



# Boldon Welfare Ground Open Space Assessment

For the redevelopment of an unused brownfield site  
and the installation of an ECB approved  
2 Lane Non-turf Practice Facility

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# 1 Introduction

1. The Boldon Welfare Ground, nestled off Cotswold Lane in Boldon Colliery, is a multifaceted recreational facility, owned by CISWO (The Coal Industry Welfare Organisation), leased and managed by Boldon CA Sports Club. This expansive ground is home to three sports fields: two football pitches, one of which is utilized by Boldon CA Football Club and the other is the former home of Jarrow Roofing Football Club, and a cricket pitch used by Boldon CA Cricket Club. Additionally, the site features essential amenities such as a main clubhouse, ample parking, and storage facilities for maintenance equipment, along with an unused brownfield area.
2. This document serves as a comprehensive open space assessment aimed at evaluating the current condition and potential of various open areas within Boldon Welfare Ground. The primary focus is the redevelopment of the brownfield site, which has remained unused and neglected for years. The assessment aspires to transform this dormant space into a state-of-the-art all-weather cricket practice facility, addressing the community's recreational needs and enhancing local amenities without sacrificing existing open spaces.
3. By revitalizing the brownfield area and reopening it for community use, Boldon CA Sports Club hopes to foster a more inclusive, accessible, and aesthetically pleasing environment. This transformation not only addresses the immediate recreational demands but also ensures long-term environmental and community benefits by making optimal use of the available space.

## 1.1 History of the Welfare Ground

1. The Boldon Colliery Welfare Ground opened in the late 1890s or early 1900s, situated just south of Boldon Colliery, across from the rail lines, and has been at the heart of the community in Boldon Colliery ever since. Today, Cotswold Lane roughly follows the path of the former rail lines.
2. Boldon CA Football Club was founded in 1892 as Boldon Star, but it folded in 1898 and reformed as Boldon Villa. In the 1947/48 season, the club became Boldon Colliery Welfare Football Club, before reverting to the name Boldon Villa again in the 1976/77 season. Boldon CA Cricket Club was established in 1902 under the name Boldon Colliery Cricket Club. Between 1938 and 1947, a pavilion was built, along with two buildings on the boundary of the cricket field and what is now the brownfield site. These structures are presumed to be a score box and a groundsman's shed. As well as new bowling greens and tennis courts where the 'Jarrow Roofing' football pitch is now.
3. Following the closure of the mine in Boldon in 1982, both the cricket club and the football club became a part of Boldon Community Association, which they remain affiliated with today. The site became the responsibility of CISWO.

4. Several buildings existed on the brownfield site, these buildings were demolished, it is understood that some of the buildings rubble remains under the soil. Later a shed was built for the 'Old Guys' and their Whippets where they would run whippet races along the length of the of the ground. The last race was held in the late 1970s or early 1980s and the shed was subsequently removed.



A view into the brownfield site.



A view back towards the cricket outfield.

## 2 Purpose and Scope

### 2.1 Purpose

1. The purpose of this open space assessment is to systematically evaluate the current condition and potential of the various open areas within Boldon Welfare Ground, with a particular focus on the redevelopment of the brownfield site. This assessment serves multiple objectives that collectively aim to enhance the community amenities, recreational opportunities and environmental quality of the area.
2. The project aims to redevelop a brownfield site within the boundary of Boldon Welfare Ground. This area was fenced off from the cricket pitch over 20 years ago by Boldon CA Sports Club to prevent antisocial behaviour and unauthorized access. Initially, the site

was maintained with access through two gates, one from the football field and one from the cricket pitch. Over time, however, the site became neglected and is now an unused brownfield area.

3. The redevelopment of this site will establish a state-of-the-art all weather cricket practice facility, significantly enhancing local amenities and addressing the community's recreational needs. By utilizing an unused brownfield area, the project ensures that no existing open space is lost; instead, it revitalizes a previously neglected area for community use.
4. Following the closure of the Colliery, trees were planted beyond the perimeter of The Welfare Ground. These trees have now reached maturity, and the undergrowth has effectively isolated the area, allowing access solely through the football or cricket fields. Given that this site exceeds the space needed for the construction of the new facility, the remaining area can be reopened and maintained. This will enhance both the accessibility and aesthetics of the site, ultimately benefiting the community.

## 2.2 Scope

1. The open space assessment aims to meticulously evaluate the current condition and potential of the various open areas within Boldon Welfare Ground. This extensive evaluation includes the football fields managed by Boldon CA Football Club, the former Jarrow Roofing Pitch, and the cricket pitch used by Boldon CA Cricket Club. Additionally, the assessment covers the car park, clubhouse, adjacent lands, and the brownfield site designated for redevelopment.
2. The primary objectives of this assessment are:
  - **Data Collection:** Conduct a thorough site survey to gather comprehensive data on the existing open spaces, including their size, condition, and current usage.
  - **Redevelopment Planning:** Develop a strategic plan for the revitalization of the fenced-off brownfield area, transforming it into a state-of-the-art all-weather cricket practice facility.
  - **Community Enhancement:** Ensure that no existing open space is lost by repurposing the neglected brownfield area, thus improving community amenities and recreational opportunities.
  - **Environmental Consideration:** Address the ecological impact of the project, particularly regarding the mature trees and undergrowth surrounding the site, to enhance its accessibility and aesthetics.
  - **Future Maintenance:** Propose sustainable maintenance practices for the newly developed areas to ensure their long-term usability and attractiveness for the community.

3. By addressing these objectives, the open space assessment aims to create a detailed and actionable plan that will not only improve the physical environment of Boldon Welfare Ground but also enrich the quality of life for the local residents.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Site Survey

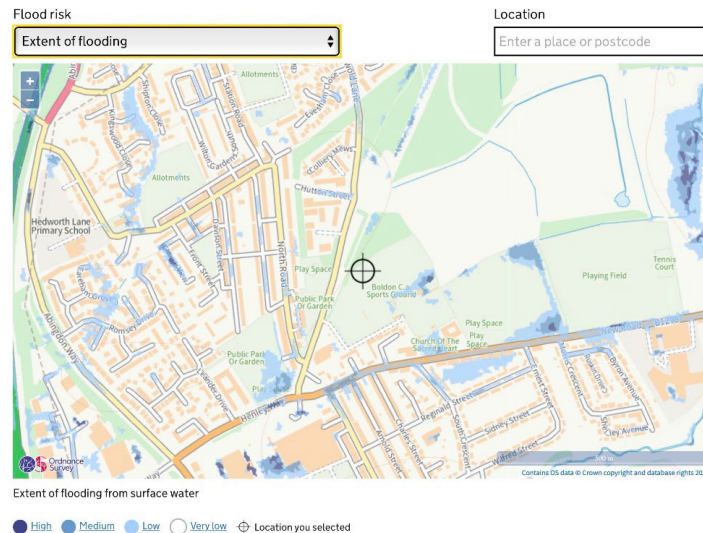
1. A comprehensive site survey was conducted to gather data on the existing open spaces within The Welfare ground. This involved physical inspections, measurements, photographic documentation of the open spaces, and a search of archived OS maps of the site. The survey focused on the size, condition, and usage of each space.



The Welfare Ground covers approximately 38,132m<sup>2</sup>, divided as follows:

- A. Brown Field Site: 1,645m<sup>2</sup>
  - B. Boldon CA Football Club: 10,319m<sup>2</sup>
  - C. Boldon CA Cricket Club: 14,321m<sup>2</sup>
  - D. Car Park, Club House and Adjacent Land: 2,946m<sup>2</sup>
  - E. Former Jarrow Roofing Pitch: 8,912m<sup>2</sup>
2. A representative from 'Total Play' visited and conducted a site survey on 30th June 2023. The following results are taken from Total Play's design proposal:

**FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT:** The site is not at risk of flooding from 'Surface Water' The proposed location for the new facility is not identified as at risk of future flooding to the area.

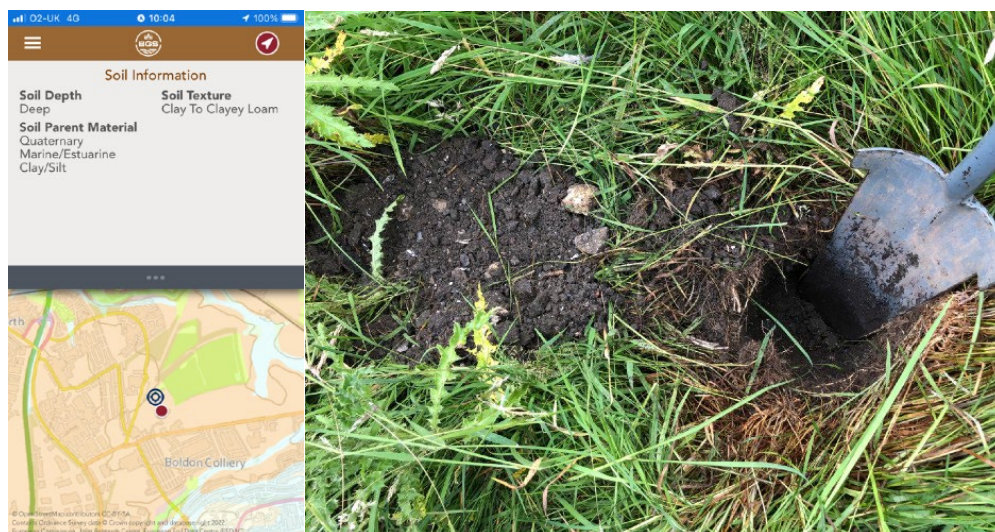


**DRAINAGE:** No additional drainage is deemed necessary. The proposed location of the new system is believed to not be at direct risk of a water course running through it.

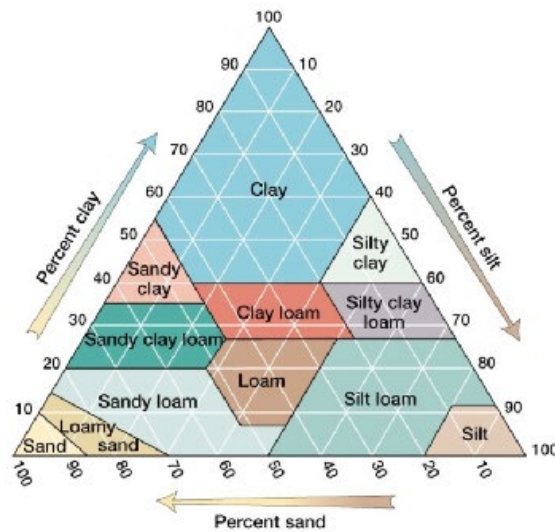
**LOCAL SOILS:** The local soil profile and soil characteristics determine the build depth of the new systems stone profile. Therefore, understanding soil mechanics is a vital part of designing a new system. The TP investigation process explores the local ground conditions to determine its drainage capabilities, the height of the water table, soil stability and soil strength. To establish these key details a trial hole was taken to determine the make up of the indigenous soil.

**GEOLOGY INFO & TRIAL HOLE IMAGE:** Trial holes were dug at site visit. The depth of this topsoil layer was between 150mm - 200 mm. The topsoil is thought to be a Clay loam soil. The subbase is made up of a stoney clay soil. The soil profile showed no signs/signs of continual water logging.

Further on-site discussion with the client highlighted that the existing practice area / proposed works area doesn't suffer from regular flooding or water logging.



**FIGURE 2: TEXTURAL CLARIFICATION OF SOILS SOIL STRENGTH - CALIFORNIA BEARING RATIO (CBR):**



As part of our site investigation process, we record the California Bearing Ratio (CBR) of the sub-grade. The CBR is a measurement of the resistance of the sub-grade to deform under load. Within the UK a CBR of 5% or above is regarded as acceptable and a standard 'total-play' design can be used.

### 3.2 Archive search

1. A review of archived OS maps revealed several buildings located at the edge of the brownfield site. The earliest map, dated 1897, depicts two buildings along the boundary of the Welfare Ground, situated between the railway lines and next to the brownfield site. These buildings appear on all subsequent OS maps until around 1952. However, by the 1957 map, these buildings are no longer shown. The 1947 OS map features three new buildings on the Welfare Ground: the Pavilion and two smaller structures located just inside the brownfield site. It is presumed that these are a score box and a groundsman's shed, though this cannot be confirmed with complete certainty. By the 1957 map, all buildings on or near the brownfield site had been removed.

### 3.3 Community Consultation

1. Boldon CA Cricket Club took a proactive approach in consulting various stakeholders about the proposed redevelopment of their site. They engaged with Boldon CA Sports Club, discussing the plans in meetings with its trustees to gather their insights and obtain their approval. The cricket club also reached out to local councillors, providing them with detailed information about the project and its anticipated benefits for the community. To ensure a broad spectrum of feedback, they involved the South Tyneside Schools Sports Network, seeking opinions from educational institutions on how the redevelopment could enhance youth sports programs. Additionally, the club communicated with local residents and businesses, holding forums and distributing surveys to collect their views. This comprehensive consultation process resulted in overwhelmingly positive feedback, with the community expressing strong support for the redevelopment, recognizing its potential to enhance local amenities and recreational opportunities.

## 4 Policy Review

1. This section sets out both national and local planning policies which should be considered when assessing the provision of open space.

### 4.1 National Planning Policy

1. The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024. Section 8 of the NPPF covers areas relating to the promotion of healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 98 in particular recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.
2. Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
  - a) *an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings, or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
  - b) *the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
  - c) *the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use. The NPPF also requires that planning policies be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. These assessments can then be used to inform the levels of open space and recreation provision that is required.*
3. Accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) then sets out how open space should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making and how close does a Local Green Space need to be to the community it serves.

#### 4.11 ECB Code of Practice and Performance Standards

1. The ECB has 2 documents relating to the design, installation, performance and testing of non-turf cricket facilities:
  - Code of Practice and Technical Requirements for the Design and Installation of Non-Turf Cricket Facilities
  - Performance Standards for Non-turf Cricket Pitches Intended for Outdoor Use (TS6) November 2007

## 4.12 Code of Practice and Technical Requirements for the Design and Installation of Non-Turf Cricket Facilities

1. This Document defines the design and workmanship standards the ECB consider appropriate for non-turf pitches.
2. The ECB, as the governing body for the sport of cricket in England and Wales, assists in the development of grass roots cricket through, amongst others, affiliated cricket clubs and schools.
3. As part of its responsibility, the ECB has set out guidelines, technical standards and performance standards for non-turf pitches and approves particular systems for installation (**Approved Systems**). In all cases, it is the system itself that is approved and not the manufacturer or installer of that Approved System.
4. Whilst the ECB does not and will not recommend suppliers or contractors for the undertaking of particular projects, it has introduced this code of practice (**Code of Practice**) which sets out certain recommended minimum standards for designers, installers and suppliers of Approved Systems (**Suppliers**) to follow.

## 4.13 Performance Standards for Non-turf Cricket Pitches Intended for Outdoor Use (TS6) November 2007

1. This Standard describes the requirements for non-turf cricket pitch systems intended for outdoor use. It sets requirements for match pitches and practice areas. It does not set requirements for outfielders for which there are currently no standards.
2. The Standard has four sections:
  - Performance Requirements  
These define the ball/surface and player/surface interactions considered necessary to allow a satisfactory game of cricket to take place.
  - Construction Requirements  
These define the dimensions, tolerances and gradients for match pitches and practice areas to ensure they provide a satisfactory playing environment.
  - Material Requirements  
These define the quality of the synthetic material used to construct non-turf pitches to ensure they will last for a realistic period of time.
  - Identification tests  
Once a surfacing system has been shown to satisfy the performance and material requirements a series of tests are undertaken to characterise the materials used in the surface's construction so that they cannot be replaced by inferior or different materials.
3. This Standard should be read in conjunction with the ECB's *Code of Practice and Technical Requirements for the Design and Installation of Non-turf Cricket Facilities*,

which defines the design and workmanship standards the ECB consider appropriate for non-turf pitches.

## 4.2 Local Planning Policy

### 4.21 South Tyneside Local Development Framework

1. The South Tyneside Local Development Framework (LDF) is the current Local Plan and guides future development and use of land in the borough. The Local Development Framework includes a portfolio of statutory Development Plan Documents (DPD). The following documents of the LDF are considered relevant to this Assessment:

- Core Strategy (June 2007)
- Development management Policies (December 2011)

Along with National Planning Policy, the LDF policies set the basis for assessing all planning applications and development proposals.

### 4.22 Core Strategy (June 2007)

1. The South Tyneside Core Strategy (STCS) was adopted in 2007. It is deemed as the blueprint for South Tyneside's Regeneration Strategy. Policy SC6 of the STCS sets out how South Tyneside Council:

*"Will promote the provision of high quality recreational open space, playing fields and outdoor sporting and play facilities by:*

- A. implementing and supporting schemes that will protect and improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and outdoor sports, leisure, and children's play facilities throughout the Borough, in accordance with our adopted standards and other relevant legislation;*
  - B. remedying deficiencies in open space provision and quality, including through the reuse of previously developed 'brownfield' sites, particularly within the Tyne riverside regeneration corridor, the inner-urban areas of South Shields, and Cleadon village;*
  - C. supporting schemes that extend the Borough's strategic Linked Open Space System into the wider countryside, assist the implementation of the Great North Forest's recreational framework, or broaden the range of opportunities for recreational pursuits within the Great North Forest and the River Tyne and coastal corridors."*
2. Paragraph 5.21 of the supporting text to policy SC6 sets out that Open spaces, sports and recreation is essential elements for creating sustainable communities. They contribute to improving people's health, enriching their quality of life, improving the physical environment and supporting the creation of wildlife habitats, as well as building local pride. Increasing public awareness of the significant benefits of participating in sport and physical activity for health, social and other reasons has also increased demand.

3. Paragraph 5.24 of the supporting text to Policy SC6 sets out that more detailed guidance on open space standards and the use of planning obligations to achieve suitable open space provision and maintenance will be provided in Supplementary Planning Documents. This paragraph also outlines that the Councils Open Space Strategy will set out needs-based standards for recreational open space provision in terms of quantity, quality, and accessibility. Further to this, the Council outline that they will identify land allocations to meet community needs for recreation through the Site-Specific Allocations Development Plan document and Area Action Plans.

#### 4.23 Development Management Policies (December 2011)

1. The Development Management Policies documents sets out policies required in South Tyneside to address locally distinctive issues that are not covered elsewhere in national or local policy.
2. There are no specific policies relating to open space within the Development Management Policies SPD, that said, paragraph 2.17 outlines:
3. *“Pockets of amenity open space are often provided in residential developments. They can help to maintain good quality urban spaces and contribute to the character and visual amenity of an area.”*
4. Further to this, paragraph 5.18 outlines: *“Core Strategy Policy SC6 promotes the provision of recreational green space and supports proposals that extend the borough’s strategic Linked Open Space System into the wider countryside. We will also provide further guidance on the delivery of green infrastructure in forthcoming supplementary planning document SPD3.”*

#### 4.24 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 3: Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013)

1. In relation to Formal Out Door Sports Facilities and Playing Fields, which can include Cricket and other sports, paragraph 9.31 of SPD 3 states:

*“Recent analysis of current playing pitch provision available for use by members of the public, shows a slight shortage of cricket pitches available to meet the (current and) predicted needs for South Tyneside. However, when the unavailable and future playing pitches to be provided by the BSF/TOPS schools are completed and included in the playing pitch provision, the number of playing pitches required for all sports available within the borough meets or exceeds the need requirements up to 2026. This analysis is detailed in table. The challenge is to ensure the wider availability of these Education Authority pitches to members of the public by formalising Community Use Agreements.”*

#### 4.25 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 5: Planning Obligations & Agreements

1. This SPD states that the Council will take into account the scale and nature of the proposed development and the likely demand for recreational open space that will be

generated. Detailed planning obligations negotiations will also consider existing local provision of recreational open space and the availability of suitable land within the development site when determining opportunities for on or off-site provision.

#### 4.26 South Tyneside Open Space Assessment Report (2015)

1. The Open Space Assessment (OSA, 2015) is a document prepared by Knight Kavanagh and Page (KKP) for South Tyneside Council to outline the existing open space provision, its condition, distribution, and overall quality. The document also considers the demand for open space provision based upon population distribution, planned growth and consultation findings. In 2019, an addendum to the OSA was produced by KKP to reflect potential changes in open space provision as a result of potential site allocations within the emerging Local Plan.
2. The OSA sets out standards for different typologies of open space in both quantitative and qualitative sense. For mapping purposes and audit analysis, South Tyneside is divided into three analysis areas, Hebburn and Jarrow, Inner and Outer South Shields, and South. The Site falls within the Hebburn and Jarrow Analysis Area of the OSA.

#### 4.27 Open Space Update Addendum (2019)

1. The Open Space Update Addendum was published to reflect potential changes in open space provision as a result of potential site allocations within the emerging Local Plan. The Addendum therefore sets out known changes in open space provision as well as scenario testing in relation to future site allocations and future needs based on ONS population projections.

#### 4.28 South Tyneside Open Space Standards Paper (2015)

1. The Open Space Standard Paper (OSSP, 2015) was prepared by KKP for South Tyneside and follows on from the preceding Open Space Assessment Report. This study establishes recommendations of open space provision in relation to quantity, quality, and accessibility.

The OSSP also provides evidence to help set an approach to securing open space facilities through new housing development and forms the basis for negotiation with developers for contributions towards the provision of appropriate open space facilities and their long-term maintenance.

### 5 Considerations

1. This Section highlights evidence from the Open Space Assessment (2015), Open Space Update Addendum (2019), and Open Space Standards Paper (2015). For the purpose of such documents, the Application Site is located in the 'South' Analysis Area.
2. The documents mentioned above establish standards in relation to the accessibility, quality, and value of each open space typology, which are set out below:

*Open Space Standard per Typology*

| Typology                 | Applied standard                                    |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Parks and gardens        | 10 minute walk time (800m)<br>30 minute drive time  |
| Natural and semi-natural | 15 minute walk time (1200m)<br>30 minute drive time |
| Amenity greenspace       | 5 minute walk time (400m)                           |

- Given that the proposed project is for the redevelopment of an unused space within Boldon Welfare Ground, it is considered that there is only the need generated for the following open space typologies relating to Formal Outdoor Sports specifically Cricket.
- During the review of South Tyneside's Open Space Assessment, which included an examination of both the 2015 and 2023 documents, it was observed that the 2015 document provides detailed information regarding specific sports, their availability, accessibility, and quality of the facilities. In contrast, the 2023 document does not reference specific sports. The following excerpts are taken from the 2015 document to provide supporting evidence:

## NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE

### Introduction

The natural and semi-natural greenspace typology can include woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. down-land, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), wastelands (including disturbed ground), and bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs, quarries, pits) and commons. Such sites are often associated with providing wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

### Current provision

In total 43 sites are identified as natural and semi-natural greenspace, totalling over 487 hectares of provision. These totals may not include all provision in the area as a site size threshold of 0.1 hectares has been applied. Sites smaller than this are likely to be of less or only limited recreational value to residents.

#### *Distribution of natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area*

| Analysis area                  | Natural and semi-natural greenspace |               |                                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                | Number                              | Size (ha)     | Current standard<br>(ha per 1,000 population) |
| Hebburn & Jarrow               | 17                                  | 96.98         | 2.36                                          |
| Inner & Outer<br>South Shields | 9                                   | 234.65        | 3.19                                          |
| South                          | 17                                  | 156.32        | 4.60                                          |
| <b>SOUTH TYNESIDE</b>          | <b>43</b>                           | <b>487.95</b> | <b>3.29</b>                                   |

South Tyneside has a variety of natural and semi-natural sites including woodlands, nature reserves and coastal areas. Three of the sites classified as natural and semi-natural greenspace are recognised as beaches; Little Haven, Marsden and Sandhaven. The latter is identified as having Blue Flag Award status.

Most provision is located in the Inner & Outer South Shields Analysis Area (234 hectares) and the South Analysis Area (156 hectares). Well over half of the total provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace in South Tyneside can be attributed to five large sites which are located in the area. The Frenchman's Lea (94 hectares) and Temple Park (76 hectares) sites are located in the Inner & Outer South Shields Analysis Area whilst Whitburn Point (45 hectares) and Colliery Wood (28 hectares) are located in the South Analysis Area. Hebburn & Jarrow Analysis Area contains the Hebburn Riverside Park (40 hectares).

Subsequently the South Analysis Area has the greater proportion of provision per 1,000 population with 4.6 hectares. This is significantly higher standard than the other two analysis areas of Inner & Outer South Shields (3.19 hectares per 1,000 population) or Hebburn & Jarrow (2.36 hectares per 1,000 population).

It is important to recognise that some provision such as parks and amenity greenspace also provide opportunities and activities associated with natural and semi-natural types of open space. Such sites are not included here as their primary typology is the basis upon which sites are recorded.

## AMENITY GREENSPACE

### Introduction

This is defined as sites offering opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. It includes informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, village greens and other incidental space.

### Current provision

There are 80 amenity greenspace sites in South Tyneside; over 178 hectares of provision. They are most often found within areas of housing and function as informal recreation space or open space along highways that provide a visual amenity. A number of recreation grounds are also classified as amenity greenspace.

#### *Distribution of amenity greenspace sites by analysis area*

| Analysis area               | Amenity greenspace |               |                                            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------|
|                             | Number             | Size (ha)     | Current standard (ha per 1,000 population) |
| Hebburn & Jarrow            | 30                 | 86.28         | 2.10                                       |
| Inner & Outer South Shields | 24                 | 41.44         | 0.56                                       |
| South                       | 26                 | 50.62         | 1.49                                       |
| <b>SOUTH TYNESIDE</b>       | <b>80</b>          | <b>178.34</b> | <b>1.20</b>                                |

Of the 80 sites, four are identified as potentially having restricted access:

- Ernest Street
- Owen Drive

- Arberia Roman Fort
- Henderson Road

An uncertainty over three of these sites exists; as it is not known whether they are publicly accessible. Only the Arbeia Roman Fort site is known to be open to the public at certain times of the day (13.00 - 16.00). Site sizes vary from the smallest incidental open space amongst housing, such as Heather Close Court at 0.10 hectares, to the largest, King George V Playing Field, Jarrow, at over 47 hectares.

It is important to note that whilst a large proportion of provision may be considered as being small grassed areas or visual landscaped space, there is some variation of sites within this typology. For example certain recreation grounds are included under amenity greenspace, such as Cleadon Park Recreation Ground and Bents Recreation Ground. These serve a different purpose to smaller grassed areas and verges; often providing an extended range of opportunities for recreational activities due to their size and facilities.

## FORMAL OUTDOOR SPORTS

### *Cricket*

In total, there are eight senior grass cricket pitches in South Tyneside all of which are available for community use.

The table shows that all analysis areas have cricket provision. Half of all cricket provision is located in the South Analysis Area.

#### *Cricket pitches available to community*

| Analysis area               | Available for community use (used) |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Hebburn & Jarrow            | 1*                                 |
| Inner & Outer South Shields | 3*                                 |
| South                       | 4                                  |
| <b>SOUTH TYNESIDE</b>       | <b>8</b>                           |

All cricket pitch sites in South Tyneside are currently considered to be secured i.e. pitches will continue to be provided over the next three years. In addition, security of tenure is generally not an issue for clubs. The only club that has a lease length that may need extending is Boldon CC (up to 25 years in order to secure funding, if needed).

\* It must be noted that regrettably both Hebburn CC and Whiteleas & Harton Welfare CC were both forcibly removed from their home grounds and have ceased to exist since South Tyneside's publication of this report. Following this a

small section of Whiteleas & Harton Welfare CC continued playing in the Hetton Lyons Development League for several seasons, however they had to play their home matches at Percy Main CC in North Shields. After the conclusion of the 2020 season there was no longer any team using the Whiteleas & Harton Welfare CC name.

The document also speaks of the accessibility of sports in the Borough, the following is also from the same document:

### **Accessibility**

To determine accessibility of formal outdoor sports, clubs were asked (as part of a consultation exercise) to identify how far they think club members travel in order to access provision.

### **Cricket**

The majority of cricket clubs (80%) also suggest that most players tend to travel between two and five miles to access cricket provision in South Tyneside. No issues regarding accessibility were highlighted from clubs.

The document also speaks of the Quality of pitches in the Borough in the area, the following is also from the same document:

### **Quality of pitches**

### **Cricket**

South Tyneside Council commissioned the ECB to carry out Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessments on the pitches in the Borough. These are considered to be much more detailed than the non-technical site assessments prescribed within the playing pitch methodology and are therefore considered an acceptable form of site assessment for cricket. These have been used to assimilate into the PPS methodology ratings:

| <b>Good</b> | <b>Standard</b> | <b>Poor</b> |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| -           | 8*              | -           |

The table highlights that all pitches are considered standard quality, indicating that on the whole the pitches are fit for purpose, but further work could be carried out to improve them.

All cricket clubs have access to changing facilities at their respective grounds. Generally, these are described as good or acceptable. Only South Shields CC describes the changing rooms as poor.

\* Again, it must be noted that regrettably both Hebburn CC and Whiteleas and Harton CC have both ceased to exist since South Tyneside's publication of this report.

## 5 Findings

### 5.1 Availability of Open Spaces

1. Boldon Colliery boasts a variety of open spaces that contribute to the community's recreational and social activities. These spaces include well-maintained parks, sports fields, and play areas that are accessible to the public throughout the year. The most notable open space is The Welfare Ground, which serves as a central hub for sports and community events. In addition to The Welfare Ground, there are smaller parks and green spaces scattered throughout the area, providing residents with ample opportunities for outdoor activities and leisure. The comprehensive network of open spaces ensures that residents of Boldon Colliery have access to quality outdoor environments that support an active and healthy lifestyle.
2. The South Tyneside Open Space Assessment demonstrates that the south of the region is well provisioned with open spaces, with the total provision of both natural, semi natural and amenity open space in the south area is 43 space with a total area of 206.94 ha broken down as follows:
  - a. Natural and Semi-natural Green Spaces
    - 17 spaces
    - 156.32 ha
    - 4.6 ha per 1000 people
  - b. Amenity Greenspaces
    - 26 spaces
    - 50.62 ha
    - 1.49 ha per 1000 people
3. The closure of 2 out of the 8 cricket clubs in the borough, a quarter of the total, since 2015 raises concerns about the availability of cricket in South Tyneside.

### 5.2 Accessibility

1. The accessibility of The Welfare Ground was assessed based on its proximity to residential areas, the availability of public transportation, and the presence of pedestrian and cycling routes. The evaluation determined that The Welfare Ground is situated within a 10-minute walk of major residential areas and is easily accessible by public transportation, with well-established road links to the broader region.
2. When reviewing the South Tyneside Open Space Assessment 2015, it states the following:

*The majority of cricket clubs (80%) also suggest that most players tend to travel between two and five miles to access cricket provision in South Tyneside. No issues regarding accessibility were highlighted from clubs.*

### 5.3 Quality and Condition

1. A comprehensive assessment of The Welfare Ground was conducted, evaluating the quality and condition of the site based on factors such as maintenance, safety, amenities, and aesthetic appeal. The results indicated that 95% of the space is well-maintained and offers adequate amenities. However, the remaining 5%, which predominantly encompasses the area designated for the proposed redevelopment, requires significant improvements and maintenance.

## 6 Usage and Demand

1. For the 2025 cricket season Boldon CACC has 3 senior teams and a midweek team, in addition there are 5 junior teams.
2. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI, 2<sup>nd</sup> XI and midweek teams play in the Durham and Northeast Cricket League. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> teams play their league matches on a Saturday afternoon. The midweek team play their home matches on a Thursday evenings, the midweek team is to introduce junior players to senior cricket. There is also a Sunday XI who play in the Hetton Lyons Development League, this league is focused on developing junior cricketers by introducing them to longer formats of the game as well as playing alongside senior players.
3. The junior section was established following the conclusion of the 2019 season with only 10 Under-11 players. It has experienced continuous growth each year, and by 2024, it comprised five junior teams: Under-18s, Under-15s, Under-13s, Under-11s, and Under-9s.
  - Under 18s play Tuesday nights
  - Under 15s play Monday nights
  - Under 13s play Wednesday nights
  - Under 11s and 9s play Sunday morning
4. The junior teams participate in the Durham Cricket Board Junior Cricket League. For the 2025 season, the league has decided to modify the format by changing the Under 18s category to Under 17s, in alignment with other County Cricket leagues.
5. An under-18s team was introduced for the 2024 season, which includes members who joined in 2019 when the junior section was established. On May 31, 2023, County Durham Youth Trust utilized the ground for coaching under-10s, with players from various clubs in the region attending.
6. During the 2024 season, the cricket club conducted ALLSTARS sessions on Saturday mornings and is working to establish a girls' section. The girls' group would train on

Saturday mornings, and it is planned that they will play a few friendly matches on Saturday mornings as well.

7. Given the number of teams and the high demand for ground availability in the 2024 season, it has been challenging for the club and its coaching volunteers to conduct regular coaching sessions for juniors or training sessions for senior players. The feasibility of conducting coaching and training sessions is contingent on the availability of the ground. Additionally, several sessions have been cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.
8. Since the proposed location of the practice facility does not overlap with the cricket outfield, redeveloping this brownfield site would enable the club and its coaches to conduct coaching sessions concurrently with matches.
9. Since the publication of the 2015 South Tyneside Open Space Assessment, two of the eight cricket clubs within the borough have ceased operations. Redeveloping the site at the Welfare Ground could help attract new members to the Cricket Club, thereby potentially strengthening the club and improving its long-term sustainability. Additionally, this redevelopment may enhance local amenities and contribute to the community's recreational needs.
10. The Cricket Club aims to continue its established partnerships and create new opportunities with local schools, providing them access to the cricket facilities, including the proposed new practice facility, during regular school hours. Out of the six remaining cricket clubs in South Tyneside, only two currently possess a non-turf practice facility. Developing this site would introduce a third such facility, benefiting not only the Boldon Colliery community but the entire borough as well.

Boldon CA Cricket Club is the nearest cricket club to 5 primary schools:

| School Name   | Key Stage 1 Pupils | Key Stage 2 Pupils | Total Pupils |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| West Boldon   | 80                 | 170                | 250          |
| Hedworth Lane | 90                 | 120                | 210          |
| Hedworthfield | 90                 | 120                | 210          |
| Fellgate      | 90                 | 120                | 210          |
| Biddick Hall  | 90                 | 120                | 210          |
| Totals        | 440                | 650                | 1090         |

Boldon CA Cricket Club and Boldon CC are equal distance to the following schools:

| School      | Key Stage 1 Pupils | Key Stage 2 Pupils | Total Pupils |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Forest View | 180                | 240                | 420          |
| St Oswalds  | 90                 | 120                | 210          |
| Totals      | 270                | 360                | 630          |

Boldon Comprehensive School has approximately 750 pupils.

11. Maintaining and establishing new partnerships with these schools could provide up to 710 Key Stage 1 pupils with access to a cricket club, enabling them to participate in soft

ball cricket and potentially enrol in the ECB's ALLSTARS program. Additionally, 1010 Key Stage 2 and 750 Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils from Boldon Comprehensive School would gain access to the practice facility during their regular school hours, with the opportunity to join a cricket club if they wish to engage in competitive league cricket.

## 7 Impact of Proposed Development

1. The proposed development is expected to have both positive and negative impacts. On the positive side, the development includes plans for creating a state of the art all weather practice facility.
2. This redevelopment will provide a valuable opportunity for an amateur sports club to engage with the local youth and strengthen its presence within the community. By partnering with local schools, the club will be able to create pathways for young people to become involved in sports, fostering talent and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles. This initiative will not only attract new generations of members but will also reinforce the club's long-standing legacy within the community, a place it has proudly served for over 120 years. Through these strategic partnerships, the club will continue to play a vital role in shaping the future of local youth sports, while also solidifying its position as a cornerstone of community engagement and development.
3. This project focuses on the regeneration of an underutilized brownfield site, transforming it into a vibrant and accessible green space for the local community. By revitalizing this previously neglected land, the project aims to create an area that promotes environmental sustainability, encourages outdoor activity, and provides a welcoming space for social interaction. The new green space will not only enhance the aesthetic and ecological value of the area but will also serve as a hub for community engagement and well-being, fostering a stronger sense of connection among residents. This revitalization effort is expected to have a significant positive impact on the community, improving quality of life and offering long-term benefits for the environment and public health.
4. However, there may be temporary disruptions to the Welfare Ground during the construction phase, this should be minimal as the construction of the facility should be approximately 2 to 4 weeks. It will take place during the normal working day so shouldn't prevent cricket matches being played as normal. Also depending on the weather conditions leading up to and during the construction phase of the project there may be some damage to the grass field due to heavy machinery, this is expected to be only minor as the ground conditions are usually particularly good even after heavy rain.
5. Given that the Welfare Ground is located in a relatively isolated area, it is anticipated that the redevelopment will have minimal direct impact on the surrounding community. Its location, removed from the main residential and commercial hubs, means that any changes or activities at the site are unlikely to significantly affect local traffic patterns or day-to-day life for nearby residents. However, while the immediate community may not

experience a substantial change, the benefits of the redevelopment, such as increased access to recreational space and potential opportunities for youth engagement, may still ripple out to broader areas. The project is designed to ensure that its effects are mostly contained to the site itself, with the focus on enhancing the space for the people who will specifically use it, without causing disruption to the wider neighbourhood.

## 8 Recommendations

### 8.1 Enhancement of Existing Open Spaces

1. Upon completion, this project will significantly enhance the brownfield site. Presently, the area is heavily overgrown. The excess vegetation will be removed and properly disposed of. Post-project, the remaining open space will be maintained to accommodate further coaching and training needs, not just for Boldon CA Cricket Club, the space could also be utilised by Boldon CA Football club. Additionally, this initiative will improve the overall aesthetics of the site. The mature trees and undergrowth surrounding the boundary of the Welfare Ground will remain unaffected and unchanged, therefor keeping the environmental impact of the project to the absolute minimum.
2. Enhancing an existing open space, like the brownfield site at the Boldon Welfare ground, brings numerous benefits to both the local sports club and the wider community. For the sports club, redeveloping this site offers the opportunity to significantly improve their training facilities, thereby increasing their capacity to conduct regular coaching sessions despite the high demand for ground availability. The new practice facility would provide a reliable, all-weather option, ensuring training continuity even when the cricket outfield is in use for matches or impacted by adverse weather conditions.
3. For the community, the redevelopment transforms an overgrown and underutilized area into a vibrant and accessible green space. This not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the area but also provides a new recreational venue for local residents. The improved site can serve as a hub for physical activity and community engagement, encouraging healthier lifestyles and fostering social cohesion. By partnering with local schools and providing them access to these upgraded cricket facilities, the project further integrates sports and physical education into the daily lives of young people, promoting their overall development and well-being.

### 8.2 Creation of New Open Spaces

1. The redevelopment project for the brownfield site at Boldon Welfare ground aims to revitalise an existing unused space rather than create a new open area. The site encompasses approximately 1645m<sup>2</sup> (which is just under 5% of the total area of the Welfare Ground), with the proposed non-turf practice facility occupying only about 20% of the total area.
2. This redevelopment project essentially equates to creating a new open space because it transforms an underutilized, overgrown area into a functional and vibrant green space. For the sports club, this means significant improvements to their training facilities, with the new all-weather practice area ensuring that training can continue uninterrupted,

regardless of the weather or match schedules. This newfound capability is akin to having additional ground availability, thus effectively expanding the usable space for the club.

3. For the local community, the benefits are equally significant. The revitalized area will not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the site but also provide a new, accessible venue for recreation. This transformation turns a neglected piece of land into a communal asset, offering a fresh space for physical activities and social gatherings. The enhanced green space will serve as a hub for community engagement, promoting a healthier lifestyle and fostering stronger social ties. By integrating local schools and granting them access to the improved facilities, the project further enriches the community by embedding sports and physical education into the daily lives of young residents, thereby supporting their development and well-being.

### 8.3 Community Engagement

1. To ensure ongoing community engagement, the club plans to implement comprehensive recruitment programs aimed at attracting new members from all age groups and backgrounds. These programs will include open days, where local residents are invited to tour the facilities, participate in introductory sessions, and learn more about the benefits of joining the club. Additionally, the club will offer special membership packages and discounts to make participation more accessible and appealing.

### 8.4 Developing Partnerships with Local Schools

1. The club is also committed to developing strong new partnerships with local schools. By collaborating closely with educational institutions, the club can provide students with regular access to the upgraded cricket facilities, integrating sports and physical education into their daily routines. This partnership could involve organizing inter-school cricket tournaments, coaching clinics, and workshops led by experienced coaches and players. Through these initiatives, the club aims to inspire a new generation of cricketers and foster a lifelong appreciation for the sport.
2. To further strengthen these existing partnerships, the club could assist with professional development opportunities for school staff, ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge to support the students' athletic development. By embedding cricket within the school curriculum, the club not only enhances the students' physical well-being but also promotes teamwork, discipline, and perseverance.

### 8.4 Engaging the Wider Community

1. Beyond recruitment and school partnerships, the club will continue to host a variety of events and activities throughout the year to engage the wider community. These will include family fun days, and charity matches. By creating a diverse calendar of events, the club ensures there is something for everyone, fostering a sense of belonging and community spirit.
2. Additionally, the club will leverage social media and local media outlets to keep the community informed and involved. Regular updates, success stories, and upcoming

events will be shared to maintain a strong connection with the community and encourage ongoing participation.

3. Through these concerted efforts, the club will not only enhance its membership base but also cultivate a vibrant, supportive community centred around the love of cricket.

## 9 Policy Compliance

1. When undertaking any project, adherence to established policies and standards is crucial to ensure quality, safety, and consistency. The proposed non-turf practice facility for the brownfield site at Boldon Welfare ground exemplifies this commitment by being meticulously designed in accordance with the standards and recommendations outlined in the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) Code of Practice and Technical Requirements for the Design and Installation of Non-Turf Cricket Facilities and the Performance Standards for Non-turf Cricket Pitches Intended for Outdoor Use (TS6) November 2007.
2. These codes of practice serve as a comprehensive guideline for constructing cricket pitches that meet the highest benchmarks of performance and durability. By following these guidelines, the project not only aligns with national standards but also ensures that the facility will provide a reliable, high-quality training environment for athletes. Compliance with ECB standards guarantees that the surface will offer consistent playing characteristics, reducing the risk of injury and ensuring fair play.
3. Furthermore, adherence to these codes of practice reflects a broader commitment to policy compliance, demonstrating that the project team prioritizes regulatory adherence and industry best practices. It reassures stakeholders, including the local sports club and the wider community, that the new facility will be safe, reliable, and built to last. This alignment with ECB standards is a testament to the project's dedication to delivering a facility that meets the needs of its users while upholding the integrity of the sport.
4. Referring back to section 4.22(1) of this assessment, this redevelopment project is designed to fully comply with the requirements outlined in STCS 2007. The primary aim is to significantly enhance the quality of facilities at the Welfare Ground, providing a modern and accessible space for sporting activities. In doing so, the project will not only improve the local cricket infrastructure in Boldon Colliery but will also broaden the reach of the sport throughout the entire borough. By redeveloping a brownfield site, the initiative will contribute to the regeneration of the area, offering lasting benefits to the community. Furthermore, the project will foster stronger connections with local schools, creating opportunities for young people to engage in cricket and other recreational activities, thereby promoting active lifestyles and community cohesion.
5. Referring to Paragraph 5.21 of Policy SC6 in section 4.22(2), this project is specifically designed to enhance a local sporting facility, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of a community sports club. The improvements made will play a crucial role in promoting better health and well-being within the community, particularly by encouraging greater participation in physical activities. For young people, engaging in

team sports offers more than just physical benefits; it helps to foster lifelong friendships, teach valuable teamwork skills, and increase awareness of the positive impact sports can have on both physical and mental health. By creating an environment where individuals can connect, learn, and grow through sport, the project will have a lasting and transformative effect on the community. Additionally, the social benefits of team sports, such as improving communication skills, building confidence, and fostering a sense of belonging, will significantly enhance the overall quality of life for participants.

6. Referring to Paragraph 9.31 of the SPD3: Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013) in section 4.24(1), it is noted that there is a slight shortage of cricket pitches in South Tyneside to meet both the current and anticipated future needs of the area. This issue has been further compounded by the closure of two out of the eight cricket clubs in the borough, reducing the availability of facilities for local players. In response to this challenge, Boldon CA Sports Club and Boldon CA Cricket Club are committed to addressing this gap by redeveloping the site to create a state-of-the-art, all-weather practice facility. This new facility will not only enhance the quality and accessibility of cricket in the area but will also play a vital role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and growth of both clubs. By providing a modern, versatile space for year-round training and play, the redevelopment will help secure the clubs' continued involvement in the community, offering opportunities for players of all ages to participate in the sport and develop their skills. This initiative aligns with the broader goal of improving green infrastructure and supporting the development of recreational facilities that contribute to the well-being and cohesion of the local population.

## 10 Conclusion

1. In summary, the redevelopment of the brownfield site at Boldon Welfare ground represents a significant investment in the future of the community. By transforming an unused and neglected area into a functional, vibrant green space, the project not only enhances the sporting facilities available to the local sports club but also provides a valuable communal asset. The adherence to the England and Wales Cricket Board's standards ensures that the new non-turf practice facility will be of the highest quality, offering a safe and consistent environment for athletes.
2. This project demonstrates a strong commitment to both community engagement and policy compliance, setting a benchmark for future developments. The revitalized site will foster a healthier, more connected community, enrich the lives of local residents, and support the development and well-being of young people through improved access to sports and physical education. Ultimately, the successful completion of this project will serve as a model of how thoughtful redevelopment can breathe new life into underutilized spaces, creating lasting benefits for both the immediate community and future generations.

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