

APPENDIX 5

2005 University of Bristol Report

Stoke Lodge/Coombe Dingle Options

Background

It is agreed that the Stoke Lodge/Coombe Dingle Hub Site should be further developed/improved to help deliver high quality sports facilities and sports development programmes for North Bristol and beyond.

The first stage of the collaborative project that was established in 2000 between the University of Bristol, Bristol City Council, Avon LTA and Clifton High school. The establishment of the Coombe Dingle Sports Trust Ltd was the first of its kind in Bristol and attracted over £2 million from the Sports Lottery Fund and other partner organisations.

Coombe Dingle Sports Complex now plays host to over 50 community clubs, 2 schools, the University and a range of junior development programmes covering football, tennis, rugby, hockey, cricket and athletics. The site is visited by 2-3,000 people per week throughout the year. It is estimated that 2/3rds of those attending on a regular basis are under the age of 21.

By comparison the Stoke Lodge Playing Fields – a site that is similar in size, 30 acres, – has an estimated 300-400 users per week during part of the year dropping to as little as 100 during the summer months. The playing fields have suffered from many years of under investment and the pavilion – although usable – is often vandalised and in a very poor state of repair.

The Stoke Lodge Playing Fields are current owned by the City Council, under Education, used by Cotham School and managed/maintained by the University of Bristol on a rolling one-year contract. The Cotham School sports programme takes place mainly at Coombe Dingle as a result of the fact that only the rugby & football element is adequately catered for at Stoke Lodge.

Stoke Lodge is mainly used for football and to a lesser extent rugby, cricket and athletics. The fields are lacking basic amenities such as watering points, sufficient car-parking, security, drainage to pitches, storage and most importantly a serviceable pavilion/changing facility. The pavilion does not adequately cater for junior and senior section, women, girls or disabled user provision (although limited on this site).

It has been identified that as the pitches are of poor quality the carrying capacity is low. Some work has been carried out during the last eighteen months but this has concentrated on grass coverage, particularly in the goalmouths and on the cricket square. Small improvements have been achieved with a little additional effort and investment by the University's grounds team.

A lack of training facilities is a significant problem. The current need for teams to train on grass pitches contributes to the decline in quality. Unfortunately the training facilities at Coombe Dingle (2 artificial pitches) are at capacity between September and May, which means that those teams playing at Stoke Lodge do not currently have an alternative to the grass pitches for training.

The site also has a large established building, which is currently being used as part of the City Council's Community Education programme. The building is in need of some renovation and redecoration but could be used for several others purposes.

In line with Sport England Guidance, it has been assumed that sports development programmes over the next ten years will result in a 10% increase in the number of teams in Bristol. This potential increase may have a significant impact on the two sites over that period. The predicted demand by 2013 for cricket, hockey and junior football pitches in North Bristol shows a large deficit. This means that current pitches will need to be significantly improved, more training pitches established and good management and maintenance programmes put in place.

Hub Site (Taken from BCC Playing Pitch Strategy)

The concept of Hub sites and Hub clubs is in its infancy but a key element to these multi-sport, multi-activity sites is the associated changing facilities. Modern design for today's needs will provide changing facilities which are flexible, fit for a variety of purposes and which fully comply with the provision of the Disability Discrimination Act.

The Coombe Dingle/Stoke Lodge sites could make for an ideal Hub Site. Sport England's concept of hub sites goes beyond where we are currently, multi-sport and multi-opportunities. They see the facilities as a method of improving the coaching and voluntary workforce. Therefore the campus style facility at which a number of sports take place, and within which there will be benefits from the common elements of organised sport and physical activity. These common elements would include:-

- Coaching and coach education
- Administration and facilities
- Changing and social provision
- Training and conditioning, and
- Child protection.

It is important to recognise that although the centre of the hub may be a school, university, leisure centre or similar focus, the overall concept embraces neighbourhood or satellite sites that are able to add value, as additional, complementary opportunities through their being associated with the core facility.

Sport England and BCC Playing Fields Strategy supports the idea of Hub sites and shows that the benefits could include the following:-

- 1) Satisfying the need for improved quality of pitches that allow greater use (increased carrying capacity);
- 2) Improvement of the quality of pitches in a way that meets ever increasing standards required by governing bodies;
- 3) Locating floodlit Artificial Pitches, that provide training facilities resulting in reduced pressure on grass pitches;
- 4) Prioritisation of the identified needs of the given Planning Area
- 5) Sustainable provision, as Hubs will enable economies of scale to be realised. These include:
 - Changing facilities that service a number of sports
 - A direct contribution from ATP income
 - Grass pitches that can be more frequently let, due to their improved condition, and
 - Improved security, through controlled access and increased presence;
- 6) Alignment of strategies with Sport England increases the likelihood of success in any funding applications;
- 7) Significant satisfaction of demand freeing up opportunities for rationalisation of playing pitches in parks, Resources are inadequate to maintain the current level of provision in parks, and better use of limited resources will arise from investment and management in ore sustainable sites;
- 8) Junior pitches becoming incorporated within hub site configuration.

Funding Proposals

Although not fully costed the minimum investment in the Coombe Dingle/Stoke Lodge Playing Field 'Hub' is estimated to be as follows:

New changing rooms/Pavilion/Community Hub	£250k
Improved drainage, pitch levelling & water infrastructure	£80k
Security Fencing/parking provision	£50k
Sub Total	£380k
Artificial pitches x 2 (1 training pitch on each site, min 60 x 40 floodlit area)	£360k
Total	£740k

Options

1. School Funding – Partnership funding from Cotham/Clifton/New Redland – NOF/Sport England (Active Communities)-Education/FA?
2. University funding - University by disposal (replacement)
3. BCC/Education - by disposal (106)
4. University (capital Funding Programme)/BCC/FA/Sport England

Revenue Funding from Sport England as a Hub Site – linking to Portway Hub, Stoke Bishop, Sea Mills, Lawrence Weston, Southmead, Henleaze, Henbury, Westbury etc.

NOTE:

All options will require the same minimum facilities as shown above.

All options may require each partner to contribute resources (financial and personnel/time).

The University is currently willing to act as lead agency regardless of which option is chosen given that it can obtain a long lease (min 25years), a maintenance contract and sufficient income from the maintenance contract from BCC Education (to be agreed in advance).

Actions:

- **Accurately cost the proposals**
- **Draw up outline plans and meet with the local planners**
- **Amend plans to meet planning requirements**
- **Consult with neighbours and partners organisations**
- **Draw up grant funding documentation**
- **Take action to raise partnership funding (depending on which option is taken)**