

LK2

Executive Summary: Sports Needs
Assessment
Central Lincolnshire



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1. Introduction

This document provides an Executive Summary of the three Sports Facility Assessments carried out on behalf of City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey District Councils, which together cover the geographical area known as Central Lincolnshire.

The studies cover pitch provision for the core sports of Football, Rugby, Cricket and Hockey.

This strategy provides details in relation to future sports pitch provision requirements when considered against the growth aspirations contained within the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and has been prepared in conjunction with key partners.

The assessment provides a holistic review of the grass pitch, artificial grass pitches (AGP) and ancillary facilities across the study area providing a clear understanding for the current grass pitch and AGP offering and understanding of the needs of the local population both now and in the future, Assessments were made of the following pitches/sports provision:

- Football pitches (including 3G AGP's)
- Cricket pitches
- Rugby Union pitches
- Hockey pitches
- Sand Based AGP pitches
- 3rd Generation (3G) AGP pitches

A classification matrix using a tiered system, has been recommended to all three authorities. This provides a strategic platform to effectively segment the differing sport and leisure provisions. As well as ranking the current sports pitch provision, it also allows each organisation to consider investment opportunities and to direct resources to the most appropriate development schemes.

By combining the findings of the assessments and using a common tiered approach, it is believed that more informed decisions can be taken in relation to communities' needs rather than solely based on local authority boundary.

As well as summarising the findings of the individual Sports Facility Assessments this executive summary also outlines the areas where the Central Lincolnshire Authorities can work together to develop the respective sports and leisure provision.

Should the tier system be adopted by all organisations, there is an opportunity to consider and develop the implementation of a strategic plan for all built facilities, playing pitches and associated sport & leisure offerings across Central Lincolnshire.

Whilst it is accepted that further work is required on the strategic needs assessment, LK2 believes that by joining the three strategies together, with a common approach, it will improve both the sports provision and associated outcomes in terms of health and wellbeing in Central Lincolnshire.

2. About the Central Lincolnshire Area

City of Lincoln Council (CoLC)

The City of Lincoln, based in the East Midlands region, is one of eight British Heritage Cities: principally due to the presence of the Cathedral and the Castle Quarter. Lincoln has a population of 98,438 people and the district is densely populated compared to its near neighbours of West Lindsey and North Kesteven, as the city boundary covers just 35.6 square kilometres.

North Kesteven District Council (NKDC)

The North Kesteven district, which is located in the centre of Lincolnshire, has a total population of 115,230. The district has two major settlements in Sleaford (18,000) and North Hykeham (14,000). However, nearly a third of the population live in the “Lincoln Fringe”, the areas immediately surrounding the Lincoln City boundary. The remaining population live within 10 large villages located in the rural outlying areas. The district covers an area of 922 square kilometres, of which 95% is classified as green space, which includes agricultural land and open space.

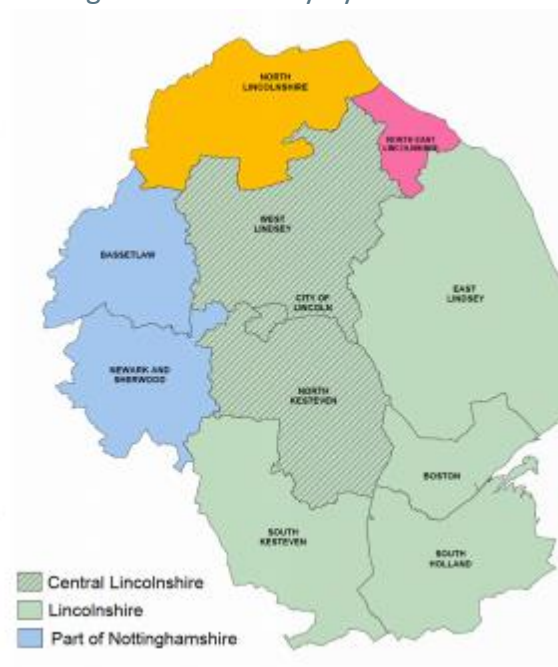
West Lindsey District Council (WLDC)

West Lindsey is also a very rural district, covering 1,156 square kilometres and is home to just under 95,000 people. West Lindsey shares boundaries with North Kesteven, Bassetlaw, Northeast Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, East Lindsey and the City of Lincoln. The district has three principal market towns in Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor.

Central Lincolnshire

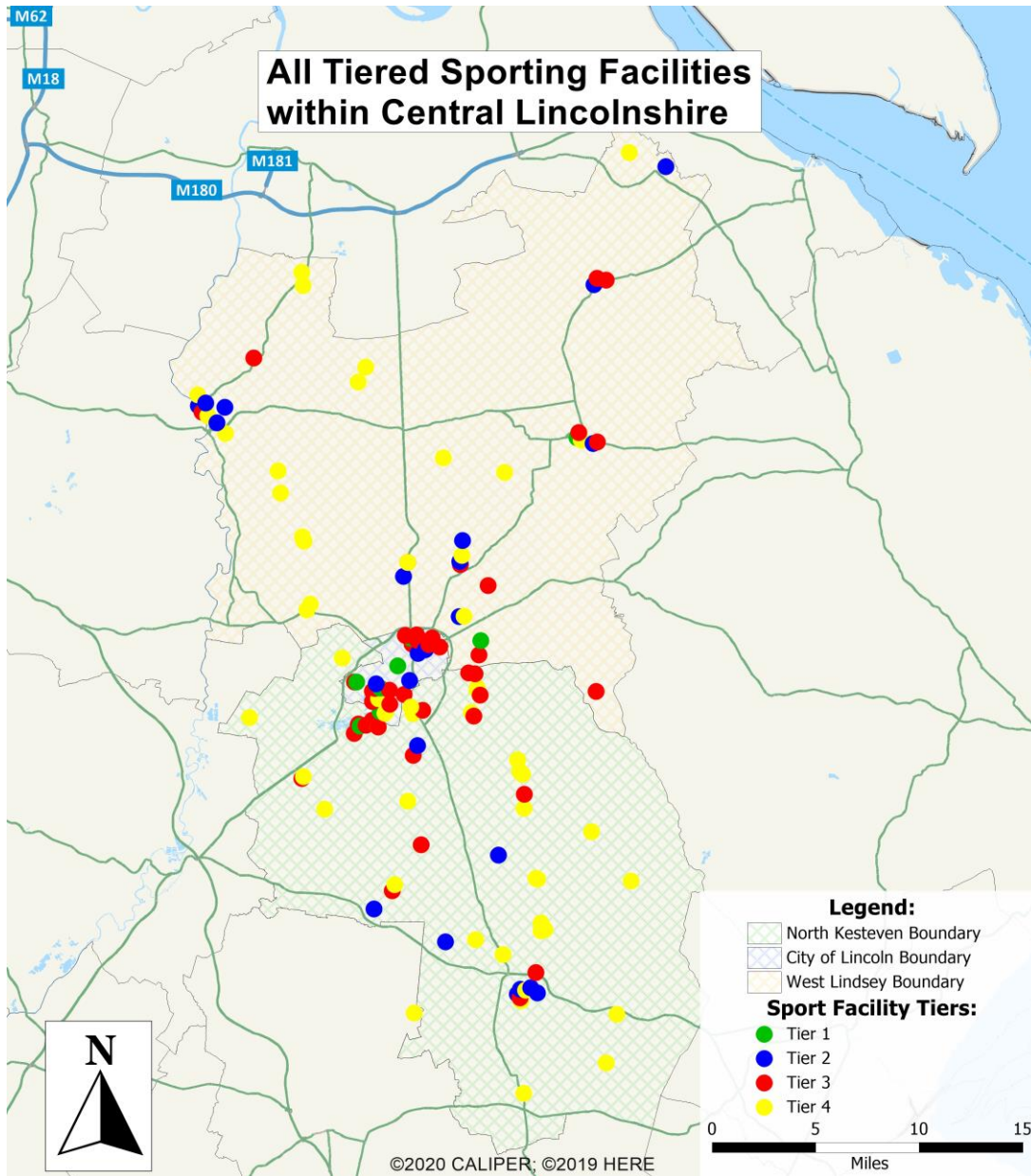
The combined study area therefore has a population of over 300,000 people and covers a vast 2,116 square kilometres. Whilst the study area is rural in nature, it has good connectivity by rail and road to the rest of Lincolnshire and to the East Midlands region. Central Lincolnshire is an area of growth and opportunity, (specifically, in relation to housing development, improvements to infrastructure, including transport links, new industries and commercial developments).

In all cases, the wider cross boundary, population and infrastructural growth should be considered when making decisions about future supply of services. In relation to the provision of sports and leisure services, the study area has a very broad provision, as depicted in the graphic below.



3. Central Lincolnshire - Existing Sports Provision

The existing sports and leisure provision has been classified into tiers within the Sports Facility Assessments. A Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping tool has been applied to all individual Local Authority facility assessments; the maps below are the overlay of ALL facilities / within ALL Tiers across Central Lincolnshire. Providing a snapshot and highlighting the major (Tier 1 Sites) throughout the Central Lincolnshire boundaries.



4. Current and Future Provision

The table below highlights the quantitative headline findings from each Local Authority assessment and overall Central Lincolnshire provision.

Local Authority	Team Numbers	Pitch Numbers	Future Demand Needed (2040)
North Kesteven	There are 128 football teams, 24 rugby teams, 30 cricket teams and 6 hockey teams within North Kesteven	There are 120 grass football pitches, 12 grass rugby pitches, 19 cricket pitches and 6 AGP sites within the North Kesteven	Based upon population projections a further 20 grass football pitches, 3 rugby pitches, 2 cricket pitches, 1 Sand Based AGP and 2 3G AGP's will be required to satisfy future demand
West Lindsey	There are 127 football teams, 47 rugby teams, 79 cricket teams and 16 hockey teams within West Lindsey	There are 120 grass football pitches, 24 grass rugby pitches, 17 cricket pitches and 3 principal AGP sites within West Lindsey	Based upon population projections a further 12 grass football pitches, 2 rugby pitches, 3 cricket pitches and 1 3G AGP will be required to satisfy future demand
City of Lincoln	There are 118 football teams, 34 cricket teams, 16 rugby teams, 16 hockey teams within the Cities boundaries	There are 3 principal sites that hockey is played at, 5 grass rugby pitches, 5 cricket pitches, 77 grass football pitches, 6 3G AGP's and 1 Sand filled AGP.	Based upon population projections a further 8 grass football pitches, 1 rugby pitches, 1 cricket pitches and 1 3G AGP will be required to satisfy future demand
Central Lincolnshire	There are 373 football teams, 143 cricket teams, 87 rugby teams and 38 hockey teams within the central study area	There are 317 grass football pitches, 41 rugby pitches, 41 cricket pitches, 10 3G AGPS and 2 Sand based AGPS within the study area	Based upon population projections for the entire central Lincolnshire study area there will be a further 40 grass football pitches, 6 rugby pitches, 6 cricket pitches and 4 3G AGP's and 1 Sand Based AGP to satisfy demand.

5. Findings

From this study we have reached the conclusion that there is adequate sports pitch provision currently across the local authority with the current population in Central Lincolnshire. This has been based upon the team numbers and current stock of pitches within the study area. There will be need for future pitches based upon the latest population projections available and the current team numbers as highlighted in the table above.

It should be noted that the Central Lincolnshire planning document sets out the implications of projected population growth on provision requirements. It should also be noted that if significant changes to population growth occur, specifically an increase in predicted population growth beyond that detailed within the proposed Local Plan, detailed supply and demand work will be required to identify the quality of the pitches. This work would determine more accurately the current carrying capacity of each pitch. In this instance there should also be detailed consultations and development links with the national governing body officers (NGB) as they have their own unique and specific development plans.

This predicted pitch growth can be catered for in various ways depending on the strategic outputs of each local authority or within the overall development plan. New pitches can be stipulated in certain circumstances, specifically relating to large scale residential development or existing pitch stock can be enhanced in quality to account for more matches and trainings within the relevant teams.

6. Recommendations

There are a multitude of opportunities to enable continuous improvement in the provision of sports and leisure opportunities across Central Lincolnshire, both in the medium and long term. LK2 believe that the strength of three local authorities is very powerful and if harnessed in the right way can lead to a positive change in sports participation and physical activity levels. In order to bring these opportunities to life, it is important to take action through collaboration and cohesive working environment to maximise the potential.

Accordingly, key steps for each Local Authority to develop outside of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Process are identified. It is anticipated that these next steps would be

1. Utilise the evidence from the Sports Facilities Assessments to underpin the development and implementation of planning policy to facilitate future contributions to sports provision, be it through the securing of commuted sums to improve existing sports pitches or specific onsite provision.
2. Investigate the quality of the existing supply of grass and artificial pitches to ascertain the degree of increased maintenance required.
3. Create a Central Lincolnshire Partnership Work Group for Sports & Leisure Development further opportunities in relation to strategic provision of sports pitches through research and evidence gathering.
4. Consider the joint commissions of a strategic report to investigate future demand of sports and leisure within Central Lincolnshire.
5. Create a roadmap of short, medium and long-term sports engagement and development priorities for each Local Authority.
6. Create an investment/funding priority list for each authority and identify projects which meet Health and Wellbeing objectives, at either a District, Central Lincolnshire Area or County level.