12
MUDC	11	13	2	4	30
Leased from MUDC	2	0	0	1	3
Total	26	17	4	10	57

The four Council pitches rated *poor* are at Bellaghy, Clady, Portglenone, Monrush1. The clubs were asked their opinion on the overall quality of their 'home' pitch.

Overall Quality of your Home Pitch		
Answer Option	No of Reponses	% of clubs
Good	15	48
Standard	9	29
Poor	7	23
Total	31	100%

Built Facilities

The Council's changing facilities and other on-site accommodation were also rated. The ratings are based on:-

- ❖ The existence of a changing facility, clubhouse and kitchen, exterior and interior quality, showers and toilets, official's changing accommodation, spectator toilets, dedicated medical room.
- ❖ Are DDA-compliant facilities provided?
- ❖ Boundary fence and parking.

Here's the results:-

Good	7 sites
Standard	13 sites
Poor	None

Conclusions

Association football relies on the Councils' provision of pitches and changing accommodation to a much greater extent than the other 'large ball' sports. Summary points are made:-

- ❖ Thinking about membership in the future, the clubs mostly aspire to membership growth with some clubs citing more girls coming into the sport and one club placing a '*greater emphasis on girl's football*'. At 88% of club players the gender balance is heavily weighted towards males. This points to the continuing need for participative programmes, both Council and club based, to target girls and for facility developments to consider the needs of females, especially in relation to changing accommodation.
- ❖ Two thirds of association football clubs in the district have a positive attitude to 3G surfaces for training with a further 31% adopting a neutral position. Thinking about matches, 54% of clubs are favourably inclined to the use of 3G with 31% taking a neutral stance. These results are slightly more positive than the results coming from the same survey in a neighbouring Council area carried out in late 2017. This could suggest that association football clubs in Mid Ulster are catching up with governing body thinking on the use of 3G, perhaps encouraged also by the increasing number of professional clubs turning to 3G or a hybrid surface.
- ❖ Whilst 'club' is widely used as a group identifier within association football at a local level, it begs the question – what constitutes a club? Of the 18 clubs fielding *only* adult teams, only 8 have two teams and none have more than two teams. This question becomes important when the Council is considering applications for funding support. It's suggested that the Council establishes criteria for recognising a 'club' across all sports.

Gaelic Games

Quantity

There are 47 gaelic games clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	5,841	2,732	4,312	1,463	14,348

The 14,348 players represent 69% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

Gaelic games clubs generally train and play matches at their club base, mostly on one or two grass pitches. With a playing season that spans the spring and summer months and given that clubs in Mid Ulster average 300 players, clubs' pitches are often used most weekday evenings and weekends. This can and does put pressure on pitch maintenance.

Gaelic Games Pitches used for matches (full) and training					
Ownership	Full Grass	Full 3G	Training Grass	Training 3G	AstroTurf
Clubs/County Board	65	1 ⁵	23	6	0
Education	5	0	10	4	1
MUDC	2	2	3	8 ⁶	1
Leased from MUDC	2	0	1	1	0
Total	74	3	37	19	2

An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for gaelic games matches and training reveals the following:-

Adequacy of Provision	-10 pitches	Supply Shortfall
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The assessment accounts for training and matches as both take place on the same pitch. The assessment here presented suggests that demand outstrips supply, further evidenced in the survey and consultation responses wherein some clubs note the need for additional facilities.

Looking at *adequacy of provision* in each of three sub-areas, Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon, whilst the 47 clubs are spread evenly across the three sub-areas, clubs in the Magherafelt area have the greater percentage of teams:-

Distribution of Gaelic Games Teams by Sub-Area			
Sub Area	% Adult Teams	% Youth Teams	% Go Games Teams
Magherafelt	43	42	45
Cookstown	31	28	28
Dungannon	26	30	27
Totals	100	100	100

⁵ Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre.

⁶ Includes the majority of MUDC's 3G pitches excludes full size GAA 3G pitches, so for example includes Maghera LC 3G, Drumcoo 3G, Benburb 3G etc and Backrow 3G – details of these pitches are included in the Association Football section of this report.

Adequacy of provision for adult and youth gaelic games for matches and training on grass pitches across these three sub-areas is:-

Magherafelt	-6.5 pitches
Cookstown	+2.5 pitches
Dungannon	-6.5 pitches

The online survey asked gaelic games clubs to record the number of hours their pitches are used for training and matches each week. The average weekly pitch use across all clubs is 24 hours per week for a first pitch, and for those clubs with two pitches, 18 hours per week for the second pitch. Given the carrying capacity of a grass pitch is two matches per week for 30 weeks annually (as recommended by Sport England), most gaelic games pitches are heavily over-used. Whilst this is mitigated to some degree by the gaelic games season and careful in-club pitch maintenance, over-use of club-based grass pitches continues to be a challenge for gaelic games clubs.

Quality

The Council's gaelic games pitches were inspected and given a quality rating; pitches in other ownerships were rated for quality by the pitch owners, clubs and schools.

Summary of Quality Rating for Gaelic Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs/Community	46	11	3	8	68
Education	3	1	0	1	5
MUDC	2	0	0	2	4
Total	51	12	3	11	77

The three pitches rated *poor* are at Dungannon GAC, Errigal Ciaran GAC, Desertmartin GAC. Two thirds of the pitches are rated as *good*, that is, 51 of the total of 77 pitches. Of the 11 pitches where quality is unknown, 6 are located at Tyrone's Garvaghy GAA complex.

Conclusions

Gaelic games clubs are in the same way as rugby clubs, generally self-contained, having a pitch/pitches and indoor accommodation at their club grounds. As gaelic games clubs have grown in recent decades, with more players including significantly more participation by females, club-based facilities have been put under pressure, especially pitches, which tend to be used for training activity and matches, but also indoor accommodation. Like many sports, gaelic games is constantly evolving, with strategic direction from its governing body, and covered

synthetic surfaces for training and youth matches are beginning to appear on clubs' wish lists. The tendency is for gaelic games clubs to focus on developing facilities at club grounds, however, in the Mid Ulster district the Council's provision of multi-sport ATPs, full size for gaelic games, complements club-based facilities in those parts of the district where they can be readily accessed. It's also noted that some gaelic games clubs are based in parts of the district where they act as the main community resource.

Gaelic games clubs in the Mid Ulster area are clearly a major provider of sports facilities and opportunities to play sport, both for males and females. Within the 47 clubs in the district there are at least 12 teams for every gaelic games full size grass pitch, pointing to the need to 'spread the load' of pitch use by accessing other facilities for training activity. The Ulster Council GAA recognises and supports the use of 3G surfaces for training and for some youth matches, however, clubs do not always have the same acceptance, particularly when it comes to matches. The challenge is to provide suitable facilities in suitable locations that will serve community needs and support clubs in their development aspirations. Future provision could be developed in centralised multi-sport hubs or as community-based facilities.

Hockey

Quantity

There are three hockey clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	158	150	610	190	1,108

The 1,108 players represent 5% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

Whilst shale hockey pitches still persist in some school sites, Ulster Hockey requires that matches are played on AstroTurf pitches, either sand (dressed or filled) or water. Shale pitches are included in this inventory for sake of completeness and recognising that they may be considered for conversion to an accepted sports surface at some point in the future.

Hockey Pitches used for Matches and Training			
Ownership	AstroTurf	Shale	Totals
Education	5	6	11
MUDC	1	0	1
Totals	6	6	12

An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for hockey matches is as following:-

Adequacy of Provision	+1 pitch	Supply just meeting demand
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This picture of *adequacy of provision* is based on four of the six AstroTurf pitches as two AstroTurf pitches, located in post-primary schools, are generally not available for competitive matches; all six shale pitches are excluded from the assessment given their unsuitability for the modern game.

Quality

A summary of the quality of the district's AstroTurf pitches is as follows; again, shale pitches are included here for completeness although they are used by schools with reluctance and only in the absence of an accessible AstroTurf pitch.

Summary of Quality Rating for Hockey Pitches (Astro Turf and Shale)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total Number of Pitches
MUDC	0	0	1	0	1
Education	6	2	3	0	0
Total	6	2	4	0	12

- ❖ The Council's AstroTurf pitch (indoor) at Meadowbank Arena is rated as *poor*, as reported in the pitches inspection document which notes:-

'It has been used as a factory during the Covid-19 pandemic and as such needs repair. There are bumps on the surface, the carpet has separated in places and the overall condition of the Astro Turf is worn. The main strengths of this pitch are its size and the fact that it is indoor and therefore allows teams to train and compete all year round.'

- ❖ It's of interest to note that whilst Dungannon Hockey Club report that the quality of their home base pitch at Royal School Dungannon is *poor*, the school itself rates the pitch as *good*.

Generally speaking, the issue with sand-filled/dressed AstroTurf pitches is that they have traditionally been used by a range of sports as they were the only synthetic surfaces pre-3G and were seen as being multi-sport. Different sports put different pressures and stresses on AstroTurf carpets, especially when used for a mix of training and matches. This can lead to unevenness and separation of carpet sections. Maintenance regimes can help avoid these issues.

Conclusions

Adequacy of provision of pitches for hockey, given the Council operates only one AstroTurf pitch, relies on school facilities, both at Cookstown High School and Royal School Dungannon. Hockey is a minority sport within the District, however, the clubs aspire to considerable growth; Rainey Hockey Club (closely linked to Rainey Endowed School) emphasises its success at team and individual level, producing numerous Ulster and Ireland players over the years.

It's known that Rainey Endowed School is at an advanced stage in its application to Sport NI's Multi Facilities funding programme to develop sports facilities at the school, including an AstroTurf pitch. The local club make the point that two AstroTurf pitches are needed in Magherafelt in order to support current and projected levels of activity.

Cookstown Hockey Club put forward an idea to construct an air dome cover over its sand-dressed pitch at Cookstown High School. Dungannon Hockey Club aspire to grow player numbers and become a hockey 'centre of excellence' for the Mid Ulster area, however, consultation with the club reveals issues with their use of the AstroTurf pitch at Royal School Dungannon.

Lawn Bowls

Quantity and Quality

The Mid Ulster District has five lawn bowls clubs, two of which have men's and ladies' sections. The breakdown of players is as follows:-

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	3	132	2	35	172

The 172 players represent 1% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

There are four bowling greens in the district, three operated by the Council and the fourth green, a synthetic surface, operated by Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation. Here's a summary of the quality of the greens.

Bowling Greens - Quality				
Ownership	No of Greens	Good	Standard	Poor
Clubs	1	0	1	0
MUDC	3	1	2	0
Totals	4	1	3	0

One of the Council's greens – Magherafelt Bowling Green – is rated as *good*, the remaining greens are rated as *standard*. Natural turf bowling greens require a good deal of regular maintenance throughout the bowling season and restorative work out of season. In past decades Councils usually engaged a green keeper to look after a single green, however, most Councils now contract-out bowling green maintenance. Clubs feel this has resulted in a lesser standard of playing surface.

For lawn bowls, adequacy of provision is assessed by looking at training and competition time compared to the total hours available for club activities. The assessment for each of the district's four greens is as follows:-

	Supply against Demand (hrs)
Fairhill Bowling Green	+ 26
Magherafelt Bowling Green	+ 36
Drumcoo Bowling Green	+ 37
Fivemiletown Bowling Green	+ 52

From the quantitative analysis of *demand* for training and match green-time at each facility compared to *supply* as measured in available green-hours it is clear that supply comfortably meets demand. Most greens appear to be well used by members.

Conclusions

Lawn bowls, whilst involving a relatively small number of players across the five clubs, offers an important recreational and social activity for the older generation. The clubs and the governing body aspire to grow membership, not least amongst the younger generation. It isn't clear how this will be achieved, however, actions may result from the Irish Bowls Federation current survey of its membership that will assist clubs to re-group post-COVID-19.

There is an issue with the standard of greens maintenance. One option is to convert natural turf greens to synthetic greens; this would appear to be a growing trend in Ireland with an estimated half of all bowling greens now synthetic.

In 2022 Cookstown Bowling Club is set to take on presidency of NI Provincial Bowling Association and the Irish Bowling Association which will see the club hosting regional and national events. With this in mind the club see the need for improved facilities at their home ground, Fairhill Bowling Green in Cookstown.

Rugby

Quantity

There are three rugby clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	623	310	124	27	1,084

The 1,084 players represent 5% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports. As with gaelic games, rugby clubs typically train and play matches on club-owned pitches. Rugby is played through the autumn and winter months so careful maintenance regimes are required to ensure pitches hold up throughout the season.

Rugby Pitches used for Matches and Training			
Ownership	Full Grass / 3G	Youth Grass	Training
Clubs	6	0	0
Education	8	2	1 x 3G
MUDC	3	0	0
Total	17	2	1

An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for rugby matches is as following:-

Adequacy of Provision	+1 pitch	Supply just meeting demand
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The assessment does not account for training demand which also takes place on most rugby pitches in addition to matches; for example, Dungannon RFC report that club growth is being constrained by the lack of training facilities. All three rugby clubs have two grass pitches based at the clubs' grounds; pitch 1 is used for 11.6 hours on average each week whilst pitch 2 is used 6 hours on average each week. This suggests that pitch 1 is over-used and pitch 2 is heavily used (although Rainey Old Boys RFC report they don't use pitch 2 for training).

Quality

The Council's grass rugby pitch at Dungannon Park was inspected for quality and pitches in club and school ownership were rated by their owners.

Summary of Quality Rating for Grass Rugby Pitches (Full and Youth)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs	4	0	2	0	6
Education	8	0	0	0	8
Council	1	0	0	0	1
Total	13	0	2	0	15

The two pitches rated *poor* are at Stevenson Park, home ground to Dungannon RFC.

Conclusions

Rugby clubs tend to train and play matches on club pitches where changing accommodation and social facilities are also available. With just three clubs, rugby is a minority sport in the Council area; a total of 68 teams are fielded across the three clubs involving 1084 players from 6 years of age through to adult; only 151 players are female. Dungannon RFC has an adult female team. As with association football the under representation of female players presents an opportunity for future inclusive programmes. Both Dungannon RFC and Clogher Valley RFC have female youth teams.

Dungannon RFC report they are in '*desperate need*' of a third pitch to cater for a growing club. Clogher Valley RFC has purchased 9 acres of land adjoining their site; the club states they are keen to explore:-

"a joint venture to build a multi-sport facility on the adjoining land with Mid Ulster District Council and CVRFC."

Ulster Rugby has approached the Council with regard to identifying a suitable regional hub for development squad training for the south region in order to reduce travelling time and costs for squad members. Aghnacloy College is viewed by Ulster Rugby as the optimum location, requiring only an indoor gym (pre-fabricated steel structure suggested) to complement the school's existing 3G floodlit pitch and changing accommodation. This presents the Council with an opportunity to consider enhancing the current partnership working with Aghnacloy College to deliver, along with Ulster Rugby, further community sporting facilities at the school.

Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

Quantity

There are 14 Council-owned MUGAs across the district. There is no ‘one size fits all’ in terms of design (size, type of surface, lighting, fencing, markings, equipment) and accessibility. Some of the Council’s MUGAs are more suited to recreational play by older children whilst others are capable of use for sports training. Some are located alongside play areas and sports pitches whilst others are unconnected to any other play or sports facilities. The Council does not presently define a MUGAs primary identity and purpose. The opportunity here is to define what a MUGA is so that future developments have a clear purpose. Here’s a summary of the key features for the Council’s MUGAs.

MUGA	Dimension (metres)	Area m ²	L x W Ratio	Does MUGA meet Sport England m ² guidance for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA
Blackhill	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Brocagh	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Caledon	37 x 20	740	1.8 : 1	No
Clogher	30 x 20	600	1.5 : 1	No
Donaghmore	38 x 20	760	1.9 : 1	No
Gortnalowry	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Gortnasoar	30 x 14	420	2.1 : 1	No
Killymeron	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Loup	15 x 12	180	1.3 : 1	No
Meadow View Park	22 x 15	330	1.5 : 1	No
Milltown	28 x 15	420	1.9 : 1	No
Moygashel	40 x 24	960	1.7 : 1	Yes
Ratheen	44 x 25	1,100	1.8 : 1	Yes
Upperlands	28 x 14	392	2.0 : 1	No

Quality

In keeping with the Sport England non-technical assessment system for conventional pitches, the consultants have assessed each MUGA and classified condition, summarised as follows:-

Good	4 MUGA’s
Satisfactory	7 MUGA’s
Poor	3 MUGA’s

The three MUGAs rated as *poor* are Caledon, Clogher, Gortnasoar.

Conclusions

The design of the Council's MUGA's varies considerably. If it's necessary to identify each MUGA's key purpose (play or sport) then in accordance with Sport England guidance half belong to play, half to sport. For future developments it will be helpful to be clear about a MUGA's purpose and to design it accordingly. This would also assist with how a MUGA is marketed.

Fields in Trust promotes a benchmark guideline of 0.3 hectares of MUGA provision (alongside skateparks) per one thousand population. For the district's population of 146,427, the Fields in Trust's benchmark suggests there should be 44 hectares of MUGA provision, however, the measured actual provision, based on the consultant's inspections, is 0.7 hectares, clearly a significant shortfall.

Strategic Recommendations and Costed Actions

Introduction

These strategic recommendations and actions are informed by analysis of the research and consultation carried out in the audit of facilities and clubs. They cover the sports of association football, gaelic games, hockey, lawn bowls, rugby – as well as multi use games areas. Their focus is on potential developments at Council-owned sites that provide for the five sports, however, they also recognise and consider the significant contribution by the community and education sectors in the provision and operation of sports facilities; the Council owns 22% of all pitches in all ownerships in the district across the five sports. Table 1.9 summarises the costed 5 year plan:-

Table 1.9: Costed 5 Year Plan Summarised

	Year 1 23/24	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total	Comments
CA1 Capital Works	£645,000	£740,000	£850,000	£620,000	£315,000	£3,170,000	Pitch enhancement programme - capital improvement works
CA2 Capital Development (Feasibility & Funding)	£5,000	£205,000	£205,000	£205,000	£205,000	£825,000	Costs to support Capital scheme development or external delivery (funding programme will be for capital delivery or to support capital schemes to become investment ready).
CA3 Capital Development (Staffing)	£51,000	£54,000	£56,227	£57,914	£59,651	£278,792	Costs associated with the employment of a temporary Programme Coordinator (5 years) to oversee and project manage the delivery of the strategy.
RA1	£30,000	£76,000	£76,000	£76,000	£76,000	£334,000	Recurring revenue costs for Grounds

Recurrent Revenue Costs							Maintenance and Sports Participation/ SLAs.
EA1 External Funding Investment (if available and subject to eligibility criteria)	£1,480,000	£1,500,000	£0	£1,100,000	£900,000	£4,980,000	
	£2,211,000	£2,575,000	£1,187,227	£2,058,914	£1,555,651	£9,587,792	

The proposed value of the draft strategy totals £9.58m of which 51.9% is to be secured from external sources (if available and subject to eligibility criteria) and the remaining 48.1% to be financed through the Council.

Whilst costs are set against the actions it is emphasised that they are intended as a high level indication of cost based on industry knowledge and experience. In taking forward any of the actions a comprehensive analysis should be carried out, not only to estimate costs but also to assess affordability and sustainability as well as the community benefit that will be achieved.

Strategic Recommendations

Each strategic recommendation has partnership potential. The strategy should be thought of as an opportunity to promote and develop partnership working in order to deliver pitches and ancillary accommodation as efficiently and cost-effective as possible. At times the Council will be the lead organisation in project development whilst at other times it will have an enabling role. The key understanding for partnership working is that each project has its own dynamic, therefore, the nature of partnership will be project-specific. Local authorities increasingly have to consider how best to meet the needs and expectations of residents and partnership working gives this pitches strategy the best chance of successful delivery and sustainability. In this regard the increasing interest in the shared use of education sites makes a great deal of sense and should be explored and exploited to its fullest extent. The strategic recommendations are presented in four categories as follows:-

1. Facility Maintenance (Council-owned assets)

Pitches and ancillary accommodation must be maintained to ensure they are fit for purpose, able to be used to their full potential and support the development of greater levels of participation.

2. Development (including non-Council assets)

This category looks at how the Council can work in partnership with clubs and other stakeholder organisations, effectively supporting the delivery of community-based opportunities for participation in sport and physical recreation.

3. Facility Development (Council-owned assets)

Recommendations in this category look to ensure the Council's pitches are high quality and achieve best use of resources to maximise community benefit.

4. Staffing Resource

Pro-active management and programming will help to ensure efficient use of the pitches and deliver higher levels of participation.

Table 1.10 presents the strategic recommendations with accompanying commentary:-

Table 1.10: Strategic Recommendations by Category

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
1. FACILITY MAINTENANCE (Council-owned assets)					
1.	Consider remedial work to pitches that have playability issues. The 17 pitches that are either <i>poor</i> or <i>standard</i> should be linked to a 5 year priority investment list based on historical usage and analysis of bookings information.	The Council operates 26 (full size and youth size) grass association football pitches of which 4 are assessed as <i>poor</i> , 13 <i>standard</i> and 9 <i>good</i> in accordance with Sport England's Non-Technical Assessment methodology. All pitches should be brought up to <i>good</i> quality. Sub-standard pitches risk becoming under-used and eventually, unused, putting more pressure on the stock of good pitches.	None	The objective is to ensure all grass association football pitches are able to be played to their full potential according to demand, so reducing cancellations and the need to rearrange fixtures.	A budget cost per pitch is £40k although this will vary according to the extent of remedial works. Assume 10 of the 17 pitches presently rated <i>poor</i> or <i>standard</i> will be upgraded suggests an indicative cost of £400k.
2.	Council pitches used for gaelic games training and matches to be properly specified with gaelic games goal posts and ball stop nets to meet the needs of all gaelic games codes.	Gaelic games activity is compromised when played on pitches that are not properly specified for all codes. This may involve consideration of change of use, where gaelic games activity takes place on Council-owned association football pitches which are under-used or not used; examples are of Moneymore and Ballygawley.	Limited multi-sport potential. Potential for partnership working with local clubs.	Enhanced experience for players.	A set of gaelic games goal posts and ball stop nets is estimated at £60k.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
3.	Consult with sporting codes regarding the indoor AstroTurf pitch at Meadowbank Sports Arena. It's recognised that the AstroTurf indoor carpet is nearing the end of its life.	The carpet is in <i>poor</i> condition; consultation will identify options for a replacement carpet/pitch that will support the further development of sport in the district. The Meadowbank AstroTurf is the Council's only pitch that prioritises hockey. It's recognised that the AstroTurf indoor carpet is nearing the end of its life, not to be confused with the newly laid (September 2020) indoor 3G carpet section.	Good potential for multi-sport use and partnership working.	Continued development of Meadowbank as a multi-sports hub.	A new carpet is estimated to cost £200k.
4.	Provide enhanced accommodation at Fairhill Bowling Green and consider the need for development at Magherafelt Bowling Green pavilion.	Cookstown Bowling Club is set to hold the offices of NI Provincial Bowling Association President and Irish Bowling Association President in 2022. The facilities at Fairhill need upgraded to enable the club to host ' <i>major events and championships</i> '.	Partnership opportunity with the Irish Bowling Association and NI Provisional Bowling Association should be explored.	Higher profile for lawn bowls in the district and, potentially, new players attracted.	Temporary enhancements are estimated to cost in the region of £30k to £50k depending on scale and scope. A new pavilion is estimated to cost in the region of £300k to £400k.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
5.	Consider developing Dungannon Park grass pitch/pitches to better suit the needs of rugby. This should include floodlighting and line markings suitable for adult matches.	Rugby in Dungannon is presently constrained by limited and poor quality pitches (2 no.) at the local club.	The grass pitch at Dungannon Park is already used by other sports (eg, cricket) and this should continue. Partnership working with local clubs should be explored.	Better support for growing female participation and rugby generally.	Installing floodlighting is estimated to cost £100k.
6.	Consider upgrading MUGAs that fall short of an agreed minimum specification. All but two of the Council's 16 MUGAs have a tarmac/shale surface whilst eight are either not fenced or not fully fenced, pending outcome of study.	Whilst Sport England recognises open textured porous macadam as an acceptable surface for some types of MUGA, it is unforgiving when falls occur.	Larger MUGAs can be multi-sport.	Improved design is likely to result in increased use for formal and informal sport and recreation.	A cost estimate is wholly dependent on the scale and scope of the work. Assume a budget of £100k annually.
2. DEVELOPMENT (includes non-Council assets)					
7.	Definition of 'sports clubs'. Sports clubs come in all shapes and sizes. The recommendation is to establish a classification system for sports clubs which would recognise clubs' size, facilities, activity programmes, community impact, aspirations, etc regardless of sport. (This should greatly assist the Council when	With clubs in Mid Ulster ranging in size from around 20 players to around 500 players it would seem reasonable to classify them. The challenge in establishing and applying criteria is not under-estimated as some sports naturally have bigger clubs than other sports; a weighting system for criteria may help. Clubs achieving the highest classification are likely to be those clubs that deliver	All sports clubs would be classified, not just the five sports under consideration here. A level of partnership between the Council and the classified clubs would be specified, encouraging the clubs to recognise and assist in achieving the Council's corporate and community strategic objectives with Council support.	Strong and resilient clubs with realistic expectations of each partners' responsibilities.	There is no indicative cost association with this recommendation. However, a classification system could be linked to the Sports Capital Grant programme.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
	considering applications for support.)	the greatest community benefit and are well run.			
8.	Support the development of full size gaelic games grass pitches for recently established hurling/camogie clubs, underpinned by robust criteria that includes clear evidence of need and sustainability.	An Bhinn Bhorb GAC and Cuchulainn an Ghleanna GAC both use Council-owned association football pitches for matches and training; in order to develop senior teams, full size grass pitches are needed. Another two gaelic games clubs do not have their own facilities.	Some multi-sport potential although gaelic games grass pitches tend to be over-used.	Sustainable development of emerging clubs.	Potential to be considered under Council Discretionary Grant Scheme subject to eligibility and robust criteria that includes clear evidence of need and sustainability.
9.	Consider the facility and developmental aspirations of the district's three hockey clubs.	All three clubs aspire to considerable growth; Rainey HC highlights its success at representative levels; Cookstown HC has an idea to construct an air dome over its sand-dressed AstroTurf pitch; Dungannon HC aspires to become a hockey 'centre of excellence' for the Mid Ulster area.	Hockey can only be played on AstroTurf pitches, however, the sand filled/dressed versions of AstroTurf have come to be regarded as multi-sport. Therefore, there is multi-sport and partnership potential in hockey.	Higher profile for hockey in the district. Hockey clubs strengthened and more sustainable.	Potential to be considered under Council Discretionary Grant Scheme subject to eligibility and robust criteria that includes clear evidence of need and sustainability.
10.	Explore potential to support Clogher Valley RFCs proposal to develop a multi-sport facility, including working in partnership with Fermanagh & Omagh District Council.	Clogher Valley's two pitches have restricted use during periods of inclement weather. The club reports 65% of its membership lives within Mid Ulster district. Collaboration is already underway with	Significant multi-sport and partnership potential.	The club can engage with other sports.	Potential to be considered under Council Discretionary Grant Scheme subject to eligibility and robust criteria that includes clear evidence of need and sustainability.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
		Fermanagh Omagh District Council in relation to Clogher Valley RFCs development proposals.			
11.	Liaise with the Education Authority regards possibilities for school-community links in the development and operation of sports facilities. Council to consider increasing the overall grant allocation and supporting future shared campus developments.	Sport NIs 'Your School Your Club' has influenced thinking on shared use of school sports facilities. The EAs 'Community in Schools' team reports that <i>'the days of school sports facilities not being shared facilities are gone.'</i> The Council has an established annual grants scheme for Schools Sports Facilities Access. In the main, this is to increase access to underutilised school sports synthetic pitch facilities for community use by minority sports that do not have their own provision in areas. The grant award is up to a maximum of £5,000 per club or school. Currently the overall funding attributed to this grant scheme is £10,000 and applications have been increasing year on year resulting in a recommendation approved in	Schools offer excellent multi-sport and partnership possibilities; there are many examples of community use of school sports facilities works well, however, it must be set up with great care.	The benefits to schools regarding community outreach are considerable as are benefits to the curriculum.	To enable community use of artificial turf pitches on school sites floodlighting is needed. Generally speaking the EA does not install floodlighting, however, they will work in partnership with local authorities on floodlighting to facilitate community use outside curriculum time. Installing floodlighting on a 90m x 60m ATP is estimated at £80k. Additional £10k per year added to annual grant scheme and review in Year 3 should further partnerships be developed with possible additional £10k per year for Year 4, 5 onwards.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
		the 2021 year for an overspend due to number of successful applications. The recommendation is for Council to consider increasing the overall grant allocation and to focus the criteria/eligibility further on schools which are making available their synthetic pitches for community sports club use. Consideration should be given to supporting future shared campus developments also.			
12.	Other Providers – whilst the Council is a major provider of sports pitches and facilities, sports clubs and others also provide and operate pitches and ancillary accommodation. The Council-led pitches strategy will not address all of the need arising from the audit either now or in the future; there remains a residual need which other providers can assist in addressing. The recommendation is to support clubs in their aspirations for	In consultation many clubs noted the need for facility developments and equipment improvements at club sites. Given the rural nature of parts of the district, many clubs serve communities where Council-supported opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity can be limited. A strategically focused grants programme can encourage partnership working and enhance VFM for the Council.	Multi-sport outcomes may be possible dependent on the nature of improvements, however the focus here is to achieve better facilities for club-based activity to encourage participation and growth.	The audit reveals there are nearly 21,000 people participating in the five sports audited. This represents around 14% of the district's population. In this regard, sports clubs can be viewed as physical activity delivery agents, achieving significant community benefit, not only amongst participants but also amongst the volunteers who coach players, maintain facilities and provide administrative support.	The Council's Sports Capital grant programme can award a maximum of £5,000 to sports clubs, to be matched 50% by the club. In the past three years 70 awards were made, an average of £3,400 for each award. The annual budget is presently £120k. Recommend to increase overall funding pot to £200k for sports capital applications and consider introduction of an increased tiered match funding allocation of up to £10k to support clubs' facility

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	improved club-based facilities that result in enhanced community outcomes.				development aspirations. Also to include additional annual capital budget of £150k to support larger scale club development; robust eligibility and selection criteria to be developed.
3. FACILITY DEVELOPMENT (Council-owned assets)					
13.	Develop additional floodlit 3G training provision where need is evidenced, ie, Benburb, Fivemiletown, Moy subject to budget and/or funding from other sources.	The 232 association football teams in the district, a combination of male and female at all ages, require 281 one hour training slots each week during the playing season. Currently there are 247 one hour slots available on all surface types, an under-supply of 34 slots, or 12% of the total requirement. If AstroTurf facilities are removed from the calculation the under-supply increases to 56 slots, or 20% of the total requirement. Sport NIs COVID-19 capital intervention programme 'Building Back Better – Sports Facilities' attracted 700 applications of which around a quarter were for floodlighting to existing	The recommendation purposely identifies 3G surfaces as these have significantly greater multi-sport – mostly association football and gaelic games – carrying capacity for mid-week evening training than other ATP surfaces or natural grass. As a result of their multi-sport potential they also have partnership potential at some level. Based on survey work and analysis of need, priority areas include Benburb, Moy and Fivemiletown. Plans are presently being progressed for additional floodlit 3G at MUSA, Gortgonis and Railway Park (Dungannon) whilst a 3G pitch at Maghera Leisure Centre was completed recently. Where	Additional 3G training provision in areas of need will reduce the shortfall and better facilitate demand.	The development of a 100m x 60m floodlit and fenced 3G pitch is estimated at £550k, depending on site conditions. A 70m x 40m floodlit and fenced 3G pitch is estimated at £300k, again depending on site conditions.

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		pitches. Natural grass pitches are generally not suited to training and match use. The clubs' survey revealed 96% of association football clubs have either a favourable (65%) or neutral (31%) attitude to the use of 3G surfaces for training.	there is a need for competitive play for association football on 3G pitches (Intermediate standard and/or regional use by the IFA) line markings should only be for association football.		
14.	Ensure existing Council facilities for association football are able to be used to their full potential, supported by suitable and sufficient ancillary accommodation.	Changing accommodation should fully support matches. For example, (i) the new 3G pitch at Maghera Leisure Centre is not supported by pitch-specific changing accommodation; (ii) there are only two team changing rooms at King George V Playing Fields to support two grass pitches – four are needed. Similar examples are found at the changing accommodation at Castlecaulfield and Benburb. The development of an additional 3G pitch and 8 lane athletics track at MUSA will necessitate consideration of additional changing and ancillary accommodation.	Depending on the type of pitch supported by changing accommodation, there is potential for use by more than a single sport.	Pitches used to their full potential according to demand.	A 4 room changing and ancillary accommodation (bricks and mortar construction) is estimated at £500k.
15.	Consider the potential to improve grass pitches in line	A sand fibre natural grass pitch reportedly has a weekly	'Hybrid' grass pitches, with floodlighting, can be used for	Maximises the use of grass pitches and assists in	Converting a standard grass pitch to a hybrid/sand fibre

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
	with evolving grass pitch technologies, such as <i>sand fibre natural grass</i> .	capacity of between 10 and 20 hours of use, depending on maintenance regimes and weather conditions; examples are at Ulster University's Coleraine and Jordanstown campuses.	mid-week training as well as weekend matches. Good potential for multi-sport.	addressing the shortfall in provision for training use.	pitch requires floodlighting to realise its playing capacity.
16.	Consider the potential for a covered 3G full size gaelic games facility suitable for club training and matches, eg, at established sites such as MUSA and Meadowbank. Subject to detailed research on feasibility and the availability of funding.	Covered 3G gaelic games pitches are an emerging development that is now being promoted by the Ulster Council GAA; Connacht GAA opened a covered facility (air dome) at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in 2021.	A covered 3G full size pitch has considerable multi-sport and partnership potential.	Enhanced community profile for gaelic games; outreach to other sports and activities.	The total project cost is unknown. The cost to the Council will be dependent on partners' contributions and grants.
17.	Classify the Council's MUGAs' primary purpose – sport, recreation, play – based on size, design, etc.	There is no classification system presently. As future developments are considered there is a need to consult at a local level to determine the proposed MUGAs purpose and the type/design best suited to the agreed purpose, not least the surface specification.	MUGAs can be multi-sport depending on size and design and have the potential to complement nearby pitches.	A classification system will help to give a rationale to the future development of MUGAs.	Carry out a study in order to classify MUGAs with regard to their primary purpose and future development - £15k.
18.	A number of the Council's grass pitches are not in use or used only very occasionally. The recommendation is to	Several association football and gaelic games clubs have expressed interest in leasing	Some possibility of multi-sport working depending on local circumstances.	This would help the Council to fully utilise its pitches' estate and maximise community benefit. Council pitches no	Typical costs to maintain a grass pitch are in the range £6k to £8k annually. This recommendation would

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
	consider the future for these sites, including the option of offering them to local clubs on a lease arrangement where there is interest and/or downgrading their current maintenance arrangements to reflect informal kickabout areas – Aughnacloy, Beechway, Bellaghy, Boyne Row, Clady, Glenone, Knockloughrim, Mill Park, Moneymore Recreation Centre, Riverside.	Council pitches that appear to be surplus to requirements. Some association football pitches are either no longer on the booking system or are only used on a very occasional basis. It is assumed that these pitches served a need and demand for association football in past years but that this need and demand has diminished for a variety of reasons.		longer required for their original purpose can assist in addressing the present and future needs of sports clubs.	achieve a saving on revenue costs and/or allow budget to be re-prioritised for other service pressures/demands.
19.	Identify Council pitches sites regarding suitability for additional community use enhancements to include, for example, floodlit perimeter trim/exercise/walking/jogging paths and to support any potential active travel projects and linkages. Consider in line, for example, with MUDCs Outdoor Recreation 5 Year Strategy, MUDCs Play Park 5 Year Strategy, MUDCs Village Plans.	Increasingly, Councils look to offer recreational opportunities and activities to complement sport at their pitch sites. Given the considerable size of many of the Council's sites, the inclusion of meaningful fitness trails helps to involve people who otherwise may not be involved in structured sport.	This develops sports pitch sites as sporting and recreational hubs, offering a range of physical activities that are accessible to everyone.	More people engaged in physical activity more often; the potential of the Council's sites is fully realised.	Recommend to allocate annual budget of £75k in Year 2 and £75k in Year 4 for specified works.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
20.	Consider development options for pitches that are under-used. Consider in line, for example, with MUDC Outdoor Recreation Strategy, MUDC Playpark 5 Year Strategy and MUDC Village Plans. Under-used pitches include Aughnacloy, Boyne Row, Drumcoo Grass 2, Fairhill, Mill Park Tobermore, Meadowbank Grass.	Analysis of the Council's pitches booking records suggests six pitches are currently under-used. Options for their future use/development should be identified and assessed. Consideration of change of use options should take into account the Council's objectives within its Outdoor Recreation Strategy, Play Strategy and Village Plans. Options should also consider community asset transfer and/or leasing.	Depending on the options, there is good potential for multi-sport and recreational use and partnership working.	Under-used pitches are wasteful of the Council's resources and have the potential to better serve the community.	By way of example the development of a standard play facility and multi-use games area has a cost estimate in the range £300k - £500k.
21.	Consider a new approach to supporting lawn bowls including the provision of synthetic greens.	High maintenance costs (at least £10k per year per green) and low club membership numbers at the Council's greens point to the need to review how the Council continues to support participation whilst achieving best value from its assets. Synthetic greens greatly reduce the maintenance costs and may be seen as encouraging greater participation through increased playability.	With synthetic greens there is good potential for partnership arrangements between the Council and clubs operating on Council greens, including lease arrangements. A range of options for Council greens includes:- ▪ Hand over maintenance responsibility along with a small equipment grant to the resident club.	The intended impact is to increase membership within lawn bowls clubs across the district, so making them more sustainable in the long term. The bowling green at King George V Playing Fields in Fivemiletown, 'home' to Clogher Valley Bowling Federation is a synthetic green, laid in 2000.	The cost of converting an existing 6 rink natural grass bowling green to a synthetic surface is in the region of £120k to £130k. Maintenance of a synthetic green involves a weekly vacuum with a wet/dry machine and occasional spray to prevent moss; maintenance can be carried out by club members. A replacement synthetic carpet will cost around £35k - £40k. Maintenance of a natural grass

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversion from grass to synthetic green(s). Transfer the asset to the resident club (with non-disposal conditions) along with a small equipment grant; the club manages and maintains the facility. <p>A separate business case should consider the cost effectiveness of these and other options.</p>		bowling green is in the region of £10k - £15k.
4. STAFFING RESOURCE					
22.	Implement a Pitches Management Programme	The audit process gives the Council a complete and detailed inventory of Council pitches and ancillary accommodation with associated booking records. How pitches 'perform' (no of bookings, cancellations, issues, etc) should be reviewed on a period basis. A Pitches Management Programme needs to be appropriately resourced with officer responsibility and administrative support.	A Pitches Management Programme has the potential to designate pitches according to need and, potentially where partnership opportunities arise.	Community benefit arising from the Council's stock of pitches will be maximised by pro-active management; under-used or unused pitches will not persist. Efficiency will be achieved.	Assume 20% of an administrator's time will be required to manage the programme, say, £6k annually.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
23.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for association football clubs which pro-actively work to involve more girls and women. Only 12% of association football clubs' players are female currently.	The district's association football clubs recognise that more girls are coming into the sport, however, with only 12% female players the gender balance is heavily weighted towards males. Clubs are a key stakeholder in involving girls and creating pathways for girls and women to play to their full potential.	Getting more girls and women involved in sport is the objective here. The Council will already have activity programming targeting girls and women; this recommendation looks to involve clubs as the Council's 'agents' in this work.	The gender balance in association football begins to be corrected.	Assume 10% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £4k annually.
24.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for lawn bowls clubs which pro-actively work to increase membership, especially targeting younger people and females.	Lawn bowls offers an important recreational and social activity, however, the age profile in the district's five lawn bowls clubs reflects the older generation; this is not sustainable. The Council's four bowling greens have spare capacity.	None.	More options for physical recreation for people of all ages.	Assume 5% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £2k annually.
25.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for gaelic games clubs to grow their community outreach activities.	Many gaelic games clubs aspire to engage the community in physical activity and recreation that is not necessarily sport-focussed.	There is a good potential to involve statutory agencies, eg, Health Promotion Agency and community sector organisations in helping to plan and deliver health and wellbeing activities in partnership with gaelic games clubs.	More people engaged in accessible physical activity programmes, so contributing to improved community wellbeing; stronger and more resilient clubs.	Assume 10% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £4k annually.

Item No	Description	Comment/Link to Audit	Multi-Sport & Partnership Potential	Impact	Indicative Costs Implications
26.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for rugby clubs as they look to involve more female and disabled players.	The IRFU Ulster Branch is proactive in encouraging clubs to promote the game beyond male players; presently the district's rugby clubs have a gender imbalance with only 14% female players.	There is potential for the Council to work closely with the governing body to help implement its several programmes for females and those with a disability in the district's rugby clubs.	This will offer more choice and opportunities to target groups that are presently under-represented in the sport of rugby.	Assume 10% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £4k annually.
27.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for hockey clubs to attract more male players.	Coaching resources are needed to enable the district's hockey clubs to offer hockey training to boys; local schools tend to focus on girl's hockey with the result just over a third of club players are male.	Stick skills are common to hockey and hurling/camogie, therefore, there is some potential for hockey and gaelic games to experience each other's sport. Good potential for hockey clubs to work in partnership with local schools.	A more balanced gender mix will strengthen the district's hockey clubs and provide opportunities for sports participation to boys who may not be interested in other team sports.	Assume 10% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £4k annually.
28.	Council's physical activity programming to consider support for lawn bowls clubs to improve their sustainability.	The district's lawn bowls clubs have only 20% female players, mostly in two of the five clubs, and only 3% junior players, these all in one club. Most of the district's bowlers are retirees, putting the sustainability of clubs at risk.	Lawn bowls historically is seen as an older person's activity and the multi-sport potential is limited. There could be partnership potential with boccia players – access permitting – and with organisations for retired people such as U3A.	Attracting new players to lawn bowls will breath new life into the sport, especially if younger players can be encouraged.	Assume 10% of an officer's time will be required at a cost of, say, £4k annually.

Costed 5 Year Action Plan

The following table presents a costed 5 year action plan. Whilst need has been evidenced, three projects are not considered in the costing as they are already covered within capital projects that are currently being progressed;

- (i) A 3G facility at Mid Ulster Sports Arena
- (ii) A 3G facility at Railway Park, Dungannon
- (iii) A 3G facility and changing accommodation at Gortgonis

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Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy
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Overall Total Years 1 - 5: £334,000 £4,273,792 £4,980,000

		Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
	Totals:	£30,000	£701,000	£1,480,000	£76,000	£999,000	£1,500,000	£76,000	£1,111,227	£0.00	£76,000	£882,914	£1,100,000	£76,000	£579,651	£900,000
Code/DEA Area	Area	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?
P1 Carntogher	Clady. Lease/disposal (fencing & site responsibilities) (Pitch Quality Score 11.4. Changing Facility Score: N/A)		£15,000													
P2 Moyola	Bellaghy. Facility maintenance/enhancements. Change of use (eg. small MUGA) Future option for lease (Pitch Quality Score 31.4. Changing Facility Score: N/A)		£50,000													
P3 Carntogher	Glenone. Lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 32.9. Changing Facility Score: N/A)															

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		Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		Totals:	£30,000	£701,000	£1,480,000	£76,000	£999,000	£1,500,000	£76,000	£1,111,227	£0.00	£76,000	£882,914	£1,100,000	£76,000	£579,651
Code/DEA Area	Area	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?
P4 Carntogher	Gulladuff - Change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement, small MUGA) (Pitch Quality Score 42.9. Changing Facility Score: N/A)					£50,000										
P5 Torrent	Henderson Park - Change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement, small MUGA) (Pitch Quality Score 42.9. Changing Facility Score: N/A)		£10,000													
P6 (a) Clogher Valley	Aughnacloy. (a) Change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement) Future option for lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 42.9. Changing Facility Score: N/A)															

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		Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
	Totals:	£30,000	£701,000	£1,480,000	£76,000	£999,000	£1,500,000	£76,000	£1,111,227	£0.00	£76,000	£882,914	£1,100,000	£76,000	£579,651	£900,000
Code/DEA Area	Area	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?
P6 (b) Clogher Valley	Aughnacloy (b) Consider enhancement to current partnership working/licence agreement to deliver further community sporting facilities/use. Partnership feasibility/options appraisal for future community sporting facility project		£50,000	£30,000					£10,000							
P7 Cookstown	Monrush - Change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement, boundary fencing, car park surfacing) (Pitch Quality Score 45.7. Changing Facility Score: N/A)		£50,000													
P8 (a) Dungannon	Drumcoo. (a) Pitch 3 enhancement: maintenance & equipment. (Pitch Quality Score 51.4. Changing Facility Score: 55.4)		£10,000													

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		Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
	Totals:	£30,000	£701,000	£1,480,000	£76,000	£999,000	£1,500,000	£76,000	£1,111,227	£0.00	£76,000	£882,914	£1,100,000	£76,000	£579,651	£900,000
Code/DEA Area	Area	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?	REVENUE Strategy Costs (council)	CAPITAL Strategy Costs (council)	Requires Budget/ Funding from others?
P8 (b) Dungannon	Drumcoo. (b) Feasibility/options appraisal for future community recreation/ sporting provision					£20,000										
P9 Moyola	Mill Park Tobermore. Lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 57.1. Changing Facility Score: 36.9)															
P10 (a) Clogher Valley	King George V Playing Fields. (a) Pitch 2 enhancement: maintenance & equipment. Changing pavilion works. (Pitch Quality Score 61.4. Changing Facility Score: 43.1)					£75,000										

Mid Ulster District Council
Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy
Part 1 of 2 – Executive Summary, Strategic Recommendations and Costed Actions

		Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
		Totals:	£30,000	£701,000	£1,480,000	£76,000	£999,000	£1,500,000	£76,000	£1,111,227	£0.00	£76,000	£882,914	£1,100,000	£76,000	£579,651
Code/DEA Area	Area	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
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P10 (b) Clogher Valley	King George V Playing Fields. (b) Pitch 1 enhancement: maintenance & equipment (should opportunity for budget and/or funding from others not materialise for a conversion to a floodlit 3G). (Pitch Quality Score 77.1)														£40,000	
P11 Moyola	Boyne Row. Lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 67.1. Changing Facility Score: 40.0)															
P12 (a) Moyola	Cahore Road. (a) Remedial work to changing accommodation. Changing Facility Score: 70.8)		£15,000													
P12 (b) Moyola	Cahore Road. (b) Pitch 3 enhancement: maintenance & equipment.		£40,000													

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	(Pitch Quality Score 80.0)															
P13 (c) Moyola	Cahore Road. C) Pitch 2 enhancement: maintenance & equipment (should opportunity for budget and/or funding from others not materialise for a conversion to a floodlit 3G) (Pitch Quality Score 67.1)														£40,000	
P14 Moyola	Knockloughrim. Lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 68.6. Changing Facility Score: N/A)															

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P15 Moyola	Riverside, Castledawson. Change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement, pocket park, etc) (Pitch Quality Score 68.6. Changing Facility Score: N/A)		£50,000	£100,000												
P16 (a) Dungannon	Benburb. (a) Enhancement: maintenance & equipment (should opportunity for budget and/or funding from others not materialise for a conversion to a floodlit 3G) (Pitch Quality Score 71.4. Changing Facility Score: 55.4)														£40,000	
P16 (b) Dungannon	Benburb. (b) Land: Feasibility/options appraisal - explore possibility of further land acquisition to meet local multi use sporting demand (subject to funding)								£15,000							£400,000

Mid Ulster District Council
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Part 1 of 2 – Executive Summary, Strategic Recommendations and Costed Actions

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P17 Cookstown	Fairhill Recreation Grounds. Feasibility/options appraisal - Explore future change of use (eg. recreation & play enhancement, pocket park, etc) Future option for lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 72.9. Changing Facility Score: 40.0)					£20,000										£500,000
P18 (a) Clogher Valley	Ballygawley Playing Fields. (a) Pitch 1 enhancement: maintenance & equipment. Changing pavilion works. (Pitch Quality Score 78.6. Changing Facility Score: 50.8)					£40,000										

Mid Ulster District Council
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P18 (b) Clogher Valley	Ballygawley Playing Fields. (b) Depending on further local consultation, installation of fencing, ball catchers and GAA goalposts					£60,000										
P19 Cookstown	Beechway. Enhancement: maintenance, equipment & fencing. Changing pavilion works. Future option for lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 78.6. Changing Facility Score: 43.1)								£60,000							
P20 Magherafelt	Moneymore Recreation Centre. Lease/disposal (Pitch Quality Score 80.0. Changing Facility Score: 81.5)															

Mid Ulster District Council
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P21 Moyola	Tobermore Golf Centre. Enhancement: maintenance & equipment. Changing pavilion works. (Pitch Quality Score 82.9. Changing Facility Score: 35.4)								£75,000							
P22 Dungannon	Dungannon Park. Pitch 1. Enhancement to better suit the needs of rugby. This should include floodlighting and line markings suitable for adult matches.											£125,000				
P23 (a) Torrent	Newmills Playing Field - (a) Enhancement: maintenance & equipment. Changing pavilion works. (Pitch Quality Score 85.7. Changing Facility Score: 47.7)					£40,000										

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Part 1 of 2 – Executive Summary, Strategic Recommendations and Costed Actions

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P23 (b) Torren	Newmills Playing Field (b) Future partnership working to deliver further community sporting facilities/use. Partnership feasibility/options appraisal for future community sporting facility project (eg. Floodlit ATP)								£15,000							
P24 Clogher Valley	Castlecaulfield. Upgrade: existing community building (address shared access to showers and accessible toilets for spectator use) Enhancement: (eg. pitch works, fencing, recreation & play enhancement, pocket park, car parking, trails, etc) (Pitch Quality Score 85.7. Changing Facility Score: 44.6).		£75,000	£600,000												

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P25 Cookstown	MUSA - recognition of current capital project re: 3G/running track - consider additional changing accommodation to support enhanced facilities/increased usage in addition to spectator seating								£15,000			£0	£600,000			
P26 Carntogher	Maghera Leisure Centre. Explore possibility of developing changing accommodation linked to new 3G pitch								£15,000				£500,000			
P27 (a) Magherafelt	Meadowbank Sports Arena. (a) Replacement: AstroTurf pitch (indoor) carpet		£200,000													
P27 (b) Magherafelt	Meadowbank Sports Arena. (b) Improvements/enhancements to the pavilion											£75,000				

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P28 (a) Cookstown	Bowls. Convert existing natural turf bowling greens to synthetic carpet (a) Fairhill					£130,000										
P28 (b) Magherafelt	Bowls. Convert existing natural turf bowling greens to synthetic carpet (b) Magherafelt								£130,000							
P28 (c) Dungannon	Bowls. Convert existing natural turf bowling greens to synthetic carpet (c) Drumcoo											£130,000				
P28 (d) Clogher Valley	Bowls. Replaced existing synthetic carpet (d) Fivemiletown														£40,000	
P29 Dungannon	Drumcoo Bowls. Install floodlighting and reinstate concrete edging											£60,000				
P30 Cookstown	Fairhill Bowls. Install/construct/ extend accommodation					£200,000										

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P31 Magherafelt	Magherafelt Bowls. Install floodlighting and upgrade the pavilion								£300,000							
P32 Cookstown	Hockey - Cookstown: explore SLA/partnership arrangement with education for continued community use provision				£5,000			£5,000			£5,000			£5,000		
P33 Dungannon	Hockey - Dungannon: explore SLA/partnership arrangement with education for continued community use provision				£5,000			£5,000			£5,000			£5,000		
P34 Various	Financial Assistance: School’s Sports Facilities Access fund £5k annually		£5,000			£5,000			£5,000			£5,000			£5,000	
P35 Various	Financial Assistance: Sports Capital fund at £50k annually to include assistance for					£50,000			£50,000			£50,000			£50,000	

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	feasibility studies/economic appraisals/equipment, etc (consider eligibility criteria)															
P36 Various	Financial Assistance: Capital Match Funding Scheme to be introduced to assist with groups larger projects/developments - £150,000 annually (consider eligibility criteria)					£150,000			£150,000			£150,000			£150,000	
P37 Various	Feasibility study for an existing multi use 3G at an established site (ie. MUSA and/or Meadowbank) to be converted into a covered 3G pitch											£15,000				
P38 Various	Establish a classification system for sports clubs No cost															

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P39 Various	Identify Council pitch sites suitable for additional community use enhancements for example, floodlit perimeter trim/exercise/ walking/jogging paths and to support any potential active travel projects and linkages															
P40 (a) Dungannon	Additional - Develop floodlit 3G community use training provision where need has been evidenced & subject to funding - (a) Benburb						£750,000									

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P40 (b) Clogher Valley	Additional - Develop floodlit 3G community use training provision where need has been evidenced & subject to funding - (b) Fivemiletown (explore existing partnership arrangements and King George Playing Fields)						£750,000									
P40 (c) Dungannon	Additional - Develop floodlit 3G community use training provision where need has been evidenced & subject to funding - C) Moy (subject to available site)			£750,000												
P41 Various	Devise and implement a Pitches Management Programme - subject to agreement as part of annual rates estimates process				£6,000			£6,000			£6,000			£6,000		

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P42 Various	Ensure Council pitches used for gaelic games are fully specified and supported with relevant equipment - ie. Gaelic games goals, ball stops, etc					£60,000			£60,000			£60,000				
P43 Various	Carry out a study in order to classify MUGAs with regard to their primary purpose and future development					£15,000										
P44 (a) Various	Development of MUGAs/small kickabout areas and as a minimum bring up to good rating (a) Caledon, Clogher, Millburn								£125,000							
P44 (b) Various	Development of MUGAs/small kickabout areas and as a minimum bring up to good rating (b) Gortnasoar, Blackhill, Broacagh, Donaghmore, Gortalowry											£125,000				

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P44 (c) Various	Development of MUGAs/small kickabout areas and as a minimum bring up to good rating (c) Killymerron, Meadowview, Moneymore Recreation Centre, Moygashel														£125,000	
P45 Clogher Valley	Explore potential to support development of multi-sport facility, working in partnership with local clubs, governing bodies and other key stakeholders		£50,000													
P46 Various	Resourcing - Additional Officer resource required for strategy delivery and programme management objectives as identified in the strategic recommendations		£51,000			£54,000			£56,227			£57,914			£59,651	

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P47 Various	Resourcing - Grounds Maintenance additional revenue budget required for strategy delivery and ongoing attainment of delivery objectives as identified in the strategic recommendations	£30,000			£60,000			£60,000			£60,000			£60,000		
P48 Various	Annual programme variations/ contingencies		£30,000			£30,000			£30,000			£30,000			£30,000	



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Final Draft
Development Committee
Consideration, February 2023



Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy

Part 2 of 2: Audit Report

April 2022



This project has been supported by The Executive Office funded through its District Council Good Relations Program in partnership with Mid Ulster District Council.



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Appendices

1. Focus Groups' Record
2. Facilities Inspections
3. Village Plans

1. Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1** Mid Ulster District Council has commissioned a Condition Survey of Council pitches and Council Pitches Strategy. The Council set out a two-part study to look at current pitch and associated changing provision; the first part is a condition survey and audit of all Council pitches and recreational spaces and the second part is to make recommendations for a Council pitches/spaces strategy. The objective of the study is to *‘create a Strategy that could be used to further develop the pitch infrastructure in the district in a way that is affordable, sustainable, inclusive, high quality and consistent with current best practice in public pitch provision.’* The facilities under consideration are for the sports of association football, gaelic games, hockey, lawn bowls, rugby.
- 1.2** The methodology for the study is based on Sport England’s Towards a Level Playing Field: Playing Pitch Model. This model is used to look at facilities for association football, gaelic games, hockey and rugby; the principles of the model are also applied to lawn bowls and multi use games areas. GIS mapping is used to look at the distribution of facilities.
- 1.3** From the outset an emphasis was placed on getting an accurate picture of activity in each sport; this was achieved by obtaining a high response to a survey of the clubs in each sport across the district, as follows:-

Sport	No of Clubs	No of Survey Returns	% Returns
Association Football	31	29	94%
Gaelic Games	47	47	100%
Hockey	3	3	100%
Lawn Bowls	5	5	100%
Rugby	3	3	100%

- 1.4** Post-primary schools were also surveyed, with 18 returns received from the 20 schools in the district.

Pitches’ Profile and Quality

- 1.5** The quality of the Council-owned pitches and changing facilities was scored using a Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment produced by Sport England. The aim of the

assessment is to rate the pitches and changing facilities based on several factors. For the pitches, the assessment is based on:

- a) A visual inspection of the pitch including grass cover, slope of pitch (gradient and cross-fall); evenness of the ground, length of grass, problem areas: evidence of dog fouling/ litter/ glass/ vehicle tracks/ unofficial use/ damage to the surface and evidence of poor drainage.
- b) Maintenance of the pitch including grass cutting, seeding, aeration, sand-dressing, fertilisation and weed killing.
- c) This information is collated, and a formula applied resulting in a percentage score and a rating.

Pitch Score %	Rating
80-100	Good
50-79	Standard
0-49	Poor

The changing facilities were also rated using the Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment. The assessment is based on:

- a) The existence of a changing facility, clubhouse and kitchen, exterior and interior quality, showers and toilets, official's changing area, spectator toilets, dedicated medical room.
- b) Are DDA compliant facilities provided?
- c) Boundary fence and parking

Changing Facilities Score %	Rating
65-100	Good
35-64	Standard
0-34	Poor

The results of the quality assessments are outlined below. The scores provide a starting point when considering the condition of each pitch and changing facility.

Table 1.1: Pitches' Profile Summary

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Aughnacloy	Grass	Association Football	91 x 60	Full	42.9	Poor	-	-
Ballygawley Playing Fields 1	Grass	Association Football	92 x 62	Full	78.6	Standard	50.8	Standard
Ballygawley Playing Fields 2	Grass	Gaelic Games	126 x 72	Training	LEASED	LEASED		
Ballygawley Playing Fields 3	Small 3G	Multi Sport	40 x 20	n/a	-	-		
Beechway 1	Grass	Association Football	95 x 56	Full	78.6	Standard	43.1	Standard
Beechway 2	Shale	Multi Sport	74 x 44	n/a	-	-		
Bellaghy	Grass	Association Football	90 x 45	Full	31.4	Poor	-	-
Benburb 1	Grass	Association Football	90 x 55	Full	71.4	Standard	55.4	Standard
Benburb 2	Small 3G	Multi Sport	40 x 20	n/a	-	-		
Boyne Row	Grass	Association Football	94 x 62	Full	67.1	Standard	40	Standard
Cahore Road 1	Grass	Gaelic Games	133 x 82	Full	91.4	Good	70.8	Good
Cahore Road 2	Grass	Association Football	96 x 64	Full	67.1	Standard		
Cahore Road 3	Grass	Association Football	100 x 61	Full	80	Good		
Castlecaulfield Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	100 x 63	Full	85.7	Good	44.6	Standard
Clady	Grass	Gaelic Games	94 x 66	Training	11.4	Poor	-	-
Drumcoo 1	3G	Multi Sport	90 x 54	n/a	-	-	52.3	Standard
Drumcoo 2	Grass	Association Football	83 x 58	Youth	85.7	Good		
Drumcoo 3	Grass	Association Football	75 x 60	Under 12s	51.4	Standard	55.4	Standard
Drumcoo 4	Grass	Association Football	100 x 44	Full	81.4	Good		

Mid Ulster District Council
Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy
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Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Drumcoo Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Good	n/a	Good
Dungannon Park 1	Grass	Rugby	120 x 68	Full	84.3	Good	70.8	Good
Dungannon Park 2	Grass	Association Football	102 x 58	Full	87.1	Good		
Fairhill Recreation Grounds 1	Grass	Association Football	94 x 60	Full	72.9	Standard	40	Standard
Fairhill Recreation Grounds 2	Grass	Association Football	94 x 56	Full	72.9	Standard	55.4	Standard
Fairhill Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Satisfactory	n/a	Standard
Glenone, Portglenone	Grass	Association Football	90 x 60	Full	32.9	Poor	-	-
Gortgonis Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	105 x 59	Full	84.3	Good	58.5	Standard
Gulladuff	Grass	Association Football	28 x 21	Small Kick-about	42.9	Poor	-	-
Henderson Park	Grass	Association Football	31 x 23	Small Kick-about	42.9	Poor	-	-
King George V 1	Grass	Association Football	91 x 55	Full	77.1	Standard	43.1	Standard
King George V 2	Grass	Association Football	90 x 50	Full	61.4	Standard		
King George V Bowling Green	Synthetic	Lawn Bowls	25 x 37	5 rinks	n/a	Satisfactory	n/a	Standard
Knockloughrim	Grass	Association Football	110 x 52	Full	68.6	Standard	-	-
Maghera Leisure Centre 1	3G	Multi Sport	115 x 65	n/a	-	-	70.8	Good
Maghera Leisure Centre 2	Small 3G	Multi Sport	30 x 27	n/a	-	-		

Mid Ulster District Council
Pitches Condition Survey & Strategy
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Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Magherafelt Bowling Green	Grass	Lawn Bowls	37 x 37	6 rinks	n/a	Good	n/a	Good
Meadowbank 1	Indoor Astro	Hockey/ Multi Sport	100 x 65	n/a	-	-	76.9	Good
Meadowbank 2	Grass	Association Football	98 x 56	Full	94.3	Good	52.3	Standard
Meadowbank 3	3G	Multi Sport	145 x 88 (Gaelic) 100 x 68 (Rugby) 90 x 66 (A. Football 1) 90 x 60.5 (A. Football 2)	Full Full Full Full	-	-		
Meadowbank 4	Small Astro	Multi Sport	34 x 37	n/a	-	-		
Meadowbank 5-8	Small indoor 3G	Multi Sport	30 x 16	n/a	- - -	- - -		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 1	Grass	Association Football	100 x 55	Full	88.6	Good	76.9	Good
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 2	Grass	Gaelic Games	138 x 86	Full	88.6	Good	76.9	Good
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 3	3G	Multi Sport	130 x 80 (Gaelic) 120 x 70 (Rugby)	Full Full	-	-		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 4	Grass	Gaelic Games	120 x 76	Training	91.4	Good		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 5	Grass	Association Football	101 X 64	Full	82.9	Good		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 6	3G	Association Football	93 x 55	Full	-	-	-	-

Site	Surface	Sport	Length x width metres	Pitch Size	Pitch Quality Score %	Pitch Rating	Changing Facility Quality Score %	Changing Facility Rating
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 7	Small 3G	Multi Sport	34 x 29	n/a	-	-	-	-
Mid Ulster Sports Arena 8	Indoor 3G	Multi Sport	57 x 22	n/a	-	-	-	-
Mill Park, Tobermore	Grass	Association Football	97 x 68	Full	57.1	Standard	36.9	Standard
Millburn, Cookstown	Small Shale	Association Football	25 x 18	Small Kick-about	-	-	-	-
Moneymore Recreation Centre	Grass	Association Football	95 x 47	Full	80	Good	81.5	Good
Monrush 1	Small Grass	Association Football	38 x 20	Small Kick-about	45.7	Poor	-	-
Monrush 2	Shale	Multi Sport	42 x 30	n/a	-	-	-	-
New Mills Playing Field	Grass	Association Football	91 x 53	Full	85.7	Good	47.7	Standard
Riverside, Castledawson	Grass	Association Football	91 x 60	Full	68.6	Standard	-	-
Tobermore Golf Centre	Grass	Association Football	99 x 52	Full	82.9	Good	35.4	Standard

Multi Use Games Areas

- 1.6** Multi use games areas (MUGAs) are developed by local authorities to supplement play areas and complement training facilities for outdoor team sports such as association football and hockey. Depending on markings and equipment they may also facilitate basketball. There is no ‘one size fits all’ in terms of design (size, type of surface, lighting, fencing, markings, equipment) and accessibility. Some of the Council’s MUGA’s are more suited to recreational play by older children whilst others are also capable of use for sports training. Some are located alongside play areas and sports pitches whilst others are unconnected to any other play or sports facilities. MUGAs tend to fall between two stools; on the one hand they are viewed primarily as play facilities, on the other hand they are viewed primarily as sports facilities. There are 16 MUGAs in the Mid Ulster District.

Table 1.2: MUGAs Profile Summary

Site	Size	Surface	Fixed Equipment	Surface Condition
Blackhill Play Area, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Boyne Row, Castledawson	-	-	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	New
Brocagh	18 x 10m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Caledon	37 x 20m	Tarmac with light shale covering	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Clogher	30 x 20m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Donaghmore	38 x 20m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Gortgonis	40 x 20m	Astro	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Gortalowry, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Gortnasoar, Dungannon	30 x 14m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Poor
Killymerron, Dungannon	18 x 10m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Meadowview Park, Dungannon	22 x 15m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Milltown, Dungannon	28 x 15m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good
Moneymore Recreation Centre	60 x 30m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 2 sets basketball hoops	Satisfactory
Monrush, Cookstown	20 x 12m	Tarmac	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good
Moygashel, Dungannon	40 x 24m	Tarmac	Small fixed association football goals	Satisfactory
Upperlands	28 x 14m	Astro	Inbuilt association football goals 1 set basketball hoops	Good

Clubs, Teams, Participants, Pitches

- 1.7** The survey of sports clubs presented an opportunity to obtain a profile of participation across the five sports in terms of numbers of clubs, teams and players, as follows:-

Table 1.3: Clubs and Teams

Sport	No of Clubs	Male		Female		Totals	
		Teams	%	Teams	%	Teams	% of Total Teams
Association Football	31	201	25	31	6	232	18
Gaelic games	47	514	64	393	80	907	70
Hockey ¹	4	21	2	60	12	81	6
Lawn Bowls ²	5	5	1	2	1	7	1
Rugby	3	63	8	5	1	68	5
Totals	90	804	100%	491	100%	1,295	100%

- 1.8** A summary of players reveals there are 13,555 male players and 7,278 female players across the five sports, giving a total of 20,833 players in these sports within the club environment. The breakdown is as follows:-

Table 1.4: Players by Sport

Sport	Male		Female		Totals	
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	Players	% of Total Players
Association Football	2,464	1,142	414	71	4,091	20
Gaelic games	5,841	2,732	4,312	1,463	14,348	69
Hockey	158	150	610	190	1,108	5
Lawn Bowls	3	132	2	35	172	1
Rugby	623	310	124	27	1,084	5
Totals	9,089	4,466	5,462	1,786	20,803	100%

- 1.9** It was considered important to prepare and present an inventory of all pitches for the five sports under consideration – multi use games areas are addressed separately. The following summary shows there are 212 ‘pitches’ across the five sports.

¹ Rainey Endowed School is included here as a hockey ‘club’ as it plays most of its hockey at Meadowbank Arena in Magherafelt.

² Magherafelt Bowling Club and Dungannon Bowling Club each have Men’s and Ladies sections but are viewed as single clubs.

Table 1.5: Summary of All Pitches

Sport	Grass		ATP		Shale		Totals
	Full	Small	Full	Small	Full	Small	
Association Football	41	4	9	3	-	-	57
Gaelic Games	74	37	3	8	-	-	122
Hockey	-	-	6	-	2	4	12
Lawn Bowls	3	-	1	-	-	-	4
Rugby	15	2	-	-	-	-	17
Totals	133	43	19	11	2	4	212

1.10 Table 1.6 presents a breakdown of the ownership of pitches by sport, type and ownership.

Table 1.6: Ownership of Pitches – All Sizes

Ownership	Grass				ATPs							Totals
	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Lawn Bowls	Rugby	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Lawn Bowls	Rugby	Hockey			
									Water-Based	Astro	Shale	
Club/Community	9	88	0	6	3	9	1	0	1	0	0	117
Education	7	15	0	10	4	0	0	0	0	4	6	46
Mid Ulster DC	27	5	3	1	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	43
Leased from Mid Ulster DC	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Totals	45	111	3	17	12	11	1	0	1	5	6	212

Further breakdown of the supply of pitches is presented in each sport-specific section. In presenting the above summary tables it's useful to note:-

- ❖ Pitches are counted within the sport that best suits their size. So, for example, the Council's full-size multi sports pitches at Meadowbank and Mid Ulster Sports Arena are counted in gaelic games.
- ❖ AstroTurf pitches are all allocated to hockey as hockey is their primary purpose, however, it's recognised they are also used by other sports for training and recreational play.

Adequacy of Provision

1.11 So how is adequacy of provision assessed? There are two assessment models relevant to this project.

- ❖ ‘Playing Pitch Model’ – Sport England
- ❖ ‘Guidance for Outdoor Sport, Play and Recreation: Beyond the Six Acre Standard’ – Fields in Trust

Sport NI’s *‘Bridging the Gap: Active Places Research Report’* (2009 with 2014 update) uses Fields in Trust guidance to assess the provision of grass and artificial turf pitches in each local authority. Field in Trust’s guidance resonates with national planning policy, in particular *‘the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the promotion of its economic, social and environmental roles and the seeking of positive improvements in the quality of the environment and people’s quality of life.’* It further states that *‘quantity guidelines should not be interpreted as either a maximum or minimum level of provision; rather they are benchmark standards that can be adjusted to take account of local circumstances.’* The Sport England Playing Pitch Model (PPM) effectively examines local circumstances by assessing actual demand through consultation and survey work with local sports clubs, schools and local community groups. The result is an accurate assessment of adequacy of provision that is locally specific, enabling development of the most beneficial investment strategy.

Sport England

1.12 Sport England’s *Playing Pitch Model* (PPM) has been applied to the assessment of provision relating to association football, gaelic games, rugby and hockey; PPM principles been applied in the assessment of adequacy of provision for lawn bowls. The assessment process matches the number of pitches available (supply) against the demand for competitive play. Three scenarios of supply are considered in accordance with the PPM as follows:-

Reference	Description
Scenario 1	All pitches
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).
Scenario 3	Council pitches only

1.13 Provision across the district for each of association football, gaelic games, rugby and hockey is summarised for each scenario, where a *positive* result indicates supply exceeds demand and a *negative* result indicates supply fails to meet demand. It is

suggested that in each case Scenario 2 is the most realistic picture of provision across these sports given that it includes all pitches that are available for matches, regardless of ownership. For lawn bowls the PPM principles have been applied in an assessment of provision.

- 1.14** A summary of adequacy of provision using the Sport England PPM model looks like this:-

Table 1.7: Playing Pitch Model – Adequacy of Provision (Scenario 2)	
Sport	Adequacy of Provision
Association Football	+ 9 pitches
Gaelic Games	- 10 pitches
Hockey	+ 1 pitch
Lawn Bowls	Surplus hours across all sites
Rugby	+ 1 pitch

Fields in Trust

- 1.15** Fields in Trust's³ 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport, Play and Recreation: Beyond the Six Acre Standard' is used to highlight adequacy of provision for formal space for association football, rugby, hockey, lawn bowls and multi use games areas. The following table compares Fields in Trust's guidance for level of provision of open space based on the district's population of 146,427 against the current stock of facilities that are available for community use for matches. For the purposes of this comparison the stock of gaelic games pitches is included in the calculations given that gaelic games is integral to the district's sporting culture

Table 1.8: Comparison of Fields in Trust with Current Stock

Type of Open Space (FiT categories)	FiT Guidance (ha per 1,000 population)	Level of provision required to meet FiT Guidance (ha)	Current Stock (ha)	Difference (ha)	Number of Pitches ⁴
Playing pitches (association football, gaelic games, hockey, rugby)	1.20	175.71	115.33	-60.38	-60 pitches
All outdoor sports	1.60	234.28	120.33	-113.95	n/a

³ The National Playing Fields Association is re-named Fields in Trust.

⁴ Sport NI estimates an average pitch size to be 2.5 acres (association football, gaelic games, rugby); 1 acre = 0.40468 hectares. In reality a full size gaelic games pitch (145mx90m) is 3.22 acres, or 1.30 hectares.

(all above plus lawn bowls, athletics, tennis)					
Other outdoor provision (MUGA's, skateboard parks)	0.30	43.93	0.67	-43.26	n/a

- 1.16** Sport NI's 'Bridging the Gap' (2014 update) report assessed adequacy of provision (grass and artificial turf pitches combined) for the Mid Ulster district to be an over-supply of 6 pitches when artificial turf pitches in the education sector are included but education's grass pitches are excluded.

Association Football

Quantity

- 1.17** There are 31 association football clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players:-

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	2,464	1,142	414	71	4,091

The 4,091 players represent 20% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

- 1.18** There is a total of 47 full size grass association football pitches suitable for adult, youth and small sided games matches and 10 full size 3G pitches. In addition there are a number of pitches of various sizes used for training.

Ownership	Full & SSG Match Pitches			Pitches used for training – varying sizes		
	Grass Full	3G Full	SSG Grass + 3G	Grass	AstroTurf	3G
Clubs/Community	9	1	2 x 3G	3	0	4
Education	5	4	3 x grass	3	1	5
MUDC	25	4	1 x grass	16	1	4
Leased from MUDC	2	1	0	2	0	1
Total	41	10	6	26	2	14

- 1.19** An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for association football matches reveals the following:-

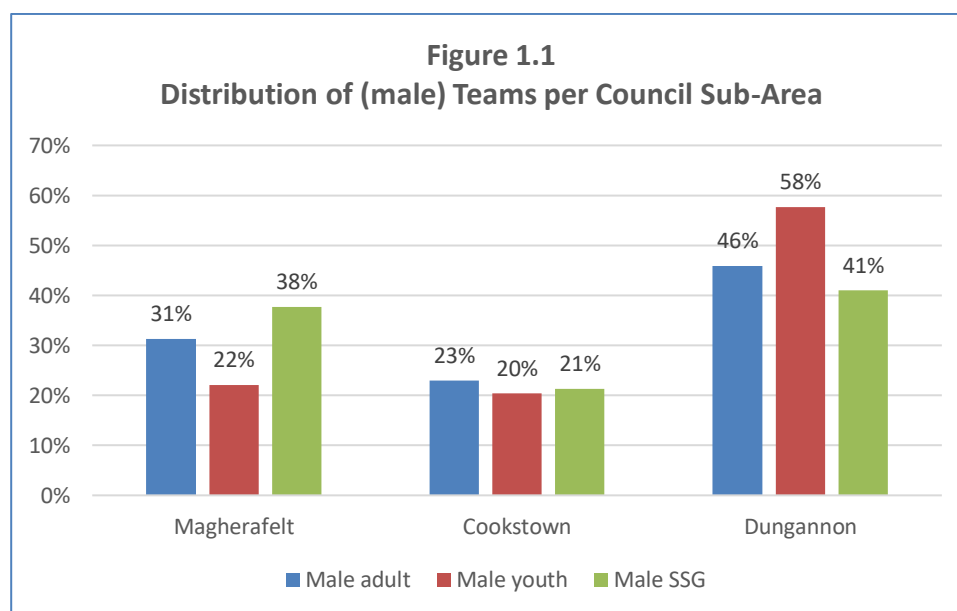
Adequacy of Provision

+9 pitches

Supply Surplus

The assessment suggests that, for adult matches on a Saturday afternoon there is a surplus of pitches. This picture is of course impacted by a number of variables including pitch condition, cancellations and changing accommodation being available. A 'buffer' of pitches is needed to cover maintenance closures, resting pitches, events/competitions and increased demand in the future.

- 1.20** It was deemed of interest to assess *adequacy of provision* in each of three sub-areas in the district; Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon. Figure 1.1 shows the Dungannon sub-area as having the greater percentage of teams across each of three male age categories.



Adequacy of provision for adult and youth football at peak demand time – Saturday afternoons – across these three sub-areas is:-

Magherafelt	+5 pitches
Cookstown	+3 pitches
Dungannon	+2 pitches

- 1.21** Looking at *adequacy of provision* of facilities for training for association football, it has been calculated (see Section 6) that the 232 association football teams in the district (a combination of male and female at all ages) require 247 one hour training slots each week; currently there are 247 slots available, an under-supply of 36 slots or 12% of the total requirement. If AstroTurf facilities are removed from the calculation the under-supply increases to 56 slots. AstroTurf is rapidly becoming less

desirable as a training surface for any ‘large ball’ sport due to the growth in availability of 3G facilities; in the survey of clubs just 15% of clubs responded ‘favourable’ when asked about AstroTurf surfaces for training. It’s also noted that this analysis of training requirements does not take into account any training needs required for elite pathway development squads, social football programmes or five-a-side recreational activity.

Quality

- 1.22** For association football all Council pitches and ancillary accommodation were inspected and given a quality rating in accordance with Sport England’s non-technical inspection system; facilities in other ownerships were assessed through the club and schools survey.

Pitches

Summary of Quality Rating for Full Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total No of Pitches
Clubs/Community	7	2	0	3	12
Education	6	2	2	2	12
MUDC	11	13	2	4	30
Leased from MUDC	2	0	0	1	3
Total	26	17	4	10	57

The four Council pitches rated *poor* are at Bellaghy, Clady, Portglenone, Monrush1. The clubs were asked their opinion on the overall quality of their ‘home’ pitch.

Overall Quality of your Home Pitch		
Answer Option	No of Responses	% of clubs
Good	15	48
Standard	9	29
Poor	7	23
Total	31	100%

Built Facilities

- 1.23** The Council’s changing facilities and other on-site accommodation were also rated. The ratings are based on:-

- ❖ The existence of a changing facility, clubhouse and kitchen, exterior and interior quality, showers and toilets, official's changing accommodation, spectator toilets, dedicated medical room.
- ❖ Are DDA-compliant facilities provided?
- ❖ Boundary fence and parking.

Here's the results:-

Good	7 sites
Standard	13 sites
Poor	None

Conclusions

1.24 Association football relies on the Councils' provision of pitches and changing accommodation to a much greater extent than the other 'large ball' sports. Summary points are made:-

- ❖ Thinking about membership in the future, the clubs mostly aspire to membership growth with some clubs citing more girls coming into the sport and one club placing a '*greater emphasis on girl's football*'. At 88% of club players the gender balance is heavily weighted towards males. This points to the continuing need for sports development programmes, both Council and club based, to target girls and for facility developments to consider the needs of females, especially in relation to changing accommodation.
- ❖ Two thirds of association football clubs in the district have a positive attitude to 3G surfaces for training with a further 31% adopting a neutral position. Thinking about matches, 54% of clubs are favourably inclined to the use of 3G with 31% taking a neutral stance. These results are slightly more positive than the results coming from the same survey in a neighbouring Council area carried out in late 2017. This could suggest that association football clubs in Mid Ulster are catching up with governing body thinking on the use of 3G, perhaps encouraged also by the increasing number of professional clubs turning to 3G or a hybrid surface.
- ❖ Whilst 'club' is widely used as a group identifier within association football at a local level, it begs the question – what constitutes a club? Of the 18 clubs fielding *only* adult teams, only 8 have two teams and none have more than two teams. This question becomes important when the Council is considering applications for funding support. It's suggested that the Council establishes criteria for recognising a 'club' across all sports.

Gaelic Games

Quantity

- 1.25** There are 47 gaelic games clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	5,841	2,732	4,312	1,463	14,348

The 14,348 players represent 69% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

- 1.26** Gaelic games clubs generally train and play matches at their club base, mostly on one or two grass pitches. With a playing season that spans the spring and summer months and given that clubs in Mid Ulster average 300 players, clubs' pitches are often used most weekday evenings and weekends. This can and does put pressure on pitch maintenance.

Gaelic Games Pitches used for matches (full) and training					
Ownership	Full Grass	Full 3G	Training Grass	Training 3G	AstroTurf
Clubs/County Board	65	1 ⁵	23	6	0
Education	5	0	10	4	1
MUDC	2	2	3	8 ⁶	1
Leased from MUDC	2	0	1	1	0
Total	74	3	37	19	2

- 1.27** An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for gaelic games matches and training reveals the following:-

Adequacy of Provision	-10 pitches	Supply Shortfall
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⁵ Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre.

⁶ Includes the majority of MUDC's 3G pitches excludes full size GAA 3G pitches, so for example includes Maghera LC 3G, Drumcoo 3G, Benburb 3G etc and Backrow 3G – details of these pitches are included in the Association Football section of this report.

The assessment accounts for training and matches as both take place on the same pitch. The assessment here presented suggests that demand outstrips supply, further evidenced in the survey and consultation responses wherein some clubs note the need for additional facilities.

- 1.28** Looking at *adequacy of provision* in each of three sub-areas, Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon, whilst the 47 clubs are spread evenly across the three sub-areas, clubs in the Magherafelt area have the greater percentage of teams:-

Distribution of Gaelic Games Teams by Sub-Area			
Sub Area	% Adult Teams	% Youth Teams	% Go Games Teams
Magherafelt	43	42	45
Cookstown	31	28	28
Dungannon	26	30	27
Totals	100	100	100

Adequacy of provision for adult and youth gaelic games for matches and training on grass pitches across these three sub-areas is:-

Magherafelt	-6.5 pitches
Cookstown	+2.5 pitches
Dungannon	-6.5 pitches

- 1.29** The online survey asked gaelic games clubs to record the number of hours their pitches are used for training and matches each week. The average weekly pitch use across all clubs is 24 hours per week for a first pitch, and for those clubs with two pitches, 18 hours per week for the second pitch. Given the carrying capacity of a grass pitch is two matches per week for 30 weeks annually (as recommended by Sport England), most gaelic games pitches are heavily over-used. Whilst this is mitigated to some degree by the gaelic games season and careful in-club pitch maintenance, over-use of club-based grass pitches continues to be a challenge for gaelic games clubs.

Quality

- 1.30** The Council's gaelic games pitches were inspected and given a quality rating; pitches in other ownerships were rated for quality by the pitch owners, clubs and schools.

Summary of Quality Rating for Gaelic Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs/Community	46	11	3	8	68
Education	3	1	0	1	5
MUDC	2	0	0	2	4
Total	51	12	3	11	77

The three pitches rated *poor* are at Dungannon GAC, Errigal Ciaran GAC, Desertmartin GAC. Two thirds of the pitches are rated as *good*, that is, 51 of the total of 77 pitches. Of the 11 pitches where quality is unknown, 6 are located at Tyrone's Garvaghy GAA complex.

Conclusions

- 1.31** Gaelic games clubs are in the same way as rugby clubs, generally self-contained, having a pitch/pitches and indoor accommodation at their club grounds. As gaelic games clubs have grown in recent decades, with more players including significantly more participation by females, club-based facilities have been put under pressure, especially pitches, which tend to be used for training activity and matches, but also indoor accommodation. Like many sports, gaelic games is constantly evolving, with strategic direction from its governing body, and covered synthetic surfaces for training and youth matches are beginning to appear on clubs' wish lists. The tendency is for gaelic games clubs to focus on developing facilities at club grounds, however, in the Mid Ulster district the Council's provision of multi-sport ATPs, full size for gaelic games, complements club-based facilities in those parts of the district where they can be readily accessed. It's also noted that some gaelic games clubs are based in parts of the district where they act as the main community resource.
- 1.32** Gaelic games clubs in the Mid Ulster area are clearly a major provider of sports facilities and opportunities to play sport, both for males and females. Within the 47 clubs in the district there are at least 12 teams for every gaelic games full size grass pitch, pointing to the need to 'spread the load' of pitch use by accessing other facilities for training activity. The Ulster Council GAA recognises and supports the use of 3G surfaces for training and for some youth matches, however, clubs do not always have the same acceptance, particularly when it comes to matches. The challenge is to provide suitable facilities in suitable locations that will serve community needs and support clubs in their development aspirations. Future provision could be developed in centralised multi-sport hubs or as community-based facilities.

Hockey

Quantity

- 1.33** There are three hockey clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	158	150	610	190	1,108

The 1,108 players represent 5% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

- 1.34** Whilst shale hockey pitches still persist in some school sites, Ulster Hockey requires that matches are played on AstroTurf pitches, either sand (dressed or filled) or water. Shale pitches are included in this inventory for sake of completeness and recognising that they may be considered for conversion to an accepted sports surface at some point in the future.

Hockey Pitches used for Matches and Training			
Ownership	AstroTurf	Shale	Totals
Education	5	6	11
MUDC	1	0	1
Totals	6	6	12

- 1.35** An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for hockey matches is as following:-

Adequacy of Provision	+1 pitch	Supply just meeting demand
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This picture of *adequacy of provision* is based on four of the six AstroTurf pitches as two AstroTurf pitches, located in post-primary schools, are generally not available for competitive matches; all six shale pitches are excluded from the assessment given their unsuitability for the modern game.

Quality

- 1.36** A summary of the quality of the district's AstroTurf pitches is as follows; again, shale pitches are included here for completeness although they are used by schools with reluctance and only in the absence of an accessible AstroTurf pitch.

Summary of Quality Rating for Hockey Pitches (Astro Turf and Shale)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total Number of Pitches
MUDC	0	0	1	0	1
Education	6	2	3	0	0
Total	6	2	4	0	12

- ❖ The Council's AstroTurf pitch (indoor) at Meadowbank Arena is rated as *poor*, as reported in the pitches inspection document which notes:-

'It has been used as a factory during the Covid-19 pandemic and as such needs repair. There are bumps on the surface, the carpet has separated in places and the overall condition of the Astro Turf is worn. The main strengths of this pitch are its size and the fact that it is indoor and therefore allows teams to train and compete all year round.'

- ❖ It's of interest to note that whilst Dungannon Hockey Club report that the quality of their home base pitch at Royal School Dungannon is *poor*, the school itself rates the pitch as *good*.

1.37 Generally speaking, the issue with sand-filled/dressed AstroTurf pitches is that they have traditionally been used by a range of sports as they were the only synthetic surfaces pre-3G and were seen as being multi-sport. Different sports put different pressures and stresses on AstroTurf carpets, especially when used for a mix of training and matches. This can lead to unevenness and separation of carpet sections. Maintenance regimes can help avoid these issues.

Conclusions

1.38 Adequacy of provision of pitches for hockey, given the Council operates only one AstroTurf pitch, relies on school facilities, both at Cookstown High School and Royal School Dungannon. Hockey is a minority sport within the District, however, the clubs aspire to considerable growth; Rainey Hockey Club (closely linked to Rainey Endowed School) emphasises its success at team and individual level, producing numerous Ulster and Ireland players over the years.

1.39 It's known that Rainey Endowed School is at an advanced stage in its application to Sport NIs Multi Facilities funding programme to develop sports facilities at the school, including an AstroTurf pitch. The local club make the point that two AstroTurf pitches are needed in Magherafelt in order to support current and projected levels of activity.

- 1.40** Cookstown Hockey Club put forward an idea to construct an air dome cover over its sand-dressed pitch at Cookstown High School. Dungannon Hockey Club aspire to grow player numbers and become a hockey ‘centre of excellence’ for the Mid Ulster area, however, consultation with the club reveals issues with their use of the AstroTurf pitch at Royal School Dungannon.

Lawn Bowls

Quantity and Quality

- 1.41** The Mid Ulster District has five lawn bowls clubs, two of which have men’s and ladies’ sections. The breakdown of players is as follows:-

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	3	132	2	35	172

The 172 players represent 1% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports.

- 1.42** There are four bowling greens in the district, three operated by the Council and the fourth green, a synthetic surface, operated by Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation. Here’s a summary of the quality of the greens.

Bowling Greens - Quality				
Ownership	No of Greens	Good	Standard	Poor
Clubs	1	0	1	0
MUDC	3	1	2	0
Totals	4	1	3	0

One of the Council’s greens – Magherafelt Bowling Green – is rated as *good*, the remaining greens are rated as *standard*. Natural turf bowling greens require a good deal of regular maintenance throughout the bowling season and restorative work out of season. In past decades Councils usually engaged a green keeper to look after a single green, however, most Councils now contract-out bowling green maintenance. Clubs feel this has resulted in a lesser standard of playing surface.

- 1.43** For lawn bowls, adequacy of provision is assessed by looking at training and competition time compared to the total hours available for club activities. The assessment for each of the district’s four greens is as follows:-

	Supply against Demand (hrs)
Fairhill Bowling Green	+ 26
Magherafelt Bowling Green	+ 36
Drumcoo Bowling Green	+ 37
Fivemiletown Bowling Green	+ 52

From the quantitative analysis of *demand* for training and match green-time at each facility compared to *supply* as measured in available green-hours it is clear that supply comfortably meets demand. Most greens appear to be well used by members.

Conclusions

- 1.44** Lawn bowls, whilst involving a relatively small number of players across the five clubs, offers an important recreational and social activity for the older generation. The clubs and the governing body aspire to grow membership, not least amongst the younger generation. It isn't clear how this will be achieved, however, actions may result from the Irish Bowls Federation current survey of its membership that will assist clubs to re-group post-COVID-19.
- 1.45** There is an issue with the standard of greens maintenance. One option is to convert natural turf greens to synthetic greens; this would appear to be a growing trend in Ireland with an estimated half of all bowling greens now synthetic.
- 1.46** In 2022 Cookstown Bowling Club is set to take on presidency of NI Provincial Bowling Association and the Irish Bowling Association which will see the club hosting regional and national events. With this in mind the club see the need for improved facilities at their home ground, Fairhill Bowling Green in Cookstown.

Rugby

Quantity

- 1.47** There are three rugby clubs in the district with the following breakdown of players.

	Male		Female		Total
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	
Players	623	310	124	27	1,084

The 1,084 players represent 5% of the total number of players registered with clubs across the five sports. As with gaelic games, rugby clubs typically train and play matches on club-owned pitches. Rugby is played through the autumn and winter months so careful maintenance regimes are required to ensure pitches hold up throughout the season.

Rugby Pitches used for Matches and Training			
Ownership	Full Grass / 3G	Youth Grass	Training
Clubs	6	0	0
Education	8	2	1 x 3G
MUDC	3	0	0
Total	17	2	1

1.48 An assessment of *adequacy of provision* for rugby matches is as following:-

Adequacy of Provision	+1 pitch	Supply just meeting demand
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The assessment does not account for training demand which also takes place on most rugby pitches in addition to matches; for example, Dungannon RFC report that club growth is being constrained by the lack of training facilities. All three rugby clubs have two grass pitches based at the clubs' grounds; pitch 1 is used for 11.6 hours on average each week whilst pitch 2 is used 6 hours on average each week. This suggests that pitch 1 is over-used and pitch 2 is heavily used (although Rainey Old Boys RFC report they don't use pitch 2 for training).

Quality

1.49 The Council's grass rugby pitch at Dungannon Park was inspected for quality and pitches in club and school ownership were rated by their owners.

Summary of Quality Rating for Grass Rugby Pitches (Full and Youth)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs	4	0	2	0	6
Education	8	0	0	0	8
Council	1	0	0	0	1
Total	13	0	2	0	15

The two pitches rated *poor* are at Stevenson Park, home ground to Dungannon RFC.

Conclusions

- 1.50** Rugby clubs tend to train and play matches on club pitches where changing accommodation and social facilities are also available. With just three clubs, rugby is a minority sport in the Council area; a total of 68 teams are fielded across the three clubs involving 1084 players from 6 years of age through to adult; only 151 players are female. Dungannon RFC has an adult female team. As with association football the under representation of female players presents an opportunity for future sports development programmes. Both Dungannon RFC and Clogher Valley RFC have female youth teams.
- 1.51** Dungannon RFC report they are in ‘desperate need’ of a third pitch to cater for a growing club. Clogher Valley RFC has purchased 9 acres of land adjoining their site; the club states they are keen to explore:-

“a joint venture to build a multi-sport facility on the adjoining land with Mid Ulster District Council and CVRFC.”

Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

Quantity

- 1.52** There are 14 Council-owned MUGAs across the district. There is no ‘one size fits all’ in terms of design (size, type of surface, lighting, fencing, markings, equipment) and accessibility. Some of the Council’s MUGAs are more suited to recreational play by older children whilst others are capable of use for sports training. Some are located alongside play areas and sports pitches whilst others are unconnected to any other play or sports facilities. The Council does not presently define a MUGAs primary identity and purpose. The opportunity here is to define what a MUGA is so that future developments have a clear purpose. Here’s a summary of the key features for the Council’s MUGAs.

MUGA	Dimension (metres)	Area m ²	L x W Ratio	Does MUGA meet Sport England m ² guidance for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA
Blackhill	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Brocagh	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Caledon	37 x 20	740	1.8 : 1	No
Clogher	30 x 20	600	1.5 : 1	No
Donaghmore	38 x 20	760	1.9 : 1	No
Gortnalowry	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Gortnasoar	30 x 14	420	2.1 : 1	No

Killymeron	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Loup	15 x 12	180	1.3 : 1	No
Meadow View Park	22 x 15	330	1.5 : 1	No
Milltown	28 x 15	420	1.9 : 1	No
Moygashel	40 x 24	960	1.7 : 1	Yes
Ratheen	44 x 25	1,100	1.8 : 1	Yes
Upperlands	28 x 14	392	2.0 : 1	No

Quality

- 1.53** In keeping with the Sport England non-technical assessment system for conventional pitches, the consultants have assessed each MUGA and classified condition, summarised as follows:-

Good	4 MUGA's
Satisfactory	7 MUGA's
Poor	3 MUGA's

The three MUGAs rated as *poor* are Caledon, Clogher, Gortnasoor.

Conclusions

- 1.54** The design of the Council's MUGA's varies considerably. If it's necessary to identify each MUGA's key purpose (play or sport) then in accordance with Sport England guidance half belong to play, half to sport. For future developments it will be helpful to be clear about a MUGA's purpose and to design it accordingly. This would also assist with how a MUGA is marketed.
- 1.55** Fields in Trust promotes a benchmark guideline of 0.3 hectares of MUGA provision (alongside skateparks) per one thousand population. For the district's population of 146,427, the Fields in Trust's benchmark suggests there should be 44 hectares of MUGA provision, however, the measured actual provision, based on the consultant's inspections, is 0.7 hectares, clearly a significant shortfall.

2. Introduction

Introduction

- 2.1** Mid Ulster District Council has commissioned a *Condition Survey of Council Pitches* and *Council Pitches Strategy*. The Council set out a two part study to look at current pitch and associated changing provision; the first part is a condition survey and audit of all Council pitches and recreational spaces and the second part is to make recommendations for a Council pitches/spaces strategy. The objective of the study is to *‘create a Strategy that could be used to further develop the pitch infrastructure in the district in a way that is affordable, sustainable, inclusive, high quality and consistent with current best practice in public pitch provision.’* The facilities under consideration are for the sports of association football, gaelic games, hockey, lawn bowls, rugby.
- 2.2** The methodology for the study is based on Sport England’s Towards a Level Playing Field: Playing Pitch Model. This model is used to look at facilities for association football, gaelic games, hockey and rugby; the principles of the model are also applied to lawn bowls and multi use games areas. GIS mapping is used to look at the distribution of facilities.

Commission

- 2.3** The Council’s brief for this commission is as follows:-

Part 1 – Audit of Existing Provision

- ❖ Audit the design, distribution, demand/supply information and condition of each Mid Ulster District Council site that hosts Council-owned and leased outdoor ‘pitches’ and associated changing facilities in the district. This audit is to include all natural turf, synthetic pitches and multi-use games areas/small-sided games/kick about areas for association football, gaelic games, hockey, rugby.⁷
- ❖ Make recommendations and provide indicative capital and ongoing revenue cost estimates to any identified remedial/improvement works or further technical investigations necessary on the Council owned and leased pitches, multi-use games areas, small-sided games/kick about areas and associated changing facilities.

⁷ Lawn bowls was added during the study period.

Part 2 – Pitch Strategy

- ❖ Review and provide an update report on the current provision data and previous strategy work available (Mid Ulster District Council Sports Facility Strategy 2018) and evaluate against:-
 - Current best practice guidance on the scale and distribution of pitch provision from Fields in Trust, Edinburgh University, and elsewhere (as appropriate)
 - Condition assessments (from Part 1) based on visual inspections and/or maintenance records/observations
 - The changing needs/expectations of many outdoor sports
 - Demand/supply/poor condition closure information,
 - Existing information for relevant non-Council facilities,
 - An assessment of current changing provision at each venue; and
 - Local consultation responses
- ❖ To make recommendations for a prioritised 'pitch' (and associated changing provision) investment strategy for the District and provide indicative capital and ongoing annual revenue cost estimates. Research should also be carried out on potential current and future known funding bids/mechanisms that may be available to support the investment strategy.
- ❖ The Pitches / recreational space (and associated changing provision) Strategy should set out a 5 year plan on a priority basis (with outline recommendations to 10 years) and make area specific recommendations and provide indicative capital and ongoing annual revenue cost estimates in relation to a range of options including:-
 - Refurbishments to assets
 - New provision based on need
 - Obsolete pitch provision and new identified shared space community need
 - Extensions to facilities
 - Rationalisation into outdoor sports hubs
 - Partnership provision/shared
 - Opportunities for long term leases
 - Facility types, sporting codes, scale and playing surface
 - High level specifications to accommodate the likely use pattern, sporting code and standard of competition

- Opportunities for multi-use of facilities including formalised sports and informal recreational use to support community engagement and health and wellbeing

- ❖ The strategy should consider the best mix and distribution of natural turf, synthetic ‘pitches’ (ATP) and multi-use games areas/small-sided games/kick about areas on current and future need (including unmet need) and provide analysis on the projected demand pattern, participation levels, data on current booking levels and the distribution and scale of sports clubs and sporting codes in the area.

- ❖ Consideration should be given to how effective partnerships with the private, education, public or third sector organisations could bring benefits to the pitch provision in the District in a way that is open and accessible while at the same time maximises sustainability, efficiency and community benefit. This may include developing it further as a pitch or it becoming open informal play space for general use.

- ❖ The strategy should give consideration to areas where there is under supply of pitches, taking account of Council and community provision and make recommendations of how to provide for demand.

- ❖ The strategy should give consideration to areas where there is oversupply of pitches and how these could be developed as usable assets for the wider benefit of the community as shared space provision.

- ❖ The Strategy recommendations should take account of levels of deprivation and barriers to access such as disability or rurality, shared space in our towns and villages etc. This should include some areas of recommendation with regard to levels of pitch provision usage across the District and then more localised usage; and flexible models to accommodate more formalised sport and more targeting of groups that are not in sports including young people not playing recognised sports and older people engagement

Background and Context

Sport and Physical Activity in Society

- 2.4** The economic benefits of a physically active lifestyle are well documented. Against an estimated total cost of physical inactivity of £1.89 billion annually it’s reckoned

that a 10% increase in physical activity amongst adults in England would benefit the economy by £500 million annually or 26%⁸. The positive impacts of regular exercise on health include:-

- ❖ Decrease in the risk of cardiovascular mortality
- ❖ Delays in the development of high blood pressure
- ❖ Assist in weight control
- ❖ Reduces the risk of certain cancers
- ❖ Reduces the risk of depression
- ❖ Helps prevent non-specific lower back pain

Current thinking suggests a minimum of thirty minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on at least five occasions per week is needed as part of a healthy lifestyle⁹.

2.5 Sport and physical activity in Northern Ireland makes an important contribution to the economy¹⁰. Over £932 million was spent on sport-related goods and services in 2013, accounting for 3.2% of total consumer expenditure in the region, an increase of 35% compared to 2008. It's also of interest to note that sport-related employment in Northern Ireland grew considerably between 2008 and 2013, from 17,900 to 25,700 or 43%. Growth on this scale is undoubtedly linked in part to the growing awareness of the health benefits of exercise and increased participation in certain sports. Facilities that are suitable and sufficient clearly have an important part to play in encouraging and enabling healthy lifestyle choices that contribute to the economy.

2.6 The coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on levels of physical activity. Whilst more informal activities such as walking and cycling, which were possible during the pandemic, increased during the pandemic, structured sports activities closed down for lengthy periods. There is a concern amongst sporting bodies that participation in structured sport may not return to pre-pandemic levels without a good deal of intervention.

Playing Pitches

2.7 The provision of playing pitches is an emotive subject, often making national headlines when pitches/playing fields are sold off to make way for development. Across the UK the number of planning applications to carry out developments on existing playing fields doubled between 1999 and 2009, from 625 to 1,322 applications. The playing fields 'watchdog' is Fields in Trust¹¹. Recommendations made by Fields in Trust have been incorporated in the recently published 'National

⁸ 'Sport, Health & Economic Benefit'; Sports Industry Research Centre, Sheffield Hallam University 2002.

⁹ British Cardiac Society.

¹⁰ Sports Industry Research Centre.

¹¹ Fields in Trust was formerly the National Playing Fields Association, rebranded in 2007.

Planning Policy Framework’; specific reference is made in the policy framework to the need to assess provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities when considering planning applications. It is also recommended that in applications where open space, sports and recreational facilities are due to be lost, the developer should replace them to at least an equivalent standard in the vicinity.

2.8 In Northern Ireland, the Department of Environment recognises the need for provision of outdoor recreation space in Planning Policy Statement 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation. Section 5.15 states. *“In large developments there may be a need to provide more formal outdoor recreation facilities such as playing pitches to meet the needs generated by the development. In such cases the Department will consult closely with the recreation department of local district Councils.”* It is therefore appropriate for local authorities to audit the provision of pitches to inform discussion in relation to planning applications and in the strategic development of opportunities for participation in sport.

2.9 Four of Northern Ireland’s eleven local authorities are known to have carried out similar pitch audits to inform playing pitch strategies¹²; a fifth local authority, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, has commenced a pitches audit. Whilst the pressure of urban development is a key factor in looking at pitches there are other important factors, including:-

- ❖ The need to ensure equality of opportunity in relation to age, ability, gender and rurality.
- ❖ The increasing interest in team sports, especially amongst children, largely the result of successful sports development initiatives by local authorities, sports clubs, Sport NI and sports governing bodies.
- ❖ The availability of artificial turf pitch (ATP) technology. For example, Third Generation, or ‘3G’ surfaces provide an alternative to natural grass that have the potential to totally transform how local authorities and sports clubs look at playing pitches.
- ❖ The limited capacity of natural grass surfaces, especially for winter season competition, accommodating two or at most three games each week with a three to four month rest period in the summer. The match capacity of any natural grass pitch is determined by a range of technical issues as well as the maintenance regime and the operator’s policy.
- ❖ Sports’ clubs constraints when it comes to developing facilities to accommodate and encourage growing demand.
- ❖ Schools’ attitudes and constraints in terms of facilitating community access to school-based pitches, both grass and ATP.

¹² Belfast City Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council; All completed by Otium Leisure Consultancy.

- ❖ The potential to develop shared public spaces especially on education sites.
- ❖ Governing body influences, most notably through sports development programmes.

2.10 The overarching rationale for reviewing pitches' adequacy of provision is better quality and adequate facilities for a better quality experience so encouraging more participation. The particular challenge for local authorities as providers is to make best use of resources to maximise the value of the pitches' estate in terms of its contribution to citizens' lifestyles.

3. The Approach

Part 1 – Audit of Existing Provision

- 3.1** The audit of existing provision presents an opportunity to develop a complete picture of the situation pertaining to all pitches in the Council area regarding condition/quality, location, usage profile, accessibility and ancillary facilities; it is also an opportunity to develop a picture of club membership, facilities used, challenges, aspirations and unmet demand. Phase 1 of the audit was approached as follows:-

Part 1: Audit Phase 1 (Research and Consultation)

- ❖ **Consultation events.** Three open events were held across the district; (i) Greenvale Leisure Centre, Magherafelt on Monday 7 June; (ii) Cookstown Leisure Centre on Tuesday 8 June; and (iii) Dungannon Leisure Centre on Wednesday 9 June. Sports clubs, schools and community groups were invited. Total attendance was 58 individuals representing 28 sports clubs, 1 community group and 2 schools (see Appendix 1 for a full record of attendees and worksheets completed at the Focus Groups). A fourth event, targeting the district's lawn bowls clubs was held on Monday 27 September in Cookstown Leisure Centre; 19 participants attended and all five lawn bowls clubs were represented.
- ❖ **Site visits.** Each of the Council's sites providing facilities for the five sports was visited and inspected. Sport England's Non-Technical Visual Assessment within its Playing Pitch Model (PPM) system was used to assess the Council's facilities for gaelic games, association football, rugby and hockey whilst the principles of the PPM system were also applied to lawn bowls. The PPM system, intended primarily for grass surfaces, considers slope, drainage, grass cover, wear and tear, floodlighting, litter, dog fouling, vandalism, changing accommodation, parking and access. This assists in identifying pitches that are over-used, reveals why some pitches might be under-used and helps prioritise investment decisions. Also visited and inspected were the Council's multi-use games areas. The inspection report is presented as Appendix 2: Facilities Inspection.
- ❖ **Survey.** The purpose of survey work was to gather information on supply/demand *and* on the condition of pitches and related facilities not in Council ownership. Additionally, the surveys returns enabled the consultant to present detailed information on the membership profile across the five sports. The main target groups for the survey were:-

- Clubs who own a pitch/pitches
- Teams/clubs who don't own a pitch
- Education sector
- Community sector

Given that survey returns informed facility inventories and participation profiles it was deemed important to maximise the returns, especially for sports clubs; returns obtained were as follows:-

Sport	No of Clubs	No of Returns	% Returns
Association Football	31	29	94%
Gaelic Games	47	47	100%
Hockey	3	3	100%
Lawn Bowls	5	5	100%
Rugby	3	3	100%

A total of 18 returns (90%) were obtained from post primary schools.

- ❖ **Consultation Interviews.** A series of interviews was conducted with key organisations having an interest in the Council's provision for the sports in question in order to enable commentary on the strategic context of future provision. On Monday 25 October 2021 a workshop (online) updated elected members on progress to date and offered an opportunity for discussion on how future need for pitches and ancillary accommodation might be prioritised and funded. Furthermore, workshops involving elected members within each of the seven district electoral areas – seven workshops – were held during late August/early September 2022.

Part 1: Audit Phase 2 (Analysis and Audit Report)

Phase 2 of the audit was approached as follows:-

- ❖ **Playing Pitch Model (PPM).** This is where information gathered through the audit is applied to Sport England's numerical model to assess 'adequacy of provision' for each of the pitches to which the PPM can be applied directly; gaelic games, association football, rugby, hockey. For the lawn bowls and MUGAs the principles of the PPM were applied where appropriate. The stages in the PPM are as follows:-

- | | |
|---------|------------------------|
| Stage 1 | Identifying teams |
| Stage 2 | Calculating home games |

Stage 3	Assessing total home games per week
Stage 4	Establish demand for games throughout the week
Stage 5	Defining pitches used/required
Stage 6	Establishing pitches available
Stage 7	Adequacy of provision

- ❖ **Audit Report.** The audit report records research and consultation undertaken for the commission, leading to analysis and recommendations. The audit report can be thought of as ‘*what*’ and ‘*so what*’:-

WHAT

- quantity of current supply
- quality of current supply
- geographic location

SO WHAT

- impact on the community
- impact on the Council’s aspiration to promote participation

The audit report deals with each sport/facility in turn.

Part 2 – A Pitches Strategy

- 3.2** Following on from the audit this is effectively ‘*what next*’? The approach has the following elements:-

- ❖ Strategy Consultation Workshop, leading to a;
- ❖ Draft Pitches Investment Strategy, inviting;
- ❖ Stakeholder views on emerging recommendations, resulting in a;
- ❖ Final Pitches Strategy

Consultation on and preparation of the strategy takes into account a number of key considerations, including:-

- ❖ Local government reform and the challenges facing the Council in relation to pitches provision.
- ❖ Relevant regional and local strategies and planning policies.
- ❖ The growth in artificial turf surfaces.
- ❖ The advent of multi-sport pitches.
- ❖ The potential to develop shared public spaces.
- ❖ The IFA’s Small Sided Games initiative and the impact of this on local youth leagues and provision of facilities.
- ❖ The potential for partnerships and partnership funding in the development and operation of facilities.
- ❖ The potential to create sports ‘hubs’.

3.3 The final Pitches Strategy identifies policy options and solutions. It addresses each sport/facility in turn, looking at a range of considerations, including:-

- ❖ Rationalisation
- ❖ Repairs/enhancements
- ❖ Re-location
- ❖ Sports facility hubs and location options
- ❖ The potential of partnerships
- ❖ High-level costings
- ❖ Community access
- ❖ Equality screening

3.4 This report is ***Part 2: Audit of Existing Provision***. It is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Executive Summary
- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ The Approach
- ❖ Strategic Context
- ❖ Stakeholder Engagement
- ❖ Audit (by sport)

4. Strategic Context

Introduction

4.1 Preparation of the Council's pitches strategy is set within the context of and informed by a range of regional and local approaches to the development of public services. It's important to understand this context as the strategy takes shape. There are four strategies that are key to this work; they are:-

- ❖ *A New Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for NI – Consultation Document; Department for Communities; February 2021*
- ❖ *Corporate Plan 2020-2025 (draft); Sport NI*
- ❖ *Local Development Plan 2030; Mid Ulster District Council*
- ❖ *Corporate Plan 2020-2024; Mid Ulster District Council*
- ❖ *Our Community Plan; Mid Ulster District Council*
- ❖ *Sport Facility Strategy for Mid Ulster District Council; April 2018*
- ❖ *Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan; Mid Ulster District Council*

4.2 Taken together these strategies and their outcomes have been influenced by and reflect other strategies and policies which, whilst they assist in informing preparation of the strategy are not reviewed here in detail. Not least of these is the draft 'Programme for Government' whose strategic outcomes address, amongst other things, the attainment of good health and confident and peaceful communities, targeting '*those things that make real improvements to the quality of life for the citizen*'.

4.3 Other literature having relevance to the Pitches Strategy includes:-

Planning

- ❖ Regional Development Strategy 2035
- ❖ Planning Policy Statements, especially PPS8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation
- ❖ 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard'. Fields in Trust 2015

Government

- ❖ 'Active Places Research Report 'Bridging the Gap' 2014 Update'; Sport NI
- ❖ Community Use of Schools Guidance Document; Department of Education 2014

‘A New Sport and Physical Strategy for NI – Consultation Document; Department for Communities; February 2021

- 4.4** The draft strategy is being developed on behalf of all the departments of the NI Executive to *‘provide a flexible strategic framework for a cross-departmental, ambitious and comprehensive approach to promoting participation and excellence in sport and physical activity.’* The strategy presents a sports and physical activity continuum that spans all ages, from fundamental movement skills in children to physical activity and social sport in middle and older age for all abilities.
- 4.5** The strategy was researched during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and the pandemic is reflected in the six key themes that are proposed:-
- ❖ Recovery from the impact of the pandemic on sport and physical activity;
 - ❖ Promoting participation, inclusion and community engagement;
 - ❖ Promoting excellence in sport;
 - ❖ The importance of partnership and integration;
 - ❖ Providing inclusive and shared spaces and place; and
 - ❖ Promoting the benefits of sport and physical activity.
- 4.6** These themes and the language of the strategy point to a change in mindset regarding the importance of sport and physical activity to individuals and to society as a whole. For example, the *‘providing inclusive and shared spaces and places’* theme suggests that making sports and physical activity infrastructure inclusive and attractive and where possible, integrating it with active travel plans, will encourage people to be less reliant on the car, so contributing to government’s net zero carbon targets.
- 4.7** Looking at the *‘importance of partnership and integration’* theme the strategy concludes that *‘the principles of partnership and integration should be at the centre of all future investment decisions in new and refurbished sports and physical activity facilities and programmes.’* Specific mention is made of better integration delivering more shared facilities across clubs, schools and communities.
- 4.8** The strategy presents *‘recovery from the impact of the pandemic on sport and physical activity’* as the platform for the strategy’s successful implementation. Research for the new strategy identified the sector as being weakened and demoralised by the pandemic and the subsequent need to make the sector more resilient to potential future shocks. The strategy recognises the need to have a recovery process that will give the sector a strong foundation as it seeks to rebuild.
- 4.9** This new strategy is an important step forward for sport and physical activity, fundamentally changing how government and its agencies think about the sector and

how best to provide support. Collaboration across government departments and the statutory, voluntary and community sector with the aim of achieving maximum effect is emphasised throughout.

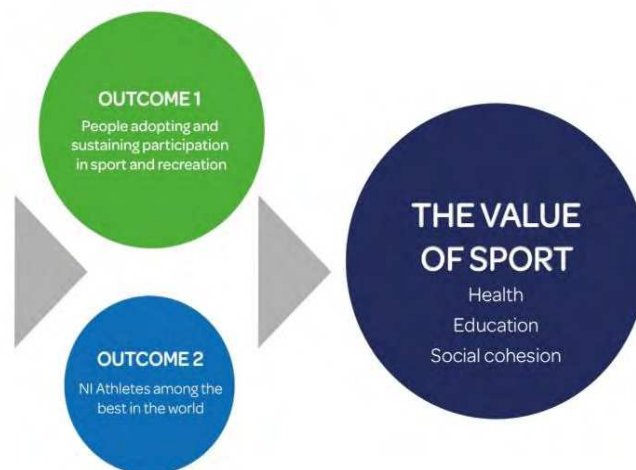
Corporate Plan 2020-2025 (draft); Sport NI

4.10 Sport NIs Corporate Plan effectively underpins Programme for Government and the Department for Communities Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. Many of the challenges identified in earlier strategies still remain, however, the sporting landscape is changing; community planning, COVID-19, rising levels of obesity amongst children and participation in sport and recreation outside the sports club structure present new challenges and new opportunities for organised sport. The draft plan presents learning points resulting from consultation, each worthy of being highlighted here:-

- ❑ The provision of accessible sport and physical recreation opportunities needs to transition effectively into connected pathways within the sporting system, in order to sustain participation generally and for underrepresented groups;
- ❑ A warm, welcoming, inclusive environment and quality coaching is key to sustaining participation, along with a diverse product offering to meet people's changing needs;
- ❑ Physical literacy in young people and others needs to be improved;
- ❑ People development is central to an effective sporting system;
- ❑ Equality and inclusion needs to be mainstreamed throughout the sporting system;
- ❑ The administrative burden on volunteers needs to be alleviated, to allow an increased focus on culture and practice;
- ❑ A holistic view is needed to achieve the best outcomes for all who participate in sport and physical recreation, so that we can celebrate all of the sporting achievements.
- ❑ There needs to be business planning, modernisation and improved utilisation of digital technologies to adapt to a dynamic and challenging environment.

4.11 It's also useful to understand the *sporting system* that Sport NI identifies as the landscape within which it works, leading to two outcomes and a view of the value of sport.

The Sporting System



- 4.12** Alongside government in general, Sport NI is moving towards an evaluation of *outcomes* rather than outputs in their capital and programme interventions; in other words, *what did we do, how well did we do it, what difference did it make*. Social outcomes through increased participation are more important than ever before as explained by Sport England¹³:-

'Right now the opportunities to get involved in sport and activity – and reap the rewards of being active – depend too much on your background, your gender, your bank balance and your postcode. For too long, people with the most to gain from being active have been the least able to take part. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important. Sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all.'

- 4.13** It's clear that sports' social conscience has been awakened and that local authorities as facility providers and delivery agents have an important role to play in making a difference. Mid Ulster District Council's strategy for the future development of pitches and ancillary accommodation will, through the provision of accessible, high quality facilities, greatly assist in making the difference put forward by Sport NI.

¹³ *Uniting the Movement 2021-2031; Sport England.*

Local Development Plan 2030; Mid Ulster District Council

4.14 The Council's Local Development Plan has three objectives that inform development and the use of land in Mid Ulster; they are:-

- ❑ Accommodating people and creating places.
- ❑ Creating jobs and promoting prosperity.
- ❑ Enhancing the environment and improving infrastructure.

Whilst the strategy to develop pitches resonates with each of these objectives, it has the greatest relevance to '*Accommodating People and Creating Places*' which is underpinned by a set of social policies, including '*Open Space, Recreation and Leisure*'. It's important that the four sub-policies relating to this strategy are fully understood as strategic recommendations are considered, ie:-



4.15 Policy OS1 – Protection of Open Space, has a particular relevance when considering options for pitches that are either under-used or unused. Where the term *change of use* appears within the strategic recommendations; the primary intention is that an under-used or unused Council pitch/pitches may be considered either for re-development as in alternative recreational facility or for re-designation to an alternative sport; neither of these development options would imply the loss of open space.

Corporate Plan 2020-2024; Mid Ulster District Council

4.16 The overarching context for the strategic development of pitches is quite simply to provide better quality facilities for a better quality experience, so encouraging more people to be more active more often, both in structured sport and informal recreation. The particular challenge is to make best use of resources and to do this through partnerships that can achieve a good deal more by working together than

working independently of one another – *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*. The Council's vision, articulated in its Corporate Plan, reflects partnership working

To be at the heart of our community

4.17 The pitches strategy will help to develop people by encouraging active lifestyles through the provision of facilities. The audit carried out in 2018 for the Council's sports facilities strategy evidences the Council's role in the provision of leisure and recreation facilities that create opportunities for active lifestyles. The pitches strategy comes at a time when recognition of the role that active lifestyles have in efforts to reduce the incidence of a range of life-limiting conditions is at an all-time high. It also makes significant contributions to at least two strategic themes in the Corporate Plan.

- ❑ Theme 2: Service Delivery
- ❑ Theme 5: Communities

Additionally, whilst each theme has a clear focus and purpose, there is also a number of corporate commitments not tethered to one area of work, but common to all themes, which the pitches strategy will contribute to:-

Addressing Rurality

- *'Close to 70% of Mid Ulster's population live in a rural setting, a fact which has strongly influenced the Council's approach to service delivery, investment and long-term planning. The importance of addressing the needs of a rural region, whether socially or economically, is undiminished and remains one of the Council's corporate commitment.'*

Promoting Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations

- *'Beyond a duty of compliance with our equality scheme, we aim to mainstream the promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations throughout the organisation, actively seeking out ways in which to enhance those opportunities and to build positive relations between and among the diverse communities across Mid Ulster.'*

Continuously Improving Our Services

- *'Whether through our formal Corporate Improvement Objectives and service-specific Performance Improvement Plans or the small, regular, routine changes which we make to services through feedback, we are committed to continuously improving what we do and how we do it.'*

Designing and Delivering Our Services Sustainably

- *'From large-scale investment projects to new or changing service models, we place a value on ensuring that what we do not only meets current needs, but is designed and delivered to be sustainable in the longer-term, ensuring the needs of future generations are uncompromised.'*

Working Collaboratively across the Public, Private, Community and Voluntary Sectors to Achieve Shared Objectives

- *'Collaborative working is key to delivering successful outcomes for local people. The Council is committed to embracing the opportunities to work with a range of other organisations on issues, projects and plans as they relate to every theme, priority and aspect of our work.'*

- 4.18** Of the 45 villages in the district that have Village Community Plans in place, 38 have identified future opportunities for outdoor recreation, including off-road cycle tracks, walkways, playparks, angling infrastructure, activity programmes and much more. Appendix 3 presents an overview of these opportunities as described in the village plans.

Our Community Plan 2017-2027; Mid Ulster District Council

- 4.19** The Council's vision for community planning reflects the plan's five themes, two of which have a particular resonance with the proposed project.

Health and Wellbeing

- *Help people live longer, healthier and more active lives.* This theme speaks of having plans to help people being healthy in all areas of life, help with mental health and wellbeing and helping people age well.

Vibrant and Safe Communities

- *Make our community feel safer and stronger.* This theme speaks of helping organisations in the community and voluntary sector - this includes sports clubs - to do more and get more people volunteering.

4.20 The sports community in Mid Ulster has been fully engaged in consultation and research for the audit and strategy. Community engagement and partnership is an essential feature of the Council's business model, not least within the sports sector and the provision of pitches which are used by the 90 sports clubs across the five sports that are the subject of this strategy. Taken together, these clubs involve nearly 21,000 individuals currently, all benefiting from having access to modern, fit for purpose facilities. The vision is that better sports pitches and ancillary accommodation will result in more participation and stronger sports clubs with skilled volunteers that can reach out to communities that have, in the eyes of Sport England, been 'traditionally left behind.'

Sports Facility Strategy for Mid Ulster District Council

4.21 Sport NI commissioned the preparation of sports facility strategies in each of the new Council areas. The outcomes for the Mid Ulster strategy are stated as:-

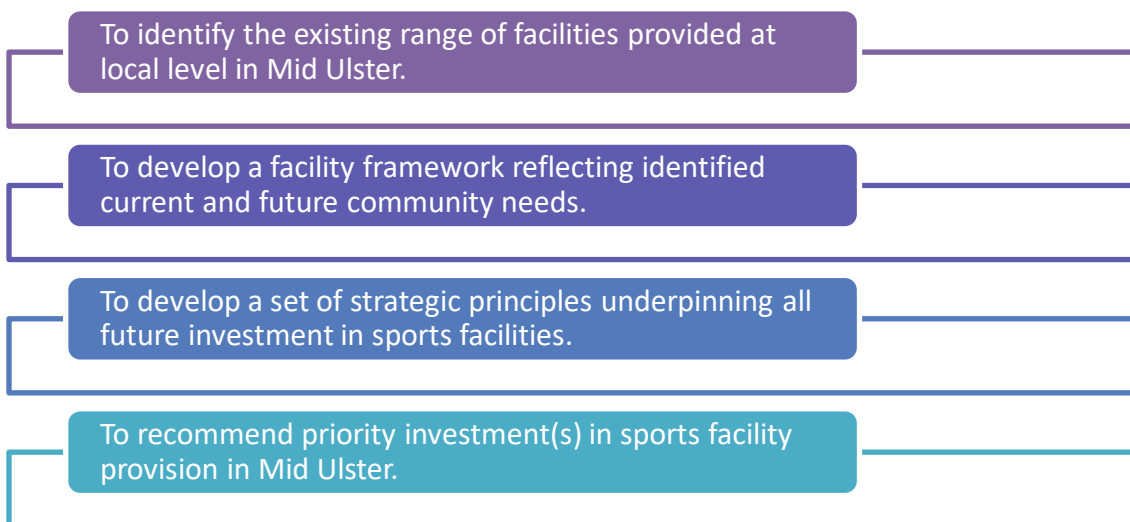
- ❑ *Identification of the future approach required to plan strategically in Mid Ulster for the provision of sports facilities at local level, setting out the principles behind the future approach to provision, working collaboratively on investment and delivery as well as identifying priorities for new development and refurbishment.*
- ❑ *Identification of clear priorities for investment.*

This strategy's importance for the local area is heightened by the fact that the approach to its preparation is consistent with the approach taken in preparing each of the eleven local authorities sports facility strategies *and* that the approach was

specified by Sport NI. For example, the strategy reflects Sport NIs ‘Bridging the Gap – Active Places Research 2009’ and its subsequent update in 2014. The strategy’s rationale is to:-

‘develop a framework for the future prioritisation and development of sports facilities, based on identified need, increasing participation, addressing health inequalities and other local specific factors.’

4.22 The strategy’s objectives are:-



Consultation for the Mid Ulster Sports Facility Strategy was extensive, involving survey work and focus groups. Now, consultation undertaken for this pitches audit and strategy builds on the earlier sports facility strategy consultation whilst providing a focus on five sports rather than all sports. The sports facility strategy recognises that participation in sport and physical activity produces ‘soft’ outcomes that include:-

- ❑ Improved confidence and self-esteem;
- ❑ Improved physical health and mental wellbeing;
- ❑ Positive impact on the local community (clubs/groups)

4.23 The 2018 Sports Facility Strategy presented Sport NIs ‘Bridging the Gap’ analysis of adequacy of provision for pitches estimating that, even with the inclusion of artificial turf pitches in the education sector in the total stock of pitches available for community use, the district has a substantial shortfall in the supply of pitches for the 2037 projected population. However, the strategy points to a number of difficulties in accurately assessing adequacy of provision, recommending that ‘..... the

assessment of future playing pitch need should be evidenced through the development of a playing pitch strategy.'

Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan; Mid Ulster District Council

- 4.24** This strategy addresses the opportunities for outdoor recreation¹⁴ across the district, which, given the district's extensive natural resource base, are considerable. The strategy's overall aim is to *'provide direction for the sustainable development, management and promotion of future outdoor recreation facilities, programmes, infrastructure, resources and investment over the period 2020-2025.'*
- 4.25** Participation in outdoor recreation activities produce many of the same benefits as participation in the five structured sports being considered in the pitches strategy; that is, getting people more active and the attendant benefits to health, education, the economy and social capital. In this regard there is a good deal of synergy between the two strategies; for example, walking is an outdoor recreation activity which is already facilitated at sports pitches sites and is now included as a development option by many sports clubs. This and other synergies should be kept in mind in the outworking of the strategic recommendations.
- 4.26** The Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan reviews the district's Village Community Plans in relation to future opportunities for outdoor recreation. Again, there is a synergy between the opportunities identified in the strategic plan and the pitches strategy given the emphasis on walking trails and off-road cycle tracks, both of which can be developed at sports pitches sites.

¹⁴ *Outdoor recreation is defined in the strategy as 'all land, water and air activities normally found in a rural or urban fringe location that depend upon sustainable access to the natural environment and are predominantly reliant on the natural environment.'*

5. Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

- 5.1** Sport NI, the Education Authority and governing bodies for each sport were contacted to discuss and comment on provision of sports pitches generally throughout Northern Ireland and within the district. Sports clubs and schools were also engaged in discussion through in-person focus groups. This section reflects on Sport NI, the Education Authority, the Council, governing bodies and schools.
- 5.2** An understanding of stakeholders and their interest in the pitches strategy lies in the fact that many of the strategic recommendations and subsequent actions cannot be achieved solely by the Council; the Council will at times simply be an *enabler*, advising and assisting other stakeholders, whilst at other times the Council will work alongside stakeholders, sharing responsibility for capital investment and project delivery. In this way the pitches strategy is best thought of as a *partnership* strategy for the Council with ‘partnership’ covering a variety of roles, from advisory to lead organisation. The strategy does not benefit the Council, rather it benefits those whom the Council serves, therefore, it is entirely appropriate and indeed necessary that working with others underpins the strategy’s delivery.

Sport NI

- 5.3** Key data sets on the provision of a range of sports facilities is presented for each local authority in Northern Ireland in Sport NI’s *Active Places Research Report ‘Bridging the Gap’ 2009*. The facilities considered in Bridging the Gap include grass and artificial turf pitches, used for association football, gaelic games, rugby and hockey. The objective of Bridging the Gap is to assess whether the supply of pitches is sufficient to meet demand; analysis is presented for each legacy Council and for each of the eleven Council areas created in 2015 as a result of local government reform. Updated in 2014, here’s the key information on the provision of pitches in each legacy Council area and in Mid Ulster District Council area.

Legacy Councils	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	Exiting Provision				Shortfalls	
			Grass	Synthetic		Total Acres of Pitches	SNI Standard	
			Grass Acres	Synthetic Acres	SNI Standard x 4		Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required
Cookstown	35,238	106	84.08	6.48	25.92	110	-4	-2
Dungannon	50,995	153	121.36	6.39	25.56	146.92	6	2
Magherafelt	43,682	131	111.49	9.1	36.4	147.89	-17	-7
Mid Ulster District Council	129,915	389	316.93	21.97	87.88	404.81	-15.07	-6

5.4 This 2014 update of ‘Bridging the Gap’ presents a scenario where ATPs located on education sites are included in the supply side of the analysis as *‘in the light of recent community use of schools guidance¹⁵ published by Sport NI and the Department for Education, it is important to recognise the potential value of school sports facilities in addressing the facility shortfalls throughout Northern Ireland.’* The scenario in the 2014 update proposes an oversupply of 6 pitches (grass or ATP) for the district as a whole, excluding grass pitches within schools but including ATPs. The 2014 update also presents a scenario in which school pitches, both grass and synthetic are included in the assessment, resulting in an estimated oversupply of 62 pitches. The reality is that community use of school pitches, especially natural grass pitches but also ATPs, whilst increasing, is still quite limited.

5.5 It’s also important to note that Sport NIs view in ‘Bridging the Gap’ regarding carrying capacity of natural grass pitches versus ATPs is that an ATP can accommodate up to 4 times the bookings of a natural grass pitch. Sport NI recognises there are conflicting views on this figure; on the one hand, Fields in Trust’s ‘Six Acre Standard’ reckons the value of an ATP to be twice that of a grass surface whilst other agencies use a factor of 6. It’s also noted that not all natural grass pitches are the same; a sand mattress pitch or a sand fibre pitch will have a greater carrying capacity than a standard soil based pitch. So, Sport NIs view that an ATP has 4 times the value of a grass surface can be looked on as having a degree of flexibility.

5.6 Sport NIs views on the provision of pitches are further reflected in the following points:-

- ❖ A key challenge for clubs is being able to access floodlit pitches for midweek evening training. Sport NIs COVID-19 capital intervention programme

¹⁵ Your School Your Club; Sport NI.

‘Building Back Better – Sports Facilities’ attracted 700 applications of which around a quarter were for floodlights to existing pitches. This evidences the ongoing need to address floodlit training facilities, either in access to existing floodlit facilities or upgrading existing pitches.

- ❖ The view is that with the development of ATP pitches in recent years – since 2014 – by local authorities, clubs and the education sector, the picture of pitches provision will have changed. It’s Sport NIs intention to repeat the Active Places research in 2022 to update data on the provision of all sports facilities across Northern Ireland.
- ❖ The education sector, most notably post-primary schools, is increasingly open to considering shared use of sports facilities. Sport NIs document *‘Your School Your Club’* has helped influence the shift towards shared use of school facilities, however, barriers remain for many schools, including; (i) the additional cost of having staff on site to open/close and supervise outside curriculum time; (ii) the cost of maintenance; (iii) logistical challenges around allowing community user groups access to school premises. There are many examples of schools having successfully embraced shared use of sports facilities and there are also examples of the Department of Education and local authorities working collaboratively in the development of new school facilities designed for shared use.
- ❖ In Sport NIs 2019 survey of sports clubs¹⁶ a question was put to clubs about *barriers to outdoor facilities*; in Mid Ulster *finding venues with a suitable training surface* was cited by 59% of respondents, *availability of floodlit venues* was cited by 56% of respondents and *can’t get a suitable booking slot* was cited by 47% of respondents. These results for Mid Ulster concur with Sport NIs view that whilst the supply of ATP surfaces has increased over the past couple of decades there remains a shortfall, perhaps exacerbated by increasing demand, the result of more people engaging in structured sport.

Education Authority

- 5.7** In recent years community use of facilities on education sites has been increasing, that is, outside curriculum time. Strategically, the Department of Education (DE) promotes use of schools by non-school groups to help build stronger links between schools and local communities. DE’s policy for school improvement, *‘Every School a Good School’*¹⁷ states, *‘School premises are a valuable facility for community use and*

¹⁶ *Sports Club Research Report 2019; Sport NI (by Otium Leisure Consultancy). Of the 88 clubs in Mid Ulster which responded to the survey, 49 were clubs in the five sports being considered in this audit.*

¹⁷ *‘Every School a Good School’ Department of Education; June 2011*

schools are actively encouraged to consider making their premises available as a community facility where possible.’ To encourage and assist schools in setting up community use, DE produced ‘Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools.’

5.8 The Education Authority (EA) is the operational arm of the Department of Education. In 2018 the EA’s newly formed Education Directorate was tasked with strategic oversight of community use of schools. This move fits with the ongoing Area Planning process within education and the community planning process being led by local authorities. Quality indicators in school inspections now recognise community engagement and use of school facilities by local communities; this will, through time, encourage schools to be pro-active in setting up community use of their premises.

5.9 The EA now has in place a Community in Schools team, providing practical support in the move to increase community use of schools. The team of three officers covers three geographical areas, each embracing a number of local authorities:-

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. South West | Omagh & Fermanagh; Mid Ulster; Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon |
| 2. North | Derry & Strabane; Causeway Coast & Glens; Mid & East Antrim; Antrim & Newtownabbey |
| 3. East | Belfast; North Down & Ards; Newry, Mourne & Down |

For the purposes of this strategy the officer for the South West area was interviewed on two occasions, here’s a summary of the discussion points:-

- ❖ Community use of schools has increased significantly in the last four years and there has been a noticeable upsurge in recent months in schools interested in community use, not least in the use of outdoor sports facilities. The link between schools and their local Council is critical in moving community use projects from concept to reality. In this regard some local authorities are more pro-active and supportive than others; it really depends where a local authority’s focus is in their corporate plan and strategy.
- ❖ Quite naturally every school looks to enhance their facilities, however, not all schools are well placed to open their doors to community use. A good deal of care by schools is needed from the outset in addressing a range of challenges. Due diligence in matters such as land ownership, insurances, maintenance, operational costs, pricing, administration and much more is critical in the early stages. For example, insurance is often a barrier to community use; DE makes clear that responsibility for on-site control and supervision of community activities rests with the user group so there is an expectation that user groups

will hold public liability insurance. However, this is not always the case; a group of people wanting to come together to play recreational five-a-side in a school hall or on a pitch is not likely to have insurance and is unlikely to want to take out insurance just for a kick-about amongst friends. Requiring insurance of user groups may actually create a barrier to the very people the Education Authority who want to see using school facilities.

- ❖ In the officer's opinion the days of school facilities **not** being shared facilities are gone. Now there is greater sense of agencies working together; for example, a synthetic pitch may be built on a school site by DE in accordance with the building handbook, ie, floodlights not included, however, ducting for floodlighting may be installed at time of construction to allow the school to install floodlighting in partnership with an external funder, so enabling community use.
- ❖ Community use of schools must be a coming together of the local authority, the EA and the school, each bringing their particular skill and resource to the project. Schools are not obliged to embrace community use and its often down to individuals, either staff or school governors, to champion community use.
- ❖ Area Planning in the education sector is ongoing, resulting in amalgamations, closures and new-builds. Larger enrolment numbers in schools may lead to the development of new or upgraded outdoor sports facilities (pitches) on school sites. This opens up opportunities for a conversation between the DE and local authorities regarding how community use can be facilitated at the design stage and how it can be successfully managed at the operational stage.

Schools

- 5.10** Following on from discussion with the Education Authority it's useful to look at what the schools are saying as stakeholders. A survey of post-primary schools attracted a good deal of interest with 18 of the 20 schools in the district submitting a response; total enrolment in the 18 schools is just over 13,600 split evenly between girls and boys. This is a sizeable audience representing nearly 10% of the district's population. The following tables reflect the information collected through the survey.

Survey Respondents

School	Enrolment Boys	Enrolment Girls
Aughnacloy College	87	86
Cookstown High School	425	406
Drumglass High School	220	180
Fivemiletown College	191	173
Holy Trinity College	435	550
Integrated College Dungannon	382	284
Magherafelt High School	250	250
Rainey Endowed School	750	750
Royal School Dungannon	305	370
Sperrin Integrated College	287	308
St Conor's College	350	350
St Joseph's College, Coalisland	259	192
St Patrick's College, Dungannon	348	393
St Patrick's Maghera	700	650
St Pius X College	478	543
St Ciaran's College	400	400
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	335	438
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	508	605
Totals	6,710	6,928

Facility Information

5.11 This table details the sports pitches at each school and information on community use.

Facility Information (note that blank cell indicates the question is not completed by the school)						
School	Facility Type		Floodlights	Size	Is it booked regularly by local sports clubs or community teams? No. of hours?	Used by
Aughnacloy College	3G Pitch		Yes	Full	3 hours per week	Caledon Rovers Fermanagh GAA
Cookstown High School	Astro-turf water based	pitch	Yes	Full	25 plus hours per week	Cookstown Hockey Club
	Astro-turf sand based	pitch	Yes	Full	25 plus hours per week	Cookstown Hockey Club

School	Facility Type	Floodlights	Size	Is it booked regularly by local sports clubs or community teams? No. of hours?	Used by
	Grass soccer	No	Full	10 hours per week	Royal British Legion Football Club
	Grass soccer	No	Full		
	Grass rugby	No	Full		
Drumglass High School	Grass rugby				
	Shale/gravel pitch				
	Grass soccer				
	Shale/gravel pitch				
Fivemiletown College	Astro-turf pitch sand based	Yes	Full	3 hours per week	Fivemiletown United, Enniskillen Hockey Club, Clogher Valley Junior Hockey, Brookeborough GAA, Tempo GAA, Clogher GAA, Core Kids NI, All our residential summer camps.
	Grass soccer	No	Full	No	
	Grass rugby	Yes	Full	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Juvenile	No	
Holy Trinity College	Grass gaelic	No	Full	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Full	No	
Integrated College Dungannon	3G Pitch	Yes	Not applicable	16 hours per week	Dungannon Rugby Club, Riverdale FC, IFA, Dungannon Rovers FC, Mid Ulster Youth League, Dungannon Swift
Magherafelt High School	Grass soccer	No	Juvenile	No	
	Grass rugby	No	Full	No	
	Astro-turf pitch sand based	No	Full	2 hours per week	Rainey Endowed School

School	Facility Type	Floodlights	Size	Is it booked regularly by local sports clubs or community teams? No. of hours?	Used by
Rainey Endowed School	Grass rugby				Maghera Cricket Club, Rainey RFHC for fitness training
	Grass rugby				
	Grass rugby				
	Shale/gravel pitch				
	Grass cricket pitch				
Royal School Dungannon	Grass rugby	No	Full	No	
	Grass rugby	No	Full	No	
	Grass rugby	No	Juvenile	No	
	Grass rugby	No	Full	1 hour per week	Dungannon Rugby Football Club (Occasional Use)
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Full	No	
	Astro-turf pitch sand based	Yes	Full	15 hours per week	Dungannon Ladies Hockey Club
Sperrin Integrated College	Multi-Use Grass Area	No	Not applicable	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Juvenile	No	
St Conor's College	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	No	
	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Juvenile	No	
St Joseph's College Coalisland	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	No	Na Fianna GAC Coalisland, Brackaville GAC, Derrytresk GAC, Derrylaughan GAC
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Juvenile	No	
St Patrick's College Dungannon	3G Pitch	Yes	Full	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Full	No	
St Patrick's Maghera	Grass gaelic	No	Full	6 hours per week	Watty Graham's Glen GFC, Robert
	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	4 hours per week	

School	Facility Type	Floodlights	Size	Is it booked regularly by local sports clubs or community teams? No. of hours?	Used by
	Grass gaelic	No	Not applicable		Emmets Slaughtneil GFC
St Pius X College	Grass gaelic	No	Full	2 hours per week	Local GAA clubs on an ad hoc basis
	Grass soccer	No	Juvenile	No	
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Not applicable	No	
St Ciaran's College	3G Pitch	Yes	Juvenile	10 hours per week	Soccer Clubs, Hurling Club, Gaelic Football Clubs
	Multi-Use Area	Grass No	Juvenile	No	
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	4 hours per week	Aodh Rua
	Shale/gravel pitch	No	Juvenile	No	Dungannon Ladies Gaelic, St Patrick's Donaghmore Ladies, St Patrick's Donaghmore Youth, Tyrone Towers Basketball, Donaghmore Celtic Soccer
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	Grass gaelic	No	Full	12 hours per week	Magherafelt
	Grass gaelic	Yes	Juvenile	8 hours per week	O'Donovan Rossa
	Grass gaelic	No	Juvenile	6 hours per week	GAC, Lavey GAC, Loup GAC, Ballinascreen Camogie, Moneyglass GAC, Slaughtneil GAC, Derry County, Moyola FC, Magherafelt Sky Blues FC

Community Use 'Agreements'

5.12 Of the 18 respondents 10 schools have a written policy/agreement, 6 schools have a casual use and/or non-written agreement, 2 schools did not supply information.

Facility User Agreement Type And Further Information

School	Does your school issue a Dual-Use Agreement/Terms and Conditions of Hire for use of your outdoor pitches? If Yes - which type of agreement?	If an agreement is in place, tell us a bit more about it
Aughnacloy College	Yes - A formal community agreement including information on charges, insurance arrangements, child protection procedures etc.	
Cookstown High School	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement.	Cookstown Hockey Club - Long Term Licence Agreement Royal British Legion - formal agreement.
Drumglass High School		
Fivemiletown College	Yes - A formal community agreement including information on charges, insurance arrangements, child protection procedures etc.	An application for usage must be made which details the group's name, address, period of use, days, times, cost and that they have relevant insurance and child protection policy in place.
Holy Trinity College	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement.	
Integrated College Dungannon	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises.	
Magherafelt High School	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises.	Booking form.
Rainey Endowed School	Yes - A formal community agreement including information on charges, insurance arrangements, child protection procedures etc.	School has an extensive Hire and conditions document for all bodies hiring pitches.
Royal School Dungannon	Yes - A formal community agreement including information on charges,	We had a commercial agreement with Dungannon local district Council for ten years from 2006-2016 for hire of the AstroTurf pitch to the local community

School	Does your school issue a Dual-Use Agreement/Terms and Conditions of Hire for use of your outdoor pitches? If Yes - which type of agreement?	If an agreement is in place, tell us a bit more about it
	insurance arrangements, child protection procedures etc.	which was very successful. This covered times, insurance, liability, etc. The new MUDC decided to terminate this agreement
Sperrin Integrated College	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement	N/A
St Conor's College	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement	
St Joseph's College Coalisland	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises	
St Patrick's College Dungannon		
St Patrick's Maghera	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement	
St Pius X College	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises	
St Ciaran's College	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises	
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	No - but we have casual use and/or non-written agreement	
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	Yes - A policy for Community Use of School Premises	We want to see insurance cover from the sports body eg, GAA for the club.

Barriers to Community Use

- 5.13** It's deemed important to understand why some schools might not have community use of their sports facilities. Seven response options were available in the survey questionnaire; the following table shows that insurance and extra staff costs are uppermost in school governor's minds.

If your school does not presently open its pitch/outdoor sports facilities for community use what are the main barriers to community use? Tick all that may apply.

Barrier	No of Schools
Insurance concerns	3
Drafting of user agreement	0
Pitches are already used extensively by school teams	2
Extra staffing costs to manage community pitch use (eg, cleaning, maintenance, caretaker, admin)	3
Not in the school development plans/strategy	0
Beyond the remit of school responsibility	0
Concerns regarding over-use and mis-use of pitches/outdoor facilities	1

Further Comments

- That is not in the school's remit but rests with H and J Martin facilities management and the owners of the school.
- Pitches are not suitable for any type of use. The College has to look elsewhere for support with Teams. Hopefully, with a new Capital Build, this will change in a few years.
- We have always been open to community use
- Pitches are not currently in a state of repair to have extensive use. The school would like to open the facilities to clubs and teams. The Sports Hall is used by the Scouts and they occasionally use the pitch during the summer for outdoor games
- No-one would want to use the pitches as they are in poor condition
- As this is a shared campus, I cannot make any arrangements without the other school
- We are very keen to explore this as an opportunity to enhance local facilities in a mutually agreeable way.

Schools' Use of Other Pitches

- 5.14** It's clear that many schools are not self-sufficient in terms of pitches, relying on Council and club pitches which they use on a regular and frequent basis.

Does your school use any other pitches/outdoor sports facilities that it does not 'own'? if so, please give details for all pitches if more than one.

School	Name and Location of all pitch/pitches	Owner of all pitch/pitches	Sports you play on all pitch/pitches	Frequency of use (approx.)	Distance travelled to all pitch/pitches
Drumglass High School	White City, Dungannon	Mid Ulster Council	Soccer	Before covid - weekly	a few hundred metres
Fivemiletown College	Castle Park Centre Lisnaskea,	Lakeland Forum	Football	5 times a year	150 miles
Holy Trinity College	Fr Rocks GAC Cookstown; MUSA	Fr Rocks; Mid Ulster Council	Gaelic Football	During football season only	1 mile return
Rainey Endowed School	Meadowbank AstroTurf hockey pitch	Mid Ulster Council	Hockey	15 hours per week	1 mile
St Conor's College	Greenough GAC	Greenlough GAC	Gaelic Games	Daily	Next door
St Patrick's Maghera	Watty Graham's Glen GFC training pitch	Watty Graham's Glen GFC	Gaelic Football, Camogie, Hurling	2-3 after school sessions per week in the period from November to March approx.	1 mile
St Pius X College	Meadowbank			Regular	2 miles
St Ciaran's College	MUSA, Tyrone GAA at Garvaghy, Sherry's Field Armagh, Local GAA Clubs	Local Council and Clubs	Mostly GAA	2/3 teams per week	varies depending upon where opposition are from
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	St Patrick Donaghmore, Galbally GAA, MUSA, DUY	GAA, Mid Ulster Council, Dungannon United Youth	Gaelic Football, Hurling, Camogie, Soccer, Rugby	Daily	Max 10miles-MUSA Dungannon 3miles, Galbally 3miles Donaghmore Quarter of a mile
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	Up to 20 main pitches for school teams to play opposition and	Meadowbank sports arena	Hurling, camogie gaelic football, ladies gaelic football, soccer	4 times per week for 32 weeks	on average 25 miles

Development Plans

- 5.15** Given the potential for the Council to partner with schools in the provision of shared sports pitches and facilities in general, it's important that the Council knows what schools' aspirations and/or plans are.

Does your school have any plans to develop or expand its sports facilities?	
Aughnacloy College	The Board of Governors would like to develop an indoor sports hall facility, as per a plan that was passed a number of years ago which was cancelled due to public objection.
Drumglass High School	Gravel pitch at the front of the school - legal issue regarding right of way to be sorted before plans to change to 3G surface can proceed.
Fivemiletown College	We currently have an AstroTurf pitch which it is nearing its life span. We are currently looking at the usage levels and if it is more visible to replace to a 3g pitch. This would take away from school and community hockey and at the moment the Enniskillen ladies hockey club use our pitch as there are no AstroTurf facilities in Fermanagh. The majority of the clubs using the astro are football and Gaelic and from a community point of view the upgrade would be of more benefit for a 3g pitch. In an ideal world we would love to have both to aid the community in their desire to offer all sports and initially we had plans for a pitch in the centre of our athletics track which we may revisit. We do also have space on at our tennis courts for the development of a pitch but as a school we would need to look at providing tennis elsewhere on the grounds.
Holy Trinity College	Capital Build due to commence. New School and new Sports facilities - 3G Pitch, MUGA, Tennis Courts, Handball Walls, Fitness Suite.
Integrated College Dungannon	The College is waiting for confirmation from the Department of Finance regarding the facilities to be included in our new buildings program. This could include two additional grass pitches. The College may approach the Council for additional funding to secure a walking track to be used by parents when the drop their children of to use the facilities as members of the clubs mentioned previously.
Rainey Endowed School	Currently trying to get both small gravel pitches converted to one sand dressed Astro Hockey pitch.
Royal School Dungannon	To continue to maintain the condition of existing rugby and hockey pitches for the benefit of school teams and community use.
Sperrin Integrated College	The school have a school development passed by DENI which had included enhanced sports facilities ,however at present the DENI are focussing on classroom accommodation.

St Joseph's College Coalisland	We have an ambition to expand the dimensions of the grass playing surface to allow the pitch to be used for inter-school competitions and allow the local clubs to use it as an official alternative to their own facilities when they are double/triple booked.
St Pius X College	We are always on the lookout for funding to enhance our provision!
St Ciaran's College	We would love to but can't source funding!
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore	Our school is in the initial stage of achieving a new build in stages, as part of this it is envisaged that an entitlement of pitches would be included to provide the required facilities for sport in our school. It is however a long drawn out process and does not meet the obvious immediate need which our school has in relation to pitch facilities.
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	We have plans passed for a 4G floodlit pitch but no funding.

Final Comments

- 5.16** These final comments supplement the schools' comments on development plans. They will be helpful as the Council looks to partner with schools in the future development of pitches.

Final Comments		
School	Further Development Plans Comment	Final Comment
Cookstown High School		There seems to be good Council provision of soccer, rugby and GAA pitches but no provision for hockey.
Drumglass High School	Approval and costs would need to be sorted with owners and H and J Martin Facilities management.	
Fivemiletown College	We aim to cater for the mental, physical and social wellbeing of the community and strive at having the facilities available for the Fivemiletown and surrounding areas to use in the evenings and at weekends.	Fivemiletown College is ideally located for the benefits of the development of pitches for sport. Local clubs and ourselves as a school have to travel to Lisnaskea, Enniskillen, Omagh or Dungannon for the nearest 3g pitch. We would support the need for the Council and local clubs in looking at a way to cater for this demand. Mid Ulster also lacks AstroTurf pitches to cater for Hockey. With no pitch in Fermanagh the nearest for Enniskillen ladies to travel to is ourselves Omagh or Dungannon.

School	Further Development Plans Comment	Final Comment
Holy Trinity College	Community partnership will be vital upon new school build.	As a maintained school in centre of Cookstown, overall provision is poor in comparison to another local controlled Post Primary School who have excellent outdoor provision.
Rainey Endowed School		Even if our school does get an AstroTurf hockey pitch on site we will still need to hire the AstroTurf hockey pitch at Meadowbank. The new pitch is planned to go on the current gravel and the current gravel at school gets up to 10 hours hockey use a week. This means if we are to maintain our participation levels of 150 girls playing hockey a week we will need Meadowbank to ensure we do not have to lose any of our current girls teams. One pitch cannot accommodate enough training slots for our ten girls teams. And this is without any allowance for boys use of AstroTurf and we constantly have boys asking us can we start hockey for them in school.
Royal School Dungannon		We regret the decision of MUDC to withdraw from a very successful commercial agreement for the hire of our AstroTurf pitch which was both cost beneficial to the Council and which supports hockey for a premier league team in an area where there is no alternative provision.
Sperrin Integrated College		Within Magherafelt the outdoor Sports facilities are very good. In the past we have used Meadowbank Pitch for match fixtures and Sports Day.
St Joseph's College Coalisland	The development of the pitch and in future a fitness suite would allow for the facilities to be used at more user-friendly times for the youth of the local clubs and the various teams they all run. It would also offer an additional venue for matches allowing the area to have another full sized pitch to accommodate games. If floodlights were to be installed it would allow the facility to be used later	While the local clubs provide the use of their facilities on a limited basis, there is no MUDC provision in Coalisland to cater for the main sports in the area. Few are floodlit to allow use later into the evening. Often the cost can put some groups off from participating and at a time when we want to encourage as many people to participate in a healthy lifestyle, our facilities fall short.

School	Further Development Plans Comment	Final Comment
	into the evening especially in the darker winter months.	
St Patrick's Maghera		The winter period is especially difficult for the school with pitches generally unplayable if weather is consistently poor. The small sized pitch on the main school site can become unplayable for 4-5 months,(Nov-March) if the weather is poor which puts a lot of pressure on pupils getting regular access to quality PE.
St Pius X College		The leadership of St Pius X College, through the current School Development Plan, is currently looking at ways to enhance the community use of the school, including our sports facilities, and are open to conversations to facilitate this ambition.
St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore		Mid Ulster Council has done much good work in developing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in its legislative area and are to be commended on this. I would however like to see increased provision in Donaghmore. The village has had considerable growth in its housing stock in recent years and accordingly the population is also increasing rapidly. Donaghmore is centrally located between South Derry and the west of the province with St Joseph's Grammar School which was founded 100 years ago occupying a magnificent site overlooking the village. The school has the necessary land to position a pitch on its site and has also developed strong links with local sporting groups which would ensure the facility would act as a tremendous hub for both the school and sporting groups in the local area.
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt		To meet the schools needs we could be doing with a Council provision in the Dungannon area which we can meet other schools for games the MUSA centre outside Cookstown is overused at times and booking are hard to secure we can usually get plenty of free Council soccer pitches.

School & Community Case Study

- 5.17** Dalriada School in Ballymoney developed a 60m x 30m 3G pitch, fully fenced and floodlit in 2009. This was only made possible with a grant of £250k from Sport NI. The intention was to share the facility with the local community as well as have access to an extra 'classroom' for PE and sports activities. Administrative responsibilities –

bookings, scheduling, invoicing – are contracted out whilst the school looks after maintenance. It is heavily used by local sports clubs and groups; achieving approximately 75% of capacity. Ballymoney United Youth Academy say, *‘We find the size of the pitch is ideal for our youth squads and being fully fenced on a school site it’s really safe too.’* After revenue costs, the pitch realises a considerable surplus which is set aside for a replacement carpet.

Mid Ulster District Council

- 5.18** The Council is the key local stakeholder given its commitment to developing and operating facilities that promote participation in sport and physical activity; in terms of pitches and ancillary accommodation the Council owns and operates nearly a quarter of the district’s entire stock. It also actively promotes and facilitates participation through its sports development activities. In addition, the Council supports local communities across the district, including sporting organisations, through its programme of grants. The sports-related grants available in 2020-2021 were as follows:-

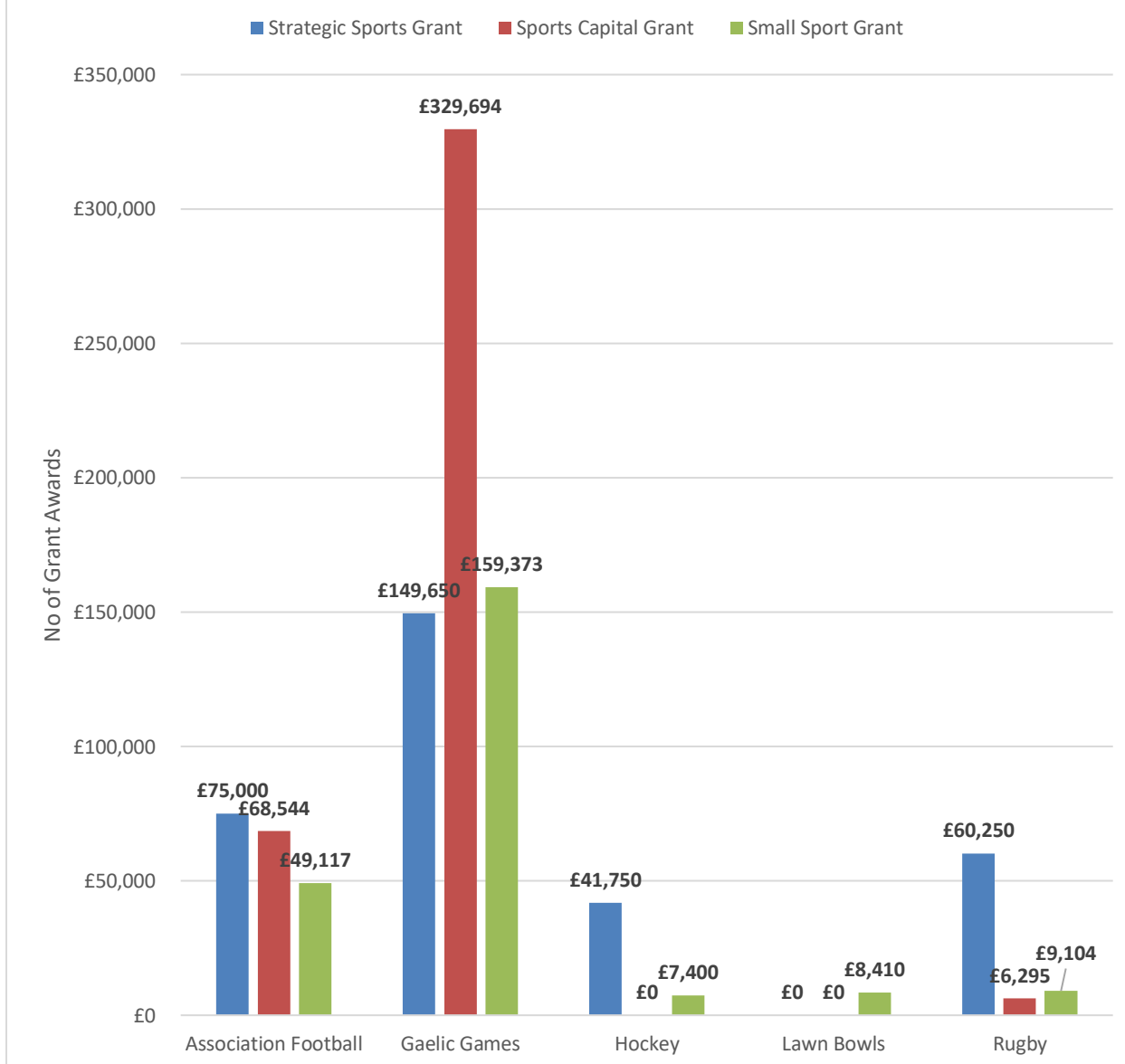
Grant Descriptor	Details
▪ Sports Development Grant	Maximum £1,500. Budget £30,000. Everybody Active funding not confirmed.
▪ Sports Capital Grant	Maximum £5,000. To be matched 50%. One call each year, can only apply every 2 years. Budget £120,000
▪ Strategic Sports Development Grant	Maximum £15,000. Budget £75,000. Governing bodies only – salary. Three year funding.
▪ Sports Representative Individual & Team Grant	Maximum £250-£500. Budget £15,000. Selected by governing body.
▪ Schools Access to Sports Facilities Grant	Maximum £5,000. Budget £10,000. Schools providing sports facilities to minority sports that do not have their own provision.

- 5.19** Analysis of the Council’s records for financial support given to sports clubs over the period 2018/2019 to 2022/2023 shows a total allocation of £1,176,161 across 25 sports, of which the five sports being considered in this strategy received £963,537, or 82% of the total allocation. Here’s the breakdown for the five sports.

Sport	Small Sports Grant			Strategic Sports Grant			Sports Capital Grant			Total All Three Grants		
	No of Awards	Total Spend £	Average Award £	No of Awards	Total Spend £	Average Award £	No of Awards	Total Spend £	Average Award £	No of Awards	Total Spend £	Average Award £
Association Football	50	49,117	982	5	75,000	15,000	24	68,544	2,856	79	192,661	2,439
Gaelic Games	134	159,373	1,189	10	149,650	14,965	97	329,694	3,399	241	638,717	2,650
Hockey	6	7,400	1,233	5	41,750	8,350	0	0	0	11	49,150	4,468
Lawn Bowls	14	8,410	600	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	8,410	600
Rugby	7	9,104	1,300	5	60,250	12,050	3	6,295	2,098	15	75,649	5,043
Totals	211	233,404	1,061	25	326,650	12,591	124	404,533	2,784	360	964,587	3,043

5.20 The above information is also presented in graph format as follows:-

**Figure 5.1: Comparison of the value of grant awards across the five sports
2018/19 to 2022/23 inclusive**



Governing Bodies

Irish Football Association

- 5.21** The IFA acts in an advisory capacity for ‘senior football’ in Northern Ireland, setting criteria for grounds in the Premiership, the Championship and the Intermediate Leagues. In the Mid Ulster area there are 31 known football clubs with 4,091 playing members, an average of 132 playing members per club. As the sports governing body the IFA is heavily involved in development of the game amongst young players. It

does this through the Grassroots Development Programme, involving a team of Grassroots Development Officers working at a local level; one of these officers has responsibility for the Mid Ulster area.

5.22 The IFA's strategy 'Promoting, Fostering and Developing Football for All; 2017-2022' has several elements of relevance to the Council's provision:-

- ❖ **Stadia Improvements** – the strategy looks to deliver 'several major stadia improvements' at Premiership grounds to improve the experience for supporters and improve the chances of hosting further UEFA tournaments. In addition the strategy looks to complete 'up to 20 other smaller projects with clubs outside the Premiership' including intermediate and junior clubs, incorporating stadia and training facilities (timeline 2018-2020).
- ❖ **Regional Hubs** – the aim is to deliver a football hub in each Council area, serving as a host venue for small-sided games and becoming the focus for all local IFA activity (timeline 2019).
- ❖ **Lending Strategy** – the IFA will act as a financial lender for clubs to ensure they can access the full range of government funds (timeline 2018-2020).
- ❖ **Pitch Strategy** – the IFA will provide subsidised training for club ground staff, hosting workshops and practical demonstrations (timeline 2019).
- ❖ **Tweak the Season** – the aim is to have clubs playing in May and June so that Premiership clubs qualifying for Europe are in peak form and fitness (timeline 2019).

As the Council considers future investment in association football it's important to work alongside the IFA to maximise value for money and avoid duplication.

5.23 The IFA's youth football strategy 'Let Them Play' aims to increase the numbers of young people playing association football to 100,000 by 2025, a doubling of the estimated 50,000 participant when the strategy was launched in 2015. The obvious implication for local authorities and other facility providers is increased pressure on facilities for training and competition for youth participation and, as players mature, for adult participation.

5.24 The Grassroots Development Officer for the Mid Ulster area reports a significant increase in participation by girls, influenced by the growing profile of the women's international game globally and coverage of the Northern Ireland women's team. As

COVID-19 restrictions ease association football is experiencing more interest from young people, boys and girls, in taking up the game.

Small Sided Games

- 5.25** The IFAs Small Sided Games (SSG) programme, introduced in 2013, continues to grow in popularity; its success is attributed to the child-centred ethos, which parents and clubs have embraced. There are four age groups:-

Age	Team Size	Squad	Pitch Size	Goals Size
Under 8's	Five-a-side	8	35mx25m	3.65mx1.83m
Under 9's	Seven-a-side	10	55mx35m	3.65mx1.83m
Under 10's	Seven-a-side	10	55mx35m	3.63mx1.83m
Under 11's	Nine-a-side	12	65mx45m	4.87mx2.13m

Matches are generally played on Saturday mornings or Friday evenings usually in three time slots; 9.00am – 10.00am, 10.00am – 11.00am, 11.00am – 12noon. The duration and structure of matches is specified as follows:-

Five-a-side	–	3 periods of play, each 12 minutes
Seven-a-side	–	3 periods of play, each 15 minutes
Nine-a-side	–	2 periods of play, each 25 minutes

There are no referees; instead team coaches 'referee' from the side-lines. Changing facilities are not essential, meaning youngsters can simply turn up, play and go. The Grassroots Development Officer reflects on the Mid Ulster SSG programme as follows:-

- ❖ As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, the interest from clubs in involving teams/squads in Mid Ulster's SSG programme has increased, resulting in pressure on facilities used by the programme. The Mid Ulster SSG programme operates on Friday evenings at Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA), Castlecaulfield, Moyola Park. At MUSA the programme uses the association football 3G pitch and the multi-sports 3G pitch with a total of approximately 60 teams involved from 12 clubs of which nine are based in Mid Ulster:-

Augher Stars FC	Riverdale Youth FC	Castlecaulfield Youth FC
Mid Ulster Utd	Cookstown Youth FC	Magherafelt Sky Blues FC
Moyola Park FC	Draperstown Celtic FC	Dungannon United Youth

- ❖ At MUSA the SSG programme only accommodates the seven-a-side age groups in the 28 participating teams, however, the organisers are keen to

extend the programme to the younger age group, playing five-a-side. Presently the two 3G pitches at MUSA used by the programme are at capacity, therefore the organisers are interested in using 3G facility within the athletics track project proposed for MUSA.

- ❖ The SSG organisers may look to access the new 3G pitch at Maghera Leisure Centre to extend the programme. However, there is also a need for more resources to help organise and deliver the sessions, especially staff/volunteers and equipment. SSG can use grass surfaces in the summer months although the programme mostly takes place from September to mid-November and from the end of February to the start of May.

Futsal

- ❖ The game of Futsal, popular in Asia and South America, is growing in popularity here in Northern Ireland. Local authority leisure centres are starting to include Futsal markings in their sports halls – the Foyle Futsal Arena in Derry City & Strabane District Council and Newry Leisure Centre are examples alongside Ulster University in Coleraine. Futsal is a form of five-a-side generally played indoors, using court markings to define the area of play. A court typically measures anything from 25 metres to 42 metres in length and 16 metres to 25 metres in width. Futsal is set to take over from the ‘traditional’ five-a-side game in the coming years. From a starting point of around 150 players in 2015 the game has grown to an estimated 8,000–9,000 participants in Northern Ireland today. Other points to note are:-
 - Northern Ireland competes in a home nations Futsal championship with Ulster University used for residential training camps; its development is in accordance with a five year strategy, ‘Game Changer’. The Futsal World Cup qualifying games will be held in April 2022 with Northern Ireland entering women’s and men’s teams. Northern Ireland has a domestic league for Futsal, men’s and women’s teams and coach education courses for Futsal are now available. In Mid Ulster Futsal is played at five venues presently; Back Row Sports Centre, Draperstown, Cookstown Leisure Centre, Dungannon Leisure Centre, Dungannon Integrated College, Mid Ulster Sports Arena.
 - Unlike five-a-side, Futsal plays to the lines, therefore, it is a more skilful game. The heavier ball has a reduced bounce which adds to the technical skill required. Indeed, the skills are transferable into the eleven-a-side game.

- A Futsal squad has 14 players of which 5 are on court. The game is played in two 20 minute halves, however, the clock stops when the ball is out of play so games can last considerably longer than 40 minutes.
- The IFA advises that Futsal is one of several initiatives that will see more ‘small-sided’ alternatives to the competitive twenty two player game, with a view to encouraging more participation in the sport by people of all ages. It’s important to keep an eye to these developments and how they may affect the future provision of pitches by local authorities and others.

Ulster Council GAA

- 5.26** Gaelic games in Ulster has around 570 clubs of which around 411 are in Northern Ireland. In the Mid Ulster area there are 47 gaelic games clubs with 14,348 playing members, an average of 305 playing members per club. As with all sports the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on clubs and recovery is ongoing. In past years gaelic clubs have been self-contained, generally not needing access to pitches outside club grounds. As a result, local authorities mostly did not develop gaelic pitches. This situation has been changing over the last 20 to 30 years and the introduction of artificial turf pitch (ATP) technology has allowed local authorities to develop multi-sport ATPs; Mid Ulster has two such pitches, at Mid Ulster Sports Arena in Cookstown and Meadowbank Sports Arena in Magherafelt. The Council also provides grass gaelic pitches.
- 5.27** Acceptance of ATP pitches by gaelic games is growing; at youth levels ATP pitches have been key to facilitating games schedules in County competitions. The Ulster Council sees a need for indoor/covered ATPs to facilitate training in inclement weather, suggesting that an air dome could be considered as an alternative to a permanent structure.

Connacht GAA Sports Air Dome

Connacht GAA completed an air dome project in 2021. Located at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence it measures 150m x 100m with a height of 26metres. The facility accommodates a full size gaelic ATP, a 130m x 5 lane running straight, gym and fitness testing and permanent spectator seating for 600. The air dome can be transformed to operate as a conference centre or a concert venue.



- 5.28** The Ulster Council reports that girls and ladies participation in gaelic games continues to grow steadily. This mirrors the increasing participation of women in other team sports, especially association football and rugby, and points to the importance of sports facilities being welcoming to females, not least in the provision of changing accommodation.
- 5.29** The Ulster Council's strategic capacity promotes *participation, governance, community engagement, health & wellness*. The strategy recognises the increasing popularity of handball which is popular throughout Europe and particularly suits foreign nationals living and working here. It's being promoted as an option for the winter season when gaelic takes a break. The Ulster Council is keen to demonstrate that gaelic games clubs can and do share facilities with other sports; in Mid Ulster a good example is the facility-sharing arrangement between Ballinderry Shamrocks GAC and Coagh United FC.

Ulster Hockey Union

- 5.30** Hockey's world governing body, the Federation Internationale Hockey estimates hockey has 44,000 players throughout Ireland. Both the men's and women's national teams are in the top twenty in world rankings, maintaining a steady position over a

number of years. Ulster is well represented on national teams; in the 2018 Women's Hockey World Cup Ireland won through to the final, led by captain Katie Mullan who played her club hockey with Ballymoney Ladies. This was a significant achievement which has boosted participation with around 16,000 players registered in Ulster.

- 5.31** There are three hockey clubs in Mid Ulster, Dungannon, Cookstown, Rainey. The main impediment to growing participation is access to pitches; having access to only a single pitch tends to constrain a club's development. Schools have a vital role to play in introducing pupils to hockey and in creating links with clubs. Ulster Hockey promotes the relationship between clubs and schools and its 'Active Clubs' initiative encourages clubs to develop under-age participation.
- 5.32** The artificial turf pitches (ATPs) which began to appear in the 1970's prioritised hockey activity – they are also known as 'AstroTurf'. They came to be regarded (incorrectly) as multi-sport in the absence of alternative ATP surfaces and were widely used by a range of sports. In the mid to late 1990's the introduction of the new 3G technology suited to large ball sports meant a gradual shift from AstroTurf (which was never designed to accommodate association football) to 3G by association football clubs/groups and an increasing demand for 3G, now popular with association football and gaelic games and increasingly, rugby. Today, 3G has taken over from AstroTurf as the surface of choice for all but hockey. Given that hockey has fewer participants than any one of the 'big three', in recent years AstroTurf carpets have been replaced by 3G carpets in several locations across Ulster. It is also the case that new ATP's currently being developed outside of hockey clubs and hockey playing schools are almost exclusively 3G as these provide the best potential for use and income.
- 5.33** Whilst some hockey clubs and most schools (that offer hockey) have their own AstroTurf facilities, many still rely on local authority facilities. However, with the loss of AstroTurf pitches in some areas, coupled with the fact that fewer AstroTurf pitches are being constructed, the Ulster Hockey Union clearly faces significant challenges as it seeks to continue to build grassroots participation.

Irish Bowls Federation

- 5.34** The sport of bowls in Northern Ireland is governed by the Irish Bowls Federation (IBF) which incorporates four member organisations, namely:-
- ❖ The Irish Bowling Association
 - ❖ The Association of Irish Indoor Bowling
 - ❖ The Irish Women's Bowling Association
 - ❖ The Irish Women's Indoor Bowling Association

The IBF was set up in 2013 with the primary aim of developing all disciplines of the sport of bowls in Northern Ireland.

5.35 Participation in lawn bowls in Northern Ireland has fallen in recent years. Many clubs have an ageing membership and find it difficult to attract and retain new and younger players. Clubs tend to focus on the playing of bowls and most clubs are not pro-active in outreach programmes or membership development. However, the sport of bowls in Northern Ireland has achieved considerable success on the international scene and it is reckoned to ‘punch above its weight’ in competitions.

5.36 The IBF Strategy 2016-2022 (updated 2021) states its purpose as:-

‘ develop a plan for the advancement of the sport in Northern Ireland. The Strategy explores plans to attract players of all ages to the sport, raising our profile and looks at how funding of the sport can be advanced along with development of the coaching support and continued success in international and world events.’

The strategy includes addressing the public perception of bowls, ways of increasing income outside the ‘public purse’, the need to have development programmes for schools and young players, better partnerships with external bodies, club and coach development. The strategy recognises the challenges facing bowls at all levels and seeks to address them.

5.37 The sport of bowls has been badly affected by COVID-19 restrictions, not least because it tends to involve players who, due to their age, are more at risk from infections. The IBF is presently conducting a survey of its membership to determine what actions will assist clubs in re-grouping post-COVID-19, with a focus on more female players. Presently, lady bowlers mostly play in the afternoons and men in the evenings; the IBF is introducing mixed competitions in an effort to make bowling more inclusive.

5.38 There are two types of surfaces for lawn bowls, (i) natural turf; (ii) synthetic. The IBF makes the point that synthetic greens are increasingly used in Ireland with an estimated half of all greens now synthetic. This is something to be considered given the cost of maintaining natural turf greens compared to the cost of maintaining a synthetic green. In Mid Ulster the bowling green at King George V Playing Fields in Fivemiletown has a synthetic surface and there are other examples in Antrim (Allen Park) and Belfast (Cl Knock). Whilst it is beyond the requirements of this commission to comment on synthetic bowling greens it’s useful to summarise earlier research¹⁸.

¹⁸ Pitches Condition Survey and Strategy; Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council 2018 by Otium Leisure Consultancy.

- ❖ The maintenance regime for natural turf bowling greens is labour intensive with frequent grass cutting (even daily), weed control, fertilising, aerating and scarifying with specialist machinery and equipment used by qualified greenkeepers. Synthetic greens are less labour intensive yet still require maintenance inputs.

❖ Cutting – 12 hours per week x £21.00 x 24 weeks	£6,048
❖ Maintenance around the green @ 8 hours per week x £21.00 x 24 weeks	£4,032

Total £10,080

These costs only deal with labour/wages. Additional costs will be incurred for equipment, fuel and materials (chemicals, sand, etc).

- ❖ It's of interest to consider the cost of 'converting' a natural turf bowling green to a synthetic surface and on-going maintenance. Dales Sports (www.dalesports.co.uk) installs a range of sports surfaces including synthetic lawn bowls; in 2015/16 Dales Sports installed the synthetic bowls surface at CI Knock to World Bowls standard. A 'private' club, Knock Bowling Club moved to CIYMS's sports complex in Belfast in 2016 constructing a new synthetic green and re-naming as CI Knock Bowling Club. Richard White of Dales Sports advises as follows:-

- Converting an existing 6 rink natural grass bowling green to a synthetic surface costs in the region of £110,000 to £120,000. The work involves removing the existing surface and sub strata, installing a drainage system, build up sub strata with Tye 1 stone, prepare level surface and install bowls carpet to World Bowls tolerances.
- Dales Sports offers a needle punch synthetic carpet system for outdoor greens, either 'Master Green' or 'Pro Green Plus'. Both systems have a 12-14 second run time which is slightly faster than natural grass. Unlike other synthetic greens, such as Allen Park Bowling Green (Antrim) these carpets do not require sand infill, helping to reduce maintenance requirements and costs.
- Maintenance involves a weekly vacuum (2/3 hours) with a wet/dry machine and spray for moss prevention on one or two occasions annually. Maintenance does not require any particular skills and can be carried out by club members. Debris such as twigs and leaves should be swept away with a medium hard brush. A suitable vacuum will cost around £2,000 to purchase.

- A replacement carpet will be required after 10-12 years at a cost of around £30,000 - £35,000. As with other synthetic sports surfaces, regular maintenance will prolong the carpets lifespan.

Irish Rugby Football Union – Ulster Branch

- 5.39** The IRFU Ulster Branch focuses a good deal of its attention and efforts on domestic growth with a 3-5 year strategic plan in place to attract more players to the game in schools and clubs. Rugby is structured as mini (U12's), youth (U19's) and adult. Mini rugby is played across the Province in clubs and primary schools, mostly in the controlled education sector but also in the maintained sector. Mini rugby is often compromised when there is a demand for pitches from youth rugby so there is a need for more availability of pitches through improved or additional facilities. Facilities are a key element of Ulster Branch's strategy; in the Mid Ulster area Meadowbank and MUSA are used for regional development squads. The Ulster Branch recognises the needs of the district's three rugby clubs; (i) additional floodlighting and another pitch at Dungannon RFC; (ii) clubhouse redevelopment, including female changing accommodation at Rainey OB RFC; (iii) clubhouse redevelopment at Clogher Valley RFC.
- 5.40** It's generally recognised that societal changes have had an impact on rugby wherein the traditional Saturday afternoon club fixture is increasingly difficult to sustain. The Ulster Branch recognises the need for flexibility in match scheduling, looking to weekday evening fixtures which, given that rugby is played during the autumn and winter months, requires floodlights. Part of the issue with Saturday afternoon scheduling is the time and expense associated with travelling; the Ulster Branch is addressing this with more local fixtures. It's reported that players are opting to play less frequently so rather than having 20/25 players in a squad some years ago, a squad could now comprise 40/45 players. This results in fewer teams but not necessarily fewer players.
- 5.41** Participation in youth and mini rugby continues to grow especially amongst girls and women as a result of the Ulster Branch's women's development team. Targets set for women's participation for 2015 were easily achieved and pre-COVID-19 women's participation was set to double by 2023. However, club-based facilities for girls and women are an ongoing issue, especially changing accommodation. The point is made that facilities built in the 1970s/1980s no longer reflect where the game of rugby is now, with a much greater focus on females and families.
- 5.42** The Club Community Relations Officer (CCRO) initiative has had an impact on rugby reaching into non-traditional sectors. Originally set up with the Ulster Branch as the

employer, this responsibility has been handed to the clubs, with funding support from the Ulster Branch; in Mid Ulster the Council also contributes to the posts. The work of the CCRO recognises that not all players are looking for the same rugby experience and the non-contact game, 'touch and tag' is increasingly popular.

- 5.43** The Ulster Branch reports there is a good deal of pressure on pitches in some areas. Clubs have often looked to use schools' rugby pitches, however getting permission is often down to personalities – community use policies are rarely in place in schools. Location of 3G pitches is important to rugby. It's felt that clubs would travel to 3G pitches close to the club's ground. The point is made that rugby clubs are operated as a business and they really need to have matches at club grounds. Thinking to the use of MUSA and Meadowbank for regional development squads, the Ulster Branch comments that conditioning facilities need to be able to accommodate around 20 players at the one time.

Consultation Events

- 5.44** Four consultation events were held:-

- ❖ Greenvale Leisure Centre, Monday 7 June 2021
- ❖ Cookstown Leisure Centre, Tuesday 8 June 2021
- ❖ Dungannon Leisure Centre, Wednesday 9 June 2021
- ❖ Cookstown Leisure Centre, Monday 27 September 2021

The purpose of these events was to (i) provide an opportunity to introduce the audit and strategy project to the community; (ii) promote the survey; (iii) allow the consultants to hear first-hand about pitches provision and how it influences participation across the five sports; (iv) supplement survey work. Appendix 1 presents a record of attendance and comments at each consultation event. Four topics were introduced and attendees were asked to record their thoughts. A random selection of comments is highlighted here to give a flavour of the events.

Topic / Question	Comment
PRESENT NEED	
What is your need for Council facilities?	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If our club had more fixtures than we could cope with on any one day, we would appreciate the availability of Council pitches. Membership: 150 players, 200 non-playing members. (<i>Desertmartin GAC</i>) ▪ We are fully reliant on the multi-sport pitch inside Meadowbank, both for training and matches, for all

	<p>of our age groups – minors, youth and seniors. Minis – 7 years to 11 years old; Youths 12 years – 15 years; Seniors 15 years+. This includes 105 minis, 30 Juniors and 81 Seniors. Total 216. (<i>Rainey Hockey Club</i>)</p> <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For competitive play, for practice, for social play, for preparation of elite international play. (<i>Cookstown Bowling Club</i>) ▪ As we have no pitches or assets that the club owns the need is vital for our ongoing club requirements as are the facilities for training, competition and club development. 75% of our utilisation would be Council provision. (<i>Cookstown Youth FC</i>) ▪ Moneymore GAC is a growing club of over 300 members. Over half is underage teams at present our club only has one football pitch. This is not enough to cater for all teams with training and games, etc. (<i>Moneymore GAC</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We need a surface on which to play our sport. We are asking again for equity of provision. We feel we have been overloaded on many occasions in terms of recent pitches as none have been suitable for either training or playing matches. (<i>Dungannon Hockey Club</i>) ▪ Club founded in 2016 and have had no base or regular venue to train or play. We went to establish a playing base for our current Under 5, Under 7, Under 9, Under 11, Under 13 hurling and same age groups for camogie. We currently use the ‘soccer pitch’ at Ballygawley Playing Fields but still have no venue for matches. (<i>Cúchulainn an Ghleanna</i>)
<p>How does the Council’s present provision meet your need?</p>	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Just adequate only one surface for 3 teams and juniors (U15, U13 and U11). Still managed to produce Ulster and Irish players (thanks to Meadowbank) and training in all weathers essential for young skills and girls in a safe controlled environment. Meadowbank is the envy of all other schools and clubs due to its unique <i>inclusive</i> surface. (<i>Rainey Hockey Club</i>) ▪ Not currently with the number of teams + playing members. Also current location of Council pitches

	<p>pose issue with travel. Seasonal need + lighting has been an issue with use of Council pitches. (<i>Slaughtneil GAC</i>)</p> <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present it doesn't because the pitch is not catered for gaelic, goal posts etc. catch nets. No fencing, poorly maintained grass, lights also. (<i>Moneymore GAC</i>) Members have restricted access to the green. Midweek games are often played in a short version in order to complete games. (<i>Dungannon Men's Bowling Club</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The club currently feel that Council provision with the Moy village is inadequate. The only recreational area within the village is the GAA grounds. Other small villages or similar size have Council provided facilities. Our members are having to travel to Dungannon to avail of pitches. (<i>Moy GAC</i>) We have a lease on Council pitch in Ballygawley which is used extensively by club, however, surface needs upgrading, also lights and goal posts need upgrading. (<i>Errigal Ciaran GAC</i>)
<p>If the Council's present provision doesn't meet your need tell us why.</p>	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently 150 girls playing hockey – 1 pitch cannot fulfil all our training + match requirements. Meadowbank pitch needs replaced with a new hockey surface as it is 3 years past its lifespan. Even if the school gets an AstroTurf it would replace the gravel therefore we still need Meadowbank Sports Arena pitch. (<i>Rainey Endowed School</i>) 1 functional pitch, no floodlights for training or evening games. Policy 1 game per pitch per day. Pitch is unavailable for 90% of year. Poorly maintained pitch, surroundings, eg, fencing, grass cutting, Dugouts are H&S risk, wire fencing not suitable. Limited booking slots. Poor changing facilities. (<i>Draperstown Celtic</i>) <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Because we have our own pitch and have planning permission for 2 more pitches on the same site. (<i>Clonoe O’Rahilly’s</i>) ▪ The gaelic 4G is booked regularly on a block booking by FAI and local soccer clubs leaving availability difficult. This seems strange given the amount of soccer pitches in the town that are not in use. (<i>Cookstown Fr Rocks GAA</i>) ▪ Green needs a lot of improvement, pavilion outdated – damp in ladies toilets. We need a proper greenkeeper to maintain the green and set it up for matches. (<i>Magherafelt Ladies Bowling Club</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We had an all-weather pitch in Drumcoo for many years. When hockey moved to AstroTurf we campaign for an AstroTurf pitch. The Council entered a 10 year SLA agreement with RDS in 2006. This ended in 2016 and no pitch has been provided by the Council since. (<i>Dungannon Hockey Club</i>) ▪ Newmills Playing Fields – no lights, changing rooms only available on match days. Have been informed that grass pitch used once per week in winter months (or twice in summer). We have 2 teams that train twice per week & 1 game per week. Drumcoo – not guaranteed a slot for training (Tues & Thurs). (<i>Newmills Football Club</i>)
QUALITY	
<p>What is your view of the Council’s pitches?</p>	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extremely limited for the sport of hockey as there is only 1 Council pitch available, Meadowbank Sports Arena in the whole of the Mid Ulster area. Although this facility is fantastic, the surface needs replaced with a sand dressed AstroTurf pitch to meet Ulster hockey standards and to cater for other activities and sports. (<i>Rainey Hockey Club</i>) ▪ Well serviced in main areas – rural areas neglected, eg, Draperstown have had to ‘fight’ on occasion to get them cut and lined. Dog fouling on pitches is a serious issue. Attendants not always there to solve

	<p>issues. Lack of provisions, eg, corner flags, pegs, etc from nets. (<i>Draperstown Celtic</i>)</p> <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are plenty in the Cookstown area and the quality depends on how often they are maintained, eg, Council pitches within a Council sports centre weekly are maintained better than an isolated pitch and are therefore better quality. (<i>Cookstown Fr Rocks</i>) Over the last number of years there has been a gradual deterioration in the green and associated facilities due to a lack of time invested in maintenance. Green not cut often enough or low enough for match play. (<i>Cookstown Bowling Club</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council pitch we use is of good surface quality. Issue is that pitch is not regulation size, is not lined, does not have perimeter fencing or ball stops and the posts are not usable for camogie & hurling. (<i>Cúchulainn an Ghleanna Camogie & Hurling Club</i>) Not enough GAA pitches in the Council. Large number of pitches for other sports, eg, soccer. Outside MUSA, we struggle to find a ground outside our own. (<i>Donaghmore GAA</i>)
Name the top 3 Council pitches and tell us why.	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Maghera? Meadowbank. MUSA. All well maintained facilities which meet the requirements of any user. (<i>Moyola Park</i>) <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4G gaelic pitch at MUSA – good floodlights, fencing around pitch, good surface. Gaelic pitch at MUSA – catch nets good quality, flagged and line marking for matches. (<i>Cookstown Fr Rocks</i>) Dungannon Swift FC pitch; Coagh Sports Centre – grass pitch very good; Moyola FC – 3G pitch very good. (<i>Cookstown Youth</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There's only one in our area and we cannot play games due to the size. (<i>Duiche Neill</i>) Mid Ulster Sports Arena; Drumcoo 3G – 3G pitches in general are a huge step above grass; Purely down to maintenance. (<i>Newmills Football Club</i>)
Name the bottom 3 Council pitches and tell us why.	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clady – poor state, no facilities, nearly unusable is current state. (<i>Greenlough GAC</i>) Cahore 2 – waterlogged 90% of season/no floodlights. Boyne Row – needs developed – goal mouth poor. Tobermore – Mill Park – has potential but sloped. (<i>Draperstown Celtic</i>) <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3G MUSA – too small; Beechway – too small – wet ground bad; MUSA Pitch 1 in the winter too wet (<i>Cookstown Youth</i>) Moneymore's is hardly fit for purpose. MUSA is ok if you can get a booking. Very difficult to book. (<i>Moneymore GAC</i>) <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All AstroTurf; all 4G; most 3G – doesn't meet rugby (IRFU) regs. (<i>Dungannon RFC</i>) Dungannon Park – football pitch of poor standard. Benburb is very good March – September. Once poor weather sets in pitch drainage is not very good. (<i>Riverdale FC, Benburb</i>)
What about changing accommodation?	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing accommodation is of a great standard – very spacious and always clean (this is only in terms of Meadowbank). (<i>Rainey Hockey Club</i>) Meadowbank – the changing facilities are excellent. Also – we love the staff! Great people who look after us well. (<i>Rainey Endowed School</i>) <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any I have used have been very good and well maintained. (<i>Killyman & District Cultural Group</i>)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MUSA changing is the best we have used home or away. Fairhill is the worst – needs knocked down. Beechway is old and worn out. <i>(Cookstown Youth)</i> ▪ Changing accommodation is good in Dungannon. <i>(Dungannon Men's Bowling Club)</i> <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small changing block on site at Ballygawley Playing Fields. Facility is small and has not been made available to our club. With two small changing rooms, would be an issue for matches where male & female can participate together (up to U11) but cannot share changing rooms. <i>(Cúchulainn an Ghleanna)</i> ▪ Ref Newmills Playing Fields – fairly new building so facilities are good; sizeable changing rooms, referee room, disabled access, etc. *side note* could be looked after/maintained/cleaned better between match days. <i>(Newmills Football Club)</i>
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ASPIRATIONS – SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

<p>What are the aspirations for your club / group / school thinking about sports development (eg, more people involved, targeting specific groups, coaching, etc)</p>	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Rainey Endowed School)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elite – continued team titles including Ulster & All-Ireland titles at Junior & Senior levels. Individual development – we hope to at least maintain our national & international representative levels, and ideally get more, over the next 10 years. Over the last 10 years we have had 23 Ulster representative players & 7 Ireland players (since Meadowbank opened). ▪ Participation – currently we have 150 girls playing and our 3rds team is oversubscribed – with more pitch time we'd like to start a 4ths/U15 team to accommodate this. We'd like to support more players to gain qualifications as coaches, officials & umpires. ▪ Personal Development – we'd like to give more kids opportunities to develop transferable
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	<p>interpersonal skills such as leadership, confidence & organisational skills through increased responsibilities in their own teams and in supporting younger teams through coaching and mentorship. They currently have opportunities through the school sports leader award, roles in the school hockey club and coaching but we'd like to expand much more to give more girls opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Links – we'd like to improve on creating links within the community – both primary schools (45 feeder primary schools) and the club. We'd like in particular that we get coaches out to primary schools to develop players earlier in hockey (currently very few of those schools are supported in playing hockey). ▪ All sides of the community participate in our school hockey. <p>(Slaughtneil GAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimise player drop off ▪ Maintain level of membership ▪ Advance training structures/coaching plans ▪ Reach out to the community as a whole outside of the playing members. ▪ Deal with + help to deal with issues such as obesity and mental health issues and awareness ▪ Attract other communities that are not typical to GAA ▪ Get senior players involved with underage coaching ▪ Keep + entice more females onto the club committee <p>(Draperstown Celtic FC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A club that is open to everyone – no matter age, race, ability/disability, gender. Demonstrated by recently being awarded IFA Grassroots Club of Year and IFA Inclusivity Award Winners 20/21 season. Recently expanded the female section with youth and adult teams. 10 female coaches obtained NCC certificates (along with 30+ other coaches from 14 – 45+ VAT). Close affiliation
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with TAMHI (selected as Game Changer Club) and partnership with STEPS Mental Health Charity. We have coaches & medic that are listed as disabled. Our coaches are currently waiting on the coaching disabled footballers course. We aspire to continue this work and expand on these foundations as per our sport development plan but are currently limited by facilities. To ensure a duty of care to all club members through acquiring sporting and personal skills from which they get lifelong benefits such as self-respect, self-esteem, self-confidence, integrity and respect for others.

Cookstown Leisure Centre

(Kildress GAA)

- Staying alive! Our club costs £75,000 pa to run. We have to raise all of that (including the Rates we are charged!)
- Paying off a £0.25 debt re our new building (cost £1.41m, 83% funded by us/our community).
- 'Sticking to the knitting' – fielding 16 different football teams, for men/women and boys/girls.
- Turning our 30m x 40m training area into 3G and roofing/covering it – autumn/winter/spring on a site 600' above sea level can be harsh!
- Maintaining the volunteer ethos – increasingly difficult, not least because of the burdens being placed on volunteers, eg, safeguarding, etc.
- Any I have used have been very good and well maintained. (*Killyman & District Cultural Group*)
- MUSA changing is the best we have used home or away. Fairhill is the worst – needs knocked down. Beechway is old and worn out. (*Cookstown Youth*)
- Changing accommodation is good in Dungannon. (*Dungannon Men's Bowling Club*)

(Clonoe O'Rahilly's)

- We have purchased land for 2 number pitches. We intend starting Phase 1 in the near future if we secure enough funding.

- At the moment we have only 1 pitch used for matches and training from youth to senior teams. We rent a field from a local farmer which is not very satisfactory and not safe for youth teams.
- In our planning DFI have insisted we supply a footpath from the housing development to the pitch, that would cost us approximately £180k, we will find it difficult enough to fund the pitches, never mind the footpath.
- We hope to get more people involved as there are lots of new developments in the area.

(Cookstown Youth Football Club)

- As a club to provide a suitable venue that meets the growing needs of our club and the members going forward.
- Whilst we aspire to develop a facility in the future that the members past, present and future can maintain with the available resources and finances.
- A joint venture with either private or a public body would be advantageous to the short to long term vision of the club.

(Dungannon Ladies Bowling Club)

- More members of all ages especially juniors as they are the future of any club. We are a strong ladies club and have brought home many Irish trophies in the past and we hope the Council will take this into consideration when any grants are available.

Dungannon Leisure Centre

(Dungannon Hockey Club)

- The Sports Facility Strategy in 2017 stated that 'priority should be given to the development/improvement of a range of synthetic turf pitches.' This unfortunately did not extend to a surface on which we can play hockey. Our aspirations are to have a surface on which we can continue to develop an already

thriving club – junior club and senior club, coaching opportunities for young players/volunteers. We would like to be able to link with local primary/post primary schools to develop hockey across the area. We already have close links with all hockey agencies and are restricted by our lack of pitch facilities and access to a hockey pitch on Sundays when many hockey tournaments are played.

(Dungannon RFC)

- Increase playing number by min 50% in next 10 years. Key groups include minis (6-12yrs) which could effectively double based on interest, however, we haven't got the pitch space to do so nor can we host blitz competitions as only 2 pitches.
- Increase female participation across all age levels, currently fastest growing section of the club with opportunities to play at elite level.
- To increase enjoyment within the local community including seniors by way of a walking route around both pitches and also the foreign born population given the ever changing demographics of the local Dungannon area including, but not limited to our neighbouring estate on Brookfield Road.

(St Joseph's College, Donaghmore; St Patrick's PS, Donaghmore; Blessed Patrick O'Loughran PS, Castlecaulfield; St Mary's PS, Lisboy, Carland)

- It's a fact that none of the four schools listed here enjoy the use or ownership of a competitive sized gaelic football pitch at any of the schools campus. Apart from the grammar school none of the primary schools have any changing facilities. Our aspirations are as follows:-
 - A new full size natural turf/4G pitch located close to St Joseph's & St Patrick's Donaghmore 'within the village limits', complete with adequate changing facilities.
 - A proper walking/running track

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic sports/field provision at St Mary's Lisboy Improved field provision at Castlecaulfield PS
FUTURE NEED – FACILITIES	
What facilities do you need to help deliver your sports development aspirations?	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Ballinascreen GAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At moment Ballinascreen GAC has new indoor 4G in the planning system. We hope to get full planning granted in the next 8 weeks – includes female & disabled changing facilities, 4 new changing room – refs changing room, community gym. Cahore facilities upgraded to meet our demand. <p>(Moyola Park)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We require further space. The club is at capacity. Teams need to find alternative venue or miss out, eg, max one training session per week for some teams. On occasion 4 teams training at once. As a club which operates all year, this new space needs lights and a playing surface for most weather – well drained. <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Cookstown Fr Rocks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need urgent upgrade to our club rooms/changing accommodation. As our club playing members are split between male and female approx. 60/40 currently our changing rooms cannot cater for running male and female matches and training on the same night due to privacy issues. Also as we own one pitch with our playing membership increasing year by year this is becoming unmanageable. <p>(Cookstown Youth FC)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A re-developed facility at one of the current district locations on a new green field site that meets the future needs with capacity to expand. ▪ Two full size grass pitches, one FA approved sized 3G or 4G pitch together with a suitable changing facility, parking and an indoor arena. <p>(Clogher Valley Bowling Club)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What about barbeque facilities for summer bowlers? We need additional shelters and new fence netting. Our green (synthetic) will need renewing in the future. <p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Riverdale FC, Benburb)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We would require a full size 4G pitch so our members can train to play in the area they live. This could be in addition to the current grass pitch or replacing it. <p>(Donaghmore GAA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We need to upgrade our main pitch (soil based, 50 years old & lacking floodlighting) to a full size, floodlit sand carpet pitch. We need to extend & resurface our junior size training pitch. We have the land to do this. We would then need to upgrade the floodlighting. We need to develop a shared (between 2 schools and the GAA club) 4G pitch. This would be full size, floodlit and would have a running track. We have the required land available.
<p>How do you see these facilities being developed?</p>	<p><u>Greenvale Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Rainey Endowed School)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be developed by the school – government for use of community as well as school ▪ Be developed by the Council ▪ A sand dressed pitch would be inclusive of all other sports.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meadowbank sports arena has impacted on our girls education resulting in either full high performance student athlete scholarships or bursaries to universities in the UK & Ireland. <p>(Draperstown Celtic FC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with Council proactively – secure funding through future potential mechanisms this will require a leasing agreement, one which is sustainable long term for club with arrangements similar to those in other Council areas, eg, Ballyvea and Valley Ranger both in NMD district, eg, peppercorn rent. Additional examples of club and Council working in partnership include Mid & East Antrim Council working with Greenisland to secure funding for stand (Council made significant contribution to cost 40%). <p><u>Cookstown Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Moneymore GAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moneymore has contacted MUDC about acquiring a long term lease of this Council pitch numerous times dating back to 2013. Every time Moneymore GAC have been knocked back. ▪ Wouldn't be positive given our recent history of requesting this pitch. <p>(Cookstown Fr Rocks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With HTC developing new school facilities we aim to enter into an agreement by contributing to the floodlights of their 4G pitch. This will give us after school use. ▪ We would also like to make use of a play area with the adjacent Ratheen Avenue, that currently is an area of anti-social behaviour and convert the tarmac area to 4G. <p>(Magherafelt Men's Bowling Club)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The club members are doing a good job of running the club. It's up to the Council to step up and help.
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	<p><u>Dungannon Leisure Centre</u></p> <p>(Dungannon Swifts FC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the proper funding we have a plan already in place. A contribution from Mid Ulster Council to continue the work being done at Dungannon Swifts FC. <p>(Cúchulainn an Ghleanna)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plans can be developed and funding can be sourced from sponsorship, grant support, club fundraising and alongside Council to best develop the current area to a fit for purpose facility that will be utilised by Cúchulainn an Ghleanna camogie & Hurling Club as it continues to grow and be utilised by the entire community of the Clogher Valley Area.
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Section Summary

- 5.45** The stakeholder engagement work for this commission involved Sport NI and the Education Authority, alongside clubs in the five sports. Sport NI highlighted the need for floodlit pitches for midweek training as evidenced in responses to their COVID-19 capital intervention programme, around a quarter of which requested floodlighting to existing pitches. The Education Authority's Community in Schools initiative provides practical advice and support to schools in the move to address the upsurge in interest from schools to embrace community use. The sports clubs' consultation exercise revealed a good deal of positivity and forward thinking on the part of many clubs.

6. Association Football

Introduction

6.1 This section presents consultation with the Irish Football Association followed by an overview of the supply of and demand for association football pitches; an assessment of *adequacy of provision* is made using Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Model' (PPM); the PPM is also used to assess the condition of facilities in the Council's ownership, using the 'Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment' tool. There are 31 association football clubs in the Council area operating a mix of adult and youth teams; a smaller number of these (Mid Ulster Ladies FC, Caledon Rovers FC, Cookstown Youth FC, Draperstown Celtic FC, Moyola Park AFC and Riverdale FC) accommodate female teams. Having established the supply and demand situation the section considers how it impacts on the community. The section is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality
- ❖ Clubs, Teams and Players
- ❖ Adequacy of Provision
- ❖ Community Impact

Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality

6.2 The majority of association football clubs don't own or operate premises, relying instead on Council provision. For Mid Ulster District Council ten of the 31 clubs identified for this study own or lease their grounds, as follows:-

Club	Grounds	Ownership
1. Desertmartin FC	Dromore Park	Leased from Desertmartin Parish Church
2. Dungannon Utd Youth FC	Junior Stadium, Mullaghana	Leased from MUDC
3. Magherafelt Sky Blues FC	Spires Park, Magherafelt	Leased from MUDC
4. Tobermore Utd FC	Fortwilliam Park, Tobermore	Leased from MUDC
5. Caledon Rovers FC	Tanyard Park	Leased from Caledon Estate
6. Dungannon Swifts FC	Stangmore Park	Club owned
7. Fivemiletown Utd FC	Valley Stadium	Not known
8. Moyola Park AFC	Mill Meadow	Leased from Moyola Estate
9. Coagh Utd FC	Hagan Park and Coagh Sports Centre	Leased from Coagh Sports Centre
10. Upperlands Cross Community FC	Festival Park	Leased from local developer

The remaining 21 clubs make use of Council facilities for matches and training needs booked on a weekly basis.

6.3 The following four pitch categories are considered:-

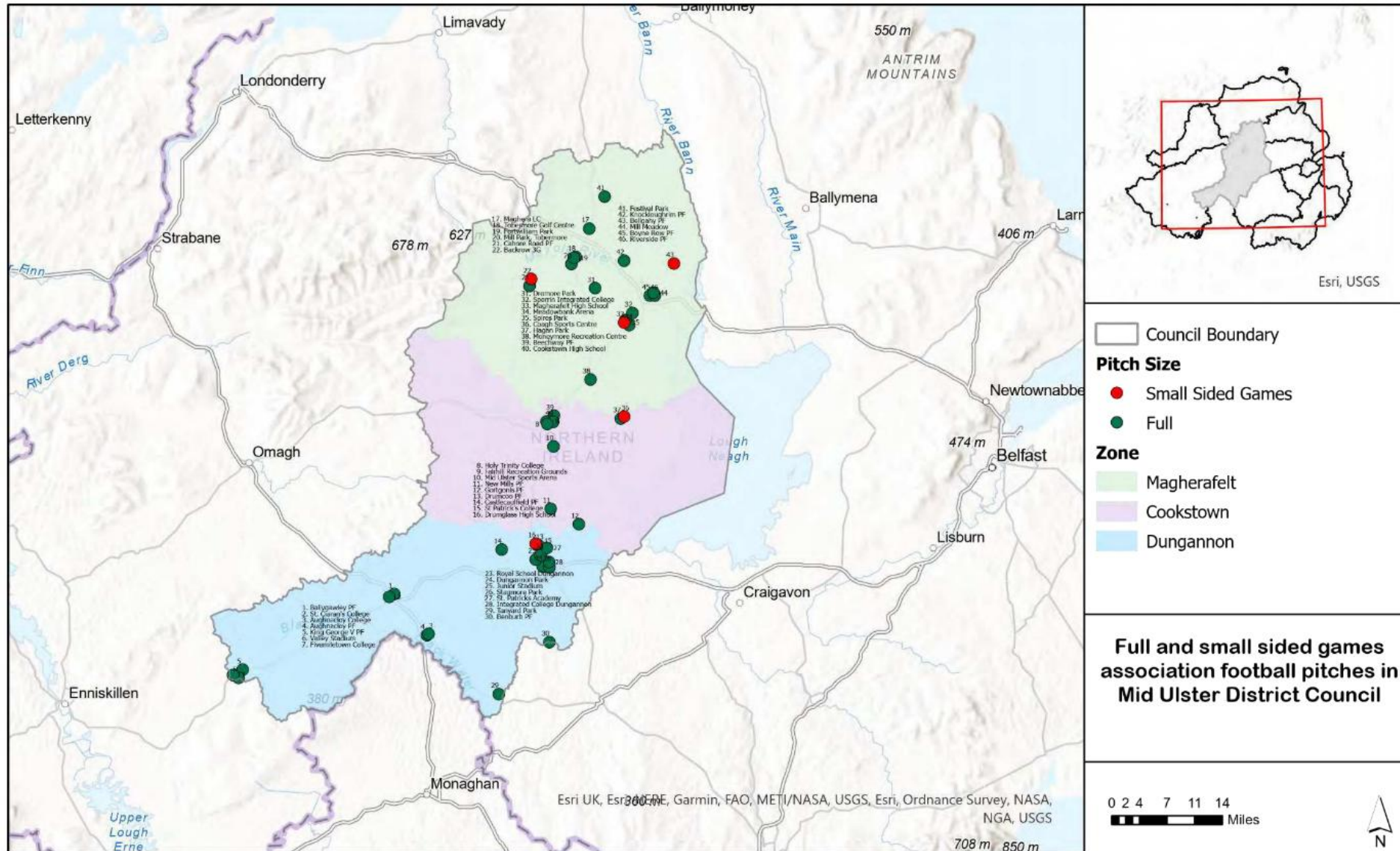
- ❖ **Full pitches** suitable for competitive adult, youth (U13 to U18) and small sided games (U8 to U12) matches – includes both 3G and grass surfaces.
- ❖ **SSG pitches** suitable only for small-sided games (U8 to U12) fixtures – includes both 3G and grass.
- ❖ **Training pitches** – pitches identified from the club survey that are used for training – includes a mix of surfaces (AstroTurf, 3G, grass and shale) and sizes.
- ❖ **Grass Kickabouts** – Council owned grass areas of varying sizes and quality.

6.4 Table 6.1 presents a detailed inventory of the full size association football pitches suitable for competitive matches. For each pitch site, type, number, quality and additional remarks are presented. Maps 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 accompany the inventory showing pitch location, ownership, type, number and quality¹⁹ respectively. Four different types of pitch 'Ownership' are recorded: -

- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council** – these pitches are maintained, operated and booked through the Council.
- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council leased** – pitches leased from the Council for dedicated use by one association football club.
- ❖ **Education** – pitches owned by primary, secondary or tertiary level educational establishments.
- ❖ **Club and community owned/leased** – pitches owned and maintained by an association football club or community group.

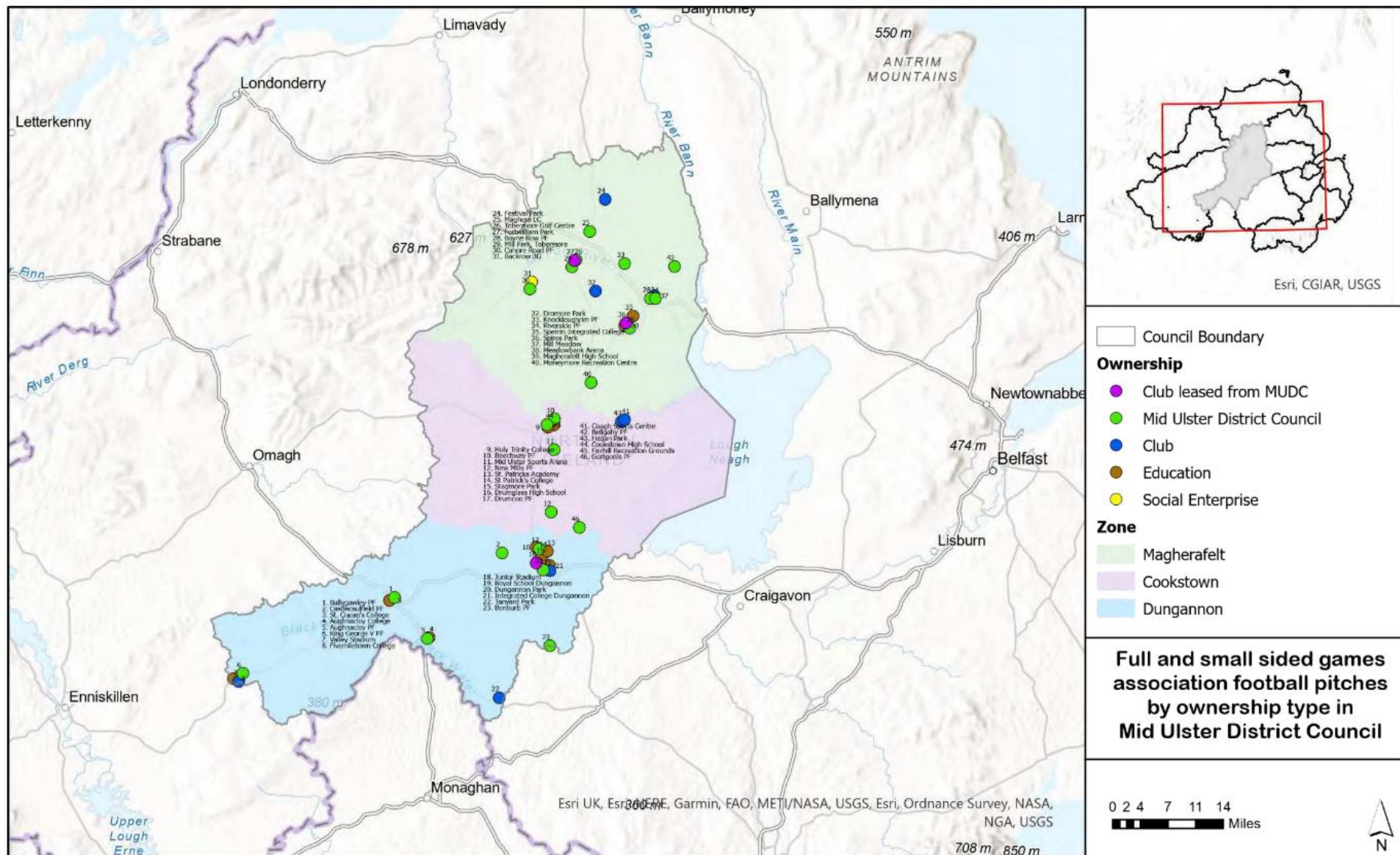
¹⁹ All Council owned pitches were inspected and rated using the Sport England non-technical pitch inspection method. The quality rating here is 'Good', 'Standard' or 'Poor'. Club, community and education sites were asked to rate their own pitch/es via the online survey using the same rating scale.

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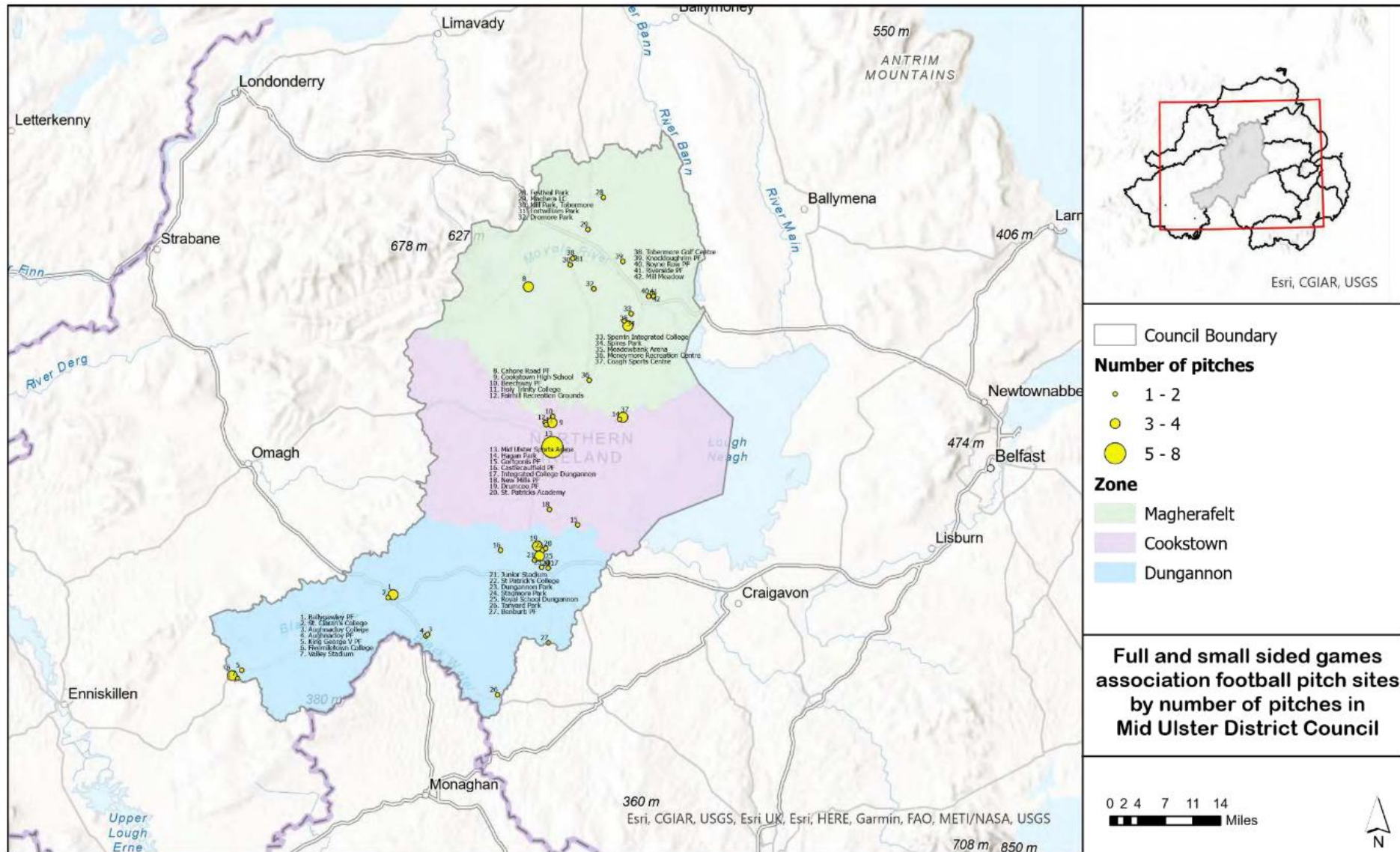
Map 6.1: Location – Full & Youth Association Football Pitch Sites

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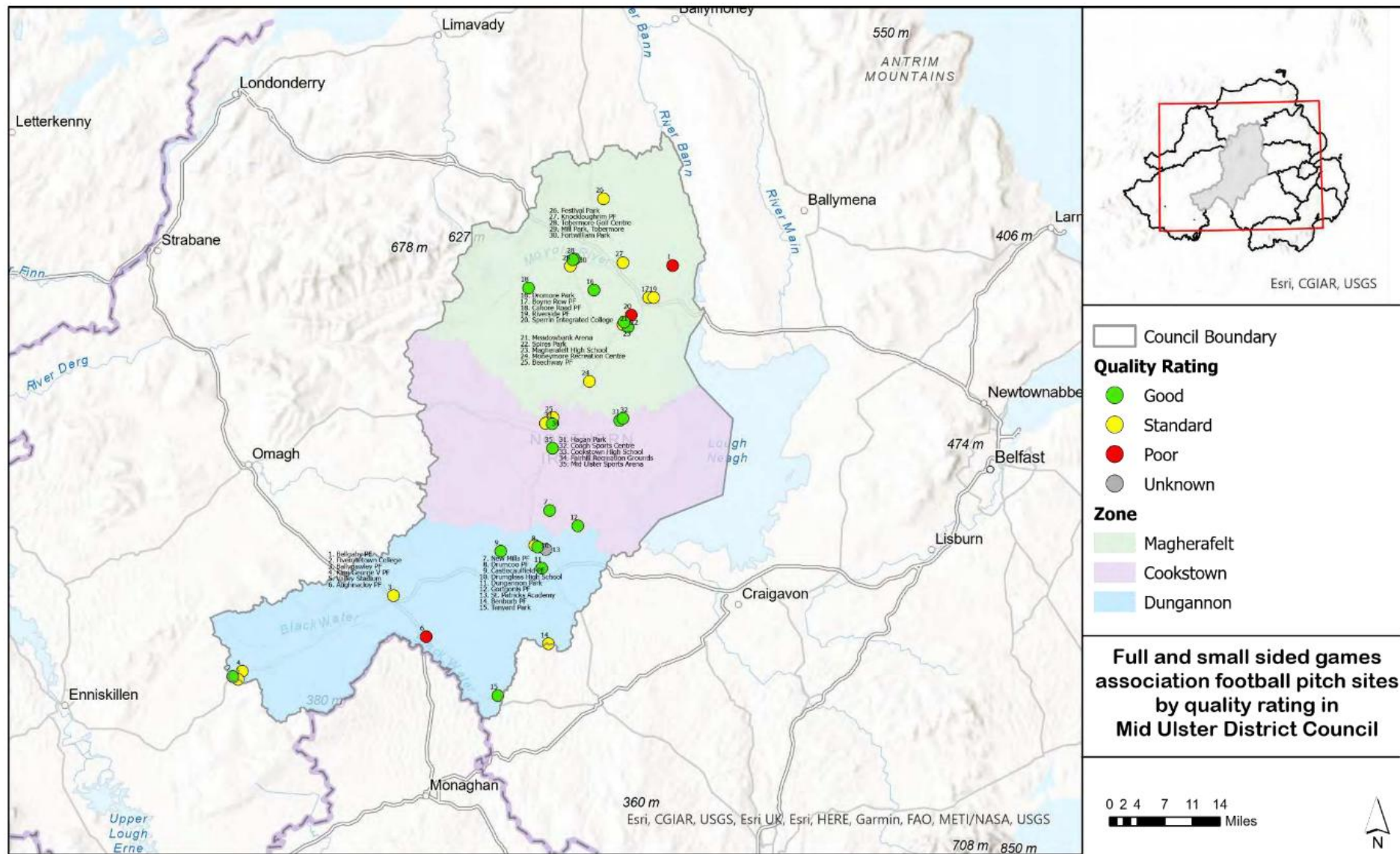
Map 6.2: Ownership – Full & Youth Association Football Pitch Sites

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Map 6.4: Number – Full & Youth Association Football Pitches

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Map 6.5: Quality – Full & Youth Association Football Pitches

Table 6.1: Association Football – Location, Quantity and Quality of Full and SSG Match Pitches by ownership

Mid Ulster District Council

Location		Quantity/Type	Quality	Remarks
Pitch Site	Area			
Aughnacloy Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	Poor	The pitch is known to have drainage problems following heavy rainfall. Changing accommodation removed in 2019.
Ballygawley Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Ballygawley Playing Fields consists of a full-size association football pitch, training-size Gaelic pitch and a small 3G. The complex also includes a play park, tennis courts and a community building currently used by Ballygawley Area Development Association. The training-size gaelic pitch is leased to Errigal Ciaran GAC.
Beechway Playing Fields	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Used for matches by Killymoon Rangers FC. Evidence of unauthorised community use of the pitch.
Bellaghy Playing Fields	Magherafelt	1 x SSG Grass	1 x Poor	The pitch is not currently on the Council's booking system as there appears to be little demand due to the dominance of Gaelic games in the local area.
Benburb Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Used by Riverdale FC for their senior and senior reserves men's matches. There is also a small 3G pitch at the site.
Boyne Row Playing Fields	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	The pitch is used occasionally for matches – Moyola Park FC has indicated an interest in leasing the pitch for club use. The development of a MUGA at the site is in progress.
Cahore Road Playing Fields	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	Home match venue for Draperstown Celtic FC (large community clubs with 23 teams). There is also one full size grass gaelic games pitch at the site.
Castlecaulfield Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home match venue for Castlecaulfield Youth FC and

				Castlecaulfield FC. On the same site there is a small 3G which is leased by the local community and a children's play park.
Drumcoo Playing Fields	Dungannon	2 X Full Grass 1 x Full 3G	3 x Good	Drumcoo Playing Fields are situated in a busy urban area and consist of three grass association football pitches and a multi-use 3G pitch. Home match venue for a number of clubs (AFC Dungannon, Reclain Rovers FC and Dungannon Rovers FC). A third grass pitch at the site measuring 75m x 60m is not currently available for booking. There is also a bowling green at the entrance of the complex.
Dungannon Park	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The pitch appears to have limited bookings; however, it is reported that there have been enquires to book the pitch for youth training.
Fairhill Recreation Grounds	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass	2 x Standard	Fairhill Recreation Grounds is a complex with tennis courts, a bowling green, children's playpark and two full-size grass association football pitches. The changing facilities are across the road from the association football pitches.
Gortgonis Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home venue for Coalisland Athletic FC and Coalisland Bhoys FC. The pitch is in the centre of an athletics track. On site there is also a MUGA and changing facility which is part of a block shared by Coalisland Day Centre. Planning has been passed to completely re-develop the Gortgonis site and will include a 3G soccer pitch, running track, play area and woodland walks.
King George V Playing Fields	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	2 x Standard	Use for home matches by Orchard FC and Fivemiletown FC. There is also a bowling green at the site.
Knockloughrim Playing Fields	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Changing facilities moved to Pomeroy in January 2021 as part of a long-term lease agreement with Pomeroy District Sports and

				Cultural Association – no recent bookings.
Maghera Leisure Centre	Magherafelt	1 x Full 3G		Recently completed facility with fixed Gaelic games posts and moveable association football nets, lines marking for both association football and gaelic games.
Meadowbank Sports Arena	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 1 x 3G	1 x Good	Meadowbank Sports Arena is a multi-pitch site which includes a large indoor AstroTurf pitch, large 3G pitch comprising pitches marked for rugby, association football and Gaelic games; athletics track with a full-size grass association football pitch, a small AstroTurf and four small 3G pitches.
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass 1 x Full Grass 1 x 3G	1 x Good 1 x Good	Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA) is a multi-facility complex used by a large range of clubs and sports from the Cookstown area and further afield. It is set on a large site and continues to develop with plans well progressed for a new 3G pitch and 8 lane athletics track. Both grass association football pitches have floodlights and used for training and matches.
Mill Park Playing Fields	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Tobermore Utd Youth and Draperstown Celtic use for Youth 11 v 11 matches.
Moneymore Recreation Centre	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	No bookings in recent years. Moneymore GAC has expressed an interest in the pitch for club training. A walkway is currently being developed is very close to the perimeter of the pitch.
New Mills Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home venue to Newmills FC. On site there is also a children's play park and a children's play group. It has a changing facility adjacent to the pitch and there is a small carpark. The carpark is small and is shared with the play park and play group and this is one of the major drawbacks of this site. There is no fencing around the pitch area.

Riverside Playing Fields	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	The pitch has not been officially booked for several years but occasionally it is used if Boyne Row is unplayable due to excess water on the pitch.
Tobermore Golf Centre	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The pitch is used by Tobermore Youth FC for matches.

Totals
25 x Full Grass Association Football Pitches
1 x SSG Grass Association Football Pitches
4 x Full 3G Pitches

Leased from Council

Junior Stadium, Mullaghana	Dungannon	1 x 3G	NA	Leased by Dungannon United Youth FC, a large youth club with 17 male youth teams.
Spires Park	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home base to Magherafelt Sky Blues, a large club with 21 male teams.
Fortwilliam Park, Tobermore	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home base to Intermediate club, Tobermore United FC.

Totals
2 x Full Grass Association Football Pitch
1 x Full 3G Pitch

Education

<i>Pitch Site</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Quantity/Type</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
St Ciaran's College	Dungannon	1 x Full 3G	NA	Pitch is used approximately 10 hours per week by association football clubs.
St Patrick's College, Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full 3G	NA	Currently not available for community bookings. Shares pitches with St Patrick's Academy.
Fivemiletown College	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	Good	Not booked for community use
Aughnacloy College	Dungannon	1 x Full 3G		Recently completed facility available for community use and used by Caledon Rovers FC and Fermanagh GAA. The Council has a service level agreement for after school community use.
Magherafelt High School	Magherafelt	1 x SSG Grass	Standard	Available for community use but not used

Drumglass High School	Dungannon	1 x Youth Grass	Standard	Not available for community use – School facilities managed by H and J Martin Facilities Management
Cookstown High School	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	One of the pitches is booked 10 hours per week by Royal British Legion Football FC.
St Conor's College - Clady	Magherafelt	1 x SSG Grass	1 x Poor	The club makes daily use of Greenlough GAC pitches for PE and after-schools sports.
Integrated College Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full 3G	NA	Pitch used for approximated 16 hours per week by sports clubs/groups (Dungannon RFC, Riverdale FC, IFA, Dungannon Rovers FC, Mid Ulster Youth League Dungannon Swifts FC). Used by Riverdale FC for matches.
Sperrin Integrated College	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Poor	Pitches are not currently in a state of repair to have extensive use. The school would like to open the facilities to clubs and teams. The Sports Hall is used by the Scouts, and they occasionally use the pitch during the summer for outdoor games.
St Patricks Academy, Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	Unknown	School did not make a survey return; Google map images shows a grass pitch of dimensions 100m x 140m approx. The school shares pitches with St Patrick's College.

Totals
5 x Full Grass Association Football
3 x SSG Grass
4 x Full 3G

Club and Community (owned/leased)

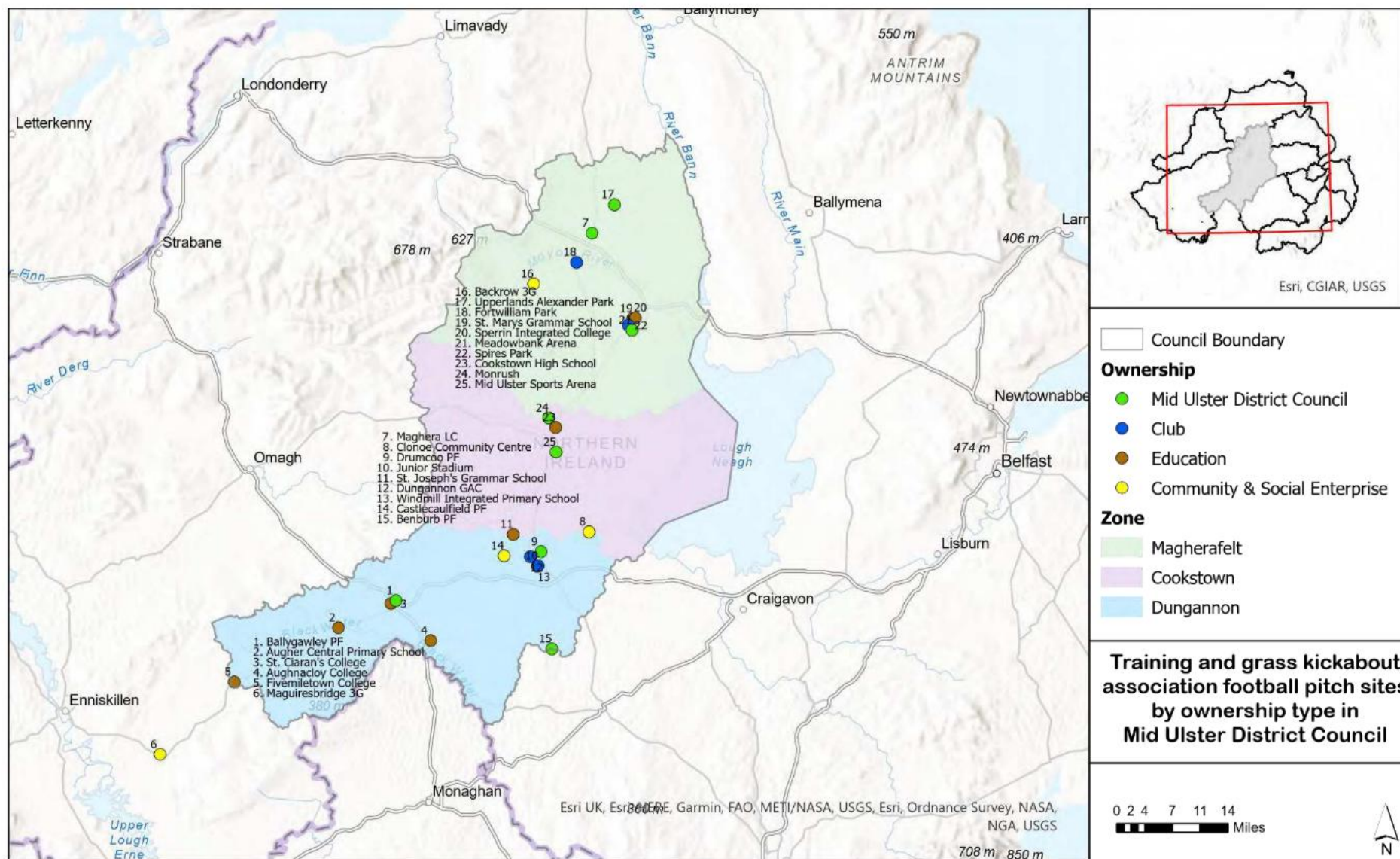
Pitch Site	Area	Quantity/Type	Quality	Remarks
Dromore Park	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	Home grounds to Desertmartin FC
Tanyard Park	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Home grounds to Caledon Rovers FC. The clubs notes that it needs additional training facilities at the site.
Stangmore Park	Dungannon	1 x Full 3G	NA	Home grounds to Dungannon Swifts FC. The club requires additional training facilities. There is also a small (45m x 40m approx.)

				3G pitch at the site used for training.
Valley Stadium	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	Standard	Home grounds to Fivemiletown FC. The club is in the process of purchasing land adjoining the site to develop a second pitch for training/matches due to club growth.
Mill Meadow	Magherafelt	1 x Full 3G	NA	Home grounds to Moyola Park AFC. The club notes they are at full capacity and require additional training facilities and wish to explore the development and use of Boyne Row Council owned pitch.
Hagan Park	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	Good	Home match pitch for Coagh United FC first team.
Coagh Sports Centre	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass 1 x SSG 3G	2 X Good	Home match and training pitches for Coagh United FC first and reserve teams. The club aspires to develop youth teams but note they would need additional/modified changing facilities.
Festival Park	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Home grounds to Upperlands Cross Community FC. The club aspires to develop a youth section for boys and girls but notes they cannot access funding as they are unable to secure a long-term lease from the landowner who is a local developer.
Backrow 3G	Magherafelt	1 x SSG 3G	NA	Pitch is owned and maintained by The Workspace Group, a social enterprise. Used by St Colm's High School, Draperstown Celtic FC and Ballinascreen GAC for training and youth games.
<p style="text-align: center;">Totals 9 x Full Grass Association Football Pitches 1 x Full 3G 2 x SSG 3G</p>				

6.5 Table 6.2 presents a detailed inventory of outdoor *training* facilities identified from both the club and school online survey and information provided by the Council – see Maps 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8 for location, ownership and type. The outdoor training facilities include a variety of surfaces (3G, grass and AstroTurf) and in a range of ownerships (Council, club, education, and community). The list below and Maps 6.6, 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9 also include a number Council grass kickabouts.

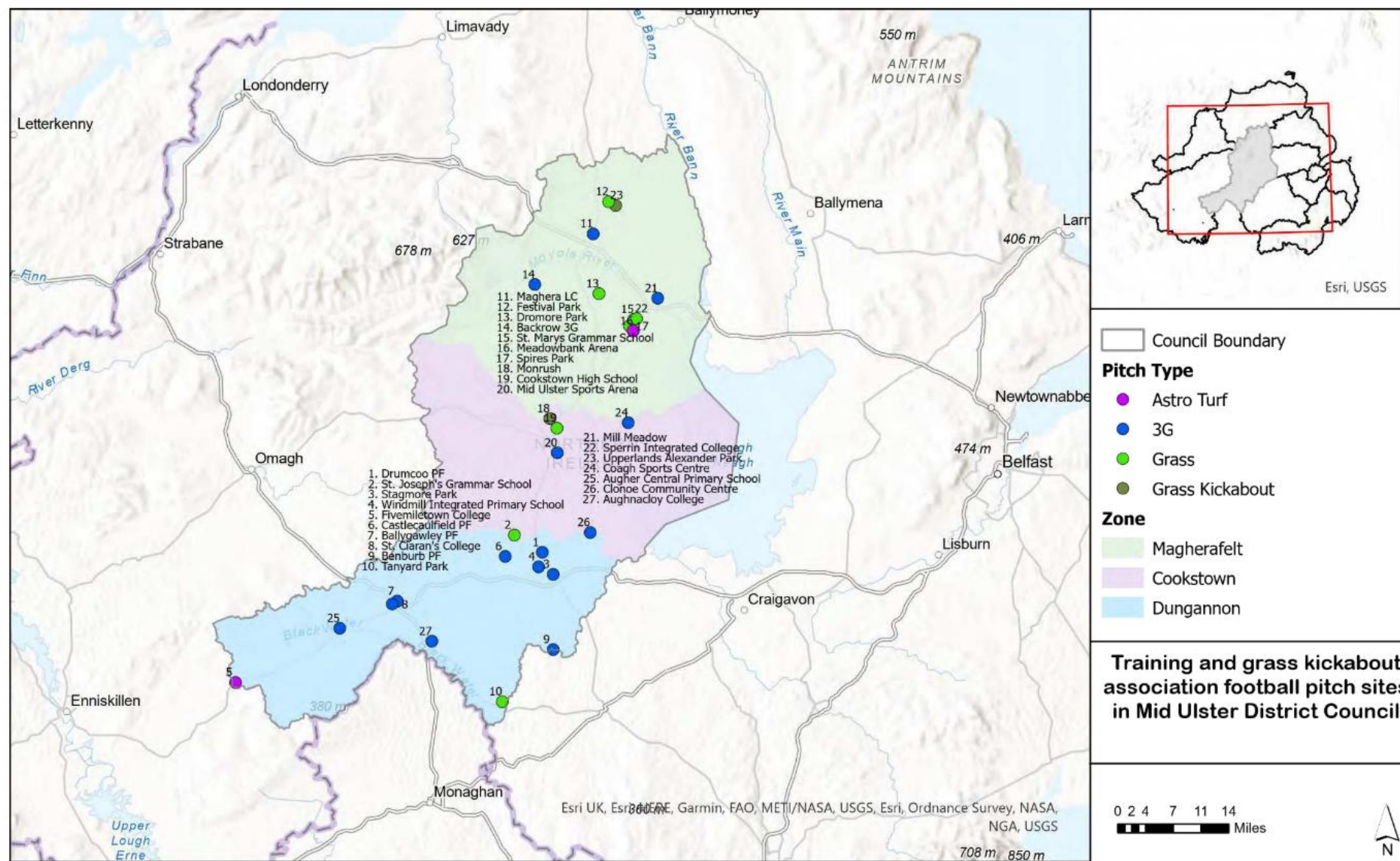
Whilst the kickabouts do not appear to be used for club training they are included as they may have potential to be developed for training purposes.

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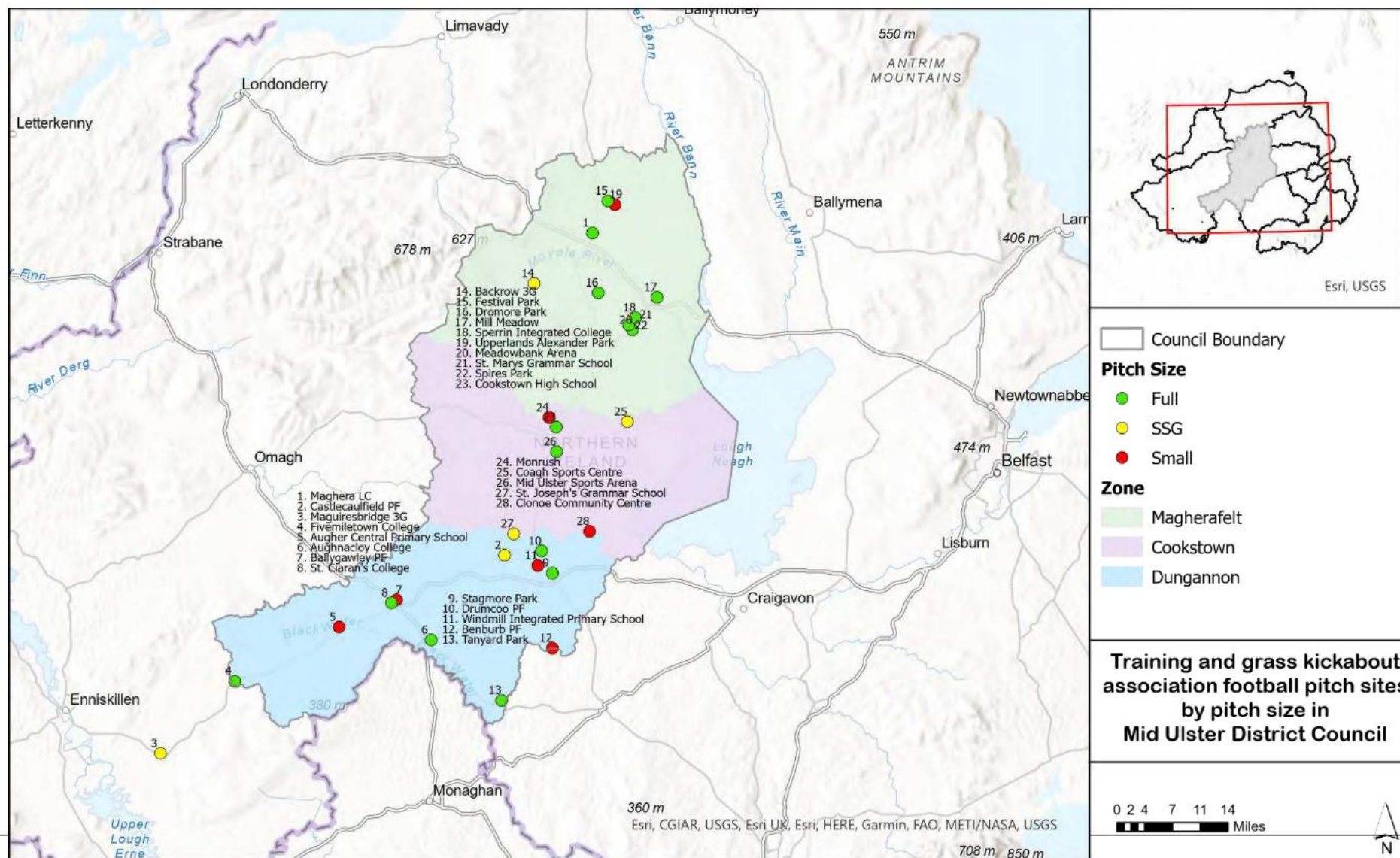
Map 6.6: Ownership – Association Football Training Pitch Sites and Grass Kickabouts

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Map 6.7: Type – Association Football Training Pitch Sites and Grass Kickabouts

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Map 6.8: Pitch Size – Association Football Training Pitch Sites and Grass Kickabouts

Table 6.2: Association Football – Inventory of Training Facilities by Ownership

Pitch Site	Area	No pitches	Type	Remarks
<u>Council</u>				
Ballygawley Playing Fields	Dungannon	1	3G	Small - 40 x 20m – 35 bookings in 2018, 30 bookings 2019, 0 bookings in 2020 and 2021.
Backrow 3G	Magherafelt	1	3G	Developed and managed by The Workspace Group, used extensively by association football, gaelic games and St Colm's High School
Benburb Playing Fields	Dungannon	1	3G	Small - 40 x 20m, large number of bookings in 2018, 2019.
Castlecaulfield Playing Fields	Dungannon	1	3G	Community - leased from MUDC, used by IFA Small Sided Games
Drumcoo Playing Fields	Dungannon	2	3G	Over 624 bookings in 2018, 552 in 2019.
Maghera Leisure Centre	Magherafelt	1	3G	Full 3G recently opened
Meadowbank	Magherafelt	1	Indoor AstroTurf	Used extensively for association football training- hockey clubs concerned about the effect of association football training on the pitch surface. Hockey clubs report they often cannot get their preferred training times as the pitch is already booked by association football clubs.
Meadowbank	Magherafelt	2	Indoor 3G	4 small 3G courts 30m x 16m used for winter indoor training and 5 aside football.
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	1	3G	Small 5 aside pitch – over 600 bookings per year in 2018 and 2019
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	1	Indoor 3G	57 x 22m – over 1000 bookings annually in 2018 and 2019.
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	2	3G Soccer 3G Rugby/GAA	Soccer 3G pitch recorded over 1000 bookings in 2018 and 2019
<u>Education</u>				

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Fivemiletown College	Dungannon	1	Full AstroTurf	Used by a large range of clubs and sports for training including Fivemiletown Utd FC
St Mary's Grammar School	Magherafelt	1	Grass	Used by Moyola Park AFC and Magherafelt Sky Blues FC for training
Integrated College Dungannon	Dungannon	1	3G	Used extensively for training and matches
Cookstown High School	Cookstown	1	Grass	Used by Cookstown Royal British Legion Swifts FC for training and matches
St Ciaran's College		1	3G	Used by association football, hurling and gaelic football clubs
St Joseph's Grammar School Donaghmore	Dungannon	1	Grass	Grass gaelic pitch used by Donaghmore FC for training
Aughnacloy Collage	Dungannon	1	3G	Recently completed 3G facility with after schools' hours community use
Augher Central Primary School	Dungannon	1	3G	Small - 50 x 30m with floodlights used by Orchard Farm FC and Fivemiletown FC
Windmill Integrated Primary School 3G pitch	Dungannon	1	3G	Small – 40 x 22m – used by Dungannon Utd Youth FC

Club/Community/Other Sport

Stangmore Park	Dungannon	1	3G	Small 45 x 40m used by Dungannon Swifts FC for training
Mill Meadow	Magherafelt	1	Grass	Owned by Moyola Park AFC
Clonoe Community Centre	Dungannon	1	Indoor 3G	Used by Coalisland Athletic FC
Backrow	Magherafelt	1	Youth 3G	Used by Draperstown FC
Spires Park	Magherafelt	1	Full Grass	Used by Magherafelt Sky Blues FC
Festival Park	Magherafelt	1	Full Grass	Used by Upperlands Cross Community FC
Tanyard Park	Magherafelt	1	Full Grass	Caledon FC training in summer months
Coagh Sports Centre	Magherafelt	1	Youth 3G	Caledon FC club training
Dromore Park	Magherafelt	2	Grass	Desertmartin FC club training

Outside Council

Maguiresbridge 3G	Fermanagh & Omagh DC	1	3G	Floodlit – 66 x 35m
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Grass Kickabout

Monrush	Cookstown	1	Grass	Small 38 x 20m, there is also a shale pitch and MUGA at the site.
Upperlands Alexander Park	Magherafelt	1	Grass	Small 32 x 15m grass kickabout located next to a MUGA and play park.

Quantity of Pitches

6.6 Looking at competitive match pitch provision within the Council area there is a total of 40 full size grass association football pitches suitable for adult, youth and small sided games matches and 11 full sized 3G facilities. In addition, there is a number of SSG pitches suitable for Small Sided Games (5 v 5, 7 v 7, 9 v 9), however, it is noted that the majority of SSG fixtures take place on floodlit 3G facilities on Friday evenings. It is noted that not all of the full size grass pitches are available for community use – generally, secondary school pitches are not available for competitive matches – this is further discussed in the Adequacy of Provision section.

6.7 A summary and breakdown of current match and training pitch provision by ownership is:-

Ownership	Full & SSG Match Pitches			Pitches used for Training – varying sizes		
	Grass Full	3G Full	SSG Grass + 3G	Grass	AstroTurf	3G
Clubs/Community	9	1	2 x 3G	3	0	4
Education	5	4	3 x grass	3	1	5
MUDC	25	4	1 x grass	16	1	4
Leased from MUDC	2	1	0	2	0	1
Total	41	10	6	26	2	14

6.8 Whilst sixteen of the Council's full size grass association football pitches are identified as currently available for training²⁰, the majority do not have floodlights and therefore can only accommodate some pre-season training needs. However, it is noted that both grass association football pitches at MUSA have floodlights and are used for both training and matches. The majority of association football training relies on the use of artificial 3G surfaces and in some cases AstroTurf when 3G is not available. There is a considerable difference in the total number of artificial training

²⁰ From an analysis of the Council's booking logs 2018 to 2021.

pitches (16)²¹ and full (match) pitches (51) reflecting the differing nature of use. The majority of matches are played in a very narrow window either Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon and therefore more will be required to satisfy demand. Training occurs across 4 to 5 weekday evenings over a 3 to 4-hour period and therefore fewer in total are needed. An assessment of 'Adequacy of Training Provision' is presented in later sections.

Proposed Pitch Developments in the Council Area

6.9 Whilst need has been evidenced, three projects are not considered in the proposed costed plan as they are already covered within capital projects that are currently being progressed:-

- (i) A 3G facility at Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown
- (ii) A 3G facility at Railway Park, Dungannon
- (iii) A 3G facility and changing accommodation at Gortgonis

Quality of Pitches

6.10 As part of this audit, the quality of all Council owned pitches was assessed using Sport England's 'Towards a Level Playing Field' Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment. This assessment is based on:-

1. A visual inspection of the grass pitch including grass-cover, size, slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall), length of grass, evenness of pitch, problem areas: evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks/ unofficial use/damage to the surface and evidence of poor drainage.
2. Maintenance of the pitch including grass cutting, seeding, aeration, sand-dressing, fertilisation and weed killing.
3. A visual inspection of Artificial Grass Pitches including age of surface; evidence of moss/lichen, loose gravel (macadam surface), holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces), grip underfoot, line markings etc.

6.11 A full report on the quality of Council-owned pitches and changing accommodation is included as an appendix. The grass pitch quality scores are summarised below as these can be relevant for adequacy of provision modelling presented later in this section. As part of the online survey, clubs and schools were asked to rate their own club pitches as Good, Standard or Poor. A summary of the grass pitch quality ratings is:-

²¹ Excludes grass surfaces.

Summary of Quality Rating for Full and Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total No of Pitches
Clubs/Community	7	2	0	3	12
Education	6	2	2	2	12
MUDC	11	13	2	4	30
Leased from MUDC	2	0	0	1	3
Total	26	17	4	10	57

Pitch Quality – Online Survey

6.12 In addition to the non-technical quality assessment of each pitch as presented above, Clubs were asked to rate the following three aspects in relation to pitch quality and maintenance of their home match venue. Results are:-

1. Has the quality of your home match pitch(es) got better or worse since last season?		
Answer Option	No of Repones	% of clubs
Much better	1	4%
Slightly better	8	32%
No difference	9	36%
Slightly poorer	5	20%
Much poorer	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Comments

- ❖ 36% of respondent clubs report 'No difference' in pitch quality this season compared to last season.
- ❖ A combined 36% report pitch quality is 'Slightly better' or 'Much better'.
- ❖ A combined 28% feel the pitch quality is 'Slightly poorer' or 'Much poorer'.

Respondents were asked to record reasons for their response on pitch quality – the following responses, unaltered, were collected:-

▪ 'Significant works carried out to the pitch in June 2020.'
▪ '3G pitches tend to wear as they get older, this may or may not be the season.'
▪ 'There was not a lot of football over the last season due to covid.'
▪ 'Very little maintenance carried out by Council.'
▪ 'This is not relevant as we maintain our own pitch.'
▪ 'Maintenance'

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Grounds work and maintenance seems to have got worse. Specifically, Beechway, the grass is missing in areas, seed is required, too much sand, too many divots, too uneven, not rolled correctly, often deep tyre tracks left from lawnmowers, rolling machines or other machinery, poor lining, poor cuts, goal nets very old and worn, occasionally broken glass, bottles, drug paraphernalia, rubbish on the pitch, dugout areas, or surround areas. Their needs to be additional fencing and security, the main building needs repaired, upgrading, modernised, the storage is not adequate, an additional building, maybe a modular building or mobile block could be added to the site to allow for storage of equipment.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Boyne Row has certainly decreased in quality. We understand grass pitches are a huge maintenance issue for MUDC.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Main club owned 3G surface needs replacing.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘We can’t really answer the above Q correctly due to the amount of games played on the pitch were limited due to Covid Pandemic last season 2020-2021 and the leagues being postponed in April 2021. The season prior to that 2019-2020 the amount of games played were approx. 12-14 this was due to the poor pitch surface and games constantly being postponed due to the pitch being unplayable and primarily waterlogged. The playing fields at Benburb (Home Pitch for Seniors and Reserves) has just undergone essential grounds maintenance for the first time in 3 years, so hopefully the playing surface will be better for the 2021-2022 season and we hope this will allow for more games to be played during the upcoming season 2021-2022. Prior to this the pitch (since 2010) at Benburb playing fields has been very poor and has been very poorly maintained by the Council annually, with only the very basic maintenance (if even that) taking place during the off season. The current pitch is only playable during the months of August to October and March to May in the playing season, this is primarily due to very poor underground drainage and the pitch is always waterlogged thus our senior games were postponed and we had to play games at the Integrated College 4G to get them played.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Better upkeep’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Lack of spiking’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Significant works carried out to the pitch in June 2020.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘We have had to play games on Drumcoo grass pitch 3 and in Fairhill in Cookstown this season. We didn’t play on those ones last year but have a couple of times so far this time around and the quality of them are awful.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Wear & Tear’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Covid has restricted on our own home pitch. Allowing pitch to nourish more. We need more work done especially floodlights.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Haven’t played on Drumcoo pitch 1 yet in the new season but last season (for the limited number of matches we played) it was in good shape, it does seem to be well looked after, I can’t comment on other grass pitches.’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Our pitch was made in the early 70s and from that time the only refurbishment it has received is sand placed on it every end of season plus the grass cut on a regular basis. I personally have been in loggerheads with the local Council over the past 10 years and

longer to upgrade the pitch, but my words have fallen on deaf ears while other pitches have been upgraded to a 3g surface and spectator barriers put in place but not Gortgonis.'

The survey results for the second aspect of pitch quality/maintenance are:-

2. How would the club rate the maintenance on its home match venue/ground?		
Answer Option	No of Reponses	% of clubs
Good	13	48%
Standard	8	30%
Poor	6	22%
Total	27	100%

Comments

- ❖ The majority of respondents (78%) rate pitch maintenance as 'Standard' or 'Good'.
- ❖ A significant 22% of clubs rated maintenance of their home pitch as 'Poor'.

The survey results for the third aspect of pitch quality/maintenance are:-

3. Overall quality of your home pitch		
Answer Option	No of Reponses	% of clubs
Good	15	48%
Standard	9	29%
Poor	7	23%
Total	31	100%

Comments

- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council** – these pitches are maintained, operated and booked through the Council.
- ❖ Almost 50% of respondent clubs rate overall quality of their home pitch as 'Good'.
- ❖ A significant 22% rate their pitch as 'Poor'.

Pitch Usage Profile

- 6.13** The starting point in looking at how grass pitches are used is to understand their carrying capacity. Whilst each pitch will have its own carrying capacity Sport England guidance shows *'the number of match equivalent sessions a week that a natural*

grass pitch is likely to be able to regularly accommodate, based on an agreed quality rating without adversely affecting its current quality' to be as follows:-

Agreed pitch quality rating	Adult Football	Youth Football	Mini Soccer
	Number of match equivalent sessions per week ²²		
Good (G)	3	4	6
Standard (S)	2	2	4
Poor (P)	1	1	2

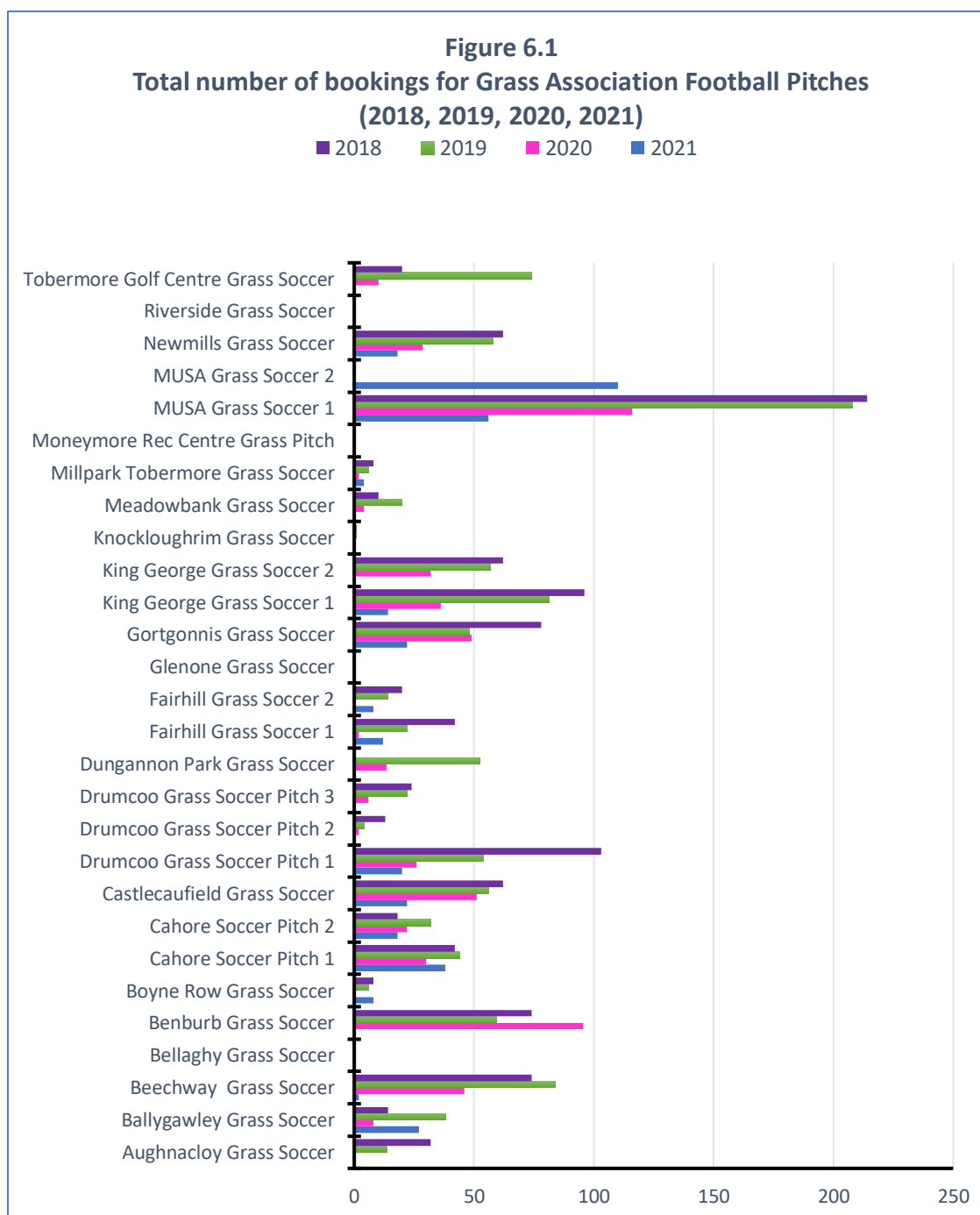
6.14 A summary of annual bookings for Council pitches for the years 2018 to 2021 is presented below, green cells represent the three most booked pitches, and the red cells represent the three least booked pitches (excluding those pitches not available to be booked). Note the 2021 bookings are from January to July.

Pitch	Booking type	Pitch Rating	Total no. of bookings (match & training)			
			2018	2019	2020	2021
Aughnacloy Grass Soccer	Training & Match	P	32	13.5	0	0
Ballygawley Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	14	38	8	27
Beechway Grass Soccer	Match Only	S	74	84	46	2
Bellaghy Grass Soccer	Not Available to be Booked	P	0	0	0	0
Benburb Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	74	59.5	95.5	0
Boyne Row Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	8	6	0	8
Cahore Soccer Pitch 1	Training & Match	G	42	44	30	38
Cahore Soccer Pitch 2	Training & Match	S	18	32	22	18
Castlecaulfield Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	62	56	51	22
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 1	Match Only	G	103	54	26	20
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 2	Not Available to be Booked	G	13	4	2	0
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 3	Match Only	G	24	22	6	0
Dungannon Park Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	0	52.5	13.5	0
Fairhill Grass Soccer 1	Match Only	S	42	22	2	12
Fairhill Grass Soccer 2	Match Only	S	20	14	0	8
Glenone Grass Soccer		P	0	0	0	0
Gortgonis Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	78	48	49	22
King George Grass Soccer 1	Training & Match	S	96	81.5	36	14
King George Grass Soccer 2	Training & Match	S	62	57	32	0
Knockloughrim Grass Soccer	Not Available to be Booked	S	1	1	0	0
Meadowbank Grass Soccer	Match Only	G	10	20	4	0
Millpark Tobermore Grass Soccer	Match Only	S	8	6	2	4

²² A match equivalent is on average 2 hours long.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

Moneymore Rec Centre Grass Pitch	Training Only	S	0	0	0	0
MUSA Grass Soccer 1	Training & Match	G	214	208	116	56
MUSA Grass Soccer 2	Training & Match	G	0	0	0	110
Newmills Grass Soccer	Match Only	G	62	58	28.5	18
Riverside Grass Soccer	Not Available to be Booked	S	0	0	0	0
Tobermore Golf Centre Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	20	74	10	0



- ❖ As expected, there is a clear decline in bookings as result of COVID-19 regulations for the year 2020 for most pitches.
- ❖ MUSA grass soccer pitch 1 is consistently the most booked pitch with over 200 bookings for years 2018 and 2019, perhaps suggesting a degree of overuse.
- ❖ Millpark Tobermore grass soccer pitch is the least booked pitch for all four years.
- ❖ Bellaghy, Knockloughrim, Drumcoo pitch 2 and Glenone pitches are not available for bookings.
- ❖ Aughnacloy grass pitch has had no bookings in the last 2 years.
- ❖ In 2021 thirteen pitches appear to have had no bookings.

Analysis of pitch bookings as percentage of recommended use

6.15 It is of interest to compare pitch usage to recommended annual usage for grass pitches as per Sport England guidelines presented above. A comparison for each pitch using the pitch rating and number of bookings is:-

Pitch	Booking Type	Pitch Rating	Capacity Hours ²³	% of Recommended Usage			
				2018	2019	2020	2021
Aughnacloy Grass Soccer	Training & Match	P	2	80%	2%	0%	0%
Ballygawley Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	4	18%	48%	10%	34%
Beechway Grass Soccer	Match Only	S	4	93%	105%	58%	3%
Bellaghy Grass Soccer	Not Available	P	2	0%	0%	0%	0%
Benburb Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	4	93%	74%	119%	No info
Boyne Row Grass Soccer	Training & Match	S	4	10%	8%	0%	10%
Cahore Soccer Pitch 1	Training & Match	G	6	35%	37%	25%	32%
Cahore Soccer Pitch 2	Training & Match	S	4	23%	40%	28%	23%
Castlecaulfield Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	6	52%	47%	43%	18%
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 1	Match Only	G	6	86%	45%	22%	17%
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 2	Not Available	G	6	11%	3%	2%	0%
Drumcoo Grass Soccer Pitch 3	Match Only	G	6	20%	18%	5%	0%
Dungannon Park Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	6	0%	44%	11%	0%
Fairhill Grass Soccer 1	Match Only	S	4	53%	28%	3%	15%
Fairhill Grass Soccer 2	Match Only	S	4	25%	18%	0%	10%
Glenone Grass Soccer	Not Available	P	2	0%	0%	0%	0%
Gortgonis Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	6	65%	40%	41%	18%
King George Grass Soccer 1	Training & Match	S	4	120%	102%	45%	18%
King George Grass Soccer 2	Training & Match	S	4	78%	71%	40%	0%

²³ Based on Pitch Rating.

Pitch	Booking Type	Pitch Rating	Capacity Hours ²³	% of Recommended Usage			
				2018	2019	2020	2021
Knockloughrim Grass Soccer	Not Available	S	4	1%	1%	0%	0%
Meadowbank Grass Soccer	Match Only	G	6	8%	17%	3%	0%
Millpark Tobermore Grass Soccer	Match Only	S	4	10%	8%	3%	5%
Moneymore Rec Centre Grass Pitch	Training Only	S	4	0%	0%	0%	0%
MUSA Grass Soccer 1	Training & Match	G	6	178%	173%	97%	47%
MUSA Grass Soccer 2	Training & Match	G	6	0%	0%	0%	92%
Newmills Grass Soccer	Match Only	G	6	52%	48%	24%	15%
Riverside Grass Soccer	Not Available	S	4	0%	0%	0%	0%
Tobermore Golf Centre Grass Soccer	Training & Match	G	6	17%	62%	8%	0%

Assumptions

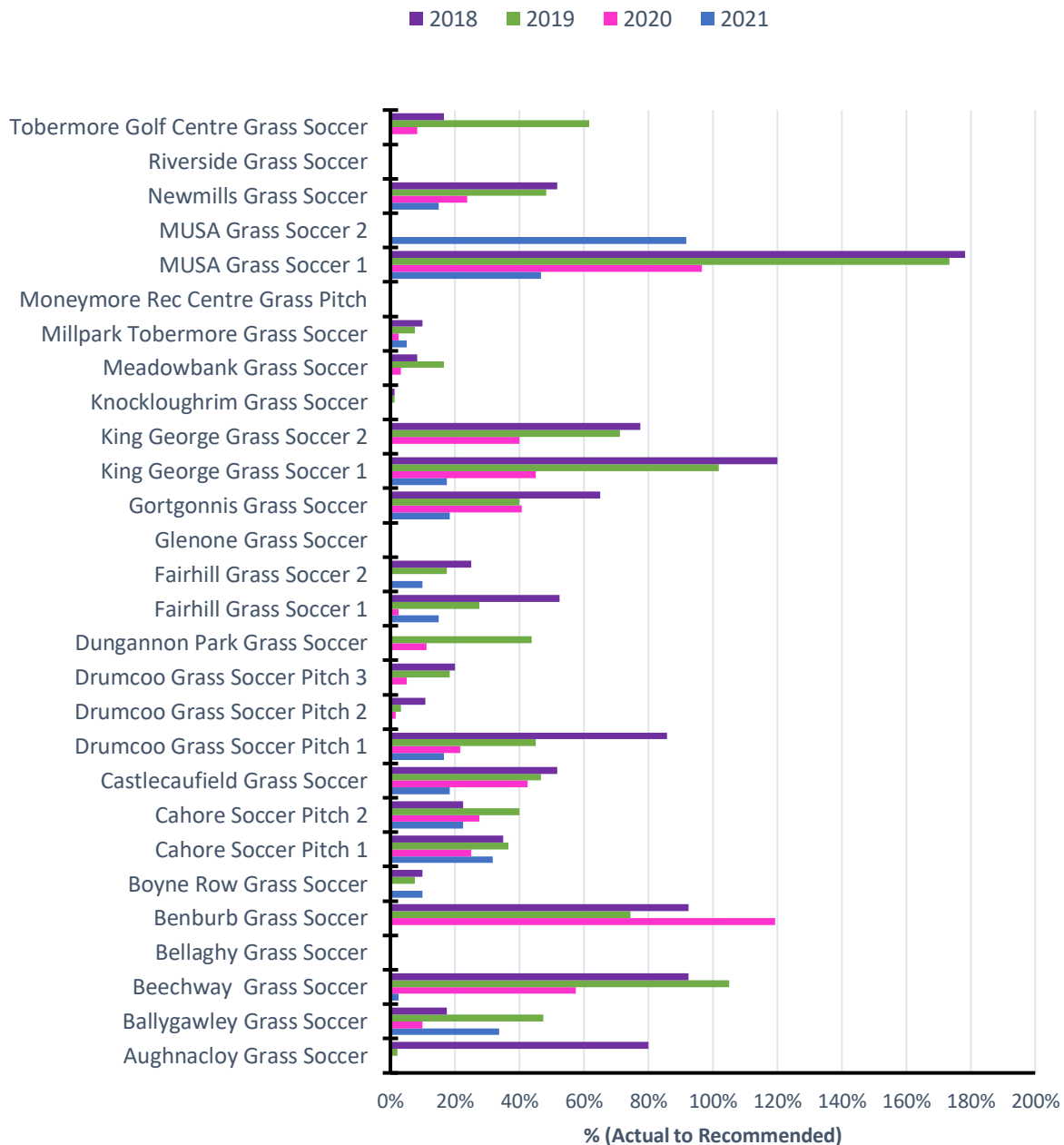
- ❖ Given that the number of bookings includes both matches and training, it is assumed that one booking is on average 1.5 hours long.
- ❖ Each pitch is available to be booked on average for 30 weeks of the year.
- ❖ The recommended usages for each of three pitch ratings are:
 - **'Good'** pitch is 6 hours per week for 30 weeks per year i.e., a total of 180 hours
 - **'Standard'** pitch is 4 hours per week for 30 weeks per year i.e., a total of 120 hours
 - **'Poor'** pitch is 2 hours per week for 30 weeks per year i.e., a total of 60 hours

So, for example, Aghnacloy grass pitch was booked 32 times for matches and training in 2018, the calculation is:

Pitch site	Aghnacloy
No of bookings in 2018	32
Total hours of use given that one booking on average = 1.5 hours	32 x 1.5 = 48 hours
Pitch Rating	Poor
Recommended annual usage given pitch rating Poor = 2 hrs/week for 30 weeks per year i.e., total usage of 60 hrs per year	60
Usage compared to recommended usage (%)	48/60 = 80%

6.16 A graphical representation of comparison to the recommended usage is:-

Figure 6.2
Percentage Comparison of Actual Pitch Usage to Recommended Usage
(2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)



Comments

- ❖ A number of pitches appear to have been overused i.e., greater than 100% for both MUSA grass pitches in 2018 and 2019.
- ❖ For 2021 MUSA grass 2 is at 92% of recommended usage.
- ❖ None of the pitches have reached recommended usage in 2021 - note the bookings are up to July 2021.

Clubs, Teams and Players

6.17 In order to evaluate the impact of training and match provision it is necessary to assess the current and future demand and need. Association football has a total of 31 recognised clubs in the Council area. For the purposes of this audit, it was deemed important to account for every club, obtaining completed questionnaires where possible to produce as accurate as possible picture of association membership, pitch use, pitch preference and any development plans and aspirations.

6.18 Information from Mid Ulster District Council, association football league secretaries and desktop research identified a total of 31 clubs satisfying at least one of the following three criteria:-

- ❖ Home match pitch is located within the Council area (includes clubs with own pitch).
- ❖ Use pitches within the Council area.
- ❖ Over 50% of team members live within the Council area.

Every effort has been made to contact these clubs and secure a survey response. Where it has not been possible to get a response from identified clubs an estimate of team numbers was made using information from the league secretaries and desktop research; this was necessary for 2²⁴ of the clubs indicating that responses were obtained for 94% of all association football clubs.

Questionnaire

6.19 The comprehensive questionnaire (42 questions in total) distributed to the 31 identified association football clubs (i.e., satisfying criteria a, b and c above) collected information on the number of players (male/female/adult), number of teams, home venue, training venue, preferred home venue etc. This information is used to make an assessment of the adequacy of pitch provision in the Council area.

²⁴ The 2 clubs not making a return are: Cookstown Olympic FC and Donaghmore FC.

6.20 The questionnaire also collected information on issues relating to club development, attitudes to 3G playing surfaces, pitch condition and quality, pitch maintenance and condition/quality of ancillary facilities.

6.21 All of the responses were collected via an online electronic link emailed to the club contact either by the consultant or the league secretaries. In order to encourage completion of the survey, 14 clubs completed a shortened version of the questionnaire. The 31 clubs included in this audit are listed below in the following categories:-

- ❖ Clubs with only adult male teams
- ❖ Clubs with youth and adult teams

Table 6.3: Association Football Clubs with only Adult Male Teams

Club	No of teams	League
1. AFC Dungannon	1	Lonsdale League
2. Castlecaulfield FC	2	Mid Ulster Football League
3. Coagh United FC	2	Coagh United Ballymena Intermediate & Provincial League
4. Coalisland Athletic FC	1	Mid Ulster Football League - Division 1
5. Coalisland Bhoys FC	1	Lonsdale League
6. Cookstown Olympic FC	1	<i>Did not make a survey return</i>
7. Desertmartin FC	2	Ballymena League, Irish Cup, Craig Memorial Cup, Intermediate Cup
8. Donaghmore FC	1	Folded 4 years ago but looking to enter league in 2022
9. Dungannon Rovers FC	1	Mid Ulster Football League
10. Dungannon Tigers FC	2	Mid Ulster Football League
11. Killymoon Rangers FC	2	Ballymena and Provincial League Division 1 (Intermediate League next season)
12. Loughshore United FC	1	Mid Ulster Football League
13. Maghera Strollers FC	1	Coleraine & District League
14. Newmills FC	2	Mid Ulster League Division 1
15. Orchard Farm FC	2	Fermanagh & Western
16. Reclain Rovers FC	1	Lonsdale League
17. Tobermore United FC	1	Premier Intermediate League
18. Upperlands Cross Community FC	2	Coleraine and District League
Total number of teams	26	

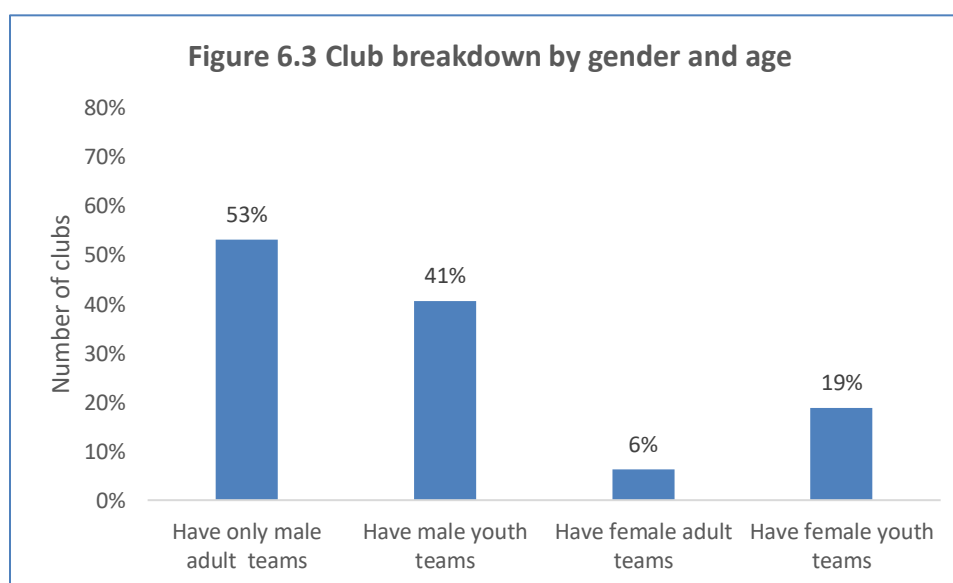
Table 6.4: Association Football Clubs with Youth and Adult Teams

Club	No of Youth Teams	No of Adult Teams	League/s
19. Caledon Rovers FC	5 x male 1 x female	2 x male	Mid Ulster Football League, Mid Ulster Youth Football League, IFA small-sided games
20. Cookstown Youth FC	21 x male 5 x female	2 x male	Ballymena & Provincial League/ Irish cup/ Intermediate Cup/ Mid Ulster Cups, NIBFA national Leagues, Mid Ulster Youth League IFA small-sided games
21. Cookstown Royal British Legion Swifts FC	1 x male	1 x male	Coleraine & District Football League
22. Draperstown Celtic FC	13 x male 5 x female	4 x male 2 x female	Coleraine and District League, Foyle League, Harry Gregg Foundation Youth League, IFA small-sided games
23. Dungannon Swifts FC	28 x male	3 x male	NIFL, National and Mid Ulster Leagues
24. Fivemiletown United FC	10 x male	2 x male	Fermanagh and Western FL, Mid Ulster Intermediate FL, Brendan Keogh Youth League, Mid Ulster Youth League
25. Magherafelt Sky Blues FC	20 x male	2 x male	Coleraine and District FL, Mid Ulster FL and IFA small-sided games
26. Mid Ulster Ladies FC	11 x female	1 x female	NIWFA Premiership in 2022, Mid Ulster Youth League, IFA small-sided games
27. Moyola Park AFC	19 x male 2 x female	2 x male	NIFL Premier Intermediate, NIFL Development League, Harry Gregg Foundation Youth League, South Belfast Youth League, NIBFA National League, IFA small-sided games
28. Riverdale FC	13 x male 4 x female	2 x male	Mid Ulster League, Lonsdale League, Girls Southern Girls League, Mid Ulster Youth League, IFA small-sided games
29. West End Hibs FC	1 x male	1 x male	Mid Ulster FL
Totals	159 121 male 28 female	24 21 male 3 female	

Table 6.5: Association Football Clubs

Club	No of Youth Teams	League/s
30. Dungannon United Youth FC	17	Mid Ulster & National League plus a wide range of Cup competitions and Youth Tournaments
31. Castlecaulfield Youth FC	5	Mid Ulster Youth League, IFA Grassroots Development Centre (Mid Ulster Region)
Totals	23	

6.22 Figure 6.3 shows that of the 31 clubs included in this report, 41% have only adult male teams (normally one or two teams), 53% of the clubs have youth teams, a relatively significant percentage (19%) have female youth teams. Just 2 clubs (5%) (Mid Ulster Ladies FC and Draperstown Celtic FC) have adult female teams, however, this could increase given the growing number of female youth teams. Just under half of the clubs have youth teams (13 clubs/41%) suggesting movement of players between clubs in the transition from youth to adult football. Clubs that operate with just one team may be less sustainable from year to year compared to those with a structure allowing players to feed through from youth to adult. The annual profile of total teams across the Council area will therefore vary as players progress to other teams/clubs and this may have implications for pitch provision. The club numbers and profiles presented in this audit are therefore a ‘snapshot’ of association football participation in the area in the Council area in the period June to September 2021.



6.23 The profile of teams and player numbers in the 31 identified clubs is as follows:-

Table 6.6 Association Football Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams

	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
Membership			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	1424	306	1730
Junior (12 -18 yrs)	1040	108	1148
Adult	1142	71	1213
Total Players	3606	485	4091
Teams			
Small Sided Games (U7, U8) ²⁵	28	11	39
Small Sided Games (U9, U10) ²⁶	35	8	43
Small Sided Games (U11, U12) ²⁷	36	4	40
Youth (U13 to U18) ²⁸	54	5	59
Adult	48	3	51
Total Teams	201	31	232

- 6.24** It is important to note that the Small Sided Games (SSG) initiative has been adopted by the Irish Football Association (IFA) wherein children from Under 7 to Under 12 play matches in teams of 5-a-side, 7-a-side or 9-a-side according to age. This has been reflected in the reporting of team numbers. For this audit SSG teams are from U7 to U12 and include boys and girls teams.

Adequacy of Provision

- 6.25** The Sport England model identifies three pitch usage categories:-

Secured Community Pitches

Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management.

Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector which are open to members of the public.

²⁵ Five-a-side

²⁶ Seven-a-side

²⁷ Nine-a-side

²⁸ Eleven-a-side

Pitches at education sites which are available for use by the public through formal community use agreements.

Used by community but not secured Pitches not included above that are nevertheless available for community use, eg, school/college pitches without formal user agreements.

Not open for community use Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public.

6.26 These categories inform three scenarios used in the quantitative assessment of adequacy of provision of association football pitches, described here along with the number of pitches in each scenario.

Reference	Description	No of full grass and 3G pitches available for adult & youth matches	No of pitches available for SSG ²⁹ (Floodlit 3G)
Scenario 1	All pitches	51	10
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	38	6
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	25	4

6.27 There is a degree of subjectivity in determining which adult pitches to include in Scenario 2 as community access to some pitches is allowed but also restricted. The number of pitches in Scenario 2 has purposely been estimated on the low side in order to remain prudent. The following full size grass Council pitches have been excluded from match provision for the reasons listed below:-

²⁹ SSG 5-side and 7-side games are currently delivered on Friday evenings on floodlit 3G pitches only.

Pitch Site	No of Pitches	Rationale
Aughnacloy Playing Fields	1	Pitch is rated as 'Poor' and has no changing facilities; these were relocated to service the recently completed Aughnacloy College 3G pitch. The pitch is reported to be 'rarely booked'.
Knockloughrim Playing Fields	1	There are no changing facilities at the site – no recent bookings.
Moneymore Recreation Centre Playing Fields	1	No bookings in recent years.
Riverside Playing Fields	1	The pitch has not been officially booked for several years, has no changing facilities.
Total	4 pitches	

6.28 The pitch breakdown for each scenario for full and youth grass match pitches available for adult, youth and small sided games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1		Scenario 2		Scenario 3	
	Full Grass	Full 3G	Full Grass	Full 3G	Full Grass	Full 3G
Clubs/Community	9	1	9	1	0	0
Education	5	4	0	0	0	0
MUDC	25	4	21	4	21	4
MUDC Leased to Club	2	1	2	1	0	0
Totals	41	10	32	6	21	4

Comments:-

- ❖ The above table records the number of pitches used in each scenario.
- ❖ Youth (U13 to U18) and adult matches are played on full size pitches. It is noted that each full size grass pitch can only accommodate one match per Saturday either in the morning or afternoon but not both.
- ❖ Although the Drumcoo grass pitch located next to the 3G pitch is slightly smaller than regulation size it is frequently booked and used for adult association football fixtures and is therefore counted as a full size pitch.

- ❖ For adult and youth association football Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude nine education sector pitches on the basis that community use is generally not available.
- ❖ For adult and youth association football, Scenario 3 excludes both education and club pitches – here only Council provision is assessed.
- ❖ The majority of 5-aside and 7-aside small-sided games are run by the IFA Grassroots Development programme and are accommodated on floodlit 3G pitches on Friday evenings (MUSA, Castlecaulfield, Moyola Park). They are included in the playing pitch modelling below.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude four identified unused Council pitches (Aughnacloy Playing Fields, Knockloughrim Playing Fields, Moneymore Recreation Centre Playing Fields and Riverside Playing Fields).
- ❖ It is noted that all youth fixtures (U13 to U18) are played on full size pitches.
- ❖ All full 3G pitches are included as they are used for competitive fixtures.

6.29 The results of the Sport England Playing Pitch Model PPM for each of the above 3 Scenarios are presented in Tables 6.7, 6.8, 6.9. In addition, in order to apply the Sport England Playing Pitch Model, Small Sided Games (SSG) teams have been calculated for 2 groups: SSG (U7, U8, U19, U10) requiring 5-aside and 7-aside facilities and SSG (U11 & U12) requiring 9-aside facilities.

Scenario 1

6.30 The picture for Scenario 1 for male association football in accordance with the Sport England model, for Mid Ulster District Council is presented in Table 6.7 below. Women's association adult football teams are not modelled here as generally their fixtures are in the summer months and therefore do not compete for pitches with male teams.

Table 6.7: Association Football – Demand and Supply Scenario 1 - All pitches

Modelling Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	82 teams	Complete picture from survey and leagues.
	SSG – 9-aside	10 teams³⁰	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	59 teams	
	Adult (U17, U18, older)	48 teams	

³⁰ The majority of 9-aside teams play in the Harry Gregg Foundation Youth League where all games are played at Ulster University Coleraine campus and therefore place no pitch burden on MUDC. From the club survey approximately ten 9-aside teams play in Mid Ulster Youth League which is a normal home and away game set-up and therefore require MUDC pitches for home games.

2. Calculating home games per team per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1.0	Based on a home game every other week for SSG – 9-aside, Youth and Adult and 1 tournament every week for 5-aside & 7-aside SSG.
	SSG – 9-aside	0.5	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1 x tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	SSG – 9-aside	5 matches	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	30 matches	
	Adult	24 matches	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside 90% Fri PM	0.9	This is the peak demand period and the % of games played as assessed from club surveys and league secretaries ³¹
	SSG - 9-aside 100% Sat AM	1.0	
	Youth - 61% Sat AM	0.61	
	Youth - 18% Sat PM	0.18	
	Adult – 7% - Sat AM	0.07	
	Adult – 93% - Sat PM	0.93	
5. Defining pitches required each day taking into account pitch capacity	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside total need	4 pitches	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up and divided by capacity for each pitch type. Capacity is 24 teams ³² each for 5-aside 7-aside fixtures $(82/24) = 4$ (rounded up) Capacity for full pitch is one adult and one youth/SSG 9-aside game per week.
	SSG 9-aside Sat AM total needed	5 pitches	
	Youth Sat AM total needed	19 pitches	
	Youth Sat PM total needed	6 pitches	
	Adult Sat AM total needed	2 pitches	
	Adult Sat PM total needed	23 pitches	
6. Establishing pitches available	Youth and Adult, SSG 9-aside	51 pitches	All full, youth and SSG pitches in all ownership. Note SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside requires floodlit 3G surfaces
	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	10 pitches	
7. Adequacy of Provision ³³	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	10-4 = +6 pitches	Good level of supply
	SSG - 9-aside Sat AM, Youth and Adult AM	51-(5+19+2) = +25 pitches	Good level of supply

³¹ This stage assesses the proportion of total home games played on each day. The data is expressed as a percentage of total weekly demand. It will determine what percentages of all games are played on a Saturday for example. For this study from an analysis of the survey data together with knowledge of league fixtures it is known that approximately 90% of 5-aside & 7-aside Small Sided Games are held on Friday evenings and 100% of 9-aside, 61% of Youth and 7% of Adult matches are held Saturday AM and 93% of Adult matches are held Saturday PM.

³² Assumption – each pitch can accommodate 4 x 7-aside SSG pitches and therefore 8 teams per hour – for a 3-hour tournament on Friday evening capacity is $3 \times 8 = 24$ teams.

³³ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

	Youth and Adult PM	51-(23+6) = +22 pitches	Good level of supply
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- 6.31** The results for Scenario 1 show there is a good level of supply for SSG, Youth and Adult with an over-supply of 25 pitches for Saturday morning matches and 22 pitches for Saturday afternoon matches.

Scenario 2

- 6.32** The picture for Scenario 2 for association football in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows where secondary school education pitches are not included as they are generally not available for competitive association football matches. Also excluded are the four Council pitches currently not in use therefore reducing the number of full size grass and 3G pitches to 38 pitches for SSG, youth and adult games.

Table 6.8: Association Football – Demand and Supply Scenario 2 - All community available pitches

Modelling Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	82 teams	Complete picture from survey and leagues.
	SSG – 9-aside	10 teams³⁴	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	59 teams	
	Adult (U17, U18, older)	48 teams	
2. Calculating home games per team per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1.0	Based on a home game every other week for SSG – 9-aside, Youth and Adult and 1 tournament every week for 5-aside & 7-aside SSG.
	SSG – 9-aside	0.5	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1 x tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	SSG – 9-aside	5 matches	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	30 matches	
	Adult	24 matches	
4. Establishing temporal	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside 90% Fri PM	0.9	This is the peak demand period and the % of games played as
	SSG - 9-aside 100% Sat AM	1.0	
	Youth - 61% Sat AM	0.61	

³⁴ The majority of 9-aside teams play in the Harry Gregg Foundation Youth League where all games are played at Ulster University Coleraine campus and therefore place no pitch burden on MUDC. From the club survey approximately ten 9-aside teams play in Mid Ulster Youth League which is a normal home and away game set-up and therefore require MUDC pitches for home games.

demand for games	Youth - 18% Sat PM	0.18	assessed from club surveys and league secretaries ³⁵
	Adult – 7% - Sat AM	0.07	
	Adult – 93% - Sat PM	0.93	
5. Defining pitches required each day taking into account pitch capacity	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside total need	4 pitches	<p>Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up and divided by capacity for each pitch type.</p> <p>Capacity is 24 teams³⁶ each for 5-aside 7-aside fixtures $(82/24) = 4$ (rounded up)</p> <p>Capacity for full pitch is one adult and one youth/SSG 9-aside game per week.</p>
	SSG 9-aside Sat AM total needed	5 pitches	
	Youth Sat AM total needed	19 pitches	
	Youth Sat PM total needed	6 pitches	
	Adult Sat AM total needed	2 pitches	
	Adult Sat PM total needed	23 pitches	
6. Establishing pitches available	Youth and Adult, SSG 9-aside	38 pitches	All full, youth and SSG pitches in all ownership. Note SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside requires floodlit 3G surfaces
	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	6 pitches	
7. Adequacy of Provision ³⁷	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	6-4 = +2 pitches	Good level of supply
	SSG - 9-aside Sat AM, Youth and Adult AM	38-(5+19+2) = +12 pitches	Good level of supply
	Youth and Adult PM	38-(23+6) = +9 pitches	Good level of supply

6.33 Based on PPM quantitative analysis, the results for Scenario 2 show that supply is meeting demand all age groups (SSG, Youth and Adult). There is a good level of supply for 9-aside and Youth teams on Saturday mornings with a surplus of 12 pitches. For adult matches on Saturday afternoons there is a surplus of 9 pitches.

6.34 It is important to note the following additional comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

³⁵ This stage assesses the proportion of total home games played on each day. The data is expressed as a percentage of total weekly demand. It will determine what percentages of all games are played on a Saturday for example. For this study from an analysis of the survey data together with knowledge of league fixtures it is known that approximately 90% of 5-aside & 7-aside Small Sided Games are held on Friday evenings and 100% of 9-aside, 61% of Youth and 7% of Adult matches are held Saturday AM and 93% of Adult matches are held Saturday PM.

³⁶ Assumption – each pitch can accommodate 4 x 7-aside SSG pitches and therefore 8 teams per hour – for a 3-hour tournament on Friday evening capacity is $3 \times 8 = 24$ teams.

³⁷ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand.
- ❖ The adequacy of provision results indicates supply is meeting demand for SSG 5-aside and 7-aside games. However, although there are seven floodlit 3G pitches available for 5-aside and 7-aside fixtures, the IFA Grassroots Development Officer reports difficulty in securing enough suitable venues as these are often booked by other sports and youth and adult training and games. Currently 5-aside and 7-aside fixtures are only held at MUSA, Castlecaulfield and Moyola Park. The IFA Development Officer reports they are unable to meet demand and have more teams than they can accommodate and are looking for additional suitable venues.
- ❖ The capacity of 3G pitches included in Scenario 2 has been set to 1 game Saturday morning and 1 game Saturday afternoon as per youth and adult fixtures – should this be increased it would result in a larger calculated surplus.
- ❖ A comparison of adequacy of provision for Scenario 2 with similar studies conducted by Otium Leisure Consultancy in other Council areas demonstrates there is a similar ‘buffer’ of pitches in Mid Ulster District Council area as found elsewhere. The buffer is the ratio of the number of unused pitches at peak demand to the number of pitches available for competitive matches at peak demand. For the Mid Ulster area this *surplus to supply buffer ratio* is 24%, similar to the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area and the Belfast City Council area as presented below:-

Pitch Audit Year	Council Area	Adequacy of Provision in Scenario 2	Supply Total number of pitches in Scenario 2	Surplus to Supply Buffer Ratio (%)
2021	Mid Ulster District Council	+9	38	24%
2018	Derry City & Strabane District Council	+3	46	7%
2017	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	+20	49	41%
2015	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	+10	47	21%
2013	Belfast City Council	+33	124	27%
2012	Newtownabbey Borough Council (legacy)	+21	44	48%

- ❖ Councils’ often require a pitch surplus, or ‘buffer’ for the following operational reasons:-

- allows for pitches to be taken out of circulation for maintenance and to be rested.
- allows for unexpected increase in games to be accommodated, for example National cup and league competitions that do not occur on a weekly basis.
- allows for use for by schools and development squads.
- poorer quality pitches may not be playable in periods of wet weather – a pitch buffer allows matches to be moved to other better quality pitches at short notice.

Scenario 3

6.35 A third scenario can be modelled where only Council pitches are considered. A total of 25 full sized pitches are available for all adults and additional for Youth and SSG. The results are: -

Table 6.9: Association Football – Demand and Supply Scenario 3 - Only Council owned pitches

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	82 teams	Complete picture from survey and leagues.
	SSG – 9-aside	10 teams³⁸	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	59 teams	
	Adult (U17, U18, older)	48 teams	
2. Calculating home games per team per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1.0	Based on a home game every other week for SSG – 9-aside, Youth and Adult and 1 tournament every week for 5-aside & 7-aside SSG.
	SSG – 9-aside	0.5	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games per week	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	1 x tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	SSG – 9-aside	5 matches	
	Youth (U13 to U16)	30 matches	
	Adult	24 matches	
4. Establishing temporal	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside 90% Fri PM	0.9	This is the peak demand period and the % of games played as
	SSG - 9-aside 100% Sat AM	1.0	
	Youth - 61% Sat AM	0.61	

³⁸ The majority of 9-aside teams play in the Harry Gregg Foundation Youth League where all games are played at Ulster University Coleraine campus and therefore place no pitch burden on MUDC. From the club survey approximately ten 9-aside teams play in Mid Ulster Youth League which is a normal home and away game set-up and therefore require MUDC pitches for home games.

demand for games	Youth - 18% Sat PM	0.18	assessed from club surveys and league secretaries ³⁹
	Adult – 7% - Sat AM	0.07	
	Adult – 93% - Sat PM	0.93	
5. Defining pitches required each day taking into account pitch capacity	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside total need	4 pitches	<p>Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up and divided by capacity for each pitch type.</p> <p>Capacity is 24 teams⁴⁰ each for 5-aside 7-aside fixtures $(82/24) = 4$ (rounded up)</p> <p>Capacity for full pitch is one adult and one youth/SSG 9-aside game per week.</p>
	SSG 9-aside Sat AM total needed	5 pitches	
	Youth Sat AM total needed	19 pitches	
	Youth Sat PM total needed	6 pitches	
	Adult Sat AM total needed	2 pitches	
	Adult Sat PM total needed	23 pitches	
6. Establishing pitches available	Youth and Adult, SSG 9-aside	21 pitches	All full, youth and SSG pitches in all ownership. Note SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside requires floodlit 3G surfaces
	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	4 pitches	
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁴¹	SSG – 5-aside & 7-aside	4-4 = +0 pitches	Supply just meeting demand
	SSG - 9-aside Sat AM, Youth and Adult AM	25-(5+19+2) = -1 pitches	Supply not meeting demand
	Youth and Adult PM	25-(23+6) = -4 pitches	Supply not meeting demand

6.36 The results for Scenario 3, for Council pitches only, demonstrates that demand can be met for SSG matches, however there is a shortfall of 1 pitch for youth Saturday morning matches and 4 pitches for adult Saturday afternoon matches demonstrating the need for club-owned pitches to accommodate all matches across the age groups.

³⁹ This stage assesses the proportion of total home games played on each day. The data is expressed as a percentage of total weekly demand. It will determine what percentages of all games are played on a Saturday for example. For this study from an analysis of the survey data together with knowledge of league fixtures it is known that approximately 90% of 5-aside & 7-aside Small Sided Games are held on Friday evenings and 100% of 9-aside, 61% of Youth and 7% of Adult matches are held Saturday AM and 93% of Adult matches are held Saturday PM.

⁴⁰ Assumption – each pitch can accommodate 4 x 7-aside SSG pitches and therefore 8 teams per hour – for a 3-hour tournament on Friday evening capacity is $3 \times 8 = 24$ teams.

⁴¹ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

Adequacy of Match Provision by Area

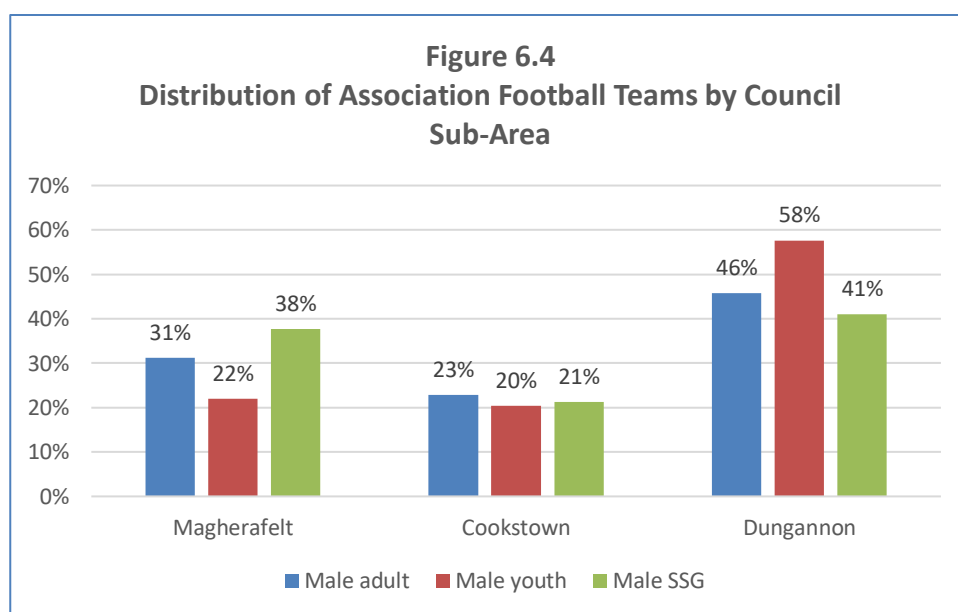
- 6.37** The previous sections demonstrate an assessment of pitch provision across the Council area as a whole. In order to provide a more local picture it is of interest to look at adequacy of pitch provision in each of the three Council sub-areas – Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon.
- 6.38** Few association football clubs own their own facilities and as such do not have a ‘home’. However, most clubs will have a preferred home venue, used to generate match fixtures on a home and away basis and reflect the area where most of their players live. From the club survey the number and percentage of senior, youth and SSG teams who expressed a home venue preference in each of the three sub-areas was assessed. Where a club failed to respond to the home venue preference question an assumption was made on the area of the Council they would prefer to have as their home venue using additional information from the survey (i.e., member catchment information) and Council staff knowledge.
- 6.39** An inventory of clubs per area is:-

Magherafelt (7 clubs)	Cookstown (8 clubs)	Dungannon (16 clubs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magherafelt Sky Blues FC Upperlands Cross Community FC Maghera Strollers FC Desertmartin FC Draperstown Celtic FC Moyola Park AFC Tobermore United FC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid Ulster Ladies FC Coagh United FC Cookstown Youth FC Killymoon Rangers FC Loughshore United FC Newmills FC Cookstown Royal British Legion Swifts FC Cookstown Olympic FC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reclain Rovers FC West End Hibs FC Dungannon Utd Youth FC Castlecaulfield Youth FC Dungannon Swifts FC Dungannon Tigers FC Dungannon Rovers FC Coalisland Bhoys FC Orchard Farm FC Castlecaulfield FC AFC Dungannon Caledon Rovers FC Coalisland Athletic FC Fivemiletown Utd FC Riverdale FC Donaghmore FC

- 6.40** The distribution of teams per area is:-

Table 6.10: Association Football – Distribution of Teams by Sub-Area (does not include adult female)

Area	No male adult teams per area	% male adult teams per area	No male youth teams per area	% male youth teams per area	No male SSG teams per area	% male SSG teams per area
Magherafelt	15	31%	13	22%	46	38%
Cookstown	11	23%	12	20%	26	21%
Dungannon	22	46%	34	58%	50	41%
Totals	48	100%	59	100%	122	100%



6.41 Full size match pitch provision per sub-area for Scenario 2 (pitches under Council and club ownership) is:-

Supply of pitches per Sub-Area (Grass +3G) for Scenario 2			
	Council	Club	Pitches not included in Scenario 2 totals
Magherafelt (14 pitches)	6 x grass, 2 x 3G	5 x grass, 1 x 3G	Knockloughrim, Moneymore Rec, Riverside Playing Fields
Cookstown (9 pitches)	5 x grass, 1 x 3G	3 x grass	
Dungannon (15 pitches)	10 x grass, 1 x 3G	2 x grass, 2 x 3G	Aughnacloy Playing Fields

6.42 Table 6.11 presents the PPM Scenario 2 for all 4 sub-areas for adult association football competitive games only.

Table 6.11: Association Football – Area based demand and supply for Scenario 2 for Adult and Youth football at peak demand Saturday afternoons

Model Stage	Whole Council	Magherafelt	Cookstown	Dungannon
1. Identifying teams	48 – adult 59 – youth	15 – adult 13 – youth	11 – adult 12 – youth	22 – adult 34 – youth
2. Calculating home games per team per week	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
3. Assessing total home games per week	24 matches – adult 30 matches – youth	8 matches – adult 7 matches – youth	5 matches – adult 6 matches – youth	11 matches – adult 17 matches – youth
4. Establishing temporal demand for games⁴²	0.93 – adult 0.18 – youth	0.93 – adult 0.18 – youth	0.93 – adult 0.18 – youth	0.93 – adult 0.18 – youth
5. Defining pitches required each day	23 pitches – adult 6 pitches – youth	7 pitches – adult 2 pitches – youth	5 pitches – adult 1 pitch – youth	10 pitches – adult 3 pitches – youth
6. Establishing pitches available	38 pitches	14 pitches	9 pitches	15 pitches
7. Adequacy of Provision⁴³	38 – 29 = +9 pitches	14 – 9 = +5 pitches	9 – 6 = +3 pitch	15 – 13 = +2 pitches

Comments

- ❖ For all three sub-areas there is an adequate supply of full-size grass and 3G pitches for adult matches at peak demand on Saturday afternoons.
- ❖ The smallest over-supply is for Dungannon with +2 pitches – this suggests supply is just meeting demand with a small ‘buffer’ supply.
- ❖ This analysis models for 93% of games being played at peak demand (Saturday afternoon); should this increase to 100% of games at peak demand there may not be enough pitches to satisfy demand particularly for the Dungannon sub-area.

⁴² On average 93% of adult games and 18% of youth games are played Saturday afternoon.

⁴³ Totals for the three Council sub-areas do not add up to that for the whole Council due to rounding up.

- ❖ This analysis assumes pitches can sustain two games, one youth game on Saturday morning and one adult game on Saturday afternoon.

Adequacy of Provision – Training

- 6.43** The majority of association football training takes places on pitches that are different to those used for competitive matches on Saturdays and mid-week. From the online survey, training during the winter months takes place predominantly on AstroTurf and 3G surfaces. Whilst some club training takes place at club owned grass training pitches, this is during the summer months. In order to assess adequacy of provision of training facilities at peak demand (winter) the supply of ‘one-hour’ training slots in the Council area is matched to the demand from the number of teams operating. A summary of the supply of 1-hour training slots is:-

Facility Type and Site	Number of 1-hour training slots midweek (i.e., Mon to Thurs) ⁴⁴	
	<i>No. of available training hours per week</i>	<i>Council Zone</i>
AstroTurf – Floodlit (2 sites)		
Meadowbank (shared 25% with hockey teams) Here is assumed that the pitch is big enough to be split into two training areas therefore doubling the number of one-hour training slots to 24, this facility is shared with hockey reducing the number of 1-hour slots to 18.	18	Magherafelt
Fivemiletown College (shared 25% with hockey and rugby teams)	4	Dungannon
Total	22 x 1-hour slots	
3G outdoor – Floodlit (10 sites)		
Backrow 3G – Youth size Shared with GAA and School teams	8	Magherafelt
Castlecaulfield 3G – Youth Size	10	Dungannon
Coagh Sports Centre	12	Cookstown
Drumcoo⁴⁵	24	Dungannon
Junior Stadium, Mullaghana	24	Dungannon
Maghera LC	24	Magherafelt
Meadowbank GAA/Rugby (66% shared with GAA/Rugby)	30	Magherafelt

⁴⁴ Demand for association football training is predominantly Monday to Thursday evening 6pm to 9pm, i.e., a total of 12 hours per week.

⁴⁵ Here is assumed that the pitch is big enough to be split into two training areas therefore doubling the number of one-hour training slots to 24.

Here it is assumed the pitch can be split into 4 training areas – training slots = 12 x 4 =48.		
Mid Ulster Sports Arena Soccer 3G ¹⁶	24	Cookstown
Mid Ulster Sports Arena Indoor 3G - SSG	12	Cookstown
Mill Meadow 3G ¹⁶	24	Magherafelt
St Ciaran's College Community bookings as noted from the online survey.	10	Dungannon
Aughnacloy College (66% shared with GAA/Rugby)	8	Dungannon
Integrated College Dungannon Community bookings as noted from the online survey.	3	Dungannon
Windmill Integrated Primary School 3G pitch Small – 40 x 22m suitable for SSG teams	4	Dungannon
Augher Central Primary School 3G Pitch Small - 50 x 30m suitable for SSG teams	4	Dungannon
Floodlit Grass Pitches		
MUSA Grass Soccer 1	8	Cookstown
MUSA Grass Soccer 2	8	Cookstown
	235 x 1-hour slots	
Total Current Supply of 1-hour slots	257 x 1-hour slots	

6.44 In summary there are approximately 257 x 1-hour training slots available at 15 floodlit sites across the Council, the breakdown per Council zone is:

Training Provision		
Zone	Total 1-hour slots	No of sites
Cookstown	64	1 site
Magherafelt	104	4 sites
Dungannon	89	10 sites
Totals	257	15

Training Facility Demand

6.45 An assessment of Association Football training needs/demand is presented in Table 6.12. Here the total number and breakdown of Mid Ulster District Council association football teams by age and training needs is assessed using information from the survey and employing the following observations:-

- ❖ 4 x U7 to U12 SSG teams have the same pitch size requirements as one adult team i.e., equivalent to 1 adult team
- ❖ 1 x youth team (U12 to U16) training is equivalent to one adult team
- ❖ U7 to U11 SSG teams train on average 1.5 times a week

- ❖ U11/U12 SSG train on average 1.5 times a week
- ❖ Youth teams train on average 1.75 times a week
- ❖ Adult teams require one full pitch for training and train on average 1.75 times a week.

Table 6.12 –Association Football Training Needs

		No. of Male Teams	No. of Female Teams	All teams	Adult team equivalents ⁴⁶	Average No. of 1-hour training sessions per week per team	Total No. of 1-hour training slots needed (rounded up)
Whole Council	U7 to U10	63	19	82	20.5	1.5	31
	U10 to U11	36	15	51	25.5	1.5	30
	U12 to U16	54	5	59	59	2	118
	Adult	48	3	51	51	2	102
	Total Teams	201	42	243	156		281 x 1-hour
Magherafelt	U7 to U10	24	5	29	7.25	1.5	11
	U10 to U11	15	2	17	8.5	1.5	13
	U12 to U16	13	0	13	13	2	26
	Adult	15	2	17	17	2	34
	Total Teams	67	9	76	45.75		84 x 1-hour
Cookstown	U7 to U10	8	13	21	5.25	1.5	8
	U10 to U11	4	1	5	2.5	1.5	4
	U12 to U16	10	2	12	12	2	24
	Adult	11	1	12	12	2	24
	Total Teams	33	17	50	31.75		60 x 1-hour
Dungannon	U7 to U10	31	1	32	8	1.5	12
	U10 to U11	17	1	18	9	1.5	14
	U12 to U16	31	3	34	34	2	68
	Adult	22	0	22	22	2	44
	Total Teams	101	5	106	73		138 x 1-hour

6.46 As calculated, the 232 association football teams in the Council require at least 281 x 1-hour training slots. Currently there are an estimated 257 x 1-hour slots available across the whole Council area, that is an undersupply of 24 x 1-hour slots. If the training on AstroTurf is discounted due to unsuitability for the modern game, this

⁴⁶ The following is assumed: 4 x U7 to U10 SSG teams require the same size training pitch as one adult team, 2 x U11, U12 SSG teams require the same size training pitch as one adult team, 1 x U13 to U18 teams requires the same size training pitch as one adult team.

increases the short fall to 46 x 1-hour slots. Note this analysis does not take into account any training needs required for elite pathway development squads, social football programmes or 5-side games. This analysis suggests training needs for association football are not being met adequately; indeed, a large number of comments in the survey are related to training with 11 out of the 29 clubs that completed the survey noting training in the question relating to future needs, for example see the below comments:

Castlecaulfield FC	Possibly starting a ladies team. One of the difficulties is having suitable training space in winter
Dungannon Swifts FC	We are in need of pitches to accommodate training for our 15's & 16's
Mid Ulster Ladies FC	We are a growing club - the demand for girls and women football is very high our numbers are increasing
Moyola FC	We currently experience issues with pitch space to accommodate the number of participants involved in the club.

6.47 An analysis of training supply and demand per Council zones demonstrates the undersupply is most acute in Dungannon zone:

Zone	Supply No. of 1hr-slots	Demand No. of 1hr-slots	Adequacy of Provision
Magherafelt	104	84	Demand meeting supply
Cookstown	64	60	Demand meeting supply
Dungannon	89	138	Demand NOT meeting supply
Whole Council (incl AstroTurf)	257	282	Demand NOT meeting supply
Whole Council (excl AstroTurf)	235	282	Demand NOT meeting supply

Community Impact

Match and Training Facility Barriers

6.48 In the online club survey, respondent clubs were asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they experienced in accessing outdoor match and training facilities. Results are as follows (clubs were able to select more than one response):-

Barrier type	Match Facilities % of clubs	Training Facilities % of clubs
Location too distant from club base	21%	24%
Hire cost too expensive for club	28%	24%

Finding venues of suitable condition	41%	NA
Finding venues of suitable surface	NA	41%
Availability of floodlit venues	NA	45%
Can't get booking slot	45%	41%
None	24%	21%

Comments

- ❖ 45% of clubs record 'availability of floodlit venues' as a significant barrier to accessing training facilities.
- ❖ 45% and 41% of clubs record 'Can't get booking slot' for matches and training respectively.
- ❖ It is of interest to note for match facilities, 41% of clubs record 'Finding venues of suitable condition' as a barrier suggesting that although there may be enough pitches for matches perhaps there are not sufficient of high enough standard?
- ❖ The following comments are record by clubs in relation to match facilities:-

'Getting the slots at the time we need them can get a problem. If we are to grow much more this will become a bigger issue.'

'Often Beechway and/or Fairhill pitches are unavailable, closed, undergoing maintenance, or not in an adequate playing condition.'

'Floodlights (Boyne Row) - particularly to utilise for mid-week training sessions. It is difficult to get a booking slot at Meadowbank.'

'Need more 4G facility.'

'We do not have to use other facilities unless weather conditions make our pitches unplayable.'

'Too many clubs sharing pitches that need them at the same time.'

'MUSA are very good and help us greatly.'

'We have to play too many of our home games in other towns and villages.'

'We can access match facilities no problem, but we want to make it as cheap as possible for every player. For a home game you pay £50 for a 3G pitch, and you pay on average £50 for a ref so that is £100 for a junior standard of football for a home game, sounds expensive for the level of football. I prefer the grass to play on anyway but the benefit with 3G is you know the match will be on. The grass pitch at Drumcoo is just under £40 so if you used that for every home match the saving compared to 3G can be substantial for a small club. Why is 3G not the same price for pitch cost as grass as there is less maintenance to be done on it compared to grass and on top of that the 3G earns more during the week due to clubs training on it as the grass can't be used for training, is the extra £10 it makes for one game at 2.15 on a Saturday going to be missed? Over a season that will benefit the clubs. There are not enough grass pitches in the Dungannon

area in my opinion, there used to be 2 years ago in Dungannon Park, but that area is not used for football anymore, the football pitch that is there is not up to standard, are there any grass areas in Dungannon that can be developed into a pitch?’

‘Ground doesn't meet IFA standard Requirements, Changing rooms too far away from the playing area, no exterior boundary or interior boundary for spectators etc.’

‘Parking Fencing Lighting.’

‘There have been some discussions in the past regarding the fee for a match. This is estimated for 2 hours where a match requires 2 half's of 45 minutes plus a 15 break and normally a minimum 30 min warm up pre match. Realistically the period is closer to 3 hours than 2.’

❖ And these comments in relation to training facilities:-

‘We are expanding club and need more booking slots.’

‘We only train once during the week, training twice a week would increase the cost for the players which you don't want to do and at this level twice a week is too much of a commitment. Ideal training is Tuesday evening with Wednesday evening the next preferable slot. Anything outside of this is too early in the week or too close to your Saturday game and you also don't want it too late in the evening either. To get the slot we needed to go to the Dungannon Integrated College as we could not get the time slot, we wanted at Drumcoo 3G due to the number of other teams all looking for the same time slots.’

‘We play in a winter league and training would require the use of outdoor floodlights to be used which the club can't afford so misses out on valuable training sessions.’

‘We were lucky to get 1/3 slot in Maghera twice per week. This however is £72 a week now with the lights. As the slots are booked in 1 hour blocks, we need to pay for 2 hours where we use 1 and a 1/2 hours on average.’

‘Getting slots can be an issue sometimes for the times we need them. if we grow bigger this will be a bigger problem.’

‘Numbers of teams we have outstrips the available facilities. Many of our teams have to train together which is not ideal - this leads to cramped training conditions. The above information relates to only 1 training session per week per team.’

‘We would be happy, willing, and probably prefer to train on Beechway pitch if the facility was better maintained, had floodlights, and the surface was better taken care of. Often the 3g surface at MUSA is hard to get slots in, it's very expensive to book, and the surface is sore and highly impactful on joints and muscles to train on an ongoing and regular basis.’

‘The size of the facility is dependent on where the current club training can be held, plus the accessibility (slots available) and it having floodlights.’

Playing Surface

- 6.49** Association football matches are increasingly being played on artificial surfaces. 3G surfaces are officially sanctioned by the IFA and over the last number of years the provision of 3G pitches has increased both in the Council area and across Northern Ireland. The survey respondents were asked to indicate their attitude to use artificial surfaces including 3G surfaces for matches and training. The results are:-

Table 6.13: Attitude to Training / Match Surfaces						
Surface	Training			Matches		
	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not favourable	Neutral	Favourable
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Polymeric	58%	35%	4%	77%	23%	0%
AstroTurf	58%	27%	15%	77%	15%	8%
3G	4%	31%	65%	15%	31%	54%

- 6.50** As presented in Table 6.13, 65% of respondents indicated that they are favourable to the use of 3G surfaces for training but less, at 54%, are favourable to using 3G for matches. Investment in 3G surfaces is an attractive option for local authorities as 3G pitches are reckoned to have the carrying capacity of at least 4 grass pitches⁴⁷. This would go some way to addressing any pitch deficit however anecdotal evidence would suggest that grass surfaces are still in demand, especially floodlit grass surfaces; see the following three comments which reflect the general attitude to grass:-

⁴⁷ Bridging the Gap Active Places Research Report 2009 – Sport NI.

'Nothing beats grass to play a match on (my opinion).'

'Prefer grass pitches and proper maintenance.'

'Playing matches on synthetic pitches is considered okay during times of bad weather, however the preference would always be grass pitches for matches, and training.'

Membership Growth and Future Plans

6.51 Club membership growth is an important factor when considering facility development and investment. Expected club membership growth over the next 5 years is recorded below for those clubs who completed this question in the online survey.

Expect Membership to	No of Clubs
Increase	24
Decrease	2
Stay the same	3

Comments

- ❖ Overall, the majority of clubs expect their membership to increase.
- ❖ Clubs listed the following reasons as to why they expect their membership to increase:-

'More competitive football being offered in the youth section with current age groups being retained and moving into juvenile football. Also greater emphasis being placed on girls football within the club.'

'We previously had a youth football team and we plan to reintroduce this team again.'

'Again more people looking to play soccer.'

'More female getting involved in sports, bigger age groups.'

'It is impossible to say as a lot of players will move from club to club or where there may be wages. We do not pay any players but sadly the way times are moving a lot of players do not stick with clubs.'

'We have been constantly growing this last number of years and we expect this to continue. We have rejuvenated the committee and club and expect to add additional youth teams and continue to grow the female section. As a true grassroots club we expect further increases as we do not hold trials for our members. All skill levels are catered for. As the winners of the IFA Grassroots Club of the Year 20/21 and IFA Inclusive Project of the Year 20/21 we expect the positive publicity to have a positive effect on our membership numbers.'

'Club better organised.'

'We have plans to bolster existing two squads, launch an under 18 team, and potentially launch another youth team as well.'

'The club plans to expand its female participation with the introduction of specific girls and ladies teams. Although with our own ground being 'land locked' in terms of expansion we would be looking to further utilise Council facilities within Castledawson village. There are plans to introduce an over 35's male team.'

'Club is better organised to cater now for larger numbers with the opportunity to play at both a highly competitive and recreational level.'

'Difficulty maintaining interest of younger players now with other interests/ effect of CV19 on mental health etc.'

'The main reasons our playing membership will increase over the next 5 years will be the current youth team members ages 2005-2007 will all have the opportunity to move into the pathway for senior football via our seconds and firsts team. If applicable the club would be willing to establish a 3rd team at U23 level to cater for the young players coming through our development pathway. That coupled with the introduction of new age groups in the next 5 years at both boys and girls the membership at youth and senior level will increase across the club.'

'Club is better organised.'

'Better organised.'

'Running costs of the club and facility.'

'The club is looking at building more youth football to bring lads through the club to be the future of the club in years to come.'

- 6.52** Emerging from future plans/need responses in the club survey are six main strands: *Intermediate pitch facilities, changing accommodation, training, home pitch, lease, ancillary needs* - see Table 6.14 for a summary of the number of clubs making comments under these six strands. Table 6.15 presents the full response (unaltered) made by clubs in the two survey questions relating to 'future plans/needs' and 'any other comments.'

Table 6.14: Summary of emerging strands in relation to future plans and needs

Club name/Home grounds	Facility ownership	Intermediate Pitch	Changing accommodation	Training	Home Pitch	Lease	Ancillary
AFC Dungannon Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council		√				
Caledon Rovers Football Club Tanyard Park	Club			√			
Castlecaulfield FC Castlecaulfield Playing Fields	Council			√			√
Coagh United FC Hagan Park	Club		√				
Coalisland Athletic FC Gortgonis Playing Fields	Council	√					
Coalisland Bhoys FC Gortgonis Sports Arena	Council	√					
Cookstown Youth FC Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Council	√					
Desertmartin FC Dromore Park	Club						√
Draperstown Celtic FC Cahore Playing Fields	Council	√			√	√	
Dungannon Rovers FC Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council						
Dungannon Swifts FC Stangmore Park	Council	√		√			
Dungannon Utd Youth FC Junior Stadium	Council			√			
Fivemiletown Utd FC Valley Stadium	Club				√		
Killymoon Rangers FC Beechway	Council				√	√	
Maghera Strollers FC	Council		√				

Maghera Leisure Centre							
Magherafelt Sky Blues FC Spires Park Magherafelt	Club						✓
Mid Ulster Ladies FC MUSA	Council			✓			
Moyola Park AFC Mill Meadow	Club			✓		✓	
Newmills FC Newmills Playing Fields	Council			✓			
Reclain Rovers FC Drumcoo/Castlecaulfield/MUSA	Council			✓			
Riverdale FC Benburb Playing Fields	Council			✓	✓		
Tobermore United FC Fortwilliam Park	Club						
Upperlands Cross Community FC Festival Park Upperlands	Club			✓	✓		
West End Hibs FC Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council			✓			
Total Number		5	3	11	5	3	3

Comments

- ❖ Five clubs made comments on the need for Intermediate standard pitches.
- ❖ Three clubs commented on need related to changing accommodation.
- ❖ Eleven clubs commented on the need for more training facilities.
- ❖ Five clubs commented on need around a home pitch.
- ❖ Three clubs commented on the aspiration to secure a lease for pitch facilities.
- ❖ Three clubs have aspirations to further develop ancillary facilities such as car parking, floodlights and fencing.

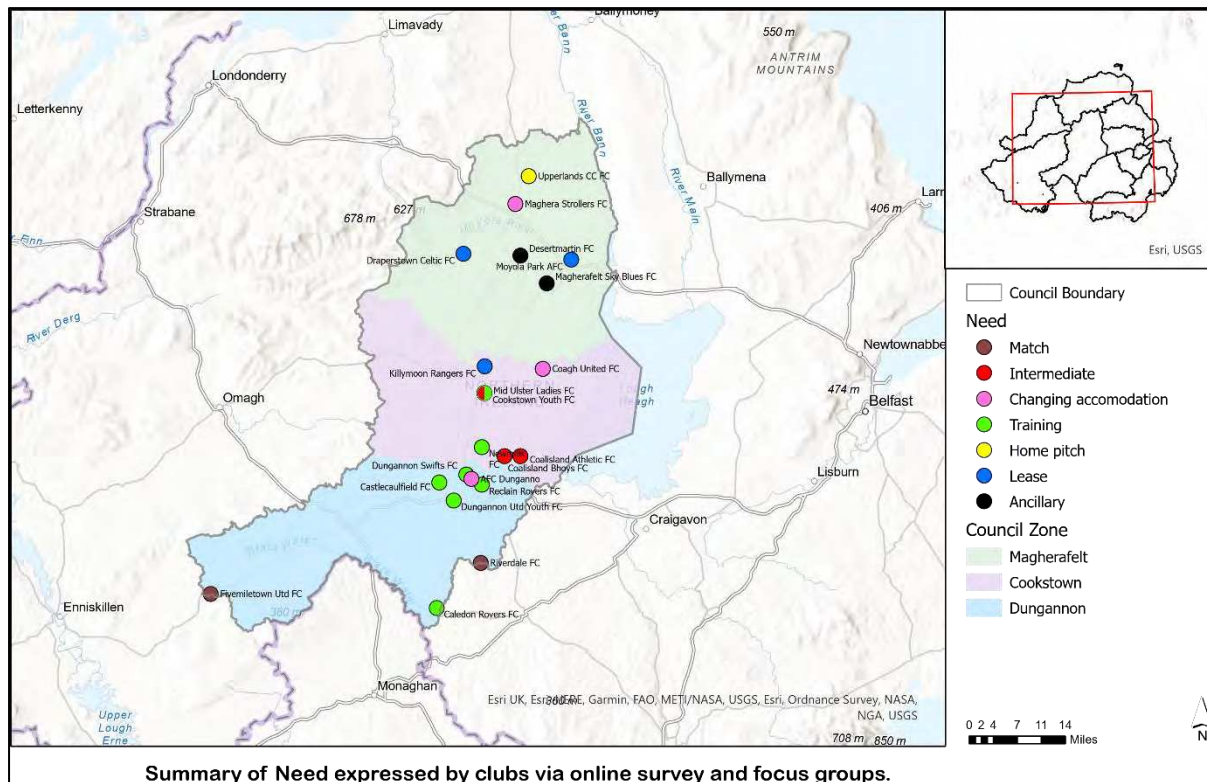


Table 6.15: Full Comments In Relation To Future Plans And Needs

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
AFC Dungannon Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council	Changing rooms need a total revamp and modernised. Toilets are awful and never any warm water changing rooms are far too small also.	Changing accommodation
Caledon Rovers Football Club Tanyard Park	Club	We have a need for a training facility at our pitch in Caledon. The growth of our youth section and also expected future growth particularly in the girls football section has meant that we are struggling with costs of pitch hire and will continue to do so in the future. Having additional training facilities that do not incur a high hire cost would ease current financial pressures a lot. We currently hire Aughnacloy College 3G pitch, it is an excellent facility but hire costs are very high compared to similar venues and there is no provision made for hiring of a half pitch to reduce hire costs. To that end we hope to try to source funding for a small 3G training facility in Caledon, at present we have a small grass area that could be converted into such a facility. Also we intend to increase storage facilities at our pitch in Caledon.	Training

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		<p>Due to the equipment needed both for training and pitch maintenance our current storage requirements are inadequate.</p> <p>Pitch provision in Mid Ulster Council is generally good though at times when external Council pitches have had to be hired at short notice they have been a little inflexible in accommodating the bookings. Also grass length and markings on hired pitches can be very inconsistent.</p>	
Castlecaulfield FC Castlecaulfield Playing Fields	Council	<p>Possibly starting a ladies team. One of the difficulties is having suitable training space in winter.</p> <p>Playing field pitch is good. Need fencing improved to stop balls getting lost in the river. Storage for equipment needed. Parking is an issue need a redesign of carpark as there have been numerous accidents at the pitch.</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>Ancillary</p>
Coagh United FC Hagan Park	Club	<p>We are keen to develop the youth structure (age 16+) at Coagh however we are limited in the use of our changing facilities available (only 2 changing rooms). We are also restricted in that there are no indoor facilities should weather be unfavourable. And the pitches are not floodlit which restricts use in winter months.</p>	<p>Changing accommodation</p> <p>Ancillary</p>
Coalisland Athletic FC Gortgonis Playing Fields	Council	<p>We are unable to advance to intermediate league due to not owning our own pitch. Also Gortgonis pitch doesn't allow us to advance to Mid Ulster Intermediate league due to criteria not being met, i.e. no fencing around the pitch.</p>	<p>Intermediate 3G match facilities</p>
Coalisland Bhoys FC Gortgonis Sports Arena	Council	<p>Ground doesn't meet IFA standard requirements; Changing rooms too far away from the playing area, No exterior boundary or interior boundary for spectators etc.</p> <p>About 10 years ago I started youth teams in my local area and had both boys and girls teams at various ages right up from under 8s to under 14s and each one of those teams had to play their home matches away from home as their existing pitch did not meet Mid Ulster Youth League criteria which was a 3G surface. I got onto my local Council and had numerous meetings with Council and assembly ministers over a 20 year period and still nothing was done. Plenty of empty promises but still the pitch stayed the same. There was also a smaller playing area to the right of the main pitch</p>	<p>Intermediate 3G match facilities</p>

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		<p>which had been put in situ the same time as the big pitch 1974 and it had a carpet-like surface which we used to train on and we asked the local Council to upgrade the surface as it was too dangerous when wet as it became like an ice rink but once again nothing was done. Eventually, the numbers started to decline due to the parents taking the children away to play GAA sports as their facilities were safer and so the youth section had to cease. I was also involved as the senior team manager some years ago and the team went from Div 4 to div 1 in the first four seasons it played winning all leagues on its way to the top. After winning division 1 for a couple of seasons I applied to the Mid Ulster League for promotion to the Premier League and was turned down as our pitch didn't meet the criteria. I once again got onto Mid Ulster Council and had numerous meetings with senior heads of departments and informed them what was required but was told the pitch was going to be upgraded soon to the point I even saw plans of the new pitch but as I write this survey and I now have very little connection with soccer in the town the pitch in Gortgonis is still sitting the same way as it did in 1974 with the playing surface still grass and the pitch still too far away from the changing rooms to meet the criteria and the club I managed some years ago is still playing and winning Div 1 titles but can't go any higher because the ground is inadequate. Why does this happen in my area while other areas are sporting state of the art playing facilities and are only in Div 3 of the league what is the difference?</p> <p>Our pitch was made in the early 70s and from that time the only refurbishment it has received is sand placed on it every end of season plus the grass cut on a regular basis. I personally have been in loggerheads with the local Council over the past 10 years and longer to upgrade the pitch, but my words have fallen on deaf ears while other pitches have been upgraded to a 3G surface and spectator barriers put in place but not Gortgonis.</p>	
Cookstown Youth Football Club Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Council	<p>We would most like to play our matches on a grass pitch but we cannot do this as we don't not have an intermediate standard grass pitch in the COOKSTOWN area, so we are forced to play on the 3G pitch which is of minimum size for intermediate football.</p>	Intermediate match facilities

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		<p>The club has been getting bigger and bigger, issues are getting training slots at the times we need them, this is normally 6 to 8pm each night of the week.</p> <p>In the Cookstown area there is only one pitch that is passed to play intermediate football on and that is the 3g at the Mid Ulster sports arena. The pitch itself is not a great size and is at the minimum size for Intermediate football, this is without doubt holding the club back when developing players at an older age. The way the game has moved we need a much bigger pitch either grass or 3G in the Cookstown area.</p>	
<p>Desertmartin Football Club</p> <p>Dromore Park</p>	<p>Club</p>	<p>Our club is a country club and we pride ourselves on the high standards of our grounds and changing rooms all clubs that play at Dromore Park for the 1st time are amazed in the middle of fields of sheep and cattle sits 2 full size soccer pitches and club house Our aim is to provide a safe and friendly club for any young lads that want to play football from any side of the community to build and instil in them the importance of team building and for them to enjoy a few hours a week away from computers, drinking etc.</p> <p>Over the next few years we would like to add more carparking spaces and if possible and there is enough interest start a youth setup to build the club players from youth to intermediate football under the club name.</p> <p>As a club we are lucky that we do not share the pitch and is always ready for use. Of course, if the weather is really bad and a lot of really wet days our training pitch may be too wet to use so we may have to book indoor pitches at Meadow Bank but these can be difficult to get and are costly for the club.</p>	<p>Ancillary</p>
<p>Draperstown Celtic FC</p> <p>Cahore Playing Fields</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>Draperstown Celtic would be open to signing a long-term lease or undergo a community asset transfer of land to secure the long-term future of the facility. It should be noted that for DC to enter into any long term lease or community transfer that the terms and conditions must include pitches that are up to standard and fit for purpose We would then propose and seek ways to development the existing community sports and leisure facilities at Cahore The installation of a 3G next generation, all-weather surface pitch with floodlights that can be used intensively all year</p>	<p>Home base for training and matches – long term lease agreement for Cahore Playing Fields to develop 3G Intermediate facility</p>

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		<p>round for training and matches. The proposed pitch should meet Intermediate football standard. This would replace pitch 2 at Cahore which is totally unfit for use from October to April each year because it is waterlogged. The upgrade of Pitch 1 and surrounding facilities at Cahore to Intermediate standard as well as the remedying of several Health and Safety issues. This would involve the construction of an internal fence with suitable gates, removal of concrete dugouts and replacement on the other side of pitch with suitable approved dugouts. The renovation and upgrade of the current pavilion to include 6 changing rooms which would include 2 unisex officials' changing rooms. Also a treatment room. The introduction of a Community Hub (with kitchen) including a community meeting rooms with capacity for roughly 75 people. Possible re-design of car-park. The addition of floodlights to Pitch 1 (Grass) along with the addition of a small covered stand. A small single room gym with cardio and strength equipment to meet broad range of needs.</p> <p>The ambition of DCFC on the field to be a leading community focused club, playing at the highest possible level is hampered by the available facilities. The current position also reflects the limitations of the current facilities in that they fall below what is required of a modern and appealing football club. There has been a blatant and distressing lack of investment and support in the development of facilities at the Cahore facility (other than basic remedial drainage works completed by the Council in 2012). This is further backed up by information that has come to light as a result of a FOI request to the Council regarding capital spend on sporting facilities. The results show spend in the following areas – Moneymore, Dungannon, Cookstown, Portglenone, Maghera and Tobermore. Local authority provision in the area does not possess the facilities to supply the present demand. Our club is being forced to alternate facilities (including some outside Mid Ulster District Council area) to train or play at non-desirable times. Poor pitch standards have led to the club having to play a lot of our games away from home – again some outside the MUDC area. The policy of only playing 1 game per day per pitch exacerbates the issue. The fact that we must play so many away games puts extra financial pressure on the club and on individual members. A major issue is that grass pitches can only sustain</p>	

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		a recommended 300/350 hours of use per year (6/7 hours per week). In addition, for approximately eight months of the year, daylight hours are limited in Northern Ireland and therefore the use of grass pitches is considerably reduced. These restrictions, and the identified shortfall, results in excessive use and saturation of grass pitches at peak times, resulting in the inability for many clubs/teams to find suitable training or competition venues. Excessive use of grass pitches causes significant deterioration, particularly during the winter months. Because of this problem it is therefore undesirable to floodlight a grass pitch for community use. Many grass pitches in Northern Ireland are in poor condition and are generally in a state of considerable disrepair – as evidenced by pitch 2. From October – April pitch 2 is unplayable as it is completely waterlogged. This is often due to poor planning at the outset, incorrect drainage, insufficient maintenance programmes and poor security arrangements. This adds to the problem of limited provision.	
Dungannon Rovers FC Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council	<p>We only train once during the week, training twice a week would increase the cost for the players which you don't want to do and at this level twice a week is too much of a commitment. Ideal training is Tuesday evening with Wednesday evening the next preferable slot. Anything outside of this is too early in the week or too close to your Saturday game and you also don't want it too late in the evening either. To get the slot we needed we needed to go to the Dungannon Integrated College as we could not get the time slot we wanted at Drumcoo 3G due to the number of other teams all looking for the same time slots.</p> <p>Development plans, personally my aim is just to get one team out each season and that seems to be getting more difficult. It has been very difficult to get a team out this year after the covid closure with a few players just finding something else to do or just retiring. We will never have our own pitch etc so will just see what the Council makes provision wise to further football in the town.</p>	Concerned about cost of match and training facilities
Dungannon Swifts FC Stangmore Park	Council	We are in need of pitches to accommodate training for our 15's & 16's – 2 x 18's and U20s playing league games is also very difficult for these age groups due to lack of pitches.	<p>Training</p> <p>Irish league standard match pitch</p>

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
Dungannon United Youth Junior Stadium	Council	We don't have the ground to extend into more pitches so really we need more proper decent floodlit 4g pitches in our area.	Training – 3G floodlit
Fivemiletown United Valley Stadium	Club	With the growing amount of teams we have pitches are in extremely shorts supply. We are presently trying to obtain a piece of land next to our home venue with a plan to develop a second playing pitch.	Match pitch
Killymoon Rangers FC Beechway	Council	<p>We have previously expressed an interest in leasing Beechway pitch, or at least offered the opportunity to discuss this option further. Cookstown Youth and Cookstown RBL, both younger clubs than ourselves, have both been considered and scored for a lease of Beechway in 2017. Link here to initial info on this - https://bit.ly/3yiMhsT We have huge aspirations to lease or own a local pitch. We would very much welcome a meeting on this and would like to be presented with the same lease agreement that Cookstown Youth were offered in 2017. Killymoon are celebrating 50 years in Cookstown, we are the longest serving club by considerable number of years and have big plans for developing more teams and pushing onwards into intermediate football and even back into championship football - however we feel this is being hampered by not having a pitch to call our own. Leasing a pitch will make us eligible for my grants and funding, plus allow for more sponsorship opportunity, better training and match options, and help our club grow and move forward. After 50 years this is the next move, it should have been done many years ago, but we are now very keen and eager to make this happen asap. Please feel free to contact Secretary Stuart to discuss further. We're aware contact has already been made regarding the above, and we have also asked local Councillors to reach out for us which they done, but as yet neither them or ourselves have received word back. We hope this isn't a case of inequality or being brushed aside, as we are very serious about having an urgent meeting and wish to be presented with the same equal opportunities as other clubs in the local area.</p> <p>As mentioned previously our committee feel some additional work and better care is required at a number of pitches in the Cookstown area, specifically Beechway, for which we have a strong desire to be considered for a long</p>	Home base at Beechway with a long-term lease agreement

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		term lease agreement. Again, as mentioned we would welcome some contact and dialogue on this topic, and feel very strongly as a 50 year old club that having a pitch to call our own is important, and we are very keen to have an official meeting or consideration put in place for the lease of this pitch, similar to what has been presented to other clubs in the past. Thank you.	
Maghera Strollers FC Maghera Leisure Centre	Council	The club has ambitions to grow and introduce a youth structure. We are also hoping to get a second team setup. There are currently over 50 players registered to the club. Club development would also be targeting intermediate football in the years ahead. The changing facilities currently are not practical for a football match. These are shared meaning both teams are in the same room as well as other people using the facility.	Changing accommodation
Magherafelt Sky Blues FC Spires Park Magherafelt	Club	To further our club. We need floodlights and better playing conditions. We totally rely on Meadowbank in winter and early spring times when we have our own facilities. We would like some help within the Council as we provide a service too community. We are one of the biggest clubs in area. We have new Cabins and changing rooms all funded. We would like better parking and some drainage help around pitch to maintain grass and keep our costs down.	Ancillary Floodlights, pitch drainage, car parking
Mid Ulster Ladies FC MUSA	Council	We are a growing club - the demand for girls and women football is very high out numbers are increasing. Our new programme the 'Little Dribblers' for Nursery to P2 has approx. 70 attending each week. We find it difficult to find enough floodlit training venues for all our training needs. We are very happy with MUSA as our home base and look forward to continuing to grow the club.	Training floodlit venues – 3G
Moyola Park AFC Mill Meadow	Club	We currently experience issues with pitch space to accommodate the number of participants involved in the club. The number of youth/children especially has increased in the last 5 years and the development plan for the club envisages greater provision of quality football coaching, but without proper facilities this will be difficult to deliver. We wish to explore the use and development of the Boyne Row facility within the village with MUDC. The changing rooms need upgrading, floodlights installed to provide greater	Additional training/match facility – would like to explore leasing Boyne Row pitch

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		flexibility for the use of the pitch and the surface looked at in general, to consider levelling, grassing cutting, quality of grass, goalposts, ball stop netting, storage facilities and the like. The Club would be interested in talking to MUDC about all of these things and the prospect of leasing the pitch in the long term.	
Newmills FC	Council	Need more 4G facility.	Training 3G
Newmills Playing Fields			
Reclain Rovers FC	Council	Too many clubs sharing pitches that need them at the same time.	Training
Drumcoo/Castlecaulfield/MUSA			
Riverdale FC	Council	We currently have a development plan 2019-2024 which supports and gauges the clubs aims and objectives and ensures these are measured on a regular basis, from coach education, facilities, equipment, committee, finances etc. The football club are almost at their capacity in terms of playing teams and playing members and we are in urgent need of another playing field within the village of Benburb that has lights to accommodate the number of teams we have at all age levels and to allow for training and matches to take place within the village, as currently and mentioned previously the following 9 club teams (Seniors Men's, Senior Reserves, Boys U16s, U14s, U13s, U12s, U11s, and Girls U17s and U15s) all have to travel to Dungannon weekly during the season to play matches to train at the Integrated College 4G in Dungannon. The hire costs of this facility on an annual basis are always increasing and putting severe pressure on the club financially and we urgently need the Mid Ulster Council to help us out in this area, as we are the only sports club in the village and we cater for boys, girls and senior playing members from Benburb and the surrounding villages of Moy, Blackwatertown, Eglis, Tullysarran, and beyond. Annually we add a new age group to our youth section (Boys and Girls) and in 2 years time we will have a team/s at each group from 2016s to 2005s plus 2 senior teams. Presently we are the largest football club outside of Dungannon in the Mid Ulster Council area with 264 playing members and 40 non playing members (coaches and committee) In the past 15 years the club have worked very closely with the Mid Ulster Council (previously Dungannon Council) and in partnership with the Benburb Community Association and	Training and match facilities
Benburb Playing Fields			

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		<p>more recently Duiche Neil Hurling Club , Benburb who were established in 2015 in the development of the park and playing fields at Benburb to upgrade and improve its facilities. This has seen the club and its key partners apply for and receive funding which has seen an investment in over £750k in new facilities, from a Small Sided Multi Use Games Area in 2009 where we started our youth section in 2010, new changing rooms in 2011, a new play-park, new fence around the playing field, new carparking and a 1km walking trail in 2018/2019 that has transformed the usage and numbers of people using the playing fields for recreational areas. The time has now come for a much needed new training and football facility within the village to accommodate our ever growing club and to allow for games and training to take place on a weekly basis.</p> <p>The provision of pitches within the Council area especially on a rural basis is very limited and those that have pitches the facilities are poorly maintained on an annual basis. Within the main town of Dungannon the pitch provision and quality of the pitches are very poor, this is primarily down to lack of essential annual maintenance and investment in the pitch over the past 10-15 years and its associated facilities to include changing and carparking. A much needed clubs forum would help with this area. Several years ago Riverdale FC established a football clubs forum with the Council on the areas identified in this survey and this led to some important dialogue and feedback on facilities, pitches etc that were addressed initially but this then fell away and this would be a good starting point for the Council to start to reengage on a localized basis with its pitch users to ensure areas identified such as maintenance, usage etc is communicated to key officers and work closer with the clubs who utilize the Council facilities.</p>	
Tobermore United FC	Club	Hoping to introduce an under 20 team	
Fortwilliam Park			
Upperlands Cross Community Football Club	Club	We need new facilities i.e., changing rooms and pitches as the owner of the pitch who is a building developer will not grant us 25 years lease to get the grants we required to build new facilities. We have the available grants, the committee to do the work. We want to develop the youth academy and develop female teams for all ages but our grass pitch will not	Training and match facility
Festival Park Upperlands			

Club Name / Home Grounds	Facility Ownership	Development Plans/Final Comment/Need	Summary Need
		allow this. We need purpose-built facilities build by our Council.	
West End Hibs FC Drumcoo Playing Fields	Council	We are on the process of starting up a youth team and it would help to get training slots early enough for them as the slots get booked up very quickly.	

Summary Points

6.53 Association football relies on Councils' provision of pitches and changing accommodation for matches and training to a much greater extent than the other large ball sports. The foregoing assessment of supply and demand, alongside consultation and survey work, informs a number of key points:-

- ❖ Looking at adequacy of provision, Scenario 2 is viewed as the most realistic picture given it includes only pitches that are available for community use. It shows the following for matches:-

Small Sided Games (SSG)	+ 3 pitches
Youth & Adult – Saturday morning	+ 12 pitches
Youth & Adult – Saturday afternoon	+ 9 pitches

The results show that provision for SSG is under pressure with only a small oversupply. This view is emphasised by the IFAs Grassroots Development Officer who reports difficulty in securing suitable venues as demand is high for other sports and youth and adult training and matches. The apparent oversupply of pitches for youth and adult matches on Saturday mornings and afternoons is actually only a reasonable buffer against operational requirements (eg, unexpected increased demand, pitches unplayable due to inclement weather, etc) that is similar to the pitches' buffer in Lisburn & Castlereagh and Belfast but a good deal less than in Causeway Coast.

- ❖ Thinking about artificial surfaces, two thirds of the association football clubs are prepared to accept 3G for training purposes with the remaining third mostly adopting a neutral position. For matches 85% of clubs are either supportive of (54%) or neutral (31%) to the use of 3G for matches; the remaining 15% of clubs stated *not favourable* when asked their attitude towards the use of 3G for matches. This result is very similar to the attitude of association clubs surveyed in the Causeway Coast area in late 2017 which would suggest the acceptance of 3G has perhaps peaked at near 100% for

training and 85% for matches. Clearly investment in 3G pitches is an attractive option for local authorities.

- ❖ Of the 31 association football clubs in the Council area nearly half (48%) rate their 'home' pitch quality as *good* with a further 29% rating their pitch as *standard*. This mirrors the quality ratings coming from the pitch inspections carried out as part of this commission.
- ❖ Analysis of training needs points to an under-supply of 56 one hour slots, excluding AstroTurf, or 24 one hour slots including AstroTurf. This suggests training needs are not being adequately met; indeed, 11 clubs noted access to training facilities as a future need.
- ❖ Regarding membership growth, 34 clubs expect more members to join over the next five years. Whilst this result needs more detailed investigation (eg, do development plans detail how membership growth will be achieved?) it does indicate positivity even as clubs are emerging from perhaps the most challenging period in the last number of decades.

7. Gaelic Games

Introduction

- 7.1** This section presents an overview of the supply of and demand for gaelic games pitches; an assessment of *adequacy of provision* is made using Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Model' (PPM); the PPM is also used to assess the condition of facilities in the Council's ownership, using the 'Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment' tool. There are 47 gaelic games clubs in the Council area operating a mix of adult and youth teams. Having established the supply and demand situation the section considers how it impacts on the community. The section is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality
- ❖ Clubs, Teams and Players
- ❖ Adequacy of Provision
- ❖ Community Impact

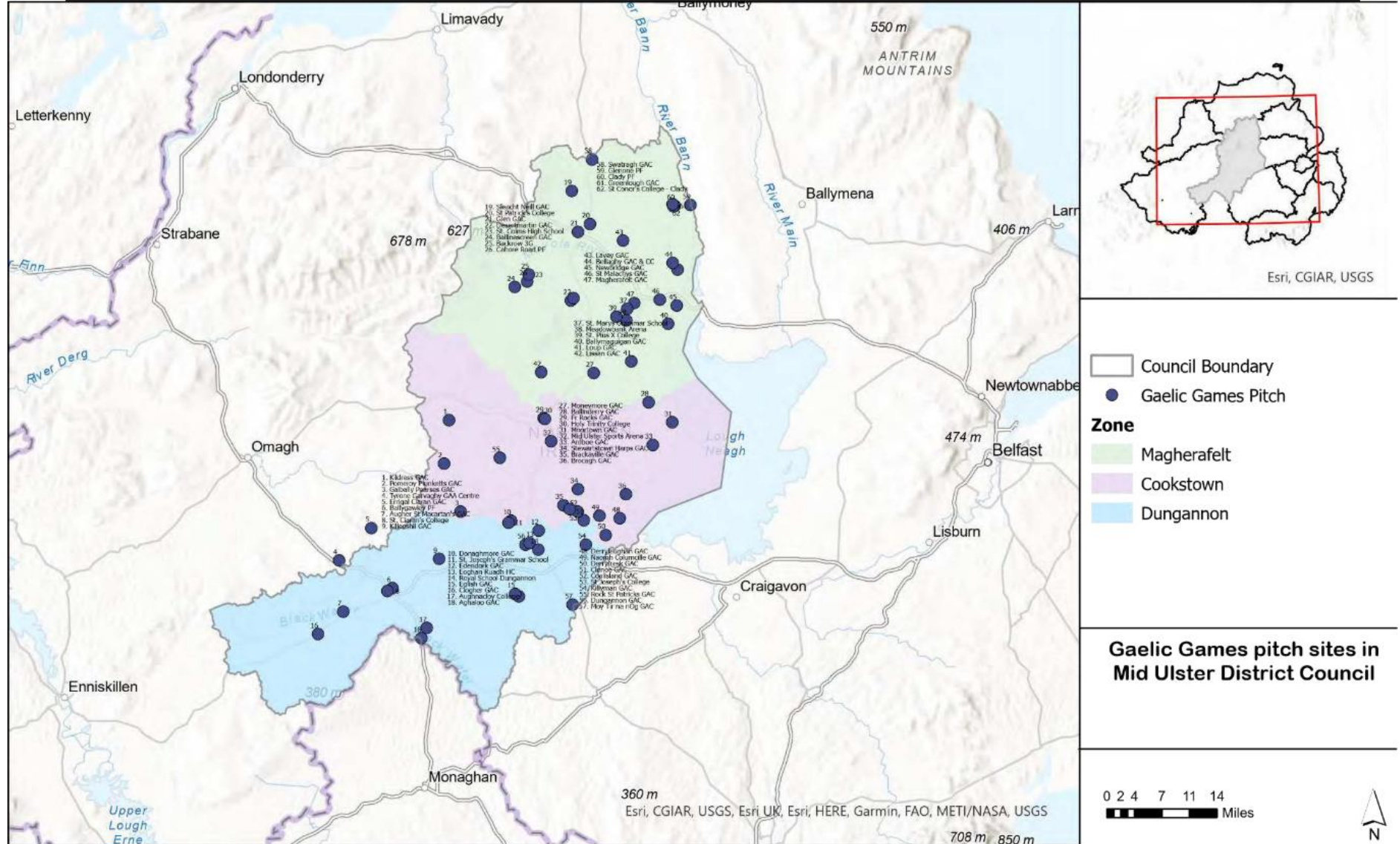
Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality

- 7.2** Gaelic games are traditionally played on a grass pitch which at full regulation size is 145m x 90m. With recent developments in artificial turf pitch (ATP) technology synthetic pitches suited to gaelic games are beginning to appear although ATP's are more suited to gaelic football than to hurling or camogie. The majority of gaelic clubs own their pitch/pitches and premises, however due to the large numbers of teams per club they often make use of community and Council pitch facilities both for training and occasionally for competitive matches. The inventory of gaelic pitches in the Council area is presented in Table 7.1. Three different types of pitch 'ownership' for gaelic games is recorded:-

- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council** – these pitches are maintained, operated and booked through the Council.
- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council leased** – pitches leased from the Council for dedicated use by one gaelic games club
- ❖ **Education** – pitches owned by primary, secondary or tertiary level educational establishments.
- ❖ **Club and community owned/leased** – pitches owned and maintained by a club.

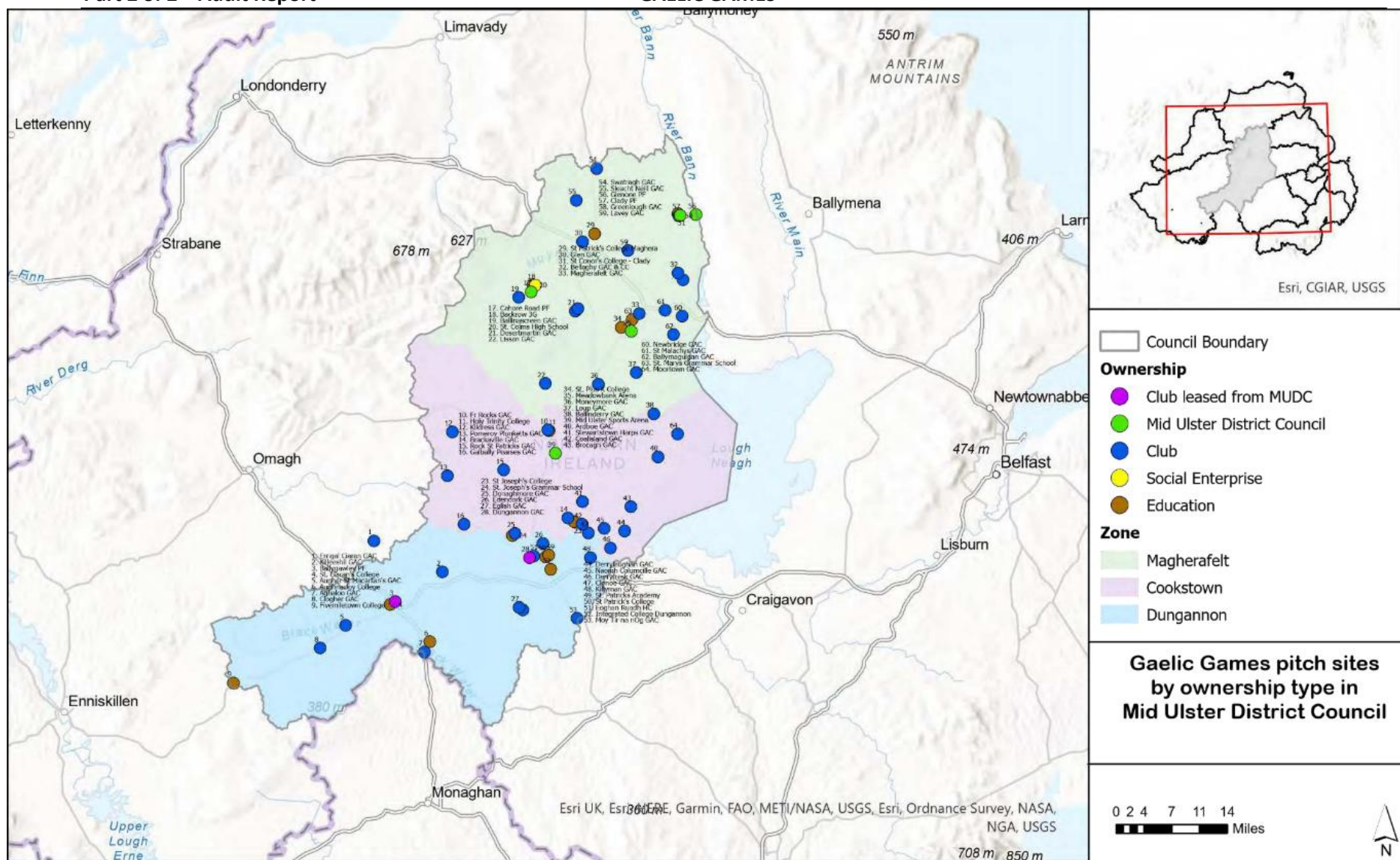
- 7.3** Table 7.1 presents a detailed inventory of gaelic games pitches suitable for competitive matches. For each pitch site, *type*, *number*, *quality* and *additional remarks* are presented. Maps 7.1 accompany the inventory showing pitch location, and ownership.

GAELIC GAMES



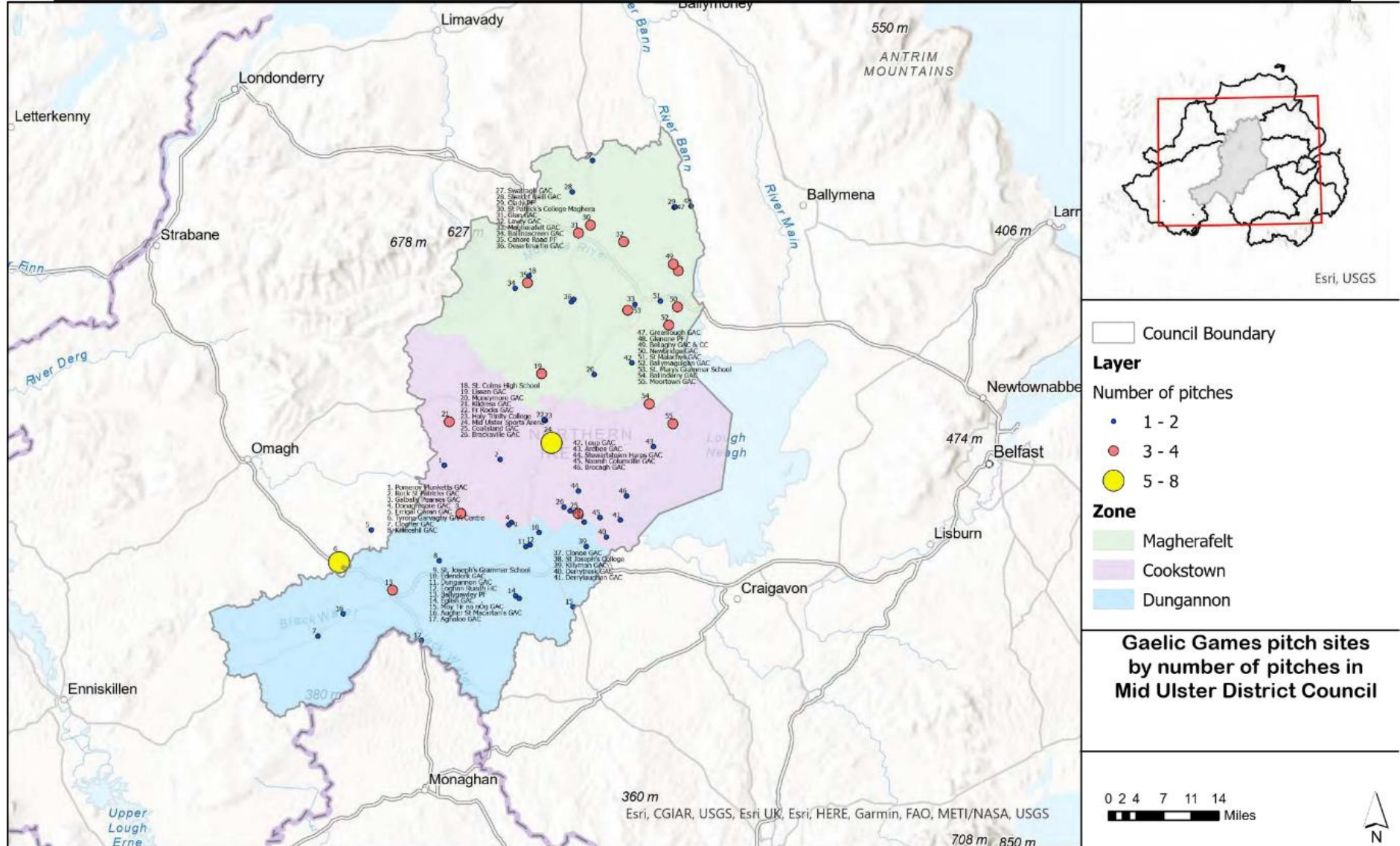
Map 7.1: Location – Gaelic Games Pitch Sites

GAELIC GAMES



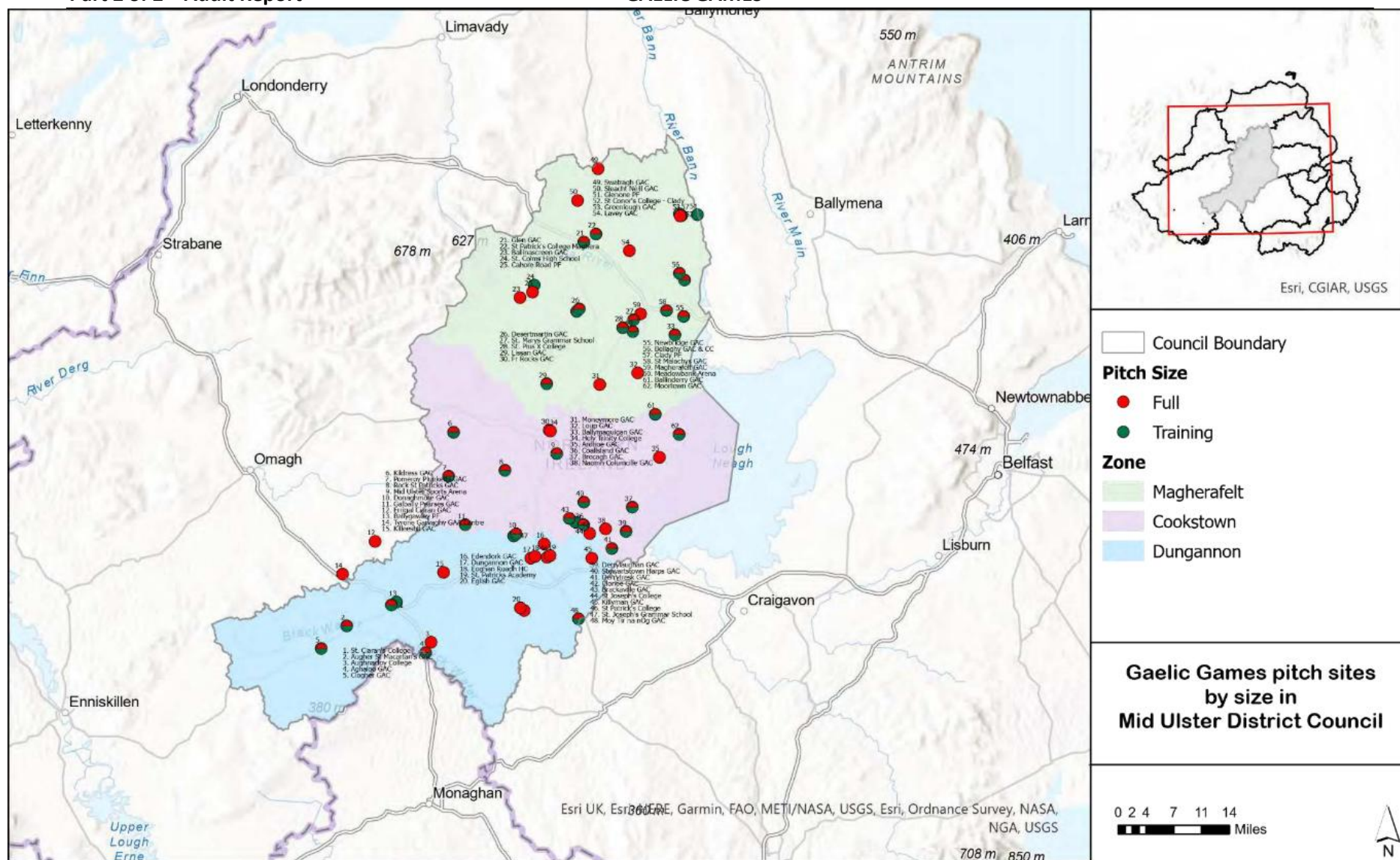
Map 7.2: Ownership – Gaelic Games Pitch Sites

Gaelic Games



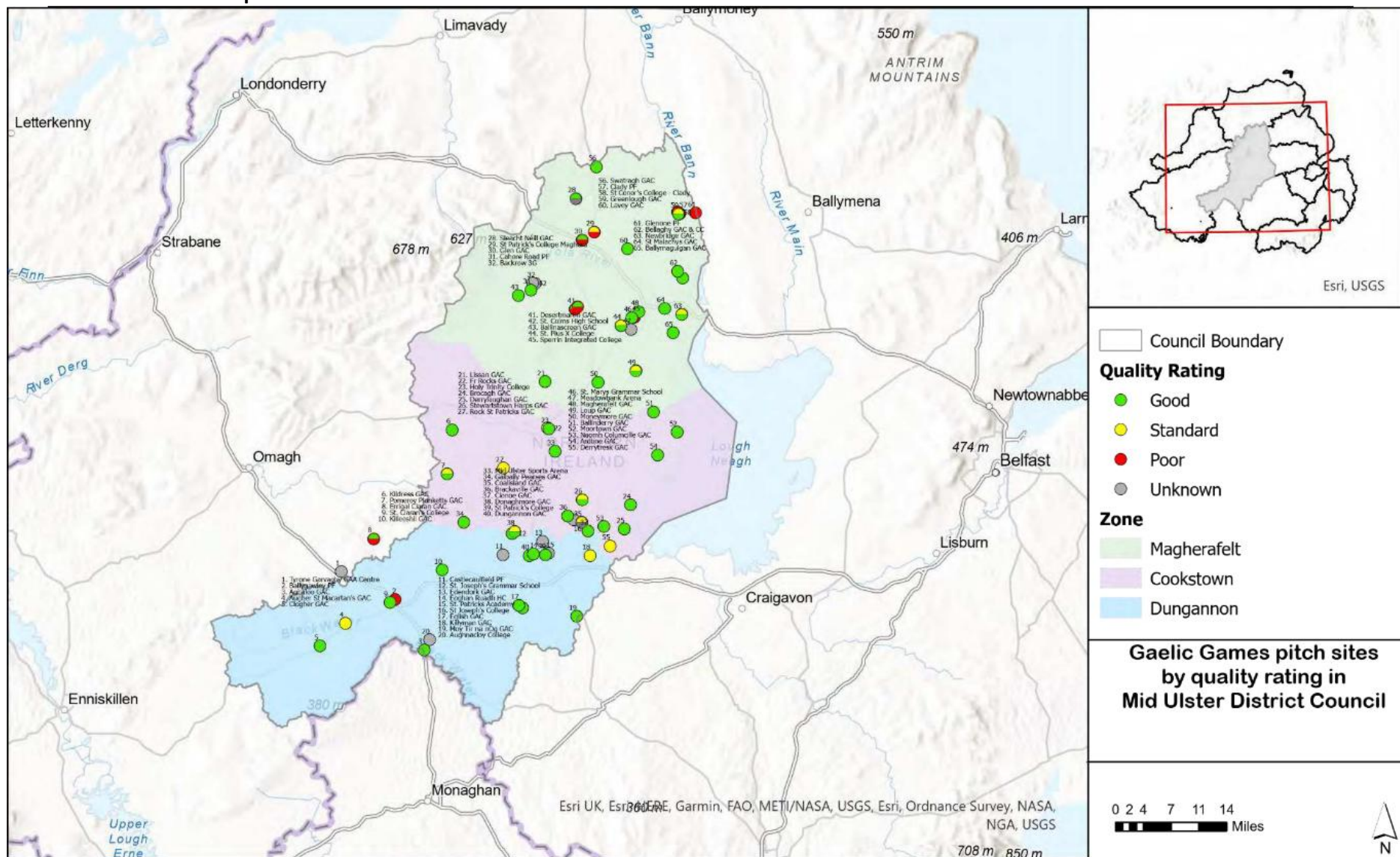
Map 7.3: Number – Gaelic Games Pitches

GAELIC GAMES



Map 7.4: Pitch Size – Gaelic Games

GAELIC GAMES



Map 7.5: Quality – Gaelic Games Pitches

7.4 Two pitch categories are noted:-

- ❖ **Full** – pitches used for matches of all ages and training.
- ❖ **Training** – pitches that are used for training and on occasions Go Games (small-sided matches for U10 and down).

Table 7.1: Gaelic Games – Location, Quantity and Quality of Pitches by Ownership

Club and County Board Owned Pitches

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Pitch Site	Area			
Aghaloo O'Neill's GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	The club has aspirations to develop a walking track and indoor synthetic training area.
Ardboe GAC	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	
Augher St Macartan's GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Standard	The club reports it has recently refurbished the changing facilities and clubhouse and has plans to build a walking track.
Ballinderry Shamrocks GAC	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass 1 x Training 3G	3 x Good	The 3G pitch is available for community use, the club is interested in extending this facility. The club notes the growth in ladies football and future need for match and training facilities to accommodate.
Bellaghy Wolfe Tones GAC & Camogie Club	Magherafelt	3 x Full Grass 1 x Training 3G	4 x Good	The club facilities are split over 2 sites, one grass pitch is located in Bellaghy, 2 grass pitches are located a mile out of the village on the Drumanee Road. All pitches are floodlit, one of the grass pitches requires drainage works.
Brackaville Owen Roes GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training 3G	2 x Good	Changing accommodation in need of an upgrade. The club has additional land which it

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
				would like to develop for club use.
Brocagh GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	Changing accommodation upgrade to accommodate both female and male teams
Clogher Eire Og GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	The Clogher club has aspirations to develop a 3G training facility for club and wider community use.
Clonoe O’Rahilly’s GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The club has purchased land to develop a second pitch and changing accommodation to satisfy a growing membership.
Coalisland Na Fianna GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 2 x Training 3G	1 x Standard 2 x Unknown	3G pitches are small (50 x 15m, 35 x 15m). The club reports it cannot accommodate training and match demand. The club has partnered with Mid- Ulster Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (MCAP) to explore joint development of club and community facilities to address physical and mental health and wellbeing.
Cookstown Fr Rocks GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	Make use of grass pitches at MUSA and Holy Trinity College to accommodate large number of teams. Has aspirations to develop modern clubhouse facilities, the site known as ‘Ratheen Tarmac Play Area’ is one option being explored.
Derrylaughan GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	Looking to develop an indoor ‘playing area/hall’ to accommodate a growing membership.
Derrytresk GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Standard	Club has aspirations to upgrade their changing accommodation

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Donaghmore GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Standard 1 x Good	Large growing club expected to grow further with new housing development in the area. The community has acquired land (and is applying for planning consent) to provide a new full sized floodlit GAA pitch (natural turf or 4G) and changing block. This is strategically located adjacent to St Joseph's Grammar School and St Patrick's PS (and is connected to the overall village housing and facilities via a network of accessible paths (walking and cycling).
Edendork St Malachys GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Unknown	The club notes the distance to MUSA for a full size GAA pitch is too far. The club uses Drumcoo 3G, Drumcoo playing pitches and Dungannon Park regularly for training, however the lack of GAA posts/nets/lines impacts on the standard of training.
Eglish GAC	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	The club has aspirations to provide additional training facilities and improve their spectator stand.
Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The club has aspirations to develop a training pitch, and further develop the clubhouse to accommodate a meeting space and a gym for community use.
Errigal Ciaran GAC	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Poor	The club reports the lack of winter training facilities especially Jan to Mar. The club has a lease agreement with MUDC for a training

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
				pitch at Ballygawley Playing Fields.
Galbally Pearse's GAC	Dungannon	3 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	3 x Good 1 x Standard	The club has aspirations to upgrade the clubhouse and changing accommodation. Reports strong links with St Joseph's Primary School.
Kildress Wolfe Tones GAC	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	3 x Good	The club recently completed a well-appointed indoor community hub. The need for an upgrade of the training grass pitch to a potentially covered 3G surface has been identified.
Killyman St Mary's GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	1 x Standard	
Lavey GAC	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	The club reports it is has reached capacity and requires a third grass pitch primarily due to the growth in number of Ladies Football teams. The club, together with Termoneeny Community Association developed a large indoor community hub facility which has an indoor 3G training hall.
Lissan GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass 1 x Training 3G	2 x Good 1 x Unknown	The club reports it continually makes incremental improvements to club facilities.
Moneymore GAC	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The club has identified the need for a training pitch, gym, clubhouse upgrade. The club has expressed an interest in a lease agreement for MUDC Moneyhaw Playing pitch for development as a training facility.
Moortown St Malachy's GAC	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good 1 x Standard	The club is currently upgrading the changing accommodation.

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Moy Tír na nÓg GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	The club has recently purchased a 5-acre site next to the existing grounds. The club notes "There are no other recreational facilities within our village and no Council facility for a town of its size/population."
Naomh Colum Cille GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The club has plans to develop, disability toilets, a kitchen and showers and has identified the need for a covered wall-ball facility, walking track and playground.
Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	The club is currently carrying out works to their main match pitch. Changing accommodation requires urgent upgrade. The club reports it cannot accommodate Ladies Football above U11 – players have therefore to play with another club if they want to continue to adult Ladies Football
O'Donovan Rossa GAC	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	The club reports there are not enough pitches for training in Magherafelt – 'it is difficult to book slots especially Monday Tuesdays and Wednesdays.'
Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	Work is soon to start on provision of new clubhouse; the club identifies the need for an additional training facility given the increasing number of juvenile members
Rock St Patricks GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Standard	The club has aspirations to purchase land adjacent to the club site for a new pitch development.

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Sleacht Néill GAC	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Unknown	The club has aspirations to develop 'a full sized covered facility.'
Sean O'Leary GAC Newbridge	Magherafelt	1 X Full Grass 2 x Training Grass	1 x Good 2 x Standard	The club is looking to install floodlights on their main match pitch.
Stewartstown Harps GAC	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	The club reports the need for an additional training pitch, a small, covered stand and further development of the clubhouse to include a club shop and gym. There is also the need for increased parking.
St Colm's GAC Ballinascreen	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	The club reports "We currently do not have the facilities on site to cater for all our teams. We rely on using St Colm's HS, Backrow 3G pitches as well as Cahore, however Cahore doesn't have lights and due to poor drainage, it isn't playable after rain fall. Plan is to build an indoor 3G on site for training purposes".
St Malachys GAC Castledawson	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good	The club has aspirations to develop a synthetic juvenile training pitch and notes 'The Council pitch ⁴⁸ in Castledawson is rarely used by anyone. Would be great if this was a rubber based pitch which could be used by GAA and soccer.'
St Patrick's GAC Loup	Cookstown	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	The club reports it has reached capacity and requires a third pitch for training.
St Martin's GAC, Desertmartin	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Poor 1 x Good	The club plans to upgrade the grass pitch playing surface

⁴⁸ Boyne Row Playing Field.

Gaelic Games

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
				and develop changing accommodation.
St Mary's Killeeshil GAC	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	The club has identified the need for floodlighting for a walking track, additional changing block and a second full size pitch.
St Oliver Plunkett's GAC Greenlough	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	The club has identified the need for improve changing accommodation, more training facilities and floodlighting. The club has approach MUDC to consider Community Asset Transfer of the adjoining Council pitch ⁴⁹ . St Conor's College makes use of the club's pitches on a daily basis.
St Trea's Ballymaguigan GAC	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 2 x Training Grass	3 x Good	The club has aspirations to develop an indoor hall.
Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre	Dungannon	5 x Full Grass 1 x Full 3G 1 x Training 3G	7 x Unknown	Tyrone GAA Centre for county squad training.
Watty Graham's GAC Glen	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	2 x Good 1 x Poor	The club has identified the need for an indoor training facility and an all-weather pitch to accommodate demand of growing membership.
Totals 65 x Full Grass Gaelic Pitches 23 x Training Grass Gaelic Pitches 1 x Full 3G Pitch 6 x Training 3G Pitch				
<u>Council and leased from Council</u>				
Ballygawley Playing Fields	Dungannon	1 x Training Grass	1 x Unknown	Leased by Errigal Ciaran GAC
Cahore Road Playing Field	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Used by Ballinascreen GAC

⁴⁹ Clady Playing Field.

Gaelic Games

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Clady Playing Field	Magherafelt	1 x Training Grass	1 x Poor	No official bookings – Greenlough GAC interested in acquiring the use of the pitch
Dungannon Thomas Clarke GAC	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	1 x Poor 1 x Good	Plans ongoing to develop a community hub with a mix of club and DfC funding. Aodh Ruadh LGFA ladies football club uses the club facilities for matches.
Glenone, Portglenone	Magherafelt	1 x Training Grass	1 x Poor	No official bookings
Meadowbank Sports Arena	Magherafelt	1 x Full 3G	1 x Unknown	Multi-sports pitch marked for association football, gaelic games and rugby
Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	1 x Full 3G 1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Unknown	The 3G Multi-sports pitch is marked for gaelic games and rugby. The grass pitches are heavily booked and home base for Tulach Og GAC

Totals

**4 x Full Grass Gaelic Pitch
4 x Training Grass Gaelic Pitch
2 x Full 3G Multi-Sports Pitch**

Education

Pitch Site	Area	Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Aughnacloy College	Dungannon	1 x Training 3G	1 x Unknown	Available for community use
Holy Trinity College	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	1 x Poor	Capital build due to commence. New school and new sports facilities - 3G Pitch, MUGA, Tennis Courts, Handball Walls, Fitness Suite.
Integrated College Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Training 3G	1 x Good	Available for community use mostly by association football and rugby teams
St Conor's College - Clady	Magherafelt	1 x Training Grass	1 x Poor	Small grass pitch – cannot accommodate school demand. School use Greenlough GAC's pitches daily.
St Joseph's College, Coalisland	Dungannon	1 x Training Grass	1 x Unknown	Available for community use by local GAA clubs. The school has aspirations to extend the

Gaelic Games

Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
				pitch to full size for school and community use.
St Patrick's College Maghera	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 2 x Training Grass	2 x Standard 1 x Poor	Available for community use – pitches usually unplayable in winter months.
St Patrick's College, Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Training 3G	1 x Good	Shared campus with St Patrick's Academy – not available for community use.
St Ciaran's College	Dungannon	1 x Training 3G 1 x Training Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	3G pitch is available for community use - 10 hours per week by association football and gaelic games clubs.
St Colm's High School	Magherafelt	1 x Training Grass	1 x Unknown	
St Joseph's Grammar School Donaghmore	Dungannon	1 x Training Grass	1 x Good	Available for community use – good club school links with Donaghmore GAC and states: <i>"The school has the necessary land to position a pitch on its site and has also developed strong links with local sporting groups which would ensure the facility would act as a tremendous hub for both the school and sporting groups in the local area."</i>
St Mary's Grammar School	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 2 x Training Grass	3 x Good	Available for community use. The school has aspirations to develop a 3G floodlit pitch – no funding secured yet.
St Patricks Academy, Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Unknown	Not available for community use
St Pius X College	Magherafelt	1 x Full Grass 1 x Training Grass	1 x Good 1 x Standard	Available for community use by local clubs on an ad hoc basis. The school notes that <i>"The leadership of St Pius X College, through the current School Development Plan, is currently looking at ways to enhance the community use of the school, including our sports facilities, and are open</i>

Location	Quantity	Quality	Remarks
			<i>to conversations to facilitate this ambition”.</i>
Totals 5 x Full Grass Gaelic Pitches 10 x Training Grass Gaelic Pitches 4 x Training 3G			

- 7.5** The majority of gaelic training takes place at the clubs’ own facility however some clubs with a large number of teams do make use of Council and Education facilities presented in the above table especially during the winter months. It is noted that the following clubs do not own their own facilities and are wholly dependent on other clubs, Council and education facilities to deliver club activities: -

Club	Home Match Venue	Training Venue	Comment
Aodh Ruadh LGFA	Thomas Clarke’s Dungannon	Dungannon Park, Drumcoo 3G	This is a Ladies Football club only and is not formally linked to a GAA club.
Tulach Óg GAC	MUSA	MUSA	Juvenile hurling and camogie club.
An Bhinn Bhorb GAC	Benburb Playing Fields	Benburb Playing Fields	First established in 2016 that now requires a full size GAA pitch to fulfil home matches.
Ghleanna Hurling & Camogie Club	Errigal Ciaran leased pitch at Ballygawley Playing Fields	Ballygawley Playing Fields	Established five years ago the club reports that it now needs access to a full size GAA pitch to accommodate home games for U15, U17 and adult teams as the club continues to grow.

Summary of Quantity of Pitches

- 7.6** Unlike association football, gaelic clubs typically train and play matches on the same pitch; often a pitch is used every evening of the week and during the weekend. A summary and breakdown of current gaelic pitches used for matches and training by ownership is given below. Here, all matches and the majority of training takes place on club owned sites. It is noted that training pitches are of a range of sizes.

Gaelic Games Pitches used for matches (full) and training					
Ownership	Full Grass	Full 3G	Training Grass	Training 3G	AstroTurf
Clubs/County Board	65	1 ⁵⁰	23	6	0
Education	5	0	10	4	1
MUDC	2	2	3	8 ⁵¹	1
Leased from MUDC	2	0	1	1	0
Total	74	3	37	19	2

Summary of Quality of Pitches

7.7 A summary and breakdown of current gaelic games match pitch provision by quality is:-

Summary of Quality Rating for Gaelic Match Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs/Community	46	11	3	8	68
Education	3	1	0	1	5
MUDC	2	0	0	2	4
Total	51	12	3	11	77

Comments

- ❖ Two thirds of the pitches are rated as 'Good' ie, 51 out of 77 pitches.
- ❖ Just three pitches are rated as 'Poor'; these are all in club/community ownership (Dungannon GAC, Errigal Ciaran GAC, Desertmartin GAC).
- ❖ Of the 11 pitches where the Quality is 'Unknown' 6 of these are located at Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre.

Clubs, Teams and Players

7.8 In order to assess the impact of training and match provision it is necessary to assess the current and future demand and need. There is a total of 47 recognised gaelic games clubs in the Mid Ulster District Council area providing a mix of gaelic football (male), hurling (male), ladies football (female) and camogie (female). Although the four 'codes' do not share the same governing body they do share pitch and club

⁵⁰ Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre.

⁵¹ Includes the majority of MUDC's 3G pitches excludes full size GAA 3G pitches, so for example includes Maghera LC 3G, Drumcoo 3G, Benburb 3G etc and Backrow 3G – details of these pitches are included in the Association Football section of this report.

facilities either as a totally integrated club in terms of finance and administration or have a working partnership in place between the sports. Forty three of the clubs own their premises, four rely on Council and education pitches; one of these is a ladies football club and the other three are recently established hurling and camogie clubs drawing members from local clubs providing only gaelic football. For the purposes of this audit it was deemed important to account for every club, obtaining completed questionnaires where possible to produce an accurate picture of membership, pitch use, pitch preference and any development plans and aspirations.

7.9 Information from the Council along with desktop research identified a total of 47 clubs satisfying at least one of the following three criteria:-

- a) Home match pitch is located within Mid Ulster District Council area (includes clubs with own pitch).
- b) Use pitches within Mid Ulster District Council area for training.
- c) Over 50% of team members live within Mid Ulster District Council area.

All 47 gaelic games clubs completed the online questionnaire giving a completion rate of 100%.

7.10 The 47 clubs included in this audit are listed below detailing the number of male and female teams across three age categories.

Table 7.2: Gaelic Clubs Team Profile

Club	Go Games (U7 to U10)		Youth (U11 to U18)		Adult		Total No of Teams
	Male	Female	Boys	Girls	Male	Female	All
Aghaloo O'Neill's GAC	2	2	4	4	1	2	15
Aodh Ruadh LGFA	2	0	4	0	1	0	7
Ardboe O Donovan Rossa GAC	2	2	4	4	1	3	16
Augher St Macartan's GAC	0	2	0	4	0	2	8
Ballinderry Shamrocks GAC	4	5	5	7	2	3	26
Bellaghy GAC & Camogie Club	2	2	3	4	2	6	19
Brackaville Owen Roes GAC	0	2	0	4	0	2	8
Brocagh GAC	2	2	4	4	2	2	16
Sleacht Néill GAC	4	4	7	7	3	3	28
Clogher Eire Ogs GAC	0	3	0	4	0	2	9
Clonoe O' Rahilly's GAC	5	6	3	3	1	2	20
Coalisland Na Fianna GFC	3	3	4	4	1	5	20
Cookstown Fr Rocks GAA	6	4	4	6	1	3	24
Ghleanna Hurling and Camogie Club	2	2	1	3	0	1	9

Gaelic Games

Tulach Óg GAC	3	3	2	4	0	0	12
An Bhinn Bhorb GAC	0	2	0	2	0	0	4
Derrylaughan GAC	3	2	3	4	1	2	15
Derrytresk GAC	0	3	0	6	0	2	11
Donaghmore GAC	3	3	4	8	1	3	22
Dungannon Thomas Clarke GAC	0	2	0	4	0	3	9
Edendork St Malachys GAC	8	4	16	8	2	2	40
Eglishe GAC	8	8	10	8	1	3	38
Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club, Dungannon	1	4	5	8	1	3	22
Errigal Ciaran GAC	4	4	5	6	1	4	24
Kildress Wolfe Tones GAC	3	3	4	4	1	3	18
Killeeshil St Mary's GAC	3	3	4	4	1	2	17
Killyman St Mary's GAC	2	2	3	4	0	3	14
Lavey GAC	4	4	8	8	1	5	30
Lissan GAC	3	3	6	6	0	1	19
O'Donovan Rossa GAC	4	4	10	7	2	4	31
Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh	2	4	4	8	2	3	23
Moneymore GAC	1	2	4	2	1	2	12
Moortown St Malachy's	2	2	4	4	1	3	16
Moy Tír na nÓg GAC	3	2	4	4	1	3	17
Naomh Colum Cille GAC	2	5	0	5	0	1	13
Galbally Pearse's GAC	3	3	4	4	1	3	18
Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC	4	2	8	8	1	2	25
Rock St Patricks GAC	2	2	4	4	1	2	15
Sean O'Leary GAC, Newbridge	3	2	3	5	2	3	18
St Colm's GAC Ballinascreen	15	10	11	10	2	2	50
St Malachy's GAC	4	4	4	4	2	2	20
Totals	145	158	201	240	47	116	907

7.11 There is a total of 907 gaelic games teams across the Council area. Typically, clubs will cater for all age groups from U7 to adult, both male and female teams. Player movement between clubs is kept to a minimum as members tend to play for the same club throughout their lifetime, only moving club if they move place of residence. The average number of teams per club is 19. There is a high female participation rate in gaelic games compared to other field sports such as association football and rugby. In common with most other field sports gaelic games provides for small-sided games through the Go Games initiative. Here, matches are played on varying pitch sizes and with varying team numbers depending on age group (U7, U9 and U11). Small pitches are created on full-size pitches with the addition of portable goal posts and cones. Go Game 'Blitzes' (tournaments) rotate around host clubs – on average a club hosts one or two Go Game Blitzes each month.

7.12 The profile of teams and player numbers in the 47 identified clubs is summarised as follows:-

Table 7.3: Gaelic Games Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams			
	Male	Female	Total Male And Female
Membership			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	3,009	2,303	5,312
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	2,832	2,009	4,841
Adult	2,732	1,463	4,195
Total Players	8,573	5,775	14,348
Teams			
Go Games (U7 to U11)	158	145	303
Youth (U12 to U18)	240	201	441
Adult	116	47	163
Total Teams	514	393	907

Adequacy of Provision

7.13 The Sport England model identifies three pitch usage categories:-

Secured Community Pitches

Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management.

Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector which are open to members of the public.

Pitches at education sites which are available for use by the public through formal community use agreements.

Used by community but not secured

Pitches not included above that are nevertheless available for community use, eg, school/college pitches without formal user agreements.

Not open for community use

Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public.

7.14 These categories inform three scenarios used in the quantitative assessment of adequacy of provision for gaelic games pitches, described here along with the number of pitches in each scenario. Given the profile of gaelic games it is assumed that all adult, youth and Go Games are played on full size pitches – youth pitches are not considered in this modelling as they are generally not used in the delivery of competitive games.

7.15 It is noted that the same stock of pitches is used for both matches and training. Training needs are accommodated in the model using ‘Team Equivalents’. Here, information on the number of teams, age group of teams and number of training times a week is used to calculate Team Equivalents. The following assumptions based on the club survey are made in regard to training:-

- ❖ 10 Go Games teams can train on an adult pitch at the same time
- ❖ Go Games teams train once a week
- ❖ Two youth teams train at the same time and on average train 1.5 times a week
- ❖ Adult teams require one full pitch for training and train on average twice a week.

So, for example, from the club survey there is a total of 303 Go Games teams – on average one full size adult pitch could accommodate 10 Go Game teams per training session, therefore a total of 31 pitches is required.

Reference	Description	No of Full Grass ⁵²	No of Training Grass
Scenario 1	All pitches	74	37
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use and pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	64 x Grass	25
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	2 x Grass	1

7.16 There is a degree of subjectivity in determining which adult pitches to include in Scenario 2 as community access to some pitches is allowed but also restricted. The number of pitches in Scenario 2 has purposely been estimated on the low side in order to remain prudent. The following full size grass pitches have been excluded for the reasons listed below:-

⁵² 3G pitches not included as the preferred surface for matches is grass.

Pitch site	No of Pitches	Rationale
Education	5 x Full Grass 10 x Training	Generally not available for matches or training
Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre	5 x Full Grass 1 x Full 3G	Not available for club games – reserved for County teams
3G MUSA and Meadowbank	2 x Full 3G	Gaelic games are almost wholly played on grass pitches in the main playing season April to Sept/Oct
Clady Pitch	1 x Training	Unused for a number of years
Glenone, Portglenone	1 x Training	Unused for a number of years
Total	10 x Full Grass 12 x Training 3 x Full 3G	

7.17 The pitch breakdown for each scenario for full grass match pitches available for adult, youth and small sided games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1		Scenario 2		Scenario 3	
	Full Grass	Training Grass	Full Grass	Training Grass	Full Grass	Training Grass
Club and Community	65	23	60	23	0	0
Education	5	10	0	0	0	0
MUDC & Leased	4	4	4	2	2	1
Totals	74	37	64	25	2	1

Comments

- ❖ Youth, Adult and Go Games matches are played on full size pitches.
- ❖ The Council's 3G pitches at Meadowbank and MUSA are not included in Scenario 2 as 3G pitches are generally not used for gaelic games matches.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude education sector pitches on the basis that community use is generally not available.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude all 5 grass pitches at Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre on the basis that community use is generally not available.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude Clady pitch and Glenone, Portglenone pitches in the training totals as the pitches are currently not booked.

Scenario 1

7.18 The picture of ***gaelic total demand and total supply for Scenario 1***, that is all clubs and all pitches, in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows:-

Table 7.4: Gaelic Games – Demand and Supply Scenario 1 - All pitches

		Matches			Training			Comments
Model Stage	Team categories	Results			Results			Gaelic pitches are used for both training and matches
1. Identifying teams/team equivalents (training)	Go Games (U6 to U11)	303			31 ⁵³			Complete picture of teams and team equivalents from survey
	Youth (U12 to U18)	441			441 ⁵⁴			
	Adult	163			326 ⁵⁵			
2. Calculating home games and training ratio per team per week	Go Games (U6 to U11)	1.5			1.0			Based on a home game every other week. Based on a blitz weekly Based on training every week
	Youth (U12 to U18)	0.5			1.0			
	Adult	0.5			1.0			
3. Assessing total home games and 1-hour training slots per week	Go Games (U6 to U11)	13 ⁵⁶			31			Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up. NB – total youth and adult team equivalents for training is 441 + 245 = 686
	Youth (U13 to U16)	221			441			
	Adult	82			326			
4. Establishing temporal demand for games and training	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Mon PM	12%	15%	11%	22%	17%	16%	This is the demand given the % of matches and training each day of the week as assessed from club surveys for go games, youth and adult. ⁵⁷
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Tues PM	3%	20%	9%	11%	12%	19%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Wed PM	16%	14%	8%	19%	17%	17%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Thurs PM	9%	22%	5%	16%	17%	15%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Fri PM	0%	4%	33%	6%	10%	7%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat AM	42%	2%	3%	10%	9%	3%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat PM	5%	14%	8%	6%	4%	5%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun AM	14%	2%	4%	9%	8%	9%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun PM	0%	10%	18%	3%	6%	10%	
5. Defining pitches/1-hour training slots required each day taking into	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Mon PM	43 pitches			115 slots			Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up taking into match and training capacity.
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Tues PM	52 pitches			102 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Wed PM	39 pitches			117 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Thurs PM	54 pitches			111 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Fri PM	36 pitches			60 slots			

⁵³ 10 teams per pitch once a week.

⁵⁴ 2 youth teams per pitch 1.5 times a week.

⁵⁵ 1 adult team per pitch on average two times a week.

⁵⁶ Go Games Blitzes can accommodate 24 teams i.e., 303 teams / 24 = 13 rounded up.

⁵⁷ Typically, games and training take place across the week – eg 22% of youth games are played on Thursday evening and 33% of adult games are played Friday PM. The peak training nights are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for all teams.

GAELIC GAMES

account pitch capacity	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat AM	12 pitches	45 slots	Capacity is 24 teams ⁵⁸ for Go Games per week Capacity for full size grass pitch is 6 games a week Training capacity is 21 x 1-hour training slots ⁵⁹ It is assumed there are 3 x 1-hour training slots each weekday evening and weekend mornings and afternoons and evenings.
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat PM	38 pitches	30 slots	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun AM	9 pitches	56 slots	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun PM	33 pitches	51 slots	
	Total weekly pitches needed for adult and youth	315/6 = 53 pitches	688/21 = 33 pitches	
Number of total weekly full pitches needed accounting for capacity is		53 + 32 = 86		
6. Establishing pitches available	Go Games, Youth and Adult	74 adult + 18 training⁶⁰ = 92⁶¹ full equivalent pitches		All full and training grass pitches in all ownership.
7. Adequacy of Provision⁶²	Go Games, Youth and Adult matches and training	92-86 = +6 pitches		Supply is meeting demand

7.19 The results for Scenario 1 where all pitches are available, including those under education ownership, show supply is meeting demand with an oversupply of six pitches when considering go games, youth and adult match and training needs.

Scenario 2

7.20 The picture for Scenario 2 for gaelic games in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows where secondary school education pitches are not included as they are generally not available for club matches. Also excluded are all pitches at Tyrone Garvaghy GAA Centre as these are generally not available to clubs so reducing the total available to 64 full and 27 training grass pitches:-

⁵⁸ Assumption – each pitch can accommodate 4 x Go Game pitches and therefore 24 teams for a 2-hour blitz on Saturday/Sunday i.e. capacity is 24 teams.

⁵⁹ Based on club survey returns on weekly pitch usage for games and training.

⁶⁰ A training pitch is deemed equivalent to half a full pitch – whilst it is not suitable for games – many are adequate for training.

⁶¹ Rounded up.

⁶² The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

Table 7.5: Gaelic Games – Demand and Supply Scenario 2 – Club and Community Match & Training Pitches Only

		Matches			Training			Comments
Model Stage	Team categories	Results			Results			Gaelic pitches are used for both training and matches
1. Identifying teams/team equivalents (training)	Go Games (U6 to U11)	303			31 ⁶³			Complete picture of teams and team equivalents from survey
	Youth (U12 to U18)	441			441 ⁶⁴			
	Adult	163			326 ⁶⁵			
2. Calculating home games and training ratio per team per week	Go Games (U6 to U11)	1.5			1.0			Based on a home game every other week. Based on a blitz weekly Based on training every week
	Youth (U12 to U18)	0.5			1.0			
	Adult	0.5			1.0			
3. Assessing total home games and 1-hour training slots per week	Go Games (U6 to U11)	13 ⁶⁶			31			Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	Youth (U13 to U16)	221			441			
	Adult	82			326			
4. Establishing temporal demand for games and training	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Mon PM	12%	15%	11%	22%	17%	16%	This is the demand given the % of matches and training each day of the week as assessed from club surveys for go games, youth and adult. ⁶⁷
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Tues PM	3%	20%	9%	11%	12%	19%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Wed PM	16%	14%	8%	19%	17%	17%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Thurs PM	9%	22%	5%	16%	17%	15%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Fri PM	0%	4%	33%	6%	10%	7%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat AM	42%	2%	3%	10%	9%	3%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat PM	5%	14%	8%	6%	4%	5%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun AM	14%	2%	4%	9%	8%	9%	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun PM	0%	10%	18%	3%	6%	10%	
5. Defining pitches/1-hour training slots required each day taking into	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Mon PM	43 pitches			115 slots			Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up taking into match and training capacity.
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Tues PM	52 pitches			102 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Wed PM	39 pitches			117 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Thurs PM	54 pitches			111 slots			
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Fri PM	36 pitches			60 slots			

⁶³ 10 teams per pitch once a week.

⁶⁴ 2 youth teams per pitch 1.5 times a week.

⁶⁵ 1 adult team per pitch on average two times a week.

⁶⁶ Go Games Blitzes can accommodate 24 teams i.e., 303 teams / 24 = 13 rounded up.

⁶⁷ Typically, games and training take place across the week – eg, 22% of youth games are played on Thursday evening and 33% of adult games are played Friday PM. The peak training nights are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for all teams.

Gaelic Games

account pitch capacity	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat AM	12 pitches	45 slots	Capacity is 24 teams ⁶⁸ for Go Games per week Capacity for full size grass pitch is 6 games a week Training capacity is 21 x 1-hour training slots ⁶⁹ It is assumed there are 3 x 1-hour training slots each weekday evening and weekend mornings and afternoons and evenings.
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sat PM	38 pitches	30 slots	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun AM	9 pitches	56 slots	
	Go Games/Youth/Adult – Sun PM	33 pitches	51 slots	
	Total weekly pitches needed for adult and youth	316/6 = 53 pitches	688/21 = 33 pitches	
	Number of total weekly full pitches needed accounting for capacity is	53 + 32 = 86		
6. Establishing pitches available	Go Games, Youth and Adult	64 adult + 12 training ⁷⁰ = 92 ⁷¹ full equivalent pitches		All full and training grass pitches in all ownership.
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁷²	Go Games, Youth and Adult matches and training	76-86 = -10 pitches		Supply is meeting NOT demand

7.25 Based on PPM quantitative analysis, the results for Scenario 2 show that, when demand is calculated on a weekly basis, there is a shortfall of ten pitches when considering go games, youth and adult matches and training needs.

7.26 It is important to note the following comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Based on the club survey, Scenario 2 assumes that gaelic pitch capacity is 6 games per week (1.5 hours per game) plus 21 x 1-hour training slots, that is, total usage of approximately 30 hours per week – this is dependent on weather and pitch maintenance.
- ❖ Scenario 2 includes does not include the use of 3G facilities for matches and training.
- ❖ Scenario 2 does not include association football grass pitches as these are deemed to be inadequate for gaelic games training due to the lack of catch nets and goalposts, however, from the club survey some association football pitches are being used for gaelic games training as below:-

⁶⁸ Assumption – each pitch can accommodate 4 x Go Game pitches and therefore 24 teams for a 2-hour blitz on Saturday/Sunday i.e. capacity is 24 teams.

⁶⁹ Based on club survey returns on weekly pitch usage for games and training.

⁷⁰ A training pitch is deemed equivalent to half a full pitch – whilst it is not suitable for games – many are adequate for training.

⁷¹ Rounded up.

⁷² The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

Council Pitch	Club
Benburb Playing Fields	Cumann Iomana Duiche Neill, An Bhinn Bhorb
Drumcoo Playing Fields	Edendork St Malachys GAC
Dungannon Park	Aodh Ruadh LGFA & Edendork St Malachys GAC
Ballygawley Playing Fields	Cúchulainn an Ghleanna GAC

Cúchulainn an Ghleanna GAC report:-

‘The facilities in Ballygawley Playing Fields would not facilitate club growth as we rely on use of a soccer pitch for training and use a pitch hired long term by Errigal Ciaran when a large pitch and hurling posts are required. No ball stops are in place meaning we lose a large number of sliotars (balls) throughout a season also.’

- ❖ Scenario 2 does not include pitches under education ownership as these can be less secure, however, from the club survey the following school pitches are used for club training:-

School Site	Club
St Patricks College Maghera	Watty Graham’s GAC Glen
St Mary's Grammar School	O’Donovan Rossa GAC
St Colm's High School	St Colm’s GAC Ballinascreen
Holy Trinity College	Fr Rock St Patricks GAC

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is not meeting demand for training and match needs. This suggests that clubs are delivering matches and training ‘under pressure’ which is likely to impact on current participation rates and future growth. The pressure on current pitch supply may become more of an issue as the large number of youth (male and female) teams filter through to adult levels - present provision would struggle to support any projected growth.

7.27 A third scenario can be modelled where only Council pitches are considered. However, as there are only two grass Council pitches suitable for adult gaelic games demand could clearly not be met, therefore this scenario is not modelled.

Adequacy of Provision Per Area

7.28 The previous sections demonstrate an assessment of pitch provision across the Council area as a whole. In order to provide a more local picture it is of interest to look at adequacy of pitch provision in each of the following three sub-areas by following Scenario 2 provision of pitches:-

- ❖ Magherafelt
- ❖ Cookstown
- ❖ Dungannon

7.29 An inventory of clubs per area is:-

Magherafelt (16)	Cookstown (16)	Dungannon (15)
Ballinderry Shamrocks GAC Bellaghy Wolfe Tones GAC & Camogie Club Sleacht Néill GAC Lavey GAC Lissan GAC Magherafelt GAC Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh Moneymore GAC Sean O'Leary GAC, Newbridge St Colm's GAC Ballinascreen St Malachys GAC, Castledawson St Martin's GAC, Desertmartin St Oliver Plunkett's GAC Greenlough, St Patrick's GAC Loup St Trea's, Ballymaguigan GAC Watty Graham's GAC Glen	Ardboe O Donovan Rossa GAA Brackaville Owen Roes GAC Brocagh GFC Clonoe O' Rahilly's Coalisland Na Fianna GAC Cookstown Fr Rocks GAC Tulach Óg GAC Derrylaughan GAC Derrytresk GFC Kildress Wolfe Tones GAC Moortown St Malachy's Naomh Colum Cille GAC Galbally Pearse's GAC Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC Rock St Patricks GAC Stewartstown Harps GAC	Aghaloo GAC Aodh Ruadh LGFA Augher St Macartan's GFC Clogher Eire Ogs GAC Cúchulainn an Ghleanna Hurling and Camogie Club Cumann Iomana Duiche Neill, An Binn Bhorb Donaghmore St Patrick's GAA Dungannon Thomas Clarke GFC Edendork St Malachys GAC Eglish GAC Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club, Dungannon Errigal Ciaran GAC Killeeshil St Mary's GAC Killyman St Mary's GAC Moy Tír na nÓg GAC

7.30 An inventory of teams per sub-area is:-

Table 7.6: Gaelic Games –Teams by Area

Sub-Area	No all adult teams	% all adult teams	No all youth teams	% all youth teams	No all GG teams	% all GG teams
Magherafelt	70	43%	188	43%	136	45%
Cookstown	50	31%	122	28%	86	28%
Dungannon	43	26%	131	30%	81	27%
Totals	163	100%	441	100%	303	100%

Comments

- ❖ Dungannon has the smallest percentage of adult teams (26%).
- ❖ Magherafelt has the largest percentage of youth and Go Game teams (43%).

7.31 The number of pitches available for training and matches for all age groups under both Council and club ownership is:

Supply of Full and Training pitches per Sub-Area (Grass) for Scenario 2					
	Council		Club		Total full and training grass pitches in Scenario 2
	Full	Training	Full	Training	
Magherafelt	1	0	26	7	27 x Full, 7 x Training
Cookstown	1	1	21	10	22 x Full, 11 x Training
Dungannon	0	0	15	7	15 x Full, 7 x Training

7.32 Table 7.7 presents the PPM Scenario 2 for all 3 sub-areas for adult and youth gaelic football competitive games and training only.

Table 7.7: Gaelic Games – Area based demand and supply for Scenario 2 for matches and training for all teams for grass only full and training pitches

Model Stage	Whole Council		Magherafelt			Cookstown		Dungannon		
1. Identifying teams	Go Games - 303 Youth - 441 Adult - 163		Go Games - 136 Youth - 188 Adult - 70			Go Games - 86 Youth - 122 Adult - 50		Go Games - 81 Youth - 131 Adult - 43		
2. Assessing total home games / 1-hour training slots per week	Go Games – 13 /31 Youth – 221 /331 Adult – 82 /326		Go Games – 6 /14 Youth – 94 /141 Adult – 35 /140			Go Games – 4 / 9 Youth – 61 /92 Adult – 25 /100		Go Games – 4 /9 Youth – 66 /99 Adult – 22 /86		
3. Establishing temporal demand for games and training	Matches	Mon PM	Tues PM	Wed PM	Thurs PM	Fri PM	Sat AM	Sat PM	Sun AM	Sun PM
	Go Games	12%	3%	16%	9%	0%	42%	5%	14%	0%
	Youth	15%	20%	14%	22%	4%	2%	14%	2%	8%
	Adult	11%	9%	8%	5%	33%	3%	8%	4%	19%
	Training	Mon PM	Tues PM	Wed PM	Thurs PM	Fri PM	Sat AM	Sat PM	Sun AM	Sun PM

Gaelic Games

	Go Games	22%	11%	19%	16%	6%	10%	6%	9%	22%
	Youth	17%	12%	17%	17%	10%	9%	4%	8%	17%
	Adult	16%	19%	17%	15%	7%	3%	5%	9%	16%
4. Defining pitches <u>required</u> each week for matches and training for <u>all</u> teams taking into account pitch capacity ⁷³	86 pitches all teams	37 pitches all teams			25 pitches all teams		25 pitches all teams			
5. Establishing pitches <u>available</u> – training pitches are set to be 0.5 x Full pitch	64 x Full 25 x Training =76 pitches	27 x Full 7 x Training =30.5 pitches			22 x Full 11 x Training =27.5 pitches		15 x Full 7 x Training =18.5 pitches			
6. Adequacy of Provision ²²	76– 86 = -10 pitches	30 -37 = -6.5 pitches			27 - 25 = +2.5 pitch		18.5 – 25 = -6.5 pitches			

7.33 An analysis of the adequacy of provision of full and training grass pitches shows the shortfall in pitches is most acute in Dungannon and Magherafelt sub-areas, with an undersupply of seven pitches in each sub-area.

Pitch Use and Capacity – Online Survey

7.34 From the online survey the following clubs recorded the number of hours their pitches, on average, are used for training and matches each week:–

Club	Pitch 1			Pitch 2		
	Total Training for ALL teams (hrs)	Total Matches for ALL teams (hrs)	Total match and training hours (hrs)	Total Training for ALL teams (hrs)	Total Matches for ALL teams (hrs)	Total match and training hours (hrs)
Augher St Macartan's GFC	8	4	12	7	2	9
Clogher Eire Og's GAC	10	4	14	-	-	-

⁷³ Rounded up to full pitches.

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Clonoe O'Rahilly's GAC	25+	10	35	-	-	-
Coalisland Na Fianna GFC	25+	24	49	25	0	25
Cookstown Fr Rocks GAA	22	10	32	10	-	10
Donaghmore St Patrick's GAA	18	12	30	20	7	27
Eglis GAC	20	5	25	15	0	15
ERRIGAL CIARAN GAC	6	6	12	20	1	21
Killyman St Mary's GFC	20	5	25	-	-	-
Moortown St Malachy's	9	4	13	8	3	11
Moy Tír na nÓg GAC	11	5	16	11	0	11
Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC	25+	14	39	25	10	35
Rock St Patricks GAC	25+	6	31	25	0	25
Sean O'Leary GAC, Newbridge	8	20	28	25	10	35
Watty Graham's GAC Glen	25+	12	37	25	12	37
Achadh Lú Uí Néill	25+	10	35	25	6	31
Ardboe O Donovan Rossa GAA	16	13	29	7	5	12
Bellaghy Wolfe Tones GAC & Camogie Club	2	25+	27	25	0	25
An Bhinn Bhorb GAC	3	2	5	-	-	-
Derrylaughan Kevin Barry's GAC	12	8	20	12	2	14
Derrytresk GFC	4	3	7	4	1	5
Edendork St Malachys GAC	25+	20	45	25	0	25
Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club, Dungannon	25+	6	31	7	0	7
Killeeshil St Mary's	10	8	18	20	2	22
Lavey GAC	18	14	32	18	14	32
Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh	7	5	12	18	6	24
Galbally Pearse's GAC	12	8	20	12	6	18
St Malachys GGAC	8	12	20	12	8	20
St Martin's GAC, Desertmartin	12	8	20	15	4	19
St Mary's Killeeshil GAC	10	8	18	16	4	20

Gaelic Games

St Oliver Plunkett's GAC Greenlough	6	14	20	14	4	18
Averages	14 hours per week	10 hours per week	24 hours per week	17 hours per week	4 hours per week	18 hours per week

Comments

- ❖ Sixteen clubs report using their pitches more than 25 hours a week – one club with 49 hours per week combined for training and matches.
- ❖ The average weekly pitch use across all clubs is 24 hours per week for pitch 1 and 18 hours per week for pitch 2 (if a club has one).
- ❖ Given the carrying capacity of a grass pitch is 2 matches per week for 30 weeks of the year as recommended by Sport England, the majority of gaelic pitches are heavily overused. This may to some degree be mitigated through careful pitch maintenance and it is recognised that the season for gaelic games avoids the worst of the winter months. However, over-use of grass pitches continues to be a challenge for clubs; the use of 3G pitches would help to address the problem by reducing the use of clubs' grass pitches for training especially pre-season and when weather poor.

Community Impact

Match and Training Facility Barriers

7.35 In the online club survey, respondent clubs were asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they experience in accessing outdoor match and training facilities; results are:-

Barrier type	Match Facilities % of clubs	Training Facilities % of clubs
Location too distant from club base	26%	21%
Hire cost too expensive for club	26%	32%
Finding venues of suitable condition	32%	34%
Availability of floodlit venues	NA	57%
Can't get booking slot	40%	60%
Condition of pitches	34%	30%
None	13%	13%

Comments

- ❖ The two most significant barriers as noted from the survey are the availability of floodlit venues for training (57% of clubs) and, closely related, 'Can't get

booking slot' (60%). Many clubs are looking to provide training during the winter months in preparation for the season ahead.

❖ The following the comments are also recorded:-

- *We have to travel to Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown to avail of GAA pitches. During wet weather in pre-season, very difficult to get slots.*
- *There is no Gaelic Pitches available in Dungannon locality. The closest GAA pitch available is MUSA and it is 10mile from Edendork and very difficult to get a slot.*
- *No floodlights for evening matches in the period of year when they are needed.*
- *Winter - only one pitch is floodlit, and it is junior size. Full size pitch is 49yrs old and has poor drainage and so is only suitable for summer months. Training pitch suffers during hectic training period where all teams use it at once. Hard to manage booking of one junior size pitch for training.*

Playing Surface

7.36 The survey respondents were asked to indicate their attitude to the use of artificial surfaces including 3G surfaces for matches and training. The results are:-

Table 7.8: Attitude to Training / Match Surfaces – Gaelic Games

Surface	Training			Matches		
	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Polymeric	48%	53%	11%	78%	22%	0%
AstroTurf	41%	33%	26%	80%	13%	7%
3G	17%	37%	46%	54%	30%	15%

7.37 A combined 83% are either favourable or neutral to the use of 3G surfaces for **training** but significantly less at a combined 45% are either favourable or neutral to using 3G for **matches**. Investment in 3G surfaces is an attractive option for local authorities as 3G pitches are reckoned to have the carrying capacity of at least 4 grass pitches⁷⁴. This would go some way to addressing any pitch deficit however anecdotal evidence would suggest that grass surfaces are strongly preferred for matches whilst 3G is acceptable only for winter pre-season training sessions.

⁷⁴ Bridging the Gap Active Places Research Report 2009 – Sport NI.

Membership Growth and Future Plans

7.38 Club membership growth is an important factor when considering facility development and investment. Expected club membership growth over the next 5 years is recorded below for those clubs who completed this question in the online survey.

Membership	No of Clubs
Increase over the next 5 years	42
Stay the same	3
Decrease over the next 5 years	0

Comments

- ❖ Overall, the majority of clubs expect their membership to increase (42 clubs) or remain the same (3 clubs).
- ❖ None of the clubs expect their membership to decrease.
- ❖ Examples of the reasons recorded by clubs for membership change:-
 - *New club facilities being developed, NGB increases*
 - *More houses planned and more families moving to our “commuter town”*
 - *Facilities will be enhanced*
 - *Better facilities, more housing planned.*
 - *More housing planned, club facilities being developed*
 - *With a huge surge of youth at u6 levels, this will have a positive impact on membership years to come. Many new families have joined the club since covid, and their siblings will join when they are older. Key to our membership growth is getting parents involved in physical activities. We run a range of fitness classes throughout the year and offer both a running club and cycling club as an alternative to GAA sports.*
 - *With the increase in recent youth players we would hope that we can retain as many as possible and that they progress into the older teams. Tyrone County Board have discussed the introduction of a recreation league (Junior B) and we want would to be entering a third adult men's team into that which would mean players who have stepped away from the adult teams will return as this league would not require as much commitment to the Senior and reserve leagues. We also released details of new club facilities which will also go a long way to player retention and ease the congestion of pitches availability which will allow for training sessions to be at suitable times. Currently our club facilities do not cater for hosting male and female training at the same time and therefore the new facilities will ease that problem.*

- *Club profile is increasing and we are moving toward introduction of adult teams for both male and female. With a growing population in the Ballygawley and Clogher Valley areas, we expect to see an increase in juvenile membership also.*
- *Club will continue to grow with teams at all ages in next 5-10 years.*
- *100's of new families (mostly young professionals) have moved into the parish, who have brought a new generation of members to our doorstep. The club's link with the 3 local, vibrant primary and secondary schools offers the ability to have children join Donaghmore GAA along with their school mates. We expect the recent exponential rise in membership to continue for years to come. The club is reacting to this, and with increased playing numbers, we have also increased the number of coaches, and their training, to ensure we can offer the best coaching possible. We have also begun to field two teams at every level in Male youth to ensure that we are able to offer gametime for all members.*
- *Children coming from the new houses been built at present. the number of houses in village area has double since 2000, with a further 50% growth in the next 5-10 years. There has also been a significant number of new build houses in the outlying parts of our locality. Numbers are currently increasing in both primary schools in our catchment.*
- *Improved retention of ladies players given better structures and focus on integration of Minor girls into Senior Ranks. Club has focussed on providing opportunities for all, with increased number of teams now entered at youth level (we now have two U15 & U13 teams for Boys). This will lead to less dropout as youngsters want to play, not sit on side-lines. We currently have 4 adult men's teams, which provides an opportunity for all young adults to continue to participate at a level which meets their needs and abilities. As increased numbers come through the youth ranks this will lead to increased numbers of adult players at both Men and Ladies level.*
- *Better youth structure meaning increased retention of players*
- *Club is better organised. More matches to play. More female players*
- *New club facilities being developed along with additional housing development.*
- *New club facilities are to be started in the later part off this year and a lot more emphasis is being put into enjoying the game with our youth teams*
- *There has been no housing developments in the area in the last 20 years plus but some new developments are planned which we hope will lead to greater participation.*
- *Lack of available housing, social, affordable private developments and new build single dwellings within our area is the single biggest issue facing our club in the incoming period ahead*

- *Club is better organised with a development plan for a new hall that will encourage more activities for the community. Mother's and Others team, lads and dads team as well as rounders started in recent weeks as well as the increase of numbers in the running club.*

7.39 Emerging from future plans/need responses in the club survey are three main strands: *match pitch needs, training facility needs* and *ancillary needs* - see Table 7.9 for the number of clubs making comments under these three strands. The comments are presented in full in Table 7.10 together with remarks from the final 'Any Other Comments' question of the survey.

Table 7.9: Summary Of Emerging Strands In Relation To Future Plans And Needs

Club	Additional Match Pitch (Lease, Home)	Training Facilities (grass, 3G, indoor)	Ancillary Facilities (Wall Ball, floodlights, parking, changing)
Aghaloo GAC		✓	
Aodh Ruadh LGFA	✓		
Ardboe O Donovan Rossa GAA			
Augher St Macartan's GFC			✓
Ballinderry Shamrocks GAC		✓	
Bellaghy GAC & Camogie Club			✓
Brackaville Owen Roes GFC		✓	✓
Brocagh GFC			
Sleacht Néill GAC		✓	
Clogher Eire Ogs GAC		✓	
Clonoe O'Rahilly's GAC		✓	
Coalisland Na Fianna GAC		✓	
Cookstown Fr Rocks GAC		✓	✓
Cúchulainn an Ghleanna Hurling and Camogie Club	✓		
Cuman uí Néill Tulach Óg			✓
An Bhinn Bhorb Benburb GAC	✓	✓	
Derrylaughan Kevin Barry's GAC		✓	
Derrytresk GFC			✓
Donaghmore St Patrick's GAA		✓	
Dungannon Thomas Clarke GFC		✓	✓
Edendork St Malachys GAC		✓	
Eglish GAC		✓	✓
Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club, Dungannon		✓	✓
Errigal Ciaran GAC		✓	

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Kildress Wolfe Tones GAA		✓	
Killyman St Mary's GFC			
Lavey GAC	✓		
Lissan GAC			
Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh		✓	
Money more GAC	✓	✓	
Moortown St Malachy's			✓
Moy Tír na nÓg GAC		✓	
Naomh Colum Cille			✓
O Donovan Rossa GAC Magherafelt			✓
Galbally Pearse's GAC			✓
Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC		✓	✓
Rock St Patricks GAC		✓	
Sean O'Leary GAC, Newbridge			✓
St Colm's GAA Ballinascreen		✓	
St Malachy's GAC Castledawson	✓	✓	
St Martin's GAC, Desertmartin			✓
St Mary's Killeeshil	✓		
St Oliver Plunkett's GAC Greenlough	✓	✓	
St Patrick's GAC Loup		✓	
St Trea's Ballymaguigan GAC			✓
Stewartstown Harps GAC		✓	✓
Watty Graham's GAC Glen		✓	
Total Number	8	28	18

Comments

- ❖ 28 clubs made comments in relation to the need for additional, winter all-weather (3G) and grass training facilities.
- ❖ 8 clubs made comment on the need for match pitch development, including exploring lease agreement with MUDC.
- ❖ 18 clubs noted the need for upgrade/improvement to ancillary facilities including changing accommodation and community trim trails.

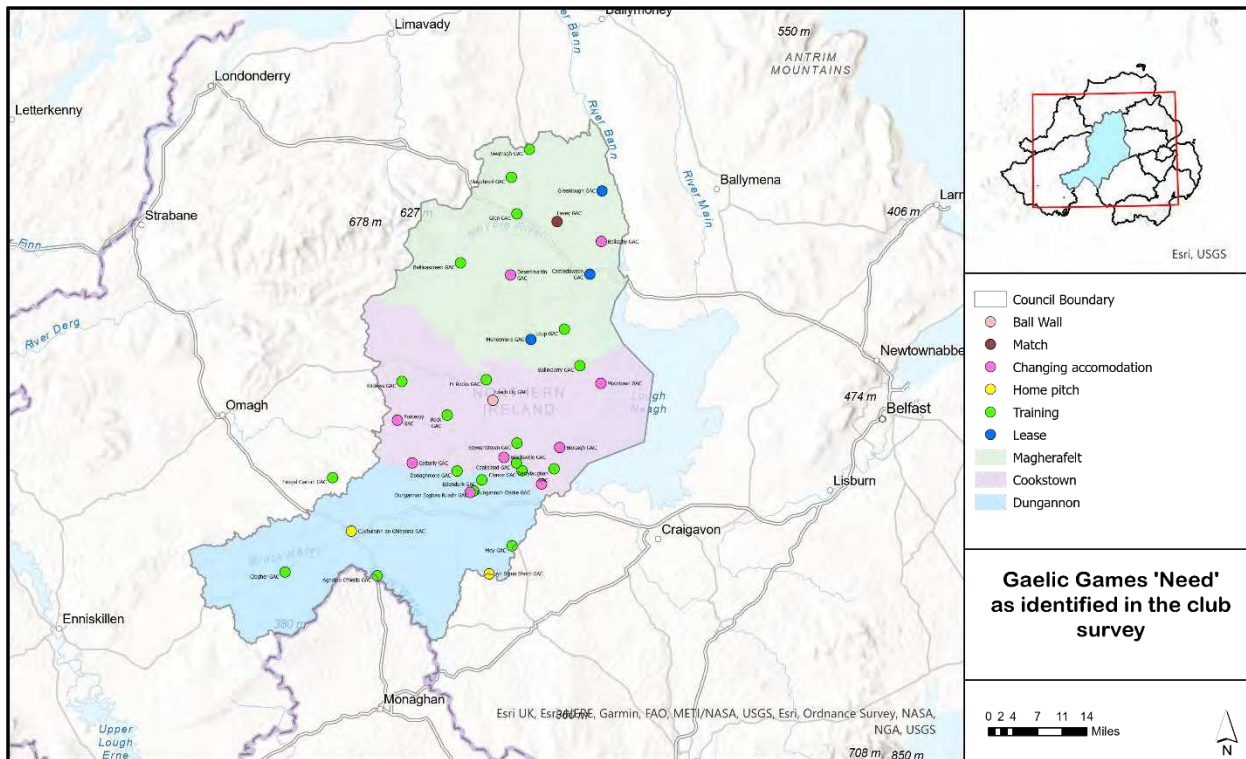


Table 7.10: Comments in Relation to Future Plans and Needs

Club Name		Need Themes
Achadh Lú Uí Néill	<p>We're currently in the middle of a development plan. Work being done includes improvements to current changing rooms, stand and gym. Budget dependent we'd also like to build a walking track and a covered training area with synthetic surface. Present difficulties are covid has put a stop to our fundraising, and the cost of the work we want to do has risen considerably.</p> <p>We rely heavily on our own pitch provision currently, but if there was a covered training facility for our youth and senior teams to use in the winter would be a fantastic asset.</p>	Training - Indoor
Aodh Ruadh LGFA	<p>Don't have our own facilities so completely dependent on other clubs to support us with Pitch availability. Train on Council pitches in Dungannon but can't play any matches as not adequate for GAA - pitch size, goalposts etc.</p> <p>No facilities, dependent on generosity of Dungannon Thomas Clarkes.</p>	Home pitch

Club Name		Need Themes
Ardboe O Donovan Rossa GAA	No comment	
Augher St Macartan's GFC	We recently refurbished our changing facilities and clubhouse. Increasing the size of changing rooms and quality of shower facilities. We now have plans now to build a public walking track around the premises.	Ancillary
Ballinderry Shamrocks	<p>We are getting to the stage where we have to have a rota system as we have more teams and also more member and public Interest in our Astro facility.</p> <p>We need to maintain our pitches to ensure they are kept to the standard required for our many players. We need to main our 4g pitch and even extend it if possible. We may need another pitch if we extend to ladies football which demand is growing for. We need to plan for new changing rooms on our premises or develop the existing or both.</p>	Training – 3G
Bellaghy Wolfe Tones GAC & Camogie Club	We currently have a need to upgrade existing changing rooms and toilet facilities at our Pairc Sean de Brun venue in Bellaghy. One of our pitches is out of action during the winter months due to water logging and would require significant investment in order to bring it up to a standard in order to be in use all year round.	<p>Changing accommodation</p> <p>Ancillary</p>
Brackaville Owen Roes GFC	<p>We envisage a complete refurbishment of our changing facilities in the next few years as they have been in existing since the early 1980s and require updating and to co formally accommodate our growth in numbers and away teams. Also shower and toilet facilities for the teams and spectators require upgrading. We have a significant amount if ground which we have filled and hope to develop in the coming years with possibly a 3rd smaller pitch, a ball wall etc. We also envisage raising the fence around our existing 4g facility as our premises are quite open and we are prone to littering, minor vandalism and general control issues especially after dark.</p> <p>In the past we found that pitch provision in the Council area was lacking especially with the number of clubs with no training pitches. We found that you really had to be on the ball early to get a booking especially in pre-season such was the demand.</p>	<p>Changing accommodation</p> <p>Training</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
Brocagh GFC	As there is a mix of male and females using the club at the same time, the club is looking about extending in the future to the girls and men don't have to use the same area while getting changed.	Changing accommodation
CLG Roibeard Eiméid Sleacht Néill	It is our intention to erect a full sized covered facility. The pitches in our area of MDC are limited and we find it difficult to get availability hence our infrequent use of these.	Training - Indoor
Clogher Eire Ogs GAC	<p>With increasing numbers at youth level we hope to source funding for an AstroTurf or 4 g pitch 50m by 30m which we have already made contact with the Council and other funders for the use of the whole community in the village and not just for GAA use. In the medium term we also need to enlarge our changing rooms built 30 years ago so are dated and small. see letter we are currently circulating.</p> <p>Dear All, I am writing on behalf of the Clogher community and surrounding area as the development officer of Clogher Eire Og Gaelic athletic club. Clogher and the Clogher valley, as you may be aware lies on the southerly boundaries of the Mid Ulster Council and straddles the border of Co Monaghan. Clogher is 18 miles from Monaghan town, 18 from Omagh, 25 from Dungannon and 25 From Enniskillen. Clogher Eire Og is a small rural club. The club was founded in 1938. The closest town with leisure facilities is @20 miles away. Football based and run on a totally voluntary base it provides free access to amenities such as a floodlit walking trail around the pitch, an indoor gym with ladies and gents' fitness, health and wellbeing classes, and coaching in a safe family-friendly environment just of the village main street. Over the past 15 years in particular, with the support of the Council fundraising and other minor grants we have created a focal point for the community to meet, communicate and feel comfortable with the addition of the walking trail, and an indoor fitness gym to compliment the 2 grass pitches already onsite. The club is registered with the Mid-Ulster Council and has supported its efforts as a drop of point before members voluntarily delivered essential supplies to vulnerable in the area during the early stages of lockdown 2020. We organised members to support Businesses with deliveries of essential groceries, the butchers & the pharmacy to self-isolating people The aim of everyone in the area is to increase provision and usage to a greater number of the population from a diverse range of ages</p>	Training – 3G

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>and all communities which in turn benefits the club and the community. In recent years we have actively promoted health and wellbeing through our new facilities being made available to the wider community at community fun days, linking up with other sports clubs in Clogher valley, a blood donation awareness cycle and a 5km walk run in association with the local primary school and last year before lockdown a 24 hour fundraising venture in aid of mental health. Any new dynamic will be a positive factor. The objective is to offer extra attractions in the form of a 4G pitch on the club grounds. To do this we need to secure funds from whatever opportunities and funding groups are available at this difficult time for those with limited access to facilities to support their mind and wellbeing. Clogher is currently rated 16th out of 542 for proximity to Services Deprivation As recorded in the last census http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk. We recognise that we are the most suitable area to develop this idea due to our location off the village in a fully floodlit area which is safe to use all year around. The addition of a 4G pitch will help the local population to still exercise during the winter season and inclement weather which is currently not available. Clogher is the only Village in the Clogher Valley without such a facility. One is located at Fivemiletown College, One at Augher Central School and another Close to Augher at Roughan Hall. In Ballygawley one located at St Ciaran College and one at the Council playing fields. The local St Macartans' Primary school does not have the space to develop such as facility. Increasing numbers at the school negate an expansion which is likely to reduce play areas outdoors. The Local Playgroup is currently based straight across the main road from Clogher GAC so again we can act as a vital link to support both education facilities if required. Sport NI have no suitable currently available from very recent enquiries, We have also made enquiries indirectly to the department for communities. We have started to canvass local political representatives how we can move this forward. Based on a 50m by 30m plan of the area immediately available the cost to create the pitch costs @ £100k . this does not include ground levelling to make ready, and perimeter fencing and lighting of the pitch which could reach a total towards £140k . The club cannot provide this level of funding and is seeking any support and guidance that can be offered.</p> <p>Due to our location as stated in the letter above which we are circulating to try and source funds we have limited access to leisure</p>	

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>facilities other than those we develop ourselves which puts a financial burden and time burden on volunteers as we have no paid staff.</p>	
<p>Clonoe O’Rahilly’s GAC</p>	<p>Only have one pitch for nearly 20 teams. We purchased land to build 2 new pitches, that includes changing rooms and covered stand (Planning permission already obtained) At the moment we can't cope with demand for training and Ladies changing facilities. Second field has been purchased next to existing field. However, require funds to do second pitch up and to provide additional changing facilities. Not enough pitches in this area.</p>	<p>Training - Grass</p>
<p>Coalisland Na Fianna GAC</p>	<p>We have to travel to Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown to avail of GAA pitches. During wet weather in pre-season, very difficult to get slots.</p> <p>As we have only 1 full size pitch and a huge amount of male and female teams, demand for training g and matches is taking a huge toll on the playing surface. We have access to a small green area adjacent to our grounds which we use for overflow training but on most evenings, training sessions are cancelled due to home games. We had been in negotiations with neighbouring ground that encompasses the old mine pit (19 acres) of which 10 acres are ideal for 2 additional pitches, a walking running track and play park. The owners, however, were asking £750,000 for the property and subsequently have put the ground on the market. This ground would be ideal, however, we could not afford the asking price and the money required to make safe the old mine pit area which is prone to anti-social behaviour. We have also partnered with MACP mental health charity who are looking for a greenfield site to build a mental health facility. We believe the partnership could create a model mental and physical wellbeing hub in the Mid Ulster Area that would have a massive benefit for the residents of the Coalisland area. Both groups, unfortunately, do not have the resources to purchase, make safe and develop the current site.</p> <p>We need a massive investment in our terraces and covered stand. We required resurfacing, new retainer walls, disabled access ramps, crowd barriers and safety markings and signage.</p>	<p>Training</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>Before Covid, we had a massive lack of playing surfaces at Coalisland Fianna. Pre-season we were able to haphazardly book Mid Ulster Sports Arena but we were asking over 90 players to travel a round trip of 20 miles to attend training sessions. Since Covid, numbers have exploded with to date 735 registered adult and youth members. A record high and up over 110 members from our previous high in 2018. Within a 3 mile radius of Coalisland there exists 9 Gaelic Football clubs, 1 independent hurling club, and 2 soccer teams and pitches in the area are at full capacity. Unfortunately, with continuously growing numbers, Coalisland Na Fianna is going to have to curb training sessions and cap youth membership in order to just fulfil current fixtures and commitments. We desperately need help!!</p>	
<p>Cookstown Fr Rocks GAC</p>	<p>The problem out at Mid-Ulster Sports Arena is for young children having to walk from Gaelic Pitch or 4G back to the toilet block. Changing facilities of our club changing rooms at Paddy Cullen Park are shared and which is not appropriate when Male and Female training is on at the same time.</p> <p>Due to the increased numbers of both male and female players, our current club rooms do not cater for hosting male and female training and matches at the same time. As our players showers and toilets are communal and poor quality, this is also not suitable for female players who choose not to wash at the club and go straight home after games and training. We currently have one pitch to share among all our teams and only for the agreement / use of Holy Trinity College Grass pitch we would have major difficulty in catering for our large numbers. With the proposed plans for HTC school, we are now entering into a new agreement with HTC to fund flood lights to their new 4G pitch which is planned for the same location as their current grass pitch. Although we will lose the use of this pitch during the construction period, the agreement will give us after school use of a high quality full size 4G GAA pitch with flood lights. As a club we therefore decided to tie this in with new club facilities development and a covered stand. We are currently reviewing a number of options for the location of the new club facilities building. We are intending this new building to have event and meeting spaces so it can made available for local community needs and other sporting clubs, such as dancing, drama, boxing etc. We have been advised by HTC of the possible use of what's known as 'Ratheen Tarmac Play Area' as</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>Changing accommodation</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>this was where the original school changing block was to be located but this would require engagement with local residents. This would be our preferred option as locating our new changing block on the grass area between Convent Road and the Tarmac area would allow safe and easy access down onto HTC new 4G pitch. There would also be scope to make use of the tarmac area with the possibility of upgrading the area to a secure flood lit 4G surface for use with youth mini games up to Under 12. This would mean all club training and matches could be hosted within the club vicinity in the town centre. With any new development it will require major fund raising around the community and further afield and we are in the process of setting this up over the next number of months and it would also require Mid-Ulster Council to review the possibility of making use of this area at Ratheen.</p> <p>New Changing and Community Building Cover Stand.</p> <p>Paddy Cullen Park, Convent Road, Cookstown is preferred. For competitive adult games there can be big spectator attendances and therefore this needs to be managed, with traffic control, entrance fee, crowd control at pitch. This is not possible at Mid-Ulster Sports Arena. There is no fence around the Gaelic pitch which has caused issues in the past, although there is a fence around the Gaelic 4G it does not cater for taking gate fees. We also feel because it is not within the town centre it does not cater for walking spectators. MUSA is also used by a number of local GAA clubs and does not provide any home advantage. HTC pitch playing surface is only good enough for training for a number of reasons. It is only junior size, there are no pitch markings and no fence separation for spectators.</p> <p>I have noticed over the past number of years the use of Fairhill playing fields has not been as active as it used to be. For example, the local soccer street league mainly being played out in MUSA. As soccer matches are usually played on a Saturday, I would ask you to look into adding Gaelic Goals at each end of this area. This would allow Gaelic training to take place over the 2 soccer fields without taking away the actual soccer fields and also make use of parking and changing facilities. The location is ideal within the town centre for all our playing members, and it would greatly help us during the Holy Trinity College Re-development.</p>	

Club Name		Need Themes
Cúchulainn an Ghleanna Hurling and Camogie Club	<p>Pitch used for training is soccer pitch with soccer posts. Unsuitable for hurling/camogie matches. Also, pitch not suitably lined so unusable.</p> <p>Using soccer pitch for hurling & camogie training. Surface is good but posts, pitch size and pitch marking are inadequate.</p> <p>As a five year old club we have plans to progress into older age groups for juvenile hurling & camogie as well as progressing with senior teams. The facilities in Ballygawley Playing Fields would not facilitate club growth as we rely on use of a soccer pitch for training and use a pitch hired long term by Errigal Ciaran when a large pitch and hurling posts are required. No ball stops are in place meaning we lose a large number of sliotars (balls) throughout a season also. Ideally, we would look to develop a suitable playing field and changing rooms to be able to successfully host training and matches as the club grows.</p> <p>The Mid Ulster Council have been extremely helpful in facilitating our needs this season as we look to establish a home for hurling and camogie in the wider Clogher Valley Area. the committee of Cúchulainn and Ghleanna are keen to work with the Mid Ulster Council to work to develop a home for hurling and camogie that can be utilised by the wider community within the area.</p>	Home pitch
Cuman uí neill Tulach Óg	<p>Being forced by MUSA when grass pitches are free. Pitches not available on Sunday and bank holiday. Facilities not available- particularly a ball wall.</p> <p>Hurling is the fastest growing sport in Mid Ulster Council is doing nothing to support this. The current situation in MUSA with grass pitches not being available to hurlers is not sustainable - the club will be forced to look at other provision. There has been a number of requests for a ball wall provision- we have attended a number of consultation where tennis and running tracks haven't been mentioned but a number of clubs have requested a ball wall - despite this we are getting a running track and tennis courts at MUSA.</p>	Ball wall
Cumann Iomana Duiche Neill, An Bhinn Bhorb	The club will be fielding an U15 team soon and the Council pitch is not regulation size for a Hurling game.	Home pitch

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>We are a new club who are growing year on year. The past 2 years have been difficult, but we are adding older teams as we grow. At present the facilities in Benburb can accommodate the younger groups but the older age groups will require a regulation sized training and playing field. Within a few years we will be fielding an adult team and proper changing facilities will be required for visiting clubs. At present we have a lot of difficulties in organising any tournaments as the facilities are not big enough. As we are a hurling club we also require ball catching nets which are not in place. We have the use of a shared storage cabin but we have a lot of equipment and there is not enough space to store everything, the coaches are taking equipment home after each session. Ideally our club would like their own ground in order to establish ourselves in the area and this may be something we will look into in the future.</p> <p>While we are grateful for the use of the Council facilities in Benburb, they are a shared ground and are mainly designed for soccer playing. The GAA regulations require a minimum playing size of 130m x 80m and regulation goal posts which are not possible in Benburb at the moment.</p>	
Derrylaughan Kevin Barry's GAC	<p>During the summer months, our playing fields can be adversely affected by warm weather leaving them burnt out and bumpy. Has a particularly bad effect on our training field which then becomes less desirable for training, leave our main training pitch forced to hold the majority of sessions which leads to more clashes between teams and pitch unavailability.</p> <p>Over the past number of years we have undertaken a number of developments on our grounds relating to our playing/changing facilities, last year saw us complete an enclosed ball wall development area encompassing a large player developmental ball wall, fully fenced with the option to enclose additional goalposts, this we intend to be make fully floodlit in the near future to complete the area. We have fully developed plans for a proposed indoor playing area hall with provisional facilities in addition to act as an extension onto our current changing room facilities to be located between our two playing fields. These plans have been submitted for planning approval. We lack an indoor playing/training facility suitable for our youth in particular during the times of year of inclement weather which has led to us</p>	Training - Indoor

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>previously having to source indoor halls at St Joseph's Coalisland School and at MUSA but this provides difficulties for parents/transportation, having something on site we've found in relation to other activities is much more beneficial for our members. We're also finding out recently with increased youth member representation for both football and camogie, we have large numbers for U-6/8/10's for both codes, in addition to accommodating other youth and Adult teams at both levels, that our two playing fields can be particularly crowded especially during weekday evenings, having additional playing areas would help to ease these burdens for our expanding player base.</p>	
Derrytresk GFC	<p>We will be looking to improve our changing area and club house to bring it up to modern standard. We have recently renovated our playing field.</p>	Changing accommodation
Donaghmore St Patrick's GAA	<p>Our facilities have become oversubscribed, so we are often having issues of double booking.</p> <p>Winter - only one pitch is floodlit, and it is junior size. Full size pitch is 49yrs old and has poor drainage and so is only suitable for summer months. Training pitch suffers during hectic training period where all teams use it at once. Hard to manage booking of one junior size pitch for training.</p> <p>Our GAA club has 400+ members and the neighbouring St Josephs Grammar School has 700+ pupils. The adjoining Primary School has 230 pupils. At present, we share one full sized grass pitch, last resurfaced in 1972. We have one junior-sized sand carpet pitch, with floodlighting and a primary sized pitch of moderate quality. Our aim is to resurface our main playing pitch to modern standards (sand carpet) and to add floodlighting. We also intend to extend the junior pitch to full size and improve the floodlighting to modern standards. Finally, we have begun a project with an aim to develop a nearby 4G pitch with floodlighting and running track, which will be used by St Joseph's Grammar during the day, and Donaghmore GAA in the evenings and weekends. These facilities could potentially have 1200-1600 playing members over the next 5yrs with the projected growth in Donaghmore parish. Alongside the new 4G pitch, we aim to develop separate changing/toilet facilities, as well as suitable car parking.</p>	Training – 3G

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>Two full sized floodlit pitches are improvements/extensions of current pitches. Additional outdoor toilet block (including disabled toilets) and outdoor storage also planned. 4G pitch would also require changing/toilet facilities and car parking.</p> <p>The appetite for Gaelic Games in Donaghmore is at an all-time high, and with continued development in the parish (live planning permission for another 180 houses between Castlecaulfield and Donaghmore, with development imminent on some of these), we expect our membership to grow and grow. We have also seen a great desire for parents to get involved in coaching. Our 3 primary schools and Grammar school are thriving, and at present we have one full sized grass pitch between us. This pitch is not-floodlit and is almost 50 years old. Our 5 year plan has left us with a long term vision, and all lands required for any extension of existing facilities or for the development of a third full sized pitch, are all currently within our ownership. We have a driven club and committee and offer great off-field facilities to our community. At present, our pitches are adversely restrictive, and we believe that we can offer much more coaching and games to a large number of GAA members' and students of St Joseph's Grammar, if we were able to develop our pitches as desired.</p>	
Dungannon Thomas Clarke GFC	<p>We plan to develop our club rooms with the assistance of DFC monies together with significant fundraising that began in early 2020 and is ongoing we plan to build a new community hub.</p> <p>The town of Dungannon would benefit from additional pitches and specifically GAA pitches. A 3G pitch would allow clubs to provide youth training for more months of the year.</p>	<p>Changing accommodation</p> <p>Training</p>
Edendork St Malachys GAC	<p>There is no Gaelic Pitches available in Dungannon locality. The closest GAA pitch available is MUSA and it is 10 mile from Edendork and very difficult to get a slot in.</p> <p>Our biggest barrier for playing pitches is the distance to MUSA for a full size GAA pitch. We use Drumcoo 4G and Drumcoo playing pitches and Dungannon Park regularly for training various teams however it is lacking the proper GAA nets and set up in all of these places and none of them are suitable for games.</p>	<p>Training</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
Eglish GAC	<p>Too many activities and teams, Eg, Typical week, 3-4 games, 18 training sessions.</p> <p>We wish to provide improved spectator accommodation. We would also want to extend our grounds to provide more training facilities.</p> <p>Spectator accommodation.</p> <p>We feel there is a need for floodlit facilities in the Dungannon area that are available in the early part of the year, Jan- Mar.</p>	<p>Ancillary</p> <p>Training</p>
Eoghan Ruadh Hurling Club, Dungannon	<p>Currently we have some additional land behind our clubhouse but not enough for an additional full-size pitch. Ideally, we'd like to utilise it for nursery teams, either with a grass or 3G surface. Our ball-wall area is one of the best in Ulster but is let down by the playing surface. It too would benefit from a surface enhancement, ideally 4G. We also have space on first floor (attic) of our clubhouse but cannot develop at present as we would have to provide lift and dual stair access/exit. We actually sacrificed provision of 4th changing room to provide public and disabled toilets for users of our Community Walkway. It's floodlit, open all year around (as are toilets) which we maintain and service on daily basis. The additional space would be well utilised for small club/community events/training seminars/meetings etc. We'd also look at provision of a unisex gym (male/female use) which an increasing majority of our adult members have been pressing for. Down the line we'd also want to consider moderate covered spectator provision too.</p> <p>The quality of the leisure provision around Cookstown/Magherafelt is very good. Some of the facilities in Dungannon are excellent if a little too few. I think Council expertise and drive is important in providing such facilities, but I think they need to bring on board "buy-in" from local clubs such as looking to establish user forums who can play a part in sharing and running the facilities. Flexible facilities would be good too, for example, for field sports, develop spaces that can accommodate two Hurling/Gaelic football/ and two Rugby/Soccer areas, one each for playing standard and one each for training. However, they would also be open enough to cater for summer camps, blitz days, tournaments at all levels. maybe training facility could be multi-sport surfaced to accommodate field hockey.</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>Ancillary</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
Errigal Ciaran GAC	<p>Need additional pitch to support training & matches on Main Site, this would need to include changing facilities. Also, Ballygawley site needs enhanced, ideally with a 3g Pitch to provide all year-round training facilities. We are severely restricted during the Period Jan- April each year, as pitches are unplayable on many occasions and training cannot take place.</p> <p>We are based on the edge of District Council, there is little provision of 3G pitches within this side of Council area. Our closest facility is MUSA, 20 miles away and very difficult to get a booking in place. A facility, like MUSA, in the West of the Council area would be a huge benefit to the area.</p> <p>As a response to population increases in the Ballygawley area – Ballygawley village has seen over 100 new homes constructed in recent years – the club conducted an online survey of club members. The club, based in Cardinal McCrory Park in Dunmoyle where they have two pitches – one floodlit – leases a grass pitch from the Council at Ballygawley Playing Fields. The survey, which attracted over 300 responses, highlights the club’s need for a facility suited to training, especially for youth sections. Here’s a summary of the survey results:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a desire for better facilities at Ballygawley Playing Fields, with mention of walking/running tracks, children’s play areas, basketball court, handball/racquet ball walls, an all-weather floodlit training surface. Respondents ranked the need for a training surface as having highest priority. ▪ Regarding ‘<i>areas of development</i>’, the survey highlighted the need for winter training programmes for youth sections. This need was identified by about half of the survey respondents. ▪ Whilst the club’s Dunmoyle grounds is the natural ‘<i>home and centre of club activity</i>’, Ballygawley was identified as the preferred location for youth training by 48% of the respondents. <p>The club is of the opinion that the Ballygawley areas has had ‘<i>poor investment in leisure facilities generally when compared with other villages and towns.</i>’ The club identifies Ballygawley as an area for investment, with specific reference to a floodlit all weather surface.</p>	Training – 3G

Club Name		Need Themes
Kildress Wolfe Tones GAA	<p>We now need to '3G' our 40m x 50m training area AND provide cover on it. That is needed to meet our high and growing levels of demand (all now influenced by COVID) and because at 600' above sea level we suffer from harsh weather conditions and need a 'year round' protected surface. We also need a fit-for-purpose community walking track: the nearest such facility is 12 miles away.</p> <p>Re Council pitches/other leisure provision the 'wicked issues' always were and remain: Provision is layered into the urban centres and rural communities (a good 60% of the MUDC population) are essentially ignored If you're in that 'urban spine' of Maghera-Magherafelt-Moneymore-Cookstown-Coalisland-Dungannon, then happy days: if not, it's 'get on your bike' and head to that urban spine. Curiously, urban communities are never expected to make those journeys in reverse. Rural areas are left to fend for themselves and the GAA's goodwill and commitment is, to be plain about it, badly exploited Our Club provides two full-size pitches (one fully floodlit), a training area and a spectator stand, plus a newly-completed £1.45m Club building Pitch maintenance alone costs us £1,100 net pm In last week's paper we see that MUDC plans to spend another £0.5m adding a 3G pitch to its previously planned investment of £1.0m at Railway Park, Dungannon To that it intends to add £26,275 pa to staff the facility for five hours a day, six days a week That's following on from huge recent sports/leisure facility investment in Maghera and Moneymore, plus a planned £5m+ investment in Gortgonis, Coalisland (for a community that's much closer to MUSA than Kildress is!) MUDC/civic society's contribution to Kildress (and our 2,500 population) meanwhile? Charging our Club Rates for doing its/government's facility-provision job for them and, to add insult to injury, sending us bills for Waste Collection Having just 83% self-funded our £1.45m building we now find we have to raise £30,000 ourselves to make its external surfaces fit-for-purpose, meaning we're left as a deprived/disadvantaged/marginal community to yet again go back to our own not-very-deep well to scrape together the funding to provide what would be just taken as read in an urban setting There are just very serious equity issues involved here. And what's being done is not right. This sounds 'whingy' but years of platitudes, surveys, 'live-horse-and-you'll-get-grass' responses and ongoing, continuous investment in urban communities just don't cut it with us anymore. The Mid-Ulster Community Plan says this: "It is essential that Mid Ulster receives</p>	<p>Training - Indoor</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
	its 'fair share' within the overall NI context; but this has to be matched by the achievement of Equality within the District between places, communities, groupings and cultures. The actions delivered through Community Planning must be accessible for all to benefit from, with consideration given to those most vulnerable and those with disabilities." Honeyed words that have not been/are not being delivered.	
Killyman St Mary's GFC	No Comment	
Lavey GAC	<p>We reckon we need a further field as ladies gaelic football developing in a big way. At present we are at maximum capacity and the fields are often used by multiple groups at one time. It was considered hiring facilities this year, but we have coped as due to covid we did not want to move too much.</p> <p>I believe there is excellent pitch provision in the area. We may have to avail of it in the future as we are near capacity.</p>	Match
Lissan GAC	<p>We are constantly improving our campus just recently got our pitch done up drained etc spent a lot of money, ideal time during lock down.</p> <p>The pitches in Musa are top notch but sometime not available due to reseed etc , but we find them as a massive asset for us early on in the year for training and some home games right on our doorstep. We are over the moon the rugby pitch is not available for gaelic.</p>	
Michael Davitt GAC Swatragh	We are currently undergoing a redevelopment of the main playing field. This has put the pit out of operation for the full calendar year 2021. All underage matches this year have been away from home as agreed with the county board. Underage teams from U15 down have had to make use of the primary school pitch for training this year with their generous agreement. The changing rooms to the main pitch will need full replacement. They are almost at the point of being unusable. Covid and main pitch renovation has mitigated that for this calendar year but that will change next year. The club would like to consider starting to provide ladies football teams initially from U7, U9, U11, U13, U15 with a view to adult teams as players develop. Currently girls who want to play football play with the boys up until U13 when they go on to play with other local	Training – 3G

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>clubs. A lot of other girls who may want to play football are put off from playing with the boys and may never go onto play football. Currently the club does not have enough facilities to provide for any further teams. Realistically the club would require a third pitch to provide this preferable 3G with lights to provide the majority of underage training with grass pitches primarily for matches. Difficulties with procuring a third pitch include securing a suitable site and capital costs.</p> <p>Our club have on occasion used the indoor facility at the Meadowbank in Magherafelt for pre-season underage tournaments. It is always freezing cold for spectators and the carpet surface is not particularly suitable for gaelic games. It is a useful facility for teams no older than U9/10 but any older than that then risk of injury increases. Generally, it is too far away for our club for make regular use of. We note that a new 3G pitch has been developed at Maghera which is more local. We will probably seek to make use of this over the winter months though it is too soon to tell what the cost and availability will be like. I am not aware of any other pitch provision from Mid Ulster Council that we make use of.</p>	
Money more GAC	<p>3 phase plan for multipurpose area, gym, training pitch and clubrooms overhaul.</p> <p>We would like to lease Moneyhaw Playing pitch for development as a training facility.</p>	<p>Lease</p> <p>Training</p>
Moortown St Malachy's	<p>We currently have temporary mobile changing room facilities. A community hall was erected on site along with toilets, hall and meeting rooms with the assistance of a grant. Further works for changing rooms to be completed when we have the finance available to carry this out.</p> <p>Build permanent changing facilities.</p>	<p>Changing accommodation</p>
Moy Tír na nÓg GAC	<p>We have currently reached maximum capacity on our current site with the club having recently purchased a 5-acre field next to our existing grounds with a view to adding more pitches.</p> <p>There are no other recreational facilities within our village and no Council facility for a town of its size/population.</p>	<p>Training</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
Naomh Colum Cille	Disabled toilets. New kitchen, showers. All self-maintained and self-funded. Need covered ball wall and walking track and playground for spectators.	Ancillary
O Donovan Rossa GAC Magherafelt	Club is expanding. We are planning installation of an ice bath. Handball wall 3rd pitch. We don't believe there are adequate pitches as it's difficult to book slots especially Monday Tuesdays and Wednesdays.	Ancillary
Galbally Pearse's GAC	WE have plans to build extensive facilities dedicated to the club including 4 new dressing rooms designed to properly accommodate ladies and also provide meeting rooms, viewing gallery and office space. We also intend to renovate the existing GAA Hall to be used primarily as a dedicated gym for strength and conditioning space. Members are also directly involved in providing adjacent land for a site for a new Primary School which will be able to benefit all the existing facilities. Long term we would be interested in building an indoor arena linking the new school and the club facilities. We have on occasion used the Council owned facilities in Cookstown whilst we were developing our own pitches. We are in the fortunate position now of being able to assist other clubs who sometimes need pitches when doing their own development. There is obviously a need for additional floodlight pitches as we often are asked by teams competing in Ulster Club championships later in the year for the use of our pitches which we always try to accommodate within reason.	Changing accommodation
Pomeroy Plunkett's GAC	The club are in the process of going to tender for the provision of a new club house, work is anticipated to start later this year. We require another playing surface for the training off a greater number of children as girls are becoming a larger part off our club and this is something we like to encourage.	Changing accommodation Training
Rock St Patricks GAC	We hope to purchase some ground close to our pitch to allow for a new pitch to be developed at some point in the future when funds become available.	Training
Sean O'Leary GAC, Newbridge	No floodlights for evening matches in the period of year when they are needed.	Ancillary

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>We are putting together a strategic 5 year plan for the club incorporating the following keys areas for development; 1. Club Structure & Administration 2. Coaching & Games 3. Finance & Fundraising 4. Facilities & Development 5. Communications, PR & Culture We are also going to be embarking upon the erection of floodlights on the main pitch and planning permission was obtained last year, and now we are trying to get the finance in place to carry out the works.</p>	
St Colm's GAC Ballinascreen	<p>Large no of teams we have.</p> <p>We currently do have the facilities on site to cater for all our teams. We rely on using St Colm's HS, Backrow 3G pitches as well as Cahore however Cahore doesn't have lights and due to poor drainage it isn't playable after rain fall. Plan is building an indoor 3G on site for training purposes.</p> <p>Indoor 3G facility with additional changing rooms and gym.</p> <p>Our club relies on the GAA pitch at Cahore for training and games however the fact there are no lights on it and no drainage in place it is of limited use to our club.</p>	<p>Training - Indoor</p>
St Malachy's GAC	<p>Club would like to have a small juvenile rubber-based pitch for juvenile training and enhance our changing facilities.</p> <p>Council pitch in Castledawson is rarely used by anyone. Would be great if this was a rubber-based pitch which could be used by GAA and soccer.</p>	<p>Lease</p> <p>Training</p>
St Martin's GAC, Desertmartin	<p>Presently we have one pair of adequate changing rooms (small in size) built in 1984. The pitch has not been upgraded in 30 years and in the winter is unplayable. The smallish changing facilities and poor pitch condition is an issue for winter training and the use of the venue for cup competitions. In 2010 we secured Sport NI funding for the development of a training pitch 500M from the main clubhouse and changing facilities. It opened in 2011 and was done to a high standard, but there are no on site changing facilities down there so participants and spectators must walk down. Around this time, we developed a walking track around the main pitch for public use and thanks to funding from the Council this is</p>	<p>Changing accommodation</p> <p>Ancillary</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>now lit up at night and gets good community usage over the winter. Just last year we developed a medium sized function room to facilitate community engagement projects but due to the pandemic this has not fully opened. The 5 year plan would be to first develop the main pitch playing surface to a modern year round standard, then develop a second set of larger changing facilities that could accommodate multiple groups at any one time. Along with this we are aiming to open a gym which would be open to public use and enhance the potential community engagement along with the recently opened function rooms.</p> <p>At times due to the quality of our pitch we have been fortunate to be able to avail of the excellent facilities at Meadowbank including the 4g surfaces. We have also at times had to seek the use of neighbouring clubs and school facilities. Whilst these options are always there, the club is one of the longest established in Ireland and proud to be able to provide GAA games to the public within the rural area. We wish to be able to stand on our own two feet and possibly be the club that helps out others in need of facilities as well and provide a venue suitable for all competitions.</p>	
St Mary's GAC Killeeshil	<p>Have a small field bought but needs development</p> <p>1. Lighting up the rest of track 2. Build two dressing rooms with a club meeting/tearoom and a gym 3. Buy more ground to make a second full size field 4. Tar the rest of the track around our main pitch in gravel at present</p> <p>Our walking/running track has been well used during lockdown/winter by both sides of our community, but public toilets are a major requirement.</p>	
St Oliver Plunkett's GAC Greenlough	<p>There is a Council pitch adjacent to our club facilities, but it is generally unplayable because of glass bottles, bonfires, dog dirt, no proper goal posts or catch nets and no floodlighting. Unsafe to play.</p> <p>We are currently developing our Club Strategic Plan 2021 -2026. Feedback from our survey suggests that we need to improve our club changing facilities, increase the training pitch capacity, improve the floodlighting of the existing training pitch. We have already made a request to MU Council to consider Community Asset Transfer of the Council pitch however, we have received no</p>	<p>Lease</p> <p>Training</p>

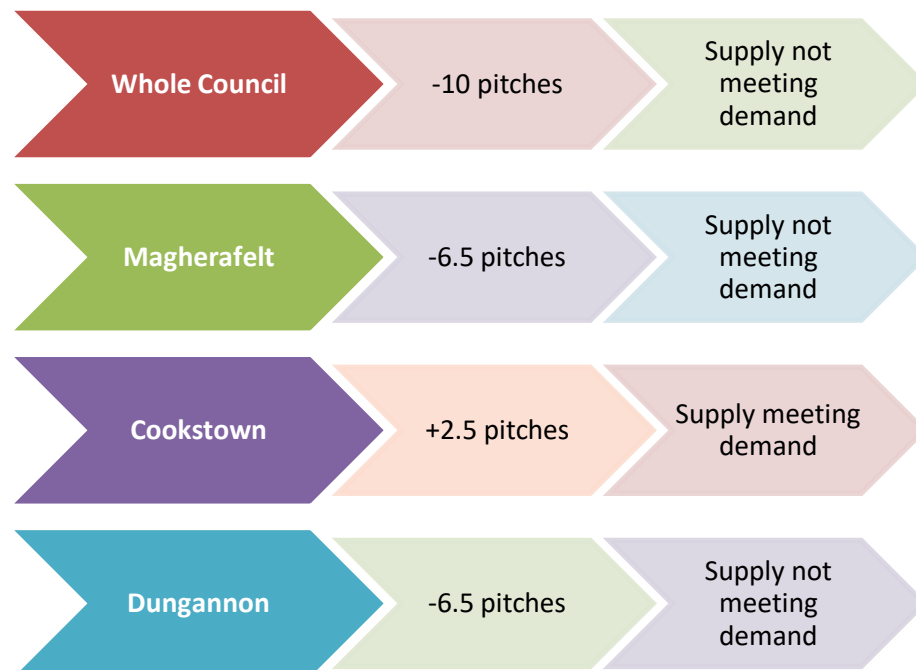
Club Name		Need Themes
	<p>feedback from this request. We believe that if this pitch was in club ownership, we could ensure it is maintained to a playing standard at all times and it would serve the purpose of meeting the capacity of our underage training programme. The club survey also identified a demand for ladies Gaelic football. This is likely to progress within the next 5years with underage ladies football starting in 2022. This will put further additional demand on our pitch capacity.</p> <p>The most economic method of providing pitch provision is to allow the clubs to own and maintain their own grounds. Gaelic Clubs in particular are extremely effective in minimising the financial burden on Council to provide the same. However, the subsidised cost of hire to soccer clubs in particular should be reflected in any report. In order to level the 'playing field' those clubs who own and maintain their own grounds should be offered equivalent subsidies to assist in the ongoing running costs of the club. This could be by way of annual revenue grant and capital grants which will assist in the development of the club grounds. Consideration should also be given to asset transfer of pitches to clubs where it is deemed beneficial to all parties.</p>	
St Patrick's GAC Loup	<p>We hope to one day have a 3rd training pitch possibly a 3G surface in the ground we have available Our two pitches at the moment cannot cope with the numbers every night with the men's football, ladies football and camogie. Most groups are sharing half pitches each to accommodate. At the moment in the dark evenings, we have only one pitch available with lights so we would hope in the near future to get floodlights on the other field which would help us a lot.</p> <p>We use MUSA in Magherafelt over the winter for underage training which is a great help It is very hard to get a good time slot on the pitches over the winter with the Council and it can be expensive.</p>	<p>Training - 3G</p>
St Trea's Ballymaguigan GAC	<p>We are looking to develop our hall in order to provide better facilities for the club as a whole.</p>	<p>Ancillary</p>
Stewartstown Harps GAC	<p>New training pitch for use by all teams. Small covered stand to be erected on main pitch. Expansion of pavilion to include a club shop and a gym. Increased car parking facilities.</p>	<p>Training Ancillary</p>

Club Name		Need Themes
	MUSA facility is top class for wide range of sports for individual and team use.	
Watty Graham's GAC Glen	<p>Requirements: Indoor training facility, All weather pitch. Above are absolute requirements to meet growing demands.</p> <p>There are no dedicated Gaelic pitches in the Maghera area (unlike other towns in the district). This needs to be addressed to meet the growing local population and their needs.</p>	Training - Indoor

Summary Points

7.40 All but four of the gaelic games clubs in the Council area operate their own pitches and changing accommodation. The foregoing assessment of supply/demand along with consultation and survey work informs a number of key points:-

- ❖ Looking at *adequacy of provision* Scenario 2 is viewed as the most realistic picture given it includes only grass pitches that are available for community use. It shows the following for matches and training for all age groups: -



- ❖ An analysis of the adequacy of provision by area demonstrates a shortfall of pitches in Magherafelt and Dungannon sub-areas. This analysis does not include the use of 3G pitches as these are not used for matches or training

during the main playing season April to September – however, the use of 3G pitches is likely to relieve training pressure on club pitches and matches in the early part of the season (January, February, March)

- ❖ The majority of gaelic games clubs have at least 2 grass pitches: one full size and one training size. Six clubs have 3G training pitches which accommodate the clubs' winter and pre-season training and are also available for use by other clubs/other sports. Four clubs do not have their own facilities, three of which are newly established (in last 5 years) hurling and camogie clubs, the fourth a ladies football only club. The Council's 3G facilities at MUSA and Meadowbank are well used by a range of gaelic games clubs, schools and county squads.
- ❖ With the 47 clubs fielding 907 teams each club has an average of 19 teams. Whilst gaelic games generally is thought of as operating during the summer months, in practice the season commences with pre-season training from January to March with competitions running through to October. Each week during the competition season a total of over 300 go games/youth/adult matches are played; with 64 full grass pitches available this indicates at least 6 matches taking place on each pitch. Training needs add significantly to the use of pitches as the same stock of pitches is used for matches and training. Survey results show that the average weekly use (matches and training) of each clubs' main pitch is 24 hours
- ❖ When asked about synthetic surfaces especially thinking of 3G and AstroTurf, the clubs responded as follows:-

	Training			Matches		
	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable
AstroTurf	41%	33%	26%	80%	13%	7%
3G	17%	37%	46%	54%	30%	15%

The result shows 3G is generally accepted for training and preferred to AstroTurf, whilst only 15% of respondents accept 3G for matches. It is also noted that the acceptance of 3G pitches for training may relate largely to the pre-season period (January to March) when clubs' grass pitches are less able to accommodate demand due to weather conditions and dark evenings.

8. Hockey

Introduction

8.1 This section presents consultation with Ulster Hockey followed by an overview of supply of and demand for hockey pitches; an assessment of adequacy of provision is made using Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Model' (PPM); the PPM is also used to assess the condition of facilities in the Council's ownership using the 'Non-Technical Visual Quality Assessment' tool. There are three hockey clubs⁷⁵ in the Council area; two of the clubs cater for female players only and the third has both male and female membership. In addition to the three clubs, Rainey Endowed School Hockey Club is included as they use the Council's Astro Turf pitch at Meadowbank for the majority of their matches and training. Having established the supply and demand situation the section considers how it impacts on the community. The section is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality
- ❖ Clubs, Teams and Players
- ❖ Adequacy of Provision
- ❖ Community Impact

Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality

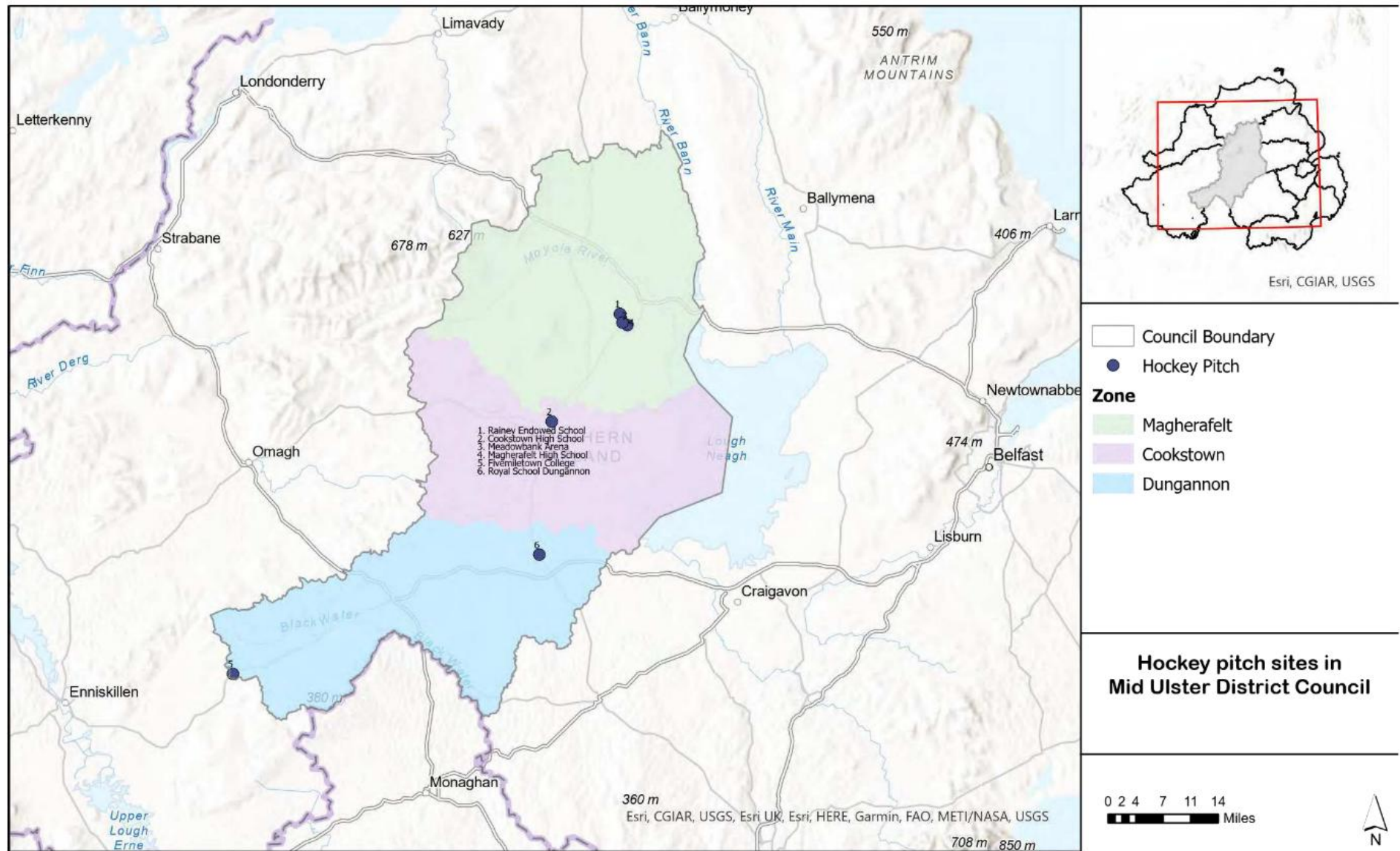
8.2 Club hockey is exclusively now played on artificial turf pitches (ATP's), either sand or water 'AstroTurf' – 3G surfaces cannot accommodate hockey. It is the case that school's hockey often uses the shale pitches still found on many school sites. For the purposes of this study although the Ulster Hockey Union stipulates all games should be played on ATPs, school shale pitches are noted as these may be upgraded to ATP surfaces. Two different types of pitch 'ownership' for hockey are recorded:-

- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council** – these pitches are maintained, operated and booked through the Council.
- ❖ **Education** – pitches owned by primary, secondary or tertiary level educational establishments.

8.3 Table 8.1 presents a detailed inventory of hockey pitches suitable for competitive matches. For each pitch site, type, number, quality and additional remarks are presented.

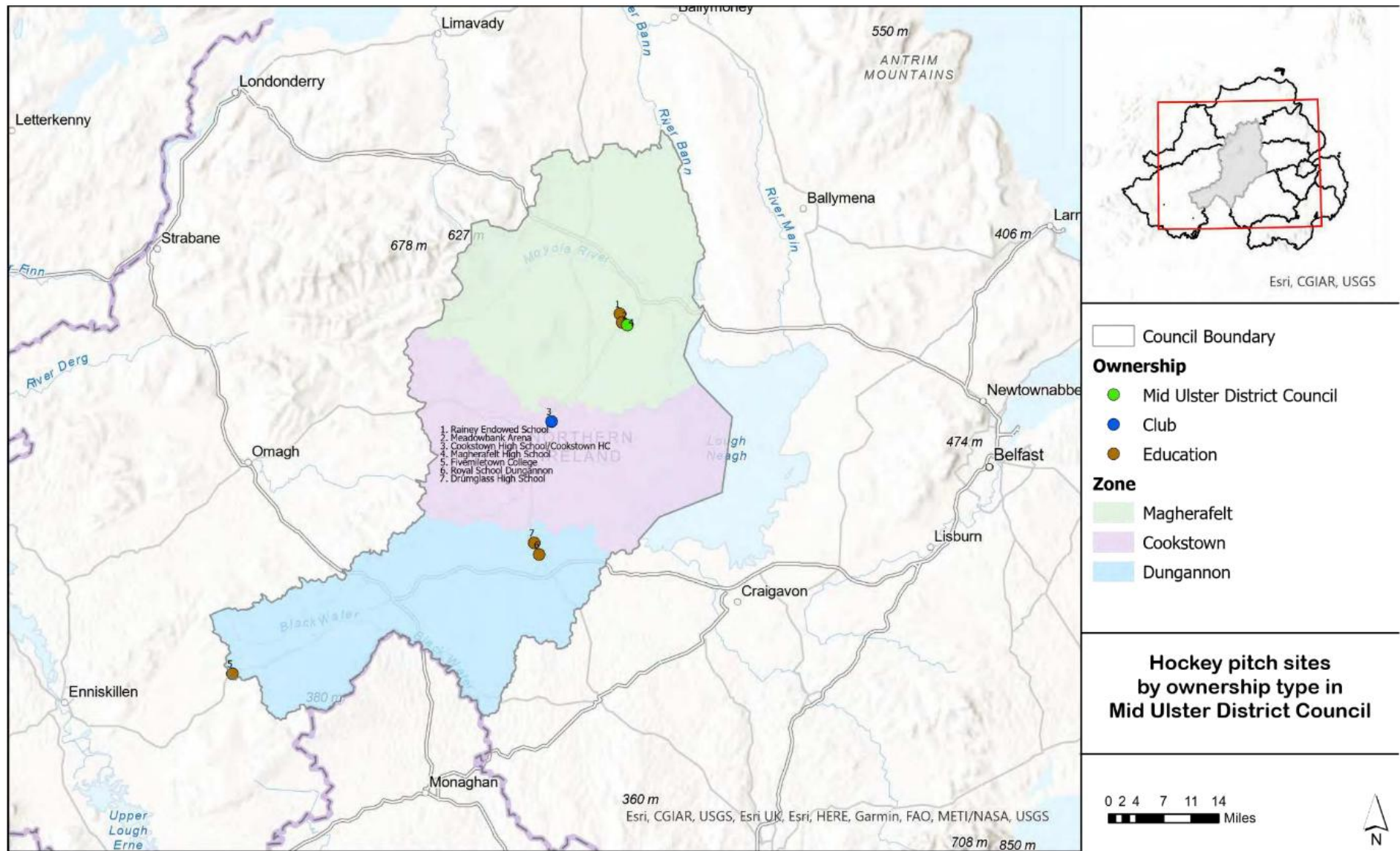
⁷⁵ Cookstown HC, Dungannon HC and Rainey HC.

HOCKEY



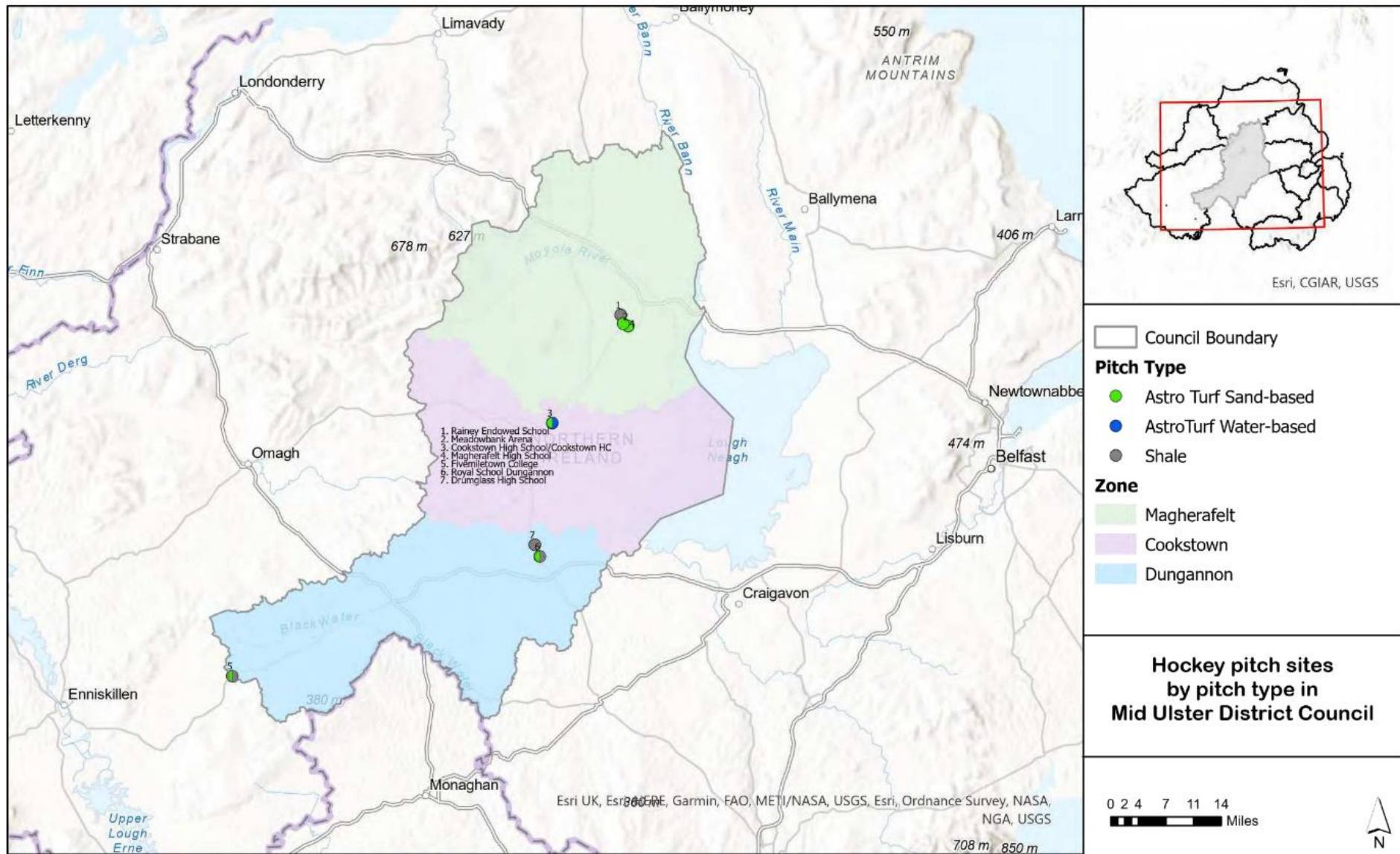
Map 8.1: Location – Hockey pitch sites in Mid Ulster District Council Area

HOCKEY



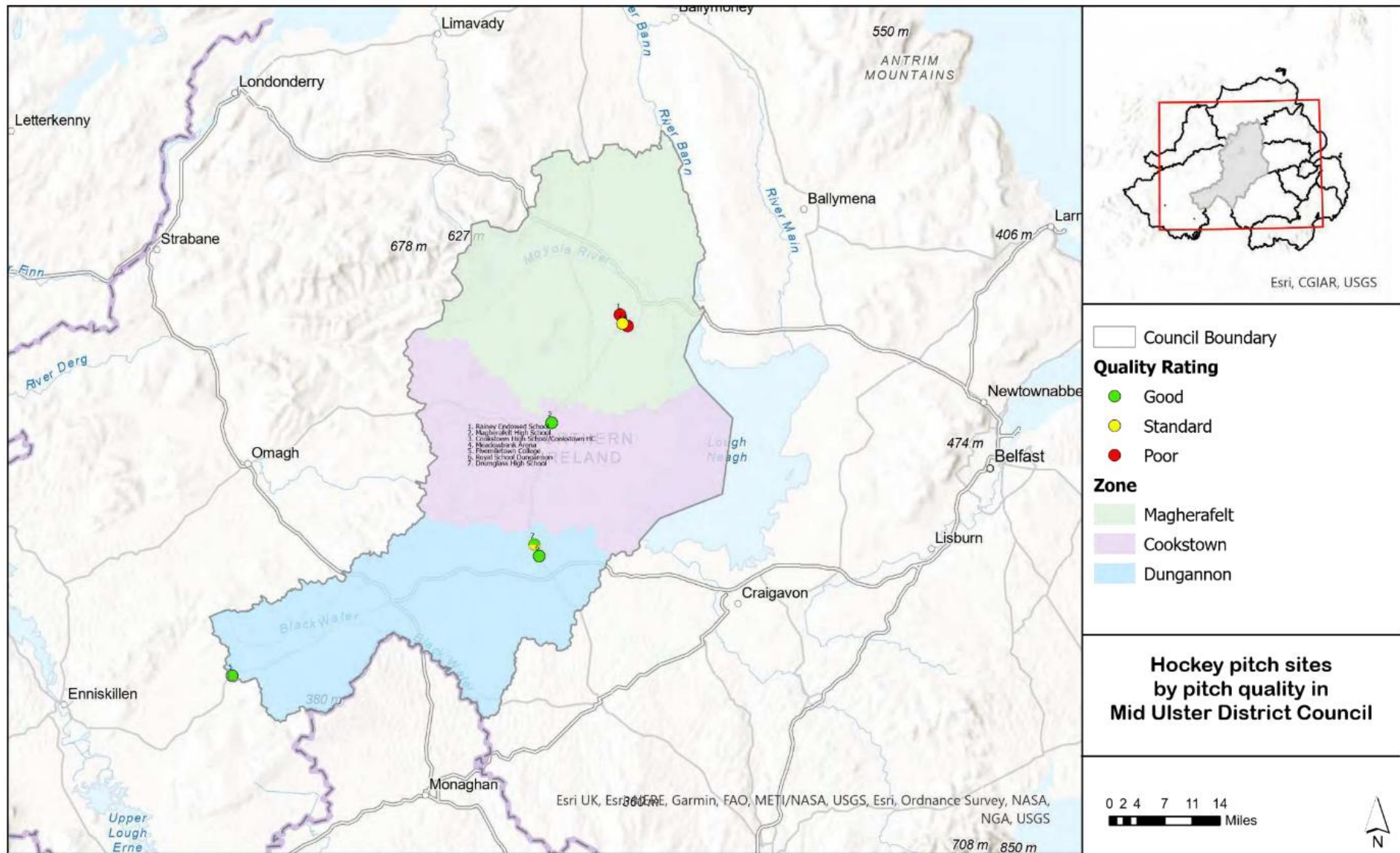
Map 8.2: Ownership – Hockey Pitches

HOCKEY



Map 8.3: Surface Type – Hockey Pitches

HOCKEY



Map 8.4: Quality – Hockey Pitches

Table 8.1: Hockey – Location, Quantity and Quality of Pitches in Mid Ulster District Council under Council and Education Ownership.

<u>Council</u>					
Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks	
Pitch Site	Area				
Meadowbank Arena (Indoor)	Magherafelt	1 x Full Sand AstroTurf	1 x Poor	This is an indoor facility and is home base to Rainey Hockey Club. The club notes that the surface is poor in places and they find it difficult to book suitable slots for club training due to high number of bookings by association football teams. The pitch is also used by Rainey Endowed School hockey teams as the school has only shale pitches available currently.	
Totals 1 x Full AstroTurf Pitch (Indoor)					
<u>Education</u>					
Fivemiletown College	Dungannon	1 x Full Sand AstroTurf 1 x Full Shale	2 x Good	Available for community use – used by Enniskillen Hockey club and association football, gaelic games and rugby teams. The school notes the pitch surface is due to be replaced soon and are looking to see if a 3G surface would be more viable. The school is very keen to continue community use of its facilities.	
Magherafelt High School	Magherafelt High School	1 x Full Sand AstroTurf	1 x Standard	The pitch is available for community use and used by Rainey Endowed School hockey teams for training.	
Cookstown High School	Cookstown High School	1 x Full Sand AstroTurf 1 x Full water-based AstroTurf	2 x Good	Home base for Cookstown Hockey Club. The club reports they have a licence agreement with the school for the land, the club installed the pitches and floodlighting. The school has full use of the pitches during school hours and the	

				club has full use at all other times.
Drumglass High School	Dungannon	2 x Training Shale		School facilities are managed by H & J Martin Facilities Management
Rainey Endowed School	Magherafelt	2 x Training Shale		Applying to Sport NI Multi Facility Fund to convert the two shale pitches to a full size AstroTurf pitch for school and community use. The school notes that due to the high number of school hockey teams they will still need to use Meadowbank AstroTurf to provide school hockey to current levels of participation.
Royal School Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full Sand Astro Turf 1 x Full Shale	1 x Good	Home base for Dungannon Ladies Hockey Club. The schools reports: <i>"We regret the decision of MUDC to withdraw from a very successful commercial agreement for the hire of our AstroTurf pitch which was both cost beneficial to the Council and which supports hockey for a premier league team in an area where there is no alternative provision"</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Totals 4 x Full Sand Astro Turf Pitches 1 x Full Water Astro Turf Pitch 2 x Full Shale Hockey Pitches 4 x Training Shale Hockey Pitches</p>				

Summary of Quantity of Pitches

- 8.4** A summary and breakdown of current hockey pitches used for matches and training by ownership is given below. Also included are shale pitches, however these are only used for schools hockey, not club hockey.

Hockey Pitches used for matches and training		
Ownership	AstroTurf Pitch	Shale
MUDC	1	0
Education	5	6
Total	6	6

Summary of Quality of Pitches

- 8.5** A summary and breakdown of hockey pitch provision by quality is presented. Shale pitches are also included here for completeness, although they are used reluctantly by schools.

Summary of Quality Rating for Hockey Pitches (AstroTurf and Shale)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total Number of Pitches
MUDC	0	0	1	0	1
Education	6	2	3	0	0
Total	6	2	4	0	12

Comments

- ❖ Six of the education pitches are rated 'Good'.
- ❖ The Council's only full-size AstroTurf pitch at Meadowbank Indoor Arena is rated 'Poor'. The pitch inspection report notes

'It has been used as a factory during the Covid-19 pandemic and as such needs repair. There are bumps on the surface, the carpet has separated in places and the overall condition of the Astro Turf is worn. The main strengths of this pitch are its size and the fact that it is indoor and therefore allows teams to train and compete all year round.'

- ❖ Dungannon Hockey Club report that the quality of the pitch at Dungannon Royal School (their home base) is 'Poor' whilst the school rates the pitch quality as 'Good'.

Clubs, Teams and Players

- 8.6** In order to assess the impact of training and match provision it is necessary to assess the current and future demand and need. The four identified hockey clubs (includes Rainey Endowed School) completed an online questionnaire to produce as accurate as possible picture of membership, pitch use, pitch preference and any development plans and aspirations. The four clubs satisfied the following criteria:-

- ❖ Home match pitch is located within Mid Ulster District Council (includes clubs with own pitch).
- ❖ Use pitches within Mid Ulster District Council for training.
- ❖ Over 50% of team members live within Mid Ulster District Council area.

8.7 The four hockey clubs included in this audit are listed below detailing the number of adult, and youth teams.

Table 8.2: Hockey Club Team Profile

Club	Mini (U7, U9, U11, U13)		Youth (U14 to U18)		Adult		Total No of Teams
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Cookstown Hockey Club	12	12	3	3	5	3	38
Dungannon Hockey Club	0	8	0	5	0	3	16
Rainey Hockey Club	1	9	0	1	0	5	16
Rainey Endowed School Hockey Club	0	5	0	6	0	0	11
Totals	13	34	3	15	5	11	81

8.8 There is a total of eighty-one hockey teams in the Council – from U9 to adult. Hockey participation is predominantly female with just one male section in Cookstown Hockey Club. In addition, Rainey Hockey Club has one male mini team. Rainey Endowed School Hockey Club is included in this analysis as it plays the majority of its school matches at the Council’s Meadowbank Arena Astro Turf pitch.

8.9 Hockey, like most outdoor team sports caters for player development through the use of small-sided games as follows:-

Programme Name	Pitch Size
U9 Fun Fours	Games are played between two teams of 4 on 1/8 of the size of a full size hockey pitch.
U11 Super Sixes	Super 6s is played on 1/3 of a full sized hockey pitch with teams having 6 players on the pitch at any one time.
U13 Extreme Eights	Extreme 8s is played on half of a full sized hockey pitch between two teams of 8 and is the final stepping stone allowing young players to think more about spatial awareness on the pitch and about playing a more expansive game.

- 8.10** The profile of teams and player numbers in the four identified clubs is summarised as follows:-

Table 8.3 Hockey – Profile of Membership and Teams based in MUDC			
	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
<u>Membership</u>			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	88	260	348
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)⁷⁶	70	350	420
Adult	150	190	340
Total Players	308	800	1108
<u>Teams</u>			
Mini (U9 to U13)	13	34	47
Youth (U14 to U18)⁷⁷	3	15	18
Adult	5	11	16
Total Teams	21	60	81

Adequacy of Provision

- 8.11** The Sport England model identifies three pitch usage categories:-

Secured Community Pitches

Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management.

Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector which are open to members of the public.

Pitches at education sites which are available for use by the public through formal community use agreements.

Used by community but not secured

Pitches not included above that are nevertheless available for community use, eg, school/college pitches without formal user agreements.

Not open for community use

Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public.

⁷⁶ Includes membership (150) of Rainey Endowed School Hockey Club as they use Meadowbank Astro Turf for matches.

⁷⁷ Includes 11 female teams from Rainey Endowed School Hockey Club.

- 8.12** These categories inform three scenarios used in the quantitative assessment of adequacy of provision hockey pitches, described here along with the number of pitches in each scenario. Given the profile of hockey it is assumed that all adult, youth and mini games are played on full size pitches – shale pitches are not considered in this modelling as they are not used for competitive club hockey games.

Reference	Description	No of full size ATP pitches
Scenario 1	All pitches	6
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	4
Scenario 3	Council pitches only.	1

- 8.13** There is a degree of subjectivity in determining which adult pitches to include in Scenario 2 as community access to some pitches is allowed but also restricted. The number of pitches in Scenario 2 has purposely been estimated on the low side in order to remain prudent. The following AstroTurf pitches have been excluded:-

Pitch Site	No of Pitches	Rationale
Fivemiletown College	1 Astro Turf pitch	Although the pitch it is available for community use it is very distant to all four hockey clubs and therefore unlikely to be used.
Magherafelt High School	1 Astro Turf pitch	The pitch is available for training by Rainey Endowed, however it is unclear if it is available for additional community use.

- 8.14** The pitch breakdown for each scenario for AstroTurf pitches available for adult, youth and mini competitive hockey games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
	AstroTurf	AstroTurf	AstroTurf
Council	1	1	1
Education	5	3	0
Totals	6	4	1

Comments

- ❖ The above table records the number of full-size AstroTurf pitches used in each scenario.
- ❖ Youth, adult and mini matches are played on full size pitches.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 excludes two education sector pitches on the basis that one is too distant and the other has no association with a club.

Adequacy

Scenario 1

- 8.15** The picture of *hockey total demand and total supply for Scenario 1*, that is all clubs and all pitches, in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows:-

Table 8.4: Hockey – Demand and Supply Scenario 1 - All pitches

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams/ <i>team equivalents</i>	Mini Hockey (U11 to U13)	21	Based on the club survey A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.
	Youth (U14 to U18)	18	
	Adult	16	
2. Calculating home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13)	Tournament	From the club survey all adult and youth teams play in different leagues i.e. don't play each other, therefore in particular for adult teams scheduling may mean they all have a home game on a Saturday afternoon. Mini blitz/tournament are once every 4 weeks
	Youth (U14 to U18)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) Sat AM	Tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up. 38% of Mini-hockey teams play Sat AM, the rest mid-week and Sunday A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams. Youth matches are played Sat AM (50%) and mid-week.
	Youth (U14 to U18)	9	
	Adult	8	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	38%	This is the peak demand period and is the % of games played then based on the survey. Youth Hockey played mid-week.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	50%	
	Adult – Sat PM	70%	

			70% of Adult games are played Sat PM and 30% mid-week on Wednesday.
5. Defining pitches required at peak demand taking into account pitch capacity	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	1 ⁷⁸	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up accounting for pitch capacity. Pitch capacity for Saturday PM is assumed to be 2 games 1pm and 2.30 starts. Capacity for Sat AM is assumed to be 2 games for Youth teams Capacity mid-week is set at 1 i.e. 1 match per evening.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	$(9 \times 50\%)/2 = 3 \text{ pitches (rounded up)}$	
	Adult – Sat PM	$(6 \times 70\%)/2 = 3 \text{ pitches (rounded up)}$	
6. Establishing pitches available	Mini Hockey	6	All Council and education owned pitches
	Youth	6	
	Adult	6	
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁷⁹	Mini Hockey	$6 - 1 = +5$	Supply meeting demand
	Youth	$6 - 3 = +3$	Supply just meeting demand
	Adult	$6 - 3 = +3$	Supply meeting demand

- 8.16** The results show that the supply of hockey facilities meets demand with a surplus for mini, youth and adult hockey demand. This is based on a quantitative analysis and assuming 1 hockey pitch can support 2 youth games Saturday morning adult games on Saturday afternoon and 1 youth game on Sunday morning or a mid-week evening.

Scenario 2

- 8.17** The picture for Scenario 2 for hockey in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows where two of the secondary school education pitches are not included as they are generally not available for competitive matches:-

Table 8.5: Hockey – Demand and Supply Scenario 2 – Pitches available for community use only

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
	Mini Hockey (U11 to U13)	21	Based on the club survey
	Youth (U14 to U18)	18	

⁷⁸ A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.

⁷⁹ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

1. Identifying teams/team equivalents	Adult	16	A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.
2. Calculating home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13)	Tournament	From the club survey all adult and youth teams play in different leagues i.e. don't play each other, therefore in particular for adult teams scheduling may mean they all have a home game on a Saturday afternoon. Mini blitz/tournament are once every 4 weeks
	Youth (U14 to U18)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) Sat AM	Tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up. 38% of Mini-hockey teams play Sat AM, the rest mid-week and Sunday A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams. Youth matches are played Sat AM (50%) and mid-week.
	Youth (U14 to U18)	9	
	Adult	8	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	38%	This is the peak demand period and is the % of games played then based on the survey. Youth Hockey played mid-week. 70% of Adult games are played Sat PM and 30% mid-week on Wednesday.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	50%	
	Adult – Sat PM	70%	
5. Defining pitches required at peak demand taking into account pitch capacity	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	1 ⁸⁰	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up accounting for pitch capacity. Pitch capacity for Saturday PM is assumed to be 2 games 1pm and 2.30 starts. Capacity for Sat AM is assumed to be 2 games for Youth teams Capacity mid-week is set at 1 i.e. 1 match per evening.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	$(9 \times 50\%) / 2 = 3 \text{ pitches (rounded up)}$	
	Adult – Sat PM	$(6 \times 70\%) / 2 = 3 \text{ pitches (rounded up)}$	
6. Establishing pitches available	Mini Hockey	4	All Council and education owned pitches
	Youth	4	
	Adult	4	
	Mini Hockey	4 - 1 = +3	Supply meeting demand

⁸⁰ A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.

7. Adequacy of Provision ⁸¹	Youth	4 - 3 = +1	Supply just meeting demand
	Adult	4 - 3 = +1	Supply just meeting demand

8.18 Based on PPM quantitative analysis, the results for Scenario 2 show that supply is meeting demand for mini, youth and adult hockey with a surplus of one pitch. It is important to note the following additional comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is meeting demand for mini hockey and less so for youth and adult hockey.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that hockey pitch capacity is 2 games on a Saturday afternoon and 70% of games are played then.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that Youth games are played both mid-week and on Saturday mornings as informed from the club survey responses.
- ❖ It is known that the AstroTurf pitch at Meadowbank is also used for other sports training. This may reduce the availability for hockey training and matches if hockey is not given priority.

Scenario 3

8.19 A third scenario can be modelled where only the Council's AstroTurf pitch is used:-

Table 8.6: Hockey – Demand and Supply Scenario 3 - Council Pitches only

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams/ <i>team equivalents</i>	Mini Hockey (U11 to U13)	21	Based on the club survey A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.
	Youth (U14 to U18)	18	
	Adult	16	
2. Calculating home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13)	Tournament	From the club survey all adult and youth teams play in different leagues i.e. don't play each other, therefore in particular for adult teams scheduling may mean they all have a home game on a Saturday afternoon. Mini
	Youth (U14 to U18)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	

⁸¹ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

			blitz/tournament are once every 4 weeks
3. Assessing total home games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) Sat AM	Tournament	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up. 38% of Mini-hockey teams play Sat AM, the rest mid-week and Sunday A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams. Youth matches are played Sat AM (50%) and mid-week.
	Youth (U14 to U18)	9	
	Adult	8	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	38%	This is the peak demand period and is the % of games played then based on the survey. Youth Hockey played mid-week. 70% of Adult games are played Sat PM and 30% mid-week on Wednesday.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	50%	
	Adult – Sat PM	70%	
5. Defining pitches required at peak demand taking into account pitch capacity	Mini Hockey (U9 to U13) – Sun AM/PM	1⁸²	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up accounting for pitch capacity. Pitch capacity for Saturday PM is assumed to be 2 games 1pm and 2.30 starts. Capacity for Sat AM is assumed to be 2 games for Youth teams Capacity mid-week is set at 1 i.e. 1 match per evening.
	Youth (U14 to U18) – Sat AM	(9 x 50%)/2 = 3 pitches (rounded up)	
	Adult – Sat PM	(6 x 70%)/2 = 3 pitches (rounded up)	
6. Establishing pitches available	Mini Hockey	1	All Council and education owned pitches
	Youth	1	
	Adult	1	
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁸³	Mini Hockey	1 - 1 = +0	Supply just meeting demand
	Youth	1 - 3 = -2	Supply NOT meeting demand
	Adult	1 - 3 = -2	Supply NOT meeting demand

8.20 The results of scenario 3, where only the Council-owned pitch is used, shows demand cannot be met youth and adult for hockey games with an undersupply of 2 pitches calculated.

⁸² A 2 hour blitz on a full size pitch can accommodate 12 teams.

⁸³ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

Community Impact

Match and Training Facility Barriers

- 8.21** In the online club survey, respondent clubs were asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they experienced in accessing outdoor match and training facilities, results are:-

Barrier type	Match Facilities No of clubs	Training Facilities No of clubs
Location too distant from club base	0	0
Hire cost too expensive for club	1	0
Finding venues of suitable training surface	0	1
Availability of floodlit venues	-	0
Can't get booking slot	1	0
Condition of pitches	0	0
None	1	1

Comments

- ❖ The following comments are recorded in relation to match and training facilities:-
 - “There are no Council outdoor match facilities to hire for hockey.”
 - “Our only option is to use pitch and RSD and pay the fee they ask for.”
 - “No access to outdoor training in Magherafelt. No outdoor AstroTurf pitch.”
 - “Not always able to get all booking slots.”

Playing Surface

- 8.22** As stipulated by the Ulster Hockey Union, all club competitive games are played on AstroTurf surfaces either water or sand based. As part of the online survey, clubs were asked to record their attitude to the AstroTurf - water based, AstroTurf -sand based and polymeric surfaces for training and for matches. The results are:-

Table 8.7: Attitude to Training / Match Surfaces						
Surface	Training - Number of clubs			Matches – Number of clubs		
	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not favourable	Neutral	Favourable
Polymeric	4	0	0	4	0	0
AstroTurf- Sand Based	1	0	3	1	0	3
AstroTurf- Water based	4	0	4	4	0	4

Comment

- ❖ All four clubs are not in favour of the use of polymeric surfaces for either training or matches.
- ❖ All but one club are in favour of using sand-based AstroTurf pitches for matches and training or matches.
- ❖ All clubs are in favour of using water-based AstroTurf pitches for matches or training.

Membership Growth and Future Plans

- 8.23** Club membership growth is an important factor when considering facility development and investment. Expected club membership growth over the next 5 years is recorded below for those clubs who completed this question in the online survey.

Membership	No of Clubs
Increase over the next 5 years	4
Stay the same	0
Decrease over the next 5 years	0

Comments

- ❖ All four clubs expect their membership to increase.
- ❖ Rainey Endowed School HC note the following:-

'We have had so much success both as teams and as individual Ulster and Ireland players it inspires the younger girls to play. We have got more matches for our B teams and more training sessions for them. Better links with post primary schools and success of junior sections.'

- ❖ Dungannon Hockey Club notes:-

'We are unable to provide coaching for boys due to lack of coaches more older women have returned to the club strong junior club with numbers growing.'

- 8.24** Table 8.8 presents the four hockey clubs' future plans/needs and also any remarks from the final 'Any Other Comments' question of the survey.

Table 8.8: Comments in Relation to Future Plans and Needs

	Future Plans	Any Other Comment
Cookstown HC	The club currently have a clubhouse that is not beside either pitch. The club would like to look build a dual purpose building beside its water based pitch. The building would serve the following purposes: 1. Spectator toilets 2. Spectator viewing area 3. Social area for kids throughout the week (to hang out with their peers in a safe controlled environment) 4. Break out rooms for video analysis and coaching feedback. 5. Small cafe	Cookstown Hockey Club will use Meadowbank in an ad hoc way during the winter months when the clubs pitches are unplayable due to frost or snow. Unfortunately, due to the popularity of that venue it is very difficult to secure a booking. The surface at Meadowbank would be much better if it was a proper sand dressed hockey pitch with a more adequate shock pad. The surface at Meadowbank really lets it down from a competitive training / match perspective. Would the Council considering partnering with Cookstown Hockey Club to provide a dome over one of its existing sand dressed pitch in Cookstown? Using a https://covair.co.uk solution? The sand dress provision is much more suitable to multi-sport and would extend the use of the pitch during the winter months. Cookstown Hockey Club also play indoor hockey, but there is no provision (court big enough) to play matches in the Mid Ulster area.
Dungannon HC	Club Development Plans to grow in numbers and be able to field another senior team and a veterans team to become a centre of excellence for hockey in Mid Ulster and host matches, coaching and umpiring courses to bring equality to sports players and club members. People from west of the province are continually disadvantaged by being selected for representative sport and being asked to travel over an hour to access training. To extend the opportunities for training and matches for our junior players. Current provision is hindered by lack of facilities and being limited to an overused pitch. To be able to develop coaching,	Dungannon Hockey Club have played within the MUC area since their formation. We have relocated and a previously promised AstroTurf pitch was then provided in conjunction with RSD. This relationship seems to break down when it was due for renewal. Promised funds to maintain and develop the pitch have not materialised. We now manage the key holding, opening and closing of pitch as well as paying more for the facilities as we did previously. With

	Future Plans	Any Other Comment
	<p>umpiring and players through link with our governing body and be able to host these events. We currently have no Sunday access to our pitch. To be able to create player pathways to lead to players representing Ulster and Ireland. Barriers to this at the minute are lack of high quality facilities including pitch, difficulty attracting coaches to Dungannon and losing players to other more attractive facilities. To be able to raise the profile of hockey in the Dungannon area through links with local schools and clubs. To build on the club's success and raise standards throughout the club including promotion for all teams and the 1st X1 competing in EHL. When our 1st X1 previously qualified for EHL we were unable to meet their criteria for pitch facilities.</p>	<p>the school having to use their school budget what we pay is still not enough to properly maintain the pitch. This situation is deteriorating year on year. The over usage is having a big impact as it has to provide ALL training and matches for the school and an ever growing club. As a hockey club who plays at the highest level in Ulster Hockey there is a specific requirement for a playing surface. We cannot play on rubber or 4G surfaces. However, other sports can play on sand based and water based surfaces. There are many examples of good practice on this throughout the country eg; Queens, Ballymena, Cookstown, Lisnagarvey. We are in an excellent location for being a hub for hockey in Mid Ulster and to bring success to Dungannon. Our national team have just qualified for the Olympics, we want to pursue playing All Ireland hockey and raise the profile of hockey and Dungannon throughout Ireland as other clubs have the opportunity to do so. We are happy to work with anyone to fulfil these aspirations.</p>
<p>Rainey HC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gateway to representation at Ulster and Ireland Hockey level. Pre Meadowbank 3 girls and since Meadowbank 23 Ulster and 7 Ireland players. Continue to provide the platform for females especially school age girls to participate in hockey and to achieve the recommended levels of exercise per day/week. Recent publication for NI Assembly quotes only 5% of girls are currently getting recommended exercise. ▪ Rainey Hockey Club began with 1 team in 2009 and in 2021 now has 3 senior teams playing in Premier League equivalent to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replacement surface which has currently gone beyond its life cycle and has been heavily and inappropriately used for non-sporting events. ▪ Possibility of a second pitch to fulfil the requirements of 3 teams on a Saturday for competitive matches. ▪ A second pitch would allow us to meet current club demands and achieve growth potential. The second pitch would additionally

	Future Plans	Any Other Comment
	<p>football's Irish Premier League and Junior I which is the highest League for a 2 x 1 team to play in (in 10 years, promoted from Junior II League to Junior I).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received Mid Ulster Sporting Civic Award. Also provides participation for females of all ages and want to continue to do this by encouraging women back to hockey as well as continued provision for young girls. 2019 season introduced the boy's hockey which we plan to continue to develop. Provide inclusive sporting facilities for children of all physical needs. The club have a development plan in place to be able to provide/train/develop their own coaches and umpires by running a series of summer/holiday camps. This would take girls of 14/15 years of age and encourage them to become coaches and umpires for the sport in the future. RHC membership currently limited by lack of facilities. We aim to double our membership, building on the increasing popularity of hockey due to Ireland Women qualifying for the Olympics and the success we've had with members gaining Ulster & Ireland caps. We require a minimum renewed/updated surface on the multi-sports surface in Meadowbank to enable us to continue playing as a club, as we have nowhere else. We would like a further outdoor AstroTurf pitch with lights & VO system to facilitate plans to expand training offering number of teams home matches at one location. VO system would enable progression of skill beneficial feedback for both coaches & players. It would allow players the opportunity to improve progress further in the sport. Continue to provide cross-community membership. 	<p>provide a sporting surface for other sports as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to Meadowbank Arena the Council provided a dedicated hockey pitch for club use, All be it a shale pitch. Since Meadowbank has opened there is no longer a dedicated surface for hockey, which is causing us to restrict the clubs development.
Rainey Endowed School HC	We hope to get an Astro pitch at our school but this will replace the shale pitch which is currently used for B training sessions and	Meadowbank Sports Arena currently offers a playing surface that is inclusive to hockey, soccer, GAA and

Future Plans		Any Other Comment
	matches. This means the school will still need Meadowbank AstroTurf if we are to maintain our current levels of girls participation and number of teams.	even rugby for training. The surface has served the whole community well but has come to the end of its use and no longer provides the quality playing surface it once did. The current surface needs to be replaced with a similar playing surface and ideally the work needs to be done out of the hockey season as due to the pandemic our schoolgirls have already missed out on a year of their school hockey and we worry the impact this may have on them long term.

Summary

8.25 The foregoing assessment of supply/demand along with consultation and survey work inform a number of key points at this audit stage:-

- ❖ *Adequacy of provision* shows the following result for Scenario 2 for matches at peak demand:

Mini-hockey	+3
Youth	+1
Adult	+1

- ❖ It is noted that there is only one Council owned synthetic AstroTurf hockey pitch; adequacy of provision therefore relies on the use of Cookstown High School synthetic hockey pitches and Dungannon Royal School, both these facilities support clubs.
- ❖ Hockey is a minority sport in the Council area, however all four clubs aspire to grow their membership. Participation is mostly female with just Cookstown HC with a male section.
- ❖ The condition of the playing surface at Meadowbank Arena is displaying signs of wear and tear and in need of an upgrade. Meadowbank pitch is heavily used by association and football teams for training; Rainey HC report it is difficult for the club to get suitable training slots especially to suit younger teams.
- ❖ Schools hockey is an important factor in the development of club hockey. Each of the four clubs has a link with a local hockey playing post primary

school from which it draws players. This school-club link in hockey is found elsewhere throughout the Province. This link alongside the unsuitability of shale pitches for hockey training or matches has led increasingly to hockey-playing post primary schools looking to develop on-site AstroTurf pitches

- ❖ As the Council thinks about future facility provision for hockey, the growth in the popularity of 3G pitches for large ball sports (mostly for training) needs to be considered. AstroTurf pitches came to be regarded as multi-sport, however the advent of 3G technology for ATP's has resulted in AstroTurf pitches being replaced by 3G pitches which are more suited to large ball sports.

9. Lawn Bowls

Introduction

9.1 This section presents consultation with the Irish Bowling Federation followed by an overview of the supply of and demand for lawn bowls. An assessment of provision is made by reviewing the demand for ‘green time’ for training and matches and setting this against the total hours available for play. The principles of Sport England’s ‘Playing Pitch Model’ (PPM) are used to assess the condition of the Council’s lawn bowl facilities. There are five lawn bowls clubs in the Council area with a mix of male and female membership playing exclusively on natural grass greens. This section is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Supply – Location Quantity, Quality
- ❖ Clubs, Teams and Players
- ❖ Adequacy of Provision
- ❖ Community Impact

Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality

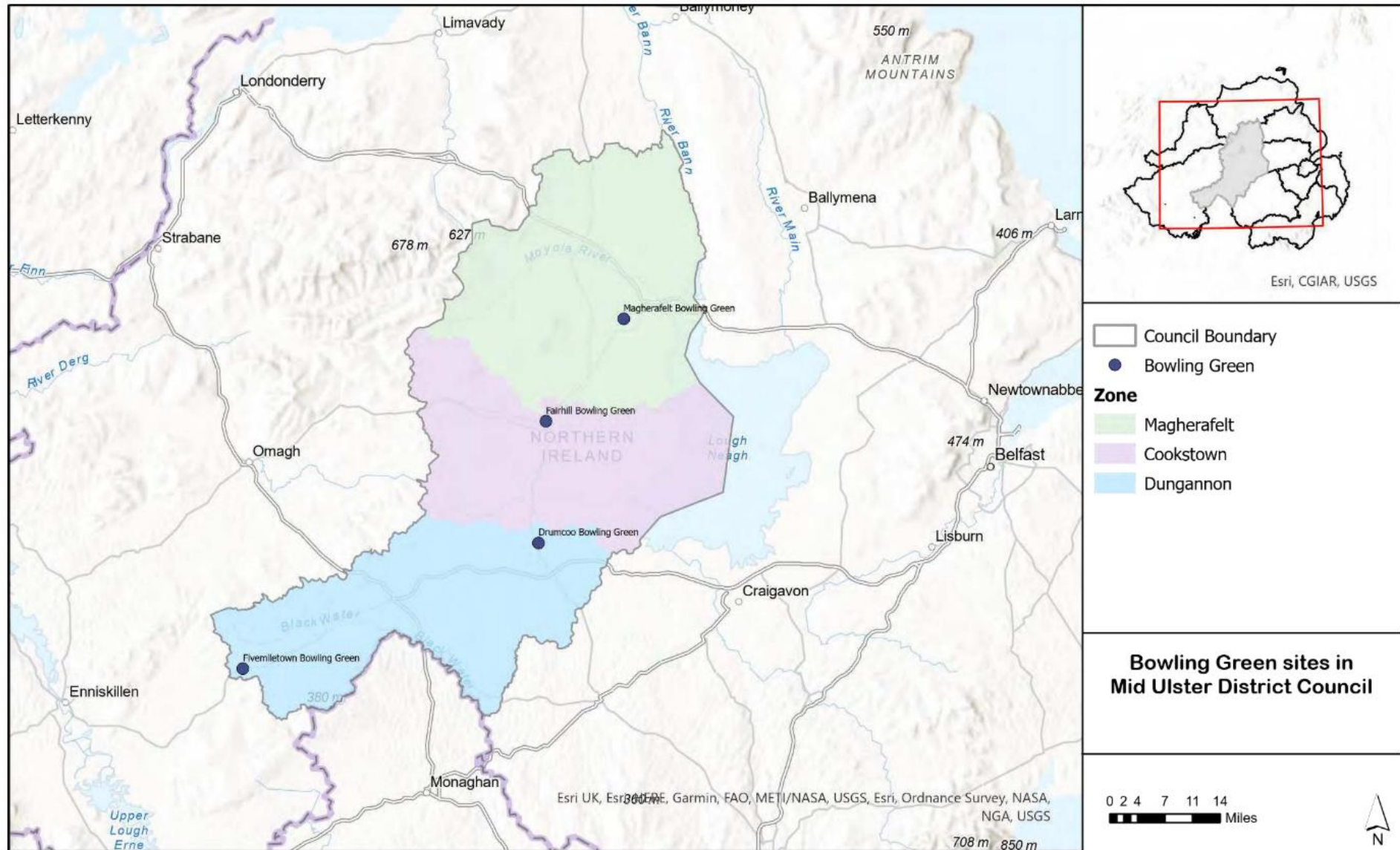
9.2 Lawn Bowls is usually played on a finely-laid, close-mown and rolled stretch of turf which requires considerable care and maintenance to maintain it to a high standard. In recent years synthetic bowling green surfaces have become more common allowing for use all year round and reduced maintenance regimes and costs, there is one synthetic green in the Council at King George V Playing Field, home base to Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation. An inventory of bowling greens in the Council area is presented in Table 9.1; here two types of green ‘ownership’ are identified:-

- **Club owned** – greens are owned and maintained by a bowling club
- **Council** – greens are owned and maintained by the Council

9.3 Table 9.1 presents a detailed inventory of bowling greens across the identified two types of ownership. Maps 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 accompany the inventory showing green location, ownership, and quality⁸⁴ respectively.

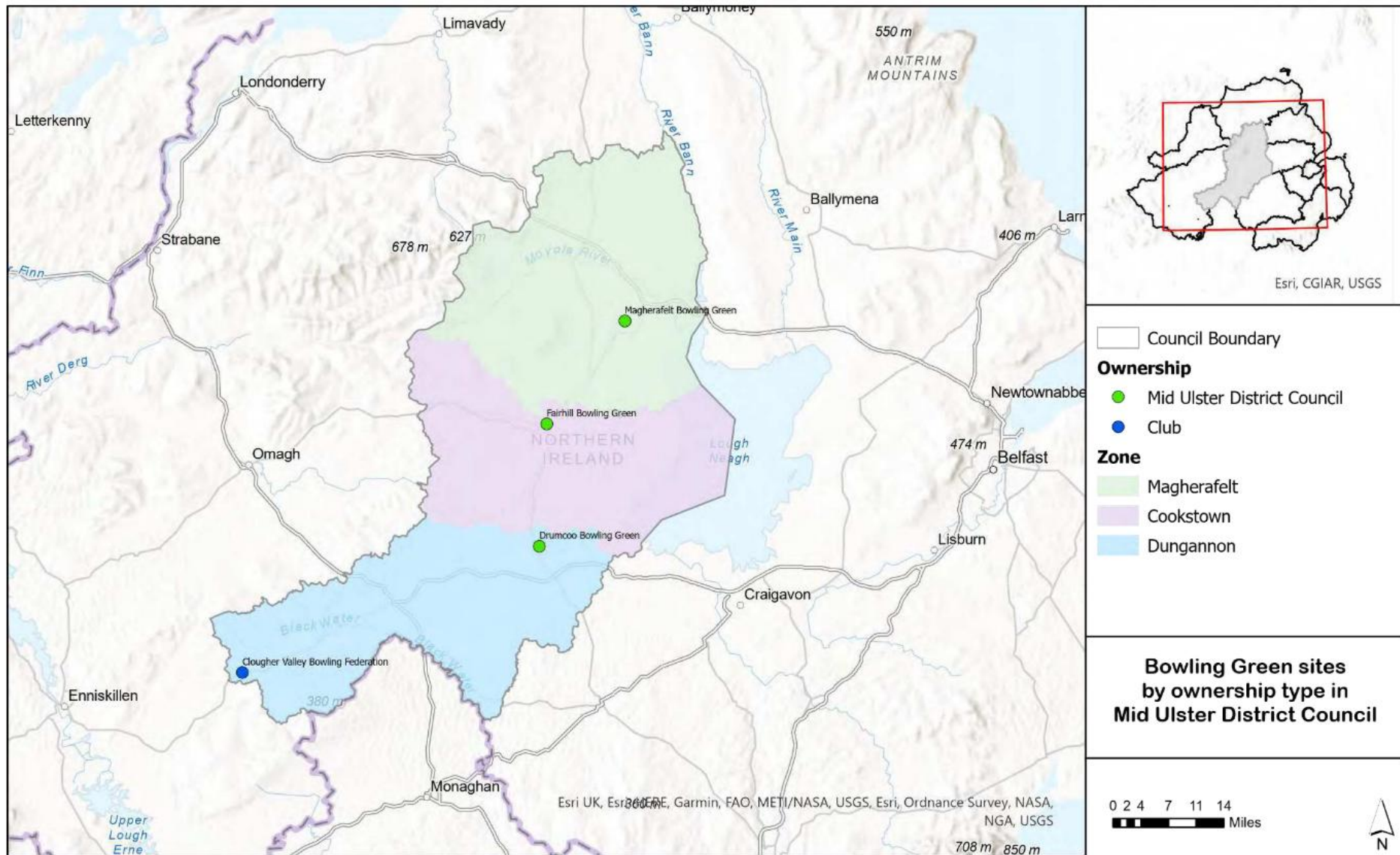
⁸⁴ All Council owned pitches were inspected and rated using the Sport England non-technical pitch inspection method. The quality rating here is ‘Good’, ‘Standard’ or ‘Poor’. Club, community and education sites were asked to rate their own pitch/es via the online survey using the same rating scale.

LAWN BOWLS



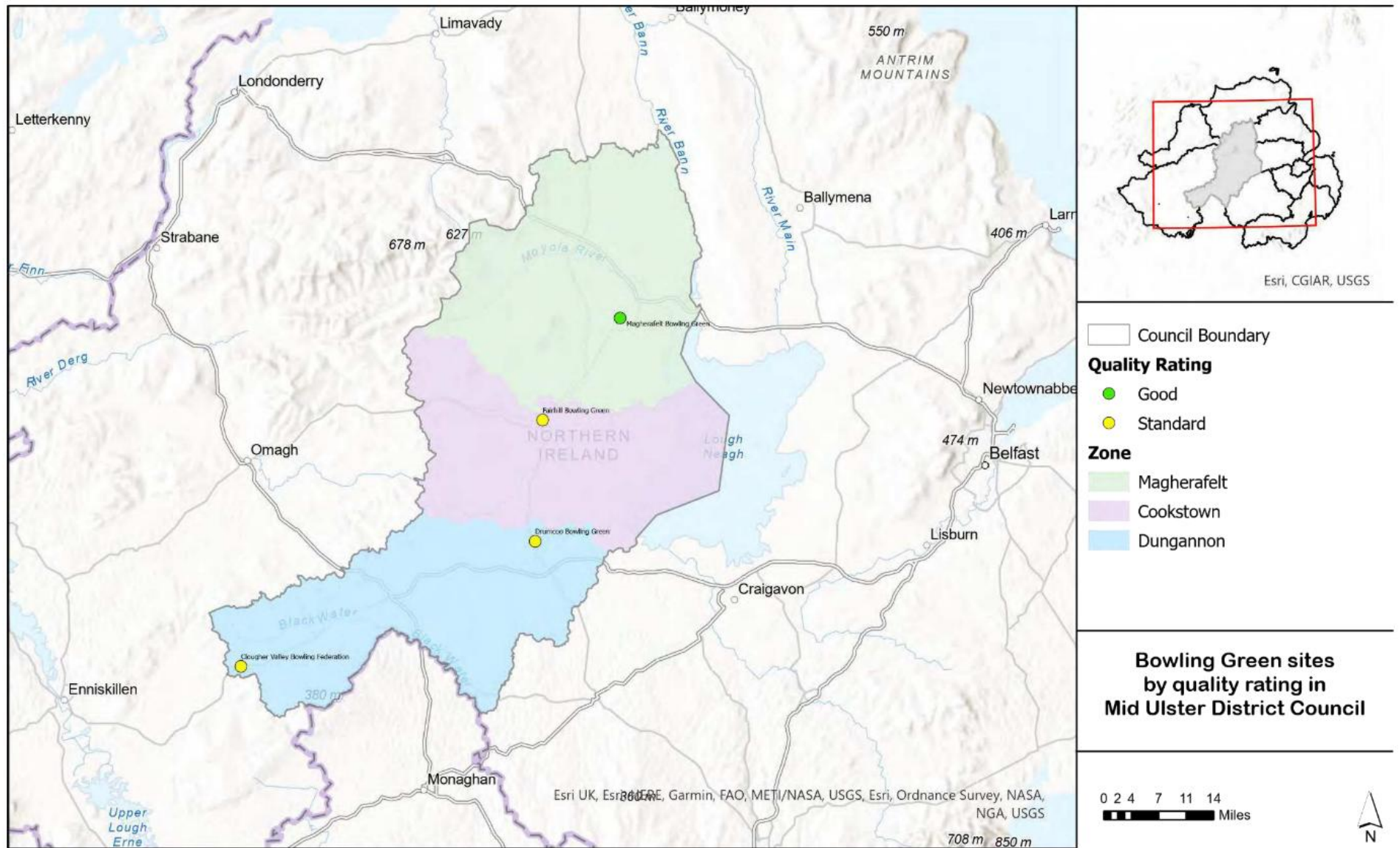
Map 9.1: Location – Bowling Greens

LAWN BOWLS



Map 9.2: Ownership – Bowling Greens

LAWN BOWLS



Map 9.3: Quality – Bowling Greens

Table 9.1: Lawn Bowls –Location, Quantity and Quality of Bowling Greens in Mid Ulster District Council and Club Ownership

<u>Council</u>				
Location		Quantity/Type	Quality	Remarks
Pitch Site	Area			
Drumcoo Bowling Green	Dungannon	1 x Grass Bowling Green – 6 rinks	1 x Standard	Home base for Dungannon Bowling Club, men's and ladies sections – the club reports that the bowling green is very 'slow', the preference is for the grass to be cut shorter making the green 'faster'.
Fairhill Bowling Green	Cookstown	1 x Grass Bowling Green - 6 rinks	1 x Standard	Home base for two clubs, Cookstown Bowling Club and Fairhill Bowling Club. Cookstown BC rated the green as 'Poor' in the club survey. Both clubs feel the Pavilion no longer serves their needs.
Magherafelt Bowling Green (Greenvale Leisure Centre)	Magherafelt	1 x Grass Bowling Green - 6 rinks	1 x Good	Home base to Magherafelt Ladies and Men's Outdoor Bowling Club. The club notes "Pavilion itself is quite dated and there are areas of damp especially in the ladies toilets." The green does not have floodlights limiting the number of playing months.
Totals 3 x Grass Bowling Greens				
<u>Club</u>				
Fivemiletown Bowling Green	Dungannon	1 x Synthetic Bowling Green - 5 rinks	1 x Standard	Home base to Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation, the club reports the synthetic green was installed in 2000 and should be replaced after 21 years. The Council owns and operates the pavilion; the bowling green is operated

				by Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation.
Totals 1 x Synthetic Bowling Green				

Summary of Quantity and Quality of Greens

- 9.4 A summary and breakdown of current bowling greens used for matches and training by ownership is given below.

Bowling Greens – Number and Quality				
Ownership	No of Greens	Good	Standard	Poor
Clubs	1	1	0	0
Council	3	1	2	0
Totals	4	2	2	0

Comments

- ❖ There is a total of 4 bowling greens under Council and club ownership.
- ❖ Just one of the Council's bowling greens is rated 'Good', the remaining two are rated 'Standard'.

Clubs, Teams and Players

- 9.5 To assess the impact of bowling green provision it is necessary to assess the current and future demand and need. There are five lawn bowling clubs in Mid Ulster District Council area. All five clubs completed an online questionnaire allowing for an accurate picture of lawn bowling club playing membership, green use, club development plans and needs. The five clubs satisfied the following criteria:-

- ❖ Home green is located within Mid Ulster District Council area (includes clubs with own pitch).
- ❖ Use pitches within Mid Ulster District Council area for training.
- ❖ Over 50% of team members live within Mid Ulster District Council area.

- 9.6 All Council owned bowling greens have at least one 'rink' available for public use – a standard bowling green has 6 'rinks'. It is assumed that the clubs account for the majority of use, therefore public use of bowling greens is not considered.

- 9.7 The five clubs included in this audit are listed below, detailing playing membership for junior, youth, adult both male and female.

Table 9.2: Bowling Club Playing Membership

Club	Junior (12 to 18)		Adult		Totals
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Fairhill Bowling Club	0	0	17	1	18
Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation	0	0	27	13	40
Cookstown Bowling Club	3	2	38	3	46
Magherafelt Ladies and Men's Bowling Club	0	0	20	18	38
Dungannon Bowling Club Men's & Ladies Sections	0	0	30	0	30
Totals	3	2	132	35	172

Comments

- ❖ There is a total of 172 lawn bowls members across all age groups and both genders.
- ❖ Female participation is approximately one fifth (22%) of male participation.
- ❖ As expected, the number of members under 18 years old is very low.

Adequacy of Provision

- 9.8 The following assessment of need and demand analysis of bowling greens is presented where the total training and match time is compared to total hours available for bowling green club activities. The total training and match needs are a combination of team and individual practice that takes place throughout the day at most facilities. The total hours available for training and matches is based on bowling green opening hours⁸⁵ and the total number of greens at each facility. The total demand is based on the club survey.

Club	Total training hours per week (hrs)	Total match hours per week (hrs)	Total demand per week (hrs)	Supply minus Demand (hrs)
Fairhill Bowling Green	26	20	46	+26
Magherafelt Bowling Green (Greenvale Leisure Centre)	12	12	24	+36
Drumcoo Bowling Green	15	8	23	+37
Fivemiletown Bowling Green	12	8	20	+52

⁸⁵ If a green has floodlights – total available hours is 6 days x 12 hours = 72 hours – assumed, it is closed on Sundays.
If no floodlights – total available hours is 6 days x 10 hours = 60 hours.

- 9.9 From the quantitative analysis of *demand* for training and match green-time at each facility compared to *supply* as measured in available green-hours it is clear that supply comfortably meets demand. Most greens appear to be well used by members.

Community Impact

Match and Training Facility Barriers

- 9.10 In the online club survey, respondent clubs were asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they experience in accessing outdoor match and training facilities, results are:-

Barrier Type	Match Facilities No of clubs	Training Facilities No of clubs
Location too distant from club base	0	0
Hire cost too expensive for club	0	1
Finding venues of suitable condition	0	0
Can't get booking slot	0	0
Availability of floodlit greens		1
Condition of bowling greens	1	1
None	4	3

Comments

- ❖ One club notes that the condition of bowling greens is a barrier to training and matches. It is unclear if the condition of bowling greens is related to poor weather events or that the bowling greens drain slowly therefore delaying access for club activities.
- ❖ Magherafelt Bowling Club noted the lack of floodlit greens as a barrier to training and matches – their home green currently does not have floodlights.

Playing Surface

- 9.11 The increasing use of synthetic surfaces for the delivery of many sports including lawn bowls is an attractive option allowing increased use and reduction in maintenance. Bowling clubs' attitude to synthetic surfaces is presented in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 - Attitude to Training / Match Surfaces

Surface	Training - Number of clubs			Matches – Number of clubs		
	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not Favourable	Neutral	Favourable
Grass	0	1	3	0	1	3
Synthetic	1	1	2	1	1	2

- 9.12** On balance it appears that grass is the slightly more preferred surface for both training and matches. However, there is also a level of acceptance of synthetic surfaces for both training and matches.

Maintenance of Greens

- 9.13** In response to three questions in the online survey relating to maintenance of club bowling greens the following is recorded by each club:-

Responses to three questions related to bowling green maintenance			
Club	Q1. Who is responsible for maintenance of your green?	Q2. How would you rate maintenance of your green?	Q3. Would your club be interested in taking over your club bowling green maintenance?
Magherafelt Ladies and Men's Bowling Club	Council	Standard	No
Dungannon Bowling Club	Council	Standard	No
Cookstown Bowling Club	Council	Poor	Not sure – <i>"this is a possibility but would need thorough discussion at whole club and committee levels following major consultation with Mid-Ulster Council."</i>
Fairhill Bowling Club	Council	Standard	No
Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation	Club	Standard	NA

Comments

- ❖ Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation is the only club in the district responsible for the maintenance of their green which is a synthetic carpet.

- ❖ Two clubs share the green at Fairhill; one club rates the green as ‘Standard’, the other club rates it as ‘Poor’.
- ❖ Three of the clubs who do not own their facility responded they are **not** interested in taking over maintenance of their bowling green. Cookstown BC replied, ‘Not sure’ to taking over maintenance.

Membership Growth and Future Plans

9.14 Club membership growth is an important factor when considering facility development and investment. Expected club membership growth over the next 5 years is recorded below for those clubs who completed this question in the online survey. Four of the clubs expect membership to increase in the next five years although it’s not clear how they will set about achieving this.

Club	Over the Next 5 years	Reason for expected membership change in the next 5 years
Fairhill Bowling Club	Stay the same	No comment
Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation	Increase	More new houses are being built in the area and our club has good cross community relations.
Cookstown Bowling Club	Increase	Improvement in club facilities. Continue to develop links with short-mat bowling clubs.
Dungannon Bowling Club	Stay the same	New members are mostly invited
Magherafelt BC - Ladies Section	Increase	We are always trying to encourage new members of all ages. Pre- Covid year we had an open afternoon which was well attended.
Magherafelt BC - Men’s Section	Increase	Population of Magherafelt continues to grow and with improved facilities i.e. floodlighting and a more determined drive to encourage local short mat bowlers particularly younger age bracket to join club would be of great benefit going forward.

9.15 Table 9.4 presents comments from the five bowling clubs on future plans/needs and also any remarks from the final survey question ‘Any Other Comments’.

Table 9.4: Full comments from the online survey in relation to future plans/needs and ‘Any Other Comments’

	Future Plans	Any Other Comment
Fairhill Bowling Club	We feel the kitchen and changing no longer works for the club.	We share the bowling green with Cookstown BC, this arrangement works well for us.
Clogher Valley Outdoor Bowling Federation	We have a synthetic green which was laid in 2000, it needs replacing after 21 years.	We are in need of more shelter facilities and refurbishment of path around green.
Cookstown Bowling Club	The bowling green needs to reach the standard of 15-20 years ago to match the success of the club during this time. Clubhouse facilities are of a very poor standard and currently do not meet Health & Safety standards. Changing rooms too small, toilets are embarrassing, no changing facilities for ladies, kitchen requires modernisation and committee room lacking for private meetings. If these changes were made, this would help recruitment of new members. In 2022, we have club reps who will be holding the offices of Northern Ireland Provincial Bowling Association President and Irish Bowling Association President. This will bring great honour to the bowling club and Mid-Ulster District. Major bowling dignitaries and top players will be present as the club will be hosting major events and championships. At present, the facilities do not meet the standard required to do this and frankly embarrassing to have to give up this opportunity as a result.	It is continually frustrating that some sports in the Mid-Ulster district have much better facilities than outdoor bowls. Since 1995 (when I joined the club) the clubhouse has not seen any major refurbishment. Consistently, members of the bowling club have achieved the highest accolades in the sport. Sadly, investment in the improvement of the bowling facilities has not been forthcoming to match the success on the green.
Magherafelt Ladies Outdoor Bowling Club	Continued maintenance of the green to a high playing standard is essential. Pavilion itself is quite dated and there are areas of damp especially in the ladies toilets. We are still using a free standing boiler placed on the kitchen worktop and this is a health hazard. We have access to a car parking area which is alongside	Changing facilities very basic could do with improvement which would help to attract younger players. The high fees we have to collect to cover club expenses coupled with the payment to The Council which

	the Greenvale leisure centre, however, members from away clubs do have difficulty in obtaining a parking space as spaces are already occupied.	this year equated to almost £50. Per member.
Dungannon Bowling Club	The club would be confident in gaining more members if the green was cut closer to make it faster i.e. shorter. We understand this is a fine balancing act, but we rarely play on a green as slow as that in Dungannon.	The bowling club is satisfied with provision given.

DRAFT ONLY - NOT FOR CIRCULATION

10. Rugby

Introduction

10.1 This section presents consultation with the Irish Rugby Football Union's Ulster Branch followed by an overview of supply of and demand for rugby pitches; an assessment of *adequacy of provision* is made using Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Model' (PPM). There are three rugby clubs in the Council area operating a mix of adult and junior rugby. Having established the supply and demand situation the section considers how it impacts on the community. The section is structured as follows:-

- ❖ Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality
- ❖ Clubs, Teams and Players
- ❖ Adequacy of Provision
- ❖ Community Impact

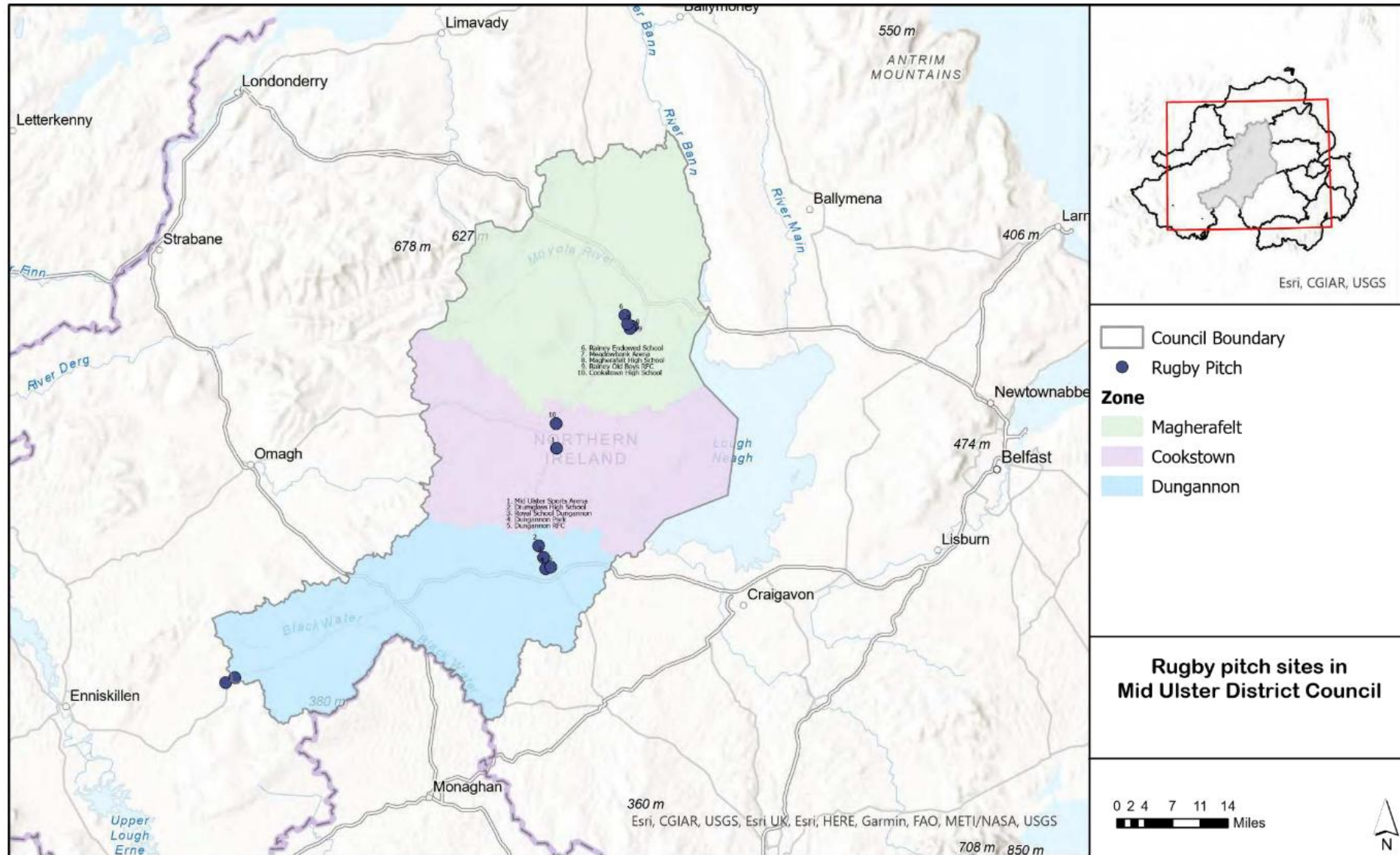
Pitch Supply – Location, Quantity, Quality

Rugby is traditionally played on a grass pitch where the field of play does not exceed 100 metres in length and the in-goal does not exceed 22 metres in length. Whilst there appears no minimum width, the maximum width must not exceed 70 metres. There are just three rugby clubs in the Council area: Rainey Old Boys RFC, Dungannon RFC and Clogher Valley RFC. Although Clogher Valley RFC grounds lie just outside the Council boundary they are included in this report as the majority of their players live in Mid Ulster District Council area. All three clubs own their facilities. In addition, there are three full-size rugby pitches under Council ownership (1 x grass and 2 x 3G⁸⁶ multi-sports pitches). The inventory of rugby pitches in the Council area is presented in Table 10.1. under three different types of pitch 'ownership': -

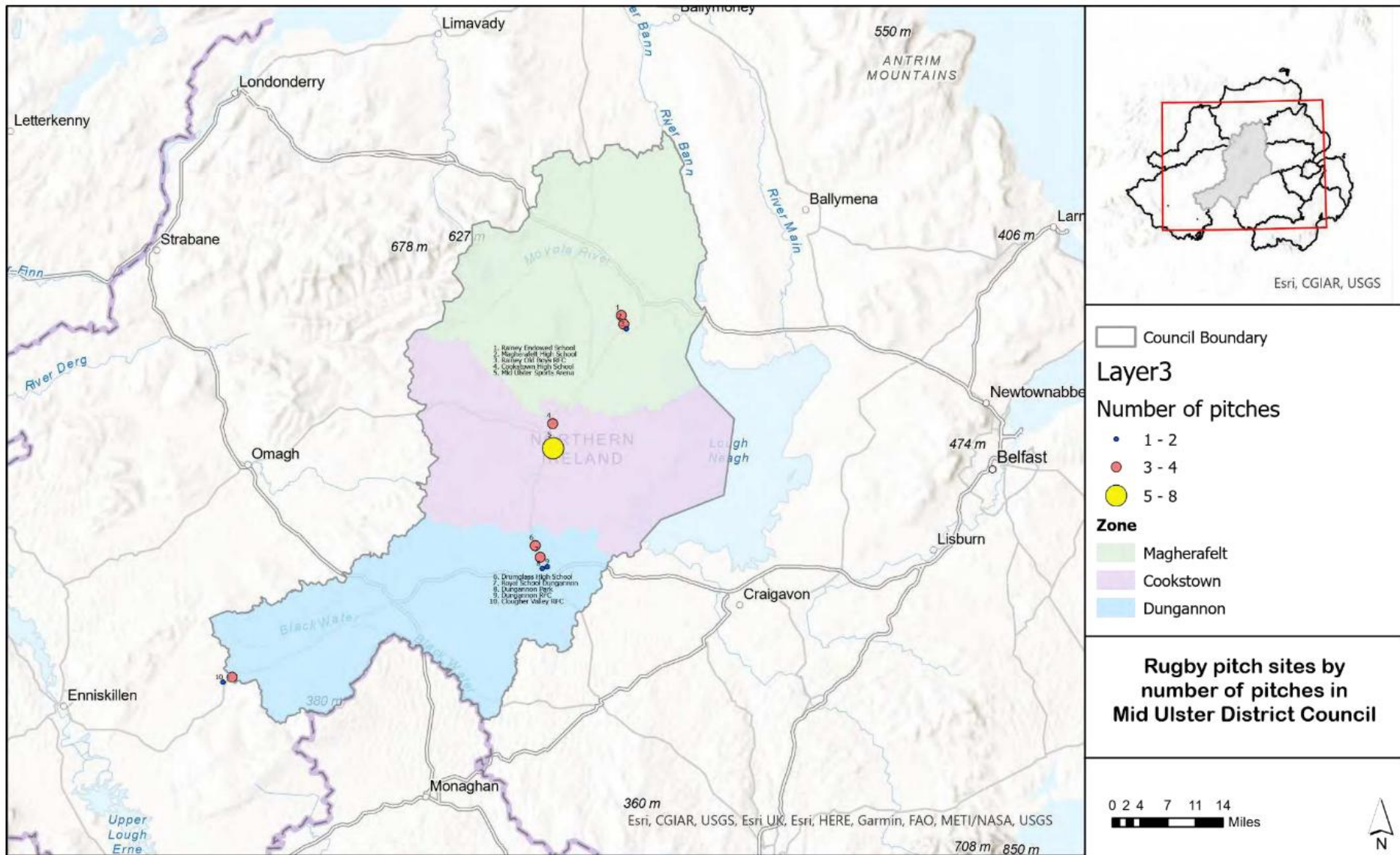
- ❖ **Mid Ulster District Council** – these pitches are maintained, operated and booked through the Council.
- ❖ **Education** – pitches owned by primary, secondary or tertiary level educational establishments.
- ❖ **Club owned/leased**– pitches owned and maintained by a rugby football club.

⁸⁶ Can accommodate rugby training and matches, specification is compliant with the Irish Rugby Football Union Artificial Turf Pitch guidelines.

RUGBY

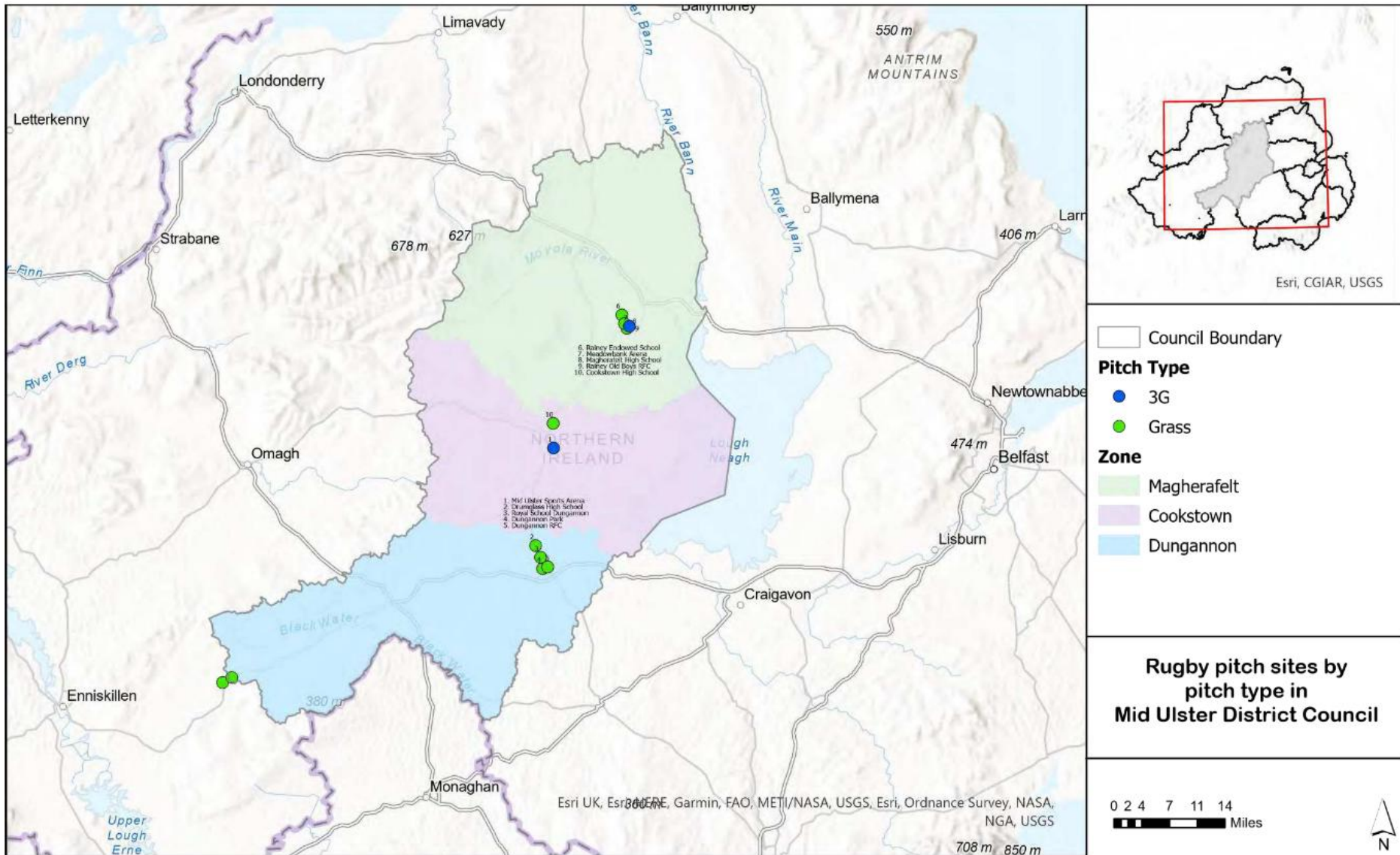


RUGBY

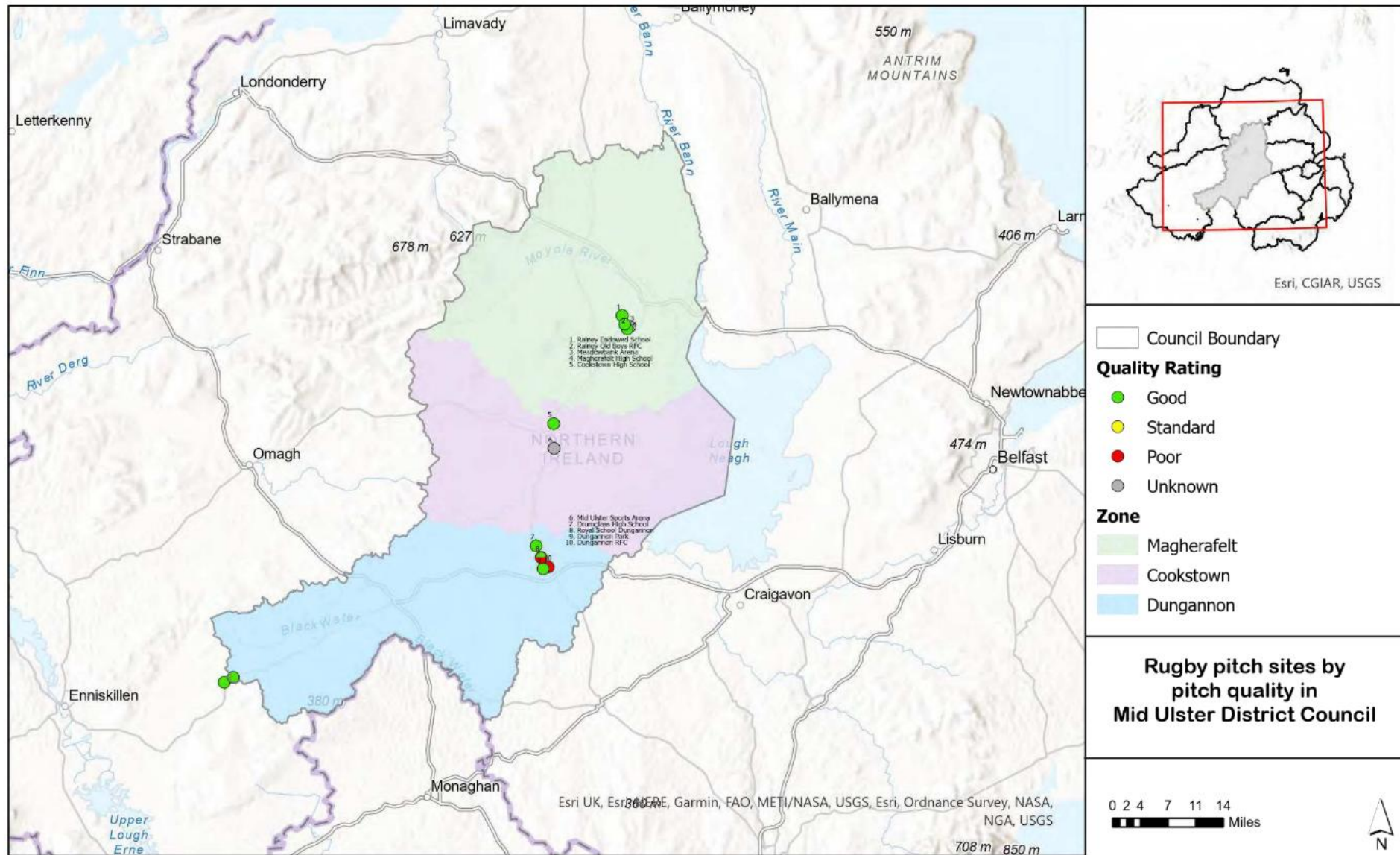


Map 10.2: Number – Rugby Pitches

RUGBY



Map 10.3: Surface Type – Rugby Pitches



Map 10.4: Quality – Rugby Pitches

10.2 Table 10.1 presents a detailed inventory of rugby pitches suitable for competitive matches and training. Two pitch categories are noted:-

- ❖ **Full** – pitches used for matches of all ages and training.
- ❖ **Youth** – pitches used for Youth only matches and training of all ages.

Table 10.1: Rugby – Location, Quantity and Quality of Pitches in Mid Ulster District Council area under Council, Education and Club Ownership				
<u>Clubs</u>				
Location		Quantity	Quality	Remarks
Pitch Site	Area			
Clogher Valley RFC The Cran	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	2 x Good	Located on the Council's boundary with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. Two of the full grass pitches are floodlit. The club has approximately 50 female youth players.
Dungannon RFC Stevenson Park	Dungannon	2 x Full Grass	2 x Poor	The club notes the quality of both club pitches is 'Poor'. The club reports with the growth of the women's rugby it is at capacity and requires a 3 rd pitch.
Rainey Old Boys RFC Hatrick Park	Magherafelt	2 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The club makes use of the Council's 3G multi-sports pitch at Meadowbank next to the club grounds for training. The club reports a rise in female playing membership.
Totals 6 x Full Grass Rugby Pitches				
<u>Council</u>				
Dungannon Park	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	Used by Dungannon Rugby club
Meadowbank Arena	Magherafelt	1 x Full 3G multi-sports	NA	Shared used with association football and gaelic games for training and matches

Mid Ulster Sports Arena	Cookstown	1 x Full 3G multi-sports	NA	The pitch is floodlit and marked for both gaelic games and rugby. Local rugby club Cookstown RFC folded in 2019.
Total 1 x Full Grass Rugby Pitch 2 x 3G Multi- sports pitch marked for rugby				
Education				
Rainey Endowed School	Magherafelt	3 x Full grass	3 x Good	The rugby pitches are currently not available for community use.
Fivemiletown College	Dungannon	1 x Full grass	1 x Good	The rugby pitch is available for community use and used occasionally by Clogher Valley RFC 3 rd team for matches.
Magherafelt High School	Magherafelt	1 x Full grass	1 x Good	The rugby pitch is available for community use but not used.
Drumglass High School	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	No community use – facilities managed by an external consultancy
Cookstown High School	Cookstown	1 x Full Grass	1 x Good	The rugby pitch is available for community use but not used.
Royal School Dungannon	Dungannon	1 x Full Grass 2 x Youth	1 x Poor 2 x Good	The pitches are available for community use and on occasions used by Dungannon RFC
Totals 8 x Full Grass Rugby Pitches 2 x Youth Grass Rugby Pitches				

Summary of Quantity of Pitches

- 10.3** Typically, rugby clubs train and play matches on the same pitch. Given that this is a winter sport, careful pitch maintenance is required to ensure pitch quality throughout the season. A summary and breakdown of current rugby pitches used for matches and training by ownership is given below.

Summary of Rugby Pitches used for matches and training			
Ownership	Full Grass / 3G	Youth Grass	Training (3G association football)
Clubs	6	0	0
Education	8	2	1 x 3G
MUDC	3	0	0
Total	17	2	1

Summary of Quality of Pitches

10.4 A summary and breakdown of current full and youth match pitch provision by quality is:-

Summary of Quality Rating for Grass Rugby Pitches (Full and Youth)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs	4	0	2	0	6
Education	8	0	0	0	8
Council	1	0	0	0	1
Total	13	0	2	0	15

Clubs, Teams and Players

10.5 In order to assess the impact of training and match provision it is necessary to assess current and future demand and need. There are three rugby clubs in Mid Ulster District Council area. All clubs completed questionnaires, producing an accurate picture of membership, pitch use, pitch preference and any development plans and aspirations. The clubs satisfied the following criteria:

- a) Home match pitch is located within Mid Ulster District Council area (includes clubs with own pitch).
- b) Use pitches within Mid Ulster District Council area for training.
- c) Over 50% of team members live within Mid Ulster District Council area.

10.6 The three clubs included in this audit are listed below detailing the number of adult, and youth teams.

Table 10.2: Rugby Club Team Profile

Club	Mini (U7 to U12)	Youth (U13 to U18)	Adult	Total No of Teams
Rainey RFC	21 x male	3 x male	5 x male	29
Clogher Valley RFC	5 x male	3 x male 3 x female	4 x male	15
Dungannon RFC	14 x male	3 x male 1 x female	5 x male 1 x female	24
Totals	40	13	15	68

10.7 There is a total of 68 rugby teams in the Council area from U7 to adult; these are predominantly male teams. However, both Clogher Valley RFC and Dungannon RFC have girls teams and Dungannon RFC has an adult female team. As is common with most other field sports rugby provides for small-sided games through the Rugby Mini programme. Here, matches are played on varying pitch sizes and team numbers depending on age group. Small pitches are created on full-size pitches with the use of cones.

10.8 The profile of teams and player numbers in the two identified clubs is summarised as follows:-

Table 10.3: Rugby – Profile of Membership and Teams based in MUDC

	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
<u>Membership</u>			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	374	76	450
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	249	48	297
Adult	310	27	337
Total Players	933	151	1084
<u>Teams</u>			
Mini (U7 to U11)	40	0	40
Youth (U12 to U18)	9	4	13
Adult	14	1	15
Total Teams	63	5	68

Adequacy of Provision

10.9 The Sport England model identifies three pitch usage categories:-

Secured Community Pitches	<p>Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management.</p> <p>Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector which are open to members of the public.</p> <p>Pitches at education sites which are available for use by the public through formal community use agreements.</p>
Used by community but not secured	Pitches not included above that are nevertheless available for community use, eg, school/college pitches without formal user agreements.
Not open for community use	Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public.

10.10 These categories inform three scenarios used in the quantitative assessment of adequacy of provision of rugby pitches, described here along with the number of pitches in each scenario. Given the profile of rugby it is assumed that all adult, youth and mini games are played on full size pitches – youth pitches are not considered in this modelling as they are generally not used for competitive games.

Reference	Description	No of full size grass and 3G pitches
Scenario 1	All pitches	15 x grass 2 x 3G
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use and pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	7 x grass 1 x 3G
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	1 x grass 1 x 3G

- 10.11** There is a degree of subjectivity in determining which adult pitches to include in Scenario 2 as community access to some pitches is allowed but also restricted. The number of pitches in Scenario 2 has purposely been estimated on the low side in order to remain prudent. The following full-size grass pitches have been excluded – all education pitches are excluded as they generally reserved for school use.

Pitch site	No of Pitches	Rationale
Education	8	Generally, not available for matches
Council	1 x 3G at MUSA	Currently not used for club matches

- 10.12** The pitch breakdown for each scenario for full and youth grass match pitches available for adult, youth and mini games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
	Full Grass/3G	Full Grass/3G	Full Grass/3G
Clubs	6	6	0
Education	8	0	0
MUDC	3	2	0
Totals	17	8	0

Comments

- ❖ The above table records the number of full-size grass pitches used in each scenario.
- ❖ Youth, adult and mini matches are played on full size pitches.
- ❖ Scenarios 2 and 3 exclude 8 education sector pitches on the basis that community use is generally not available, although Clogher Valley RFC use Fivemiletown College school pitch on occasions.
- ❖ The full size 3G pitch at Meadowbank Arena is included as it is used for competitive mini, youth and junior matches by Rainey Old Boys RFC.

Adequacy

Scenario 1

- 10.13** The picture of *rugby total demand and total supply for Scenario 1*, that is all clubs and all pitches, in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows:-

Table 10.4: Rugby – Demand and Supply Scenario 1 - All pitches

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams/ <i>team equivalents</i>	Mini (U7 to U12)	40	Mini- games are played on adult pitches. A min-game blitz/tournament takes 2-hours and can accommodate 20 teams
	Youth (U13 to U18)	13	
	Adult	14⁸⁷	
2. Calculating home games per team per week	Mini (U7 to U11)	1 x blitz	Based on a home game/blitz every other week and accounting for teams playing in different leagues
	Youth (U12 to U18)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games per week	Mini (U7 to U11)	1 x blitz	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	Youth (U11 to U18)	7	
	Adult	7	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	Mini (U7 to U11) – Sat AM	71%	This is the peak demand period and is the % of games played then based on the survey
	Youth (U12 to U18) – Sat AM	83%	
	Adult – Sat PM	85%	
5. Defining pitches required each day taking into account pitch capacity	Mini Rugby (U7 to U11) – Sat AM	2	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up – it is assumed a pitch can take 2 games a youth game and an adult game on the same day.
	Youth (U12 to U18) – Sat AM	6	
	Adult – Sat PM	6	
6. Establishing pitches available	Mini	17	All club, Council and education owned pitches
	Youth	17	
	Adult	16	
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁸⁸	Mini	17-2 = +15	Good Level of Supply
	Youth	17-6 = +11	Supply meeting demand
	Adult	17-6 = +11	Good level of supply

⁸⁷ The one Ladies team is not included as Ladies matches are generally played on Sundays.

⁸⁸ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

10.14 The results show that the supply of rugby facilities meets demand with 11 pitches surplus for both junior and senior rugby demand. This is based on a quantitative analysis and assuming 1 rugby pitch can support mini rugby, a junior and senior match as calculated from the club survey.

Scenario 2

10.15 The picture for Scenario 2 for rugby in accordance with the Sport England model is as follows where secondary school education pitches are not included as they are generally not available for competitive matches: -

Table 10.5: Rugby – Demand and Supply Scenario 2 - All community pitches

Model Stage	Team categories	Results	Comments
1. Identifying teams/ <i>team equivalents</i>	Mini (U7 to U11)	40	Mini- games are played on adult pitches. It is assumed a mini-game blitz/tournament takes 2- hours and can accommodate 20 teams and occurs every 3 or 4 weeks.
	Youth (U12 to U18)	13	
	Adult	14	
2. Calculating home games per team per week	Mini (U7 to U11)	1 x blitz	Based on a home game/blitz for youth and adult teams every other week, accounts for teams playing in different leagues.
	Youth (U12 to U18)	0.5	
	Adult	0.5	
3. Assessing total home games per week	Mini (U7 to U11)	1 x blitz	Stage 1 x Stage 2, rounded up.
	Youth (U11 to U18)	7	
	Adult	7	
4. Establishing temporal demand for games	Mini (U7 to U11) – Sat AM	71%	This is the peak demand period and is the % of games played then based on the survey
	Youth (U12 to U18) – Sat AM	83%	
	Adult – Sat PM	85%	
5. Defining pitches required each day taking into account pitch capacity	Mini Rugby (U7 to U11) – Sat AM	2	Stage 3 x Stage 4 rounded up – it is assumed a pitch can take 2 games a youth game and an adult game on the same day.
	Youth (U12 to U18) – Sat AM	6	
	Adult – Sat PM	6	
6. Establishing pitches available	Mini	8	All club and Council owned pitches
	Youth	8	

	Adult	7	
7. Adequacy of Provision ⁸⁹	Mini	8-2 = +6	Good Level of Supply
	Youth	8-6 = +2	Supply meeting demand
	Adult	7-6 = +1	Supply just meeting demand

10.16 Based on PPM quantitative analysis, the results for Scenario 2 show that supply is just meeting demand for competitive games for youth with a surplus of two pitches, however supply is just meeting demand for adult matches with a small surplus of one pitch. It is important to note the following additional comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that rugby pitch capacity is two games on a Saturday, a youth match in the morning and an adult game in the afternoon. A lower pitch capacity will reduce the modelled surplus.
- ❖ Scenario 2 includes the use of Meadowbank 3G facility for mini and youth matches but not adult fixtures as recorded in the club survey.
- ❖ Scenario 2 as presented does not account for training which also takes place on most rugby pitches in addition to matches. Dungannon RFC report that club growth is being constrained by the lack of training pitch facilities and they require a third pitch.
- ❖ Scenario 2 does not include the 3G pitch at MUSA as there is no club attached to the pitch, but it could be used for club matches in the event of club pitches not being available or playable.
- ❖ From the club survey it is noted that a number of youth and adult games are played mid-week; this will reduce the number of pitches required on Saturdays as modelled in Scenario 2.

10.17 A third scenario could be modelled where only Council pitches are considered. As there is only one grass Council pitch and two 3G pitches suitable for rugby – demand clearly could not be met.

⁸⁹ The number of pitches available minus the number of pitches needed.

Pitch Use and Capacity – Online Survey

10.18 From the online survey the following clubs recorded the number of hours their two main pitches, are used for training and matches each week on average:-

Club	Pitch 1			Pitch 2		
	Total Training for ALL teams (hrs)	Total Matches for ALL teams (hrs)	Total usage Pitch 1 (hrs)	Total Training for ALL teams (hrs)	Total Matches for ALL teams (hrs)	Total usage Pitch 2 (hrs)
Rainey Old Boys RFC	10	3	13	0	2	2
Dungannon RFC	8	2	10	8	4	12
Clogher Valley RFC	6	6	12	3	3	6
Totals	24	11	Average = 11.6 hours weekly	11	9	Average = 6 hours weekly

Comments

- ❖ All three clubs use their pitches both for training and matches.
- ❖ Rainey Old Boys RFC pitch 2 is only used for matches.
- ❖ The average number of hours Pitch 1 is used for training and matches across the three clubs is 11.6 hours.

Community Impact

Match and Training Facility Barriers

10.19 In the online club survey, respondent clubs were asked to indicate what barriers, if any, they experience in accessing outdoor match and training facilities, results are:-

Barrier Type	Match Facilities No of Clubs	Training Facilities No of Clubs
Location too distant from club base	2	1
Hire cost too expensive for club	0	1
Finding venues of suitable condition	3	1
Availability of floodlit venues	-	1
Can't get booking slot	2	3

Comments

- ❖ Dungannon RFC make the following comment with regard to training facilities: *"We want a facility close to our club, Dungannon Park would be the perfect site to use regularly if the price was right."*
- ❖ All three clubs selected 'Can't get a booking slot' with regards to training facilities.

Playing Surface

- 10.20** Competitive sport is increasingly being played on artificial surfaces and 3G surfaces are officially sanctioned by the IRFU. From the club survey all three clubs indicated they are either *favourable or neutral* to using 3G surfaces for training but neutral for matches. One club notes that: -

"Rugby match preference for our club will always be natural grass but we really only have experience of using a 3G synthetic pitch for training."

Membership Growth and Future Plans

- 10.21** Club membership growth is an important factor when considering facility development and investment. All three clubs expect to grow further particularly for the female section of the club. Dungannon RFC notes the following observations which they expect to lead to increased membership:-

"Club is better organised with a reduction in the average age of the General Committee of more than 20 years from PRE-COVID levels. The introduction of a male U20s side in 2021 will increase youth and adult male membership. We have a housing development next door that is almost complete and another land parcel worth 2.5million adjacent to our club that's up for sale. The new development has already increased use of our pitches. The female membership is going to increase in line with the market trends for increased female sport participation."

- 10.22** Table 10.6 presents the three rugby clubs' future plans/needs and also any remarks from the final 'Any Other Comments' question of the survey.

Table 10.6: Comments in Relation to Future Plans and Needs

Club Name Home Venue	Development Plans	Final Comment	Need Theme
Rainey Old Boys RFC	No comment	We greatly appreciate the links and relationships which we have in place with MUDC and our use of the Meadowbank facility has been hugely beneficial to us as a club and we look forward to continuing that relationship.	None
Clogher Valley Rugby Football Club The Cran	We have purchased 9 acres of land adjoining the pitches, with the intention of developing a multi-sport, all weather, facility to allow other sports such as soccer, hockey, GAA along with rugby to use. The current pitches are used 5 days per week, with additional school use and Ulster Rugby training sessions for regional teams. During the winter and wet periods, the pitches become unusable and there must be a restriction of use imposed. A multi-sport, all weather, floodlit facility would reduce some of the use of the pitches and increase the use of the facility.	A joint venture to build a multi-sport facility on the adjoining land with Mid Ulster District Council and CVRFC would be considered.	Multi-sport facility
Dungannon RFC Stevenson Park	We only have 2 grass pitches which are deteriorating year on year based on increased usage. Our floodlights are halogen, +25 years and now very costly to repair. Any spare funds in future are going to be allocated to replacing these lights with LED and not on any significant pitch maintenance works. With the ladies game growing, a new U20s Men's league about to be launched and rugby now marketed at toddlers and above we are desperately in need of a 3rd pitch or a local 3G so our members don't feel as though they are being pushed out of the club. A new housing development bordering our pitches also means there is usage happening outside of	Dungannon RFC is not in a financial position to make any significant changes to its rugby playing facilities.	Third pitch

	members which is being monitored by community police and the development owners. Ideally, we want to accommodate our neighbours but we can't given how precious our pitch space has become. Our changing rooms are adequate however with only one set of 20 year old toilets for both male and female they are also now in need of a full refurbishment.		
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Summary

10.23 The foregoing assessment of supply/demand along with consultation and survey work informs a number of key points:-

- ❖ Rugby clubs tend to train and play matches on club pitches where changing accommodation and social facilities are also available. With just three clubs, rugby is a minority sport in the Council area; a total of 68 teams are fielded across the three clubs involving 1084 players from 6 years of age through to adult; only 151 players are female. Dungannon RFC has an adult female team. As with association football the under representation of female players presents an opportunity for future sports development programmes. Both Dungannon RFC and Clogher Valley RFC have female youth teams.
- ❖ Looking at adequacy of provision Scenario 2 is viewed as the most realistic picture given it includes only pitches that are available for community use. It shows the following for matches:-

Mini's	+6 pitches	Supply meeting demand
Youth	+2 pitch	Supply just meeting demand
Adult	+1 pitch	Supply just meeting demand

- ❖ Dungannon RFC report they are in '*desperate need*' of a third pitch to cater for a growing club.
- ❖ Clogher Valley RFC has purchased 9 acres of land adjoining their site, the club states they are keen to explore:

"a joint venture to build a multi-sport facility on the adjoining land with Mid Ulster District Council and CVRFC."

- ❖ There is one dedicated Council-owned grass rugby pitch at Dungannon Park, and there are two multi-sport 3G pitches (Meadowbank and MUSA) suitable for rugby youth and adult fixtures.

11. Multi Use Games Areas

Introduction

- 11.1** Multi use games areas (MUGAs) are developed by local authorities to supplement play areas and complement training facilities for outdoor team sports such as association football and hockey. Depending on markings and equipment they may also facilitate basketball. There is no 'one size fits all' in terms of design (size, type of surface, lighting, fencing, markings, equipment) and accessibility. Some of the Council's MUGA's are more suited to recreational play by older children whilst others are also capable of use for sports training. Some are located alongside play areas and sports pitches whilst others are unconnected to any other play or sports facilities.
- 11.2** For the purposes of this audit each MUGA was visited and inspected. Appendix 2 presents a record of the visits with photographs. MUGAs tend to fall between two stools; on the one hand they are viewed primarily as play facilities, on the other hand they are viewed primarily as sports facilities. The Council does not presently define a MUGAs primary identity and purpose. Fields in Trust promotes a benchmark guideline of 0.3 hectares of MUGA provision per thousand population. For the district's population of 146,427, the Fields in Trust's benchmark suggests there should be 44 hectares of MUGA provision, however, the estimated actual provision, based on the consultant's inspections is 0.7 hectares. There are 14 MUGAs in the Mid Ulster District.
- 11.3** Sport England offers a classification for MUGAs.

Type Ref No	Description
1	Open textured porous macadam areas used for ball rebound sports where tennis is the priority and sports such as mini-tennis, netball, and basketball are secondary users. These areas are suitable for wheelchair sports although care is needed in warm weather during the first year of use.
2	Open textured porous macadam areas used for ball rebound sports where netball is the priority and sports such as tennis, mini-tennis, and basketball are secondary users. These areas are suitable for wheelchair sports although care is needed in warm weather during the first year of use.

3	Polymeric surface over macadam base areas used for ball rebound sports where netball is the priority and sports such as tennis, mini-tennis, and basketball are secondary users. These areas are suitable for wheelchair sports.
4	Polymeric surface over macadam base areas used for recreational football, basketball and general sports and recreational training and play. Due to their greater shock absorbency and lower surface friction, these areas are not recommended for tennis or netball.
5	Artificial grass areas (MUGAs or AGPs) with a shock pad and either heavily doused with water before play or filled or dressed with sand or rubber crumb. These areas are used for sports such as hockey, five-a-side football, football, lacrosse, American football and training for activities such as athletics, rugby union and rugby league. '3G' artificial grass with long pile and rubber particulate pile filling is less suitable for hockey. Competitive (i.e. full contact) rugby union and rugby league must be played on pitches which have a high degree of shock absorbency as specified by the NGBs of those sports.

Location, Quantity, Quality

11.4 A total of seven inspection elements were devised by the consultants in order to inform a condition assessment, *good, satisfactory, poor*; they are:-



Whilst Appendix 2 presents the complete inspection report for each MUGA, summary points for each element help to create the overall picture.

Size

11.5 Size varies considerably, both in terms of dimensions and total area. In looking at size the question arises, '*What is the ideal size for a MUGA?*' Sport England's recommendation⁹⁰ is 36.6m x 21.35m for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA and 37m

⁹⁰ '*Design Guidance Note: Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sport*'; Sport England.

x 18.5m for a Type 4 or 5 MUGA. Of the Council's 14 MUGAs, only two achieve the footprint – 781m² – for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA, however, eleven match or exceed the length:width ratio of 1.7:1 for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA. Fields in Trust's recommendation for a MUGAs minimum size is 40m x 20m, that is, a footprint of 800m² and a length to width ratio of 2:1. Here's a summary of dimensions:-

MUGA	Dimension (metres)	Area m ²	L x W Ratio	Does MUGA meet Sport England m ² guidance for a Type 1, 2 or 3 MUGA
Blackhill	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Brocagh	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Caledon	37 x 20	740	1.8 : 1	No
Clogher	30 x 20	600	1.5 : 1	No
Donaghmore	38 x 20	760	1.9 : 1	No
Gortnalowry	20 x 12	240	1.7 : 1	No
Gortnasoor	30 x 14	420	2.1 : 1	No
Killymeron	18 x 10	180	1.8 : 1	No
Loup	15 x 12	180	1.3 : 1	No
Meadow View Park	22 x 15	330	1.5 : 1	No
Milltown	28 x 15	420	1.9 : 1	No
Moygashel	40 x 24	960	1.7 : 1	Yes
Ratheen	44 x 25	1,100	1.8 : 1	Yes
Upperlands	28 x 14	392	2.0 : 1	No

Access

- 11.6** With the exception of Gortnasoor, all of the MUGAs have open access, including those with surround fencing. At Gortnasoor the MUGA is within a larger play park facility which is fenced and the gate locked at night due to anti-social behaviour. During the winter months only those MUGAs with lighting in place – Brocagh and Meadow View Park are able to be used.

Fencing

- 11.7** MUGAs generally have surround fencing that is sturdy and high enough to contain ball play. Four MUGAs have high fencing that is topped off with netting to contain high balls. Six MUGAs have some fencing but not always on all four sides or only low level; the Moygashel MUGA, for example, is fenced on three sides whilst the Ratheen MUGA is surrounded only by a low wall with no fencing. The Clogher MUGA has low fencing at each end but none along the two sides. The MUGAs at Donaghmore and Gortnasoor have no fencing. A 'standard' height for MUGA fencing appears to be

between 3 to 4 metres to be effective in containing stray balls – six of the Council's MUGAs achieve this height as a minimum.

Surface

- 11.8** Twelve of the MUGAs have a tarmac/bitmac surface. Upperlands MUGA has a 3G synthetic surface and Loup MUGA has a sand filled AstroTurf synthetic surface. Sport England's Type 1 and 2 MUGAs have tarmac/bitmac surfaces whilst the Type 5 MUGA has an artificial grass surface, which Upperlands and Loup both have. None of the MUGAs have a polymeric/rubber crumb surface which is preferable to tarmac/bitmac.

Markings/Sports

- 11.9** Typically the MUGAs are marked to accommodate five-a-side association football and basketball. Most of the MUGAs have goals and basketball boards integrated into the fencing system. The two biggest MUGAs, at Ratheen and Moygashel are marked for seven-a-side/nine-a-side association football, with Moygashel also marked for tennis. Three of the MUGAs – Caledon, Donaghmore, Loup – have no markings but are equipped with basketball boards and integrated five-a-side goals. In some MUGAs the markings, painted on tarmac/bitmac, are somewhat faded.

Lighting

- 11.10** Lighting is absent in all but two MUGAs; Brocagh has floodlights which can be brought on by operating a meter attached to the fence; Meadow View Park's floodlights are on a timer system which is controlled by the Council's Parks staff. Lights were not tested during the inspection visits. A third MUGA, at Milltown in Dungannon has two streetlights located on one side, however, it's not known how effective they are in enabling use during the hours of darkness.

Issues/Hazards

- 11.11** MUGAs are designed to be safe for unsupervised use by individuals and small groups. High level steel mesh surround fencing reduces the risk of stray balls whilst the addition of roof netting removed the risk completely. However, some issues/hazards that risk compromising safety and the quality of users experience are noted:-
- ❖ Colouring of sports markings has faded in many examples. Whilst this is not a hazard, faded lines may reduce the appeal to potential users, eg, Ratheen.
 - ❖ Weed encroachment and/or moss growth is unsightly and may present a slip hazard in wet conditions, eg, Caledon.

- ❖ With some of the older MUGAs there is evidence of surface deterioration, perhaps posing a falling or tripping hazard, eg, Clogher.
- ❖ MUGAs are often used as gathering places for young people and for bonfire sites. The risk of anti-social behaviour and property damage is clear, eg, Gortnasoar, Moygashel.

Condition Assessment

11.12 In keeping with the Sport England non-technical assessment system for conventional pitches, the consultants have assessed each MUGA and classified condition, summarised as follows:-

Good	4 MUGA's
Satisfactory	7 MUGA's
Poor	3 MUGA's

The following table summarises the condition assessment.

MULTI USE GAMES AREAS

MUGA	Size (metres)	m ²	Access	Fencing	Surface	Markings	Lighting	Issues/Hazards	Condition Assessment
1. Blackhill	20 x 12	240	Open	Yes with net overhead	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	None	None	Good
2. Brocagh	18 x 10	180	Open	Yes with net overhead	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	Yes, meter	Ownership	Satisfactory
3. Caledon	37 x 20	740	Open	Partial	Shale/Tarmac	None, Basketball hoops	None	Moss, weeds	Poor
4. Clogher	30 x 20	600	Open	Low fencing at goal ends	Tarmac, light shale, uneven	5-a-side, (faded), Tennis, Basketball	None	No ball stop at main road	Poor
5. Donaghmore	38 x 20	760	Open	None	Tarmac, light shale	None, Basketball hoops	None	Glass on surface	Satisfactory
6. Gortnalowry	20 x 12	240	Open	Yes with net overhead	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	None	Uneven	Satisfactory
7. Gortnasoar	30 x 14	420	Locked (part of locked play park)	None (park area fenced)	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	None	Anti-social & under-age drinking	Poor
8. Killymeron	18 x 10	180	Open	Yes with net overhead	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	None	Bonfire, moss, uneven	Satisfactory
9. Loup	15 x 12	180	Open	Low fence	AstroTurf	No markings, goals & b'ball hoops	None	None	Good
10. Meadow View Park	22 x 15	330	Open	Surround high fence	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball, Tennis	Yes, timer controlled	None	Satisfactory
11. Milltown	28 x 15	420	Open	Low fence	Tarmac	5-a-side, Basketball	Streetlights x 2 on one side	None	Good
12. Moygashel	40 x 24	960	Open	3 sides only	Tarmac	Football, Tennis	None	Pallets on Basketball court	Satisfactory
13. Ratheen	44 x 25	1,100	Open	Small wall	Tarmac	Football, Basketball	None	Uneven sloping gradient	Satisfactory
14. Upperlands	28 x 14	392	Open	Fence	3G	5-a-side, Basketball	None		Good

Impact on Participation

11.13 A particular difficulty in assessing how the current stock of MUGA's impacts on the Council's aspiration to promote participation lies in the fact that there is no management information relating to their usage. This may be partly because their collective purpose appears to be a mix of play, recreational activity and sport; each MUGA may be viewed slightly differently depending on its design features and its location. The foregoing research and analysis informs a number of key observations relating to the MUGA's influence on participation.

- ❖ The design of the Council's MUGA's varies considerably. If it's necessary to identify each MUGA's key purpose (play or sport) then in accordance with Sport England guidance half belong to play, half to sport. For future developments it will be helpful to be clear about a MUGA's purpose and to design it accordingly. This would also assist with how a MUGA is marketed.
- ❖ Looking at Fields in Trust guidance there is a shortfall in provision. The scale of the shortfall suggests that many individuals and groups, regardless of where they live are not able to easily access a MUGA. It's noted that Fields in Trust guidance recommends a maximum walking distance from dwellings to the nearest MUGA of 700m.
- ❖ In communities where they are available, MUGA's clearly encourage participation in play and/or sport by individuals and groups. However, their 'catchment' is likely to be fairly limited, generally drawing users only from within walking distance. So gaps in provision will tend to constrain participation, especially if local alternatives are not available.