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Sunderland Parklife Football Hub Programme

Frequently Asked Questions - Version 5, July 2018

1) What is the Parklife Hub Programme?

Parklife is a national programme (supported by the FA, Sport England and the Premier League. The 'Funding Partners') designed to offer an alternative and sustainable solution to the long term future for grass roots football. This is especially relevant at a time when local authorities are under significant financial pressure to rationalise playing stock whilst maintaining existing levels of football participation.

2) How and why was Sunderland chosen?

Sunderland City Council with support from strategic partners submitted an expression of interest to be considered for the programme in December 2016. The FA and the funding partners provided feedback in April 2017 and informed us that Sunderland was 1 of the 8 local authorities to be progressing onto stage 2 of the programme.

3) Are there any other operational Parklife Hubs in the country?

The Sheffield hubs have been in operation since the 2016/17 season. Liverpool and the London Borough of Ealing will become operational throughout 2018. Sunderland is planned to become the next portfolio of hub sites to become live in 2019.

4) Are there other Parklife Programmes in the North East?

Newcastle City Council is the latest North East local authority to be inducted onto the programme.

5) Does this mean that all football in the city will now be played on 3G pitches?

No. In addition a number of grass pitches will remain across the city.

6) How many Football Hubs will there be and where will they be located?

There will be a total of 3 football hub sites located at

- Community North Sports Complex, SR5 4BB
- Ford Quarry, SR4 0RW
- Northern Area Playing Fields, NE37 3HR

7) What will the hub sites look like?

Please see appendix 1 at the foot of this FAQ sheet.

8) Why have these 3 sites been chosen?

The FA in partnership with the City Council has reviewed a number of strategic sites across the city and concluded that these 3 particular sites are most suited in order to deliver the requirements of the Funding Partners. The 3 sites have been identified as the most suitable to host the necessary infrastructure required.

9) What will each hub site consist of?



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Each site will see considerable improvements for users. The FA stipulated early in the process that each hub site would be expected to accommodate a minimum of 3 full sized floodlit 3G pitches, a changing pavilion with a minimum of 6 changing rooms, a social / refreshment area and car parking to accommodate at least 200 cars. One of the hub sites will also have a commercial health and fitness offer incorporated on site.

10) Will the newly developed 3G pitches be of a standard to play competitive fixtures?

Yes. Each pitch will be verified by The FA and added to the 3G pitch register, a requirement for affiliated games to be played.

11) Will the hubs be able to accommodate Wearside and Northern League fixtures?

There is an expectation that some hub sites will be designed to incorporate provision for the initial playing of step 7 football (Wearside League). The site layout will be flexible to allow expansion should user's progress onto Step 5 or 6 (Northern League). For this to happen additional funding would need to be sourced.

12) When will work commence?

Construction mobilisation will be able to commence once funding has been approved and necessary contracts have been completed. This is envisaged to be late September 2018.

13) When will the hubs be operational?

It is envisaged that all 3 hubs will be constructed simultaneously and open in readiness for the 2019/20 football season. Further updates will be provided throughout the construction process

14) Who will be the primary users of the sites?

As part of the Funding Partners investment strategy, there is an aspiration to transfer 50% of mini soccer and 9v9 football onto 3G surfaces. Of the overall playing schedule for each 3G pitch, 40% of playing time will be reserved for partner clubs. The remaining 60% will be available for all other teams to liaise with the operator to utilise.

15) How do clubs become a partner club?

In 2017, a process was undertaken to identify suitable partner clubs based on a selection criteria set by Sunderland City Council and Durham County FA. All other users will be able to liaise direct with the chosen operator once the process to procure an operator is complete.

16) Will the partner clubs be allocated first choice of playing times?

A programme of use has now been completed for partner clubs, a requirement of the city councils application to the project. 60% of playing time will still remain for all "non-partner" clubs.

17) Will other sports and/or groups share the hub sites?

Yes. Whilst recognising that this is a football led programme, there is an opportunity for additional sports and groups to become involved as users of each facility. Rugby will feature as part of the hub at Northern Area.



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18) What level of consultation will take place with residents and teams?

Members of the Sunderland Parklife Board have identified the following public groups to liaise with throughout the process.

- Leagues
- Junior Clubs
- Adult Clubs
- Partner Clubs
- Residents
- Neighbouring organisations

The frequency, level and method of consultation will vary from group to group however a designated Sunderland Parklife Programme Progress Page will be hosted at www.sunderland.gov.uk/parklife. Durham FA will also host a link to this page.

Sunderland City Council hosted a public consultation event for each of the 3 hub sites in February.

The FA and Operator will ensure that ALL teams playing at the site sign a 'Code of Conduct' agreement including;

- Acting as good neighbours within the communities in which the game is played
- Considerate of residents and others by using dedicated parking facilities where they are provided
- All individuals to park considerately and responsibly

In addition, Sunderland City Council will;

- Help clubs play their part in encouraging the best standards of behaviour across the game by lending our support to initiatives such as the Respect Agenda
 - Continue to promote, invest in and support football in Sunderland
- Ensure that the incoming Operator will be considerate of local people and address any issues raised by our partners and stakeholders.

19) Did clubs/leagues have the opportunity to apply for Parklife funding?

No, clubs were not eligible to apply directly for Parklife funding. The programme sets out that clubs would become partner clubs or block booking/casual users of the sites. The Parklife Programme funding is for Local Authorities only.

20) What will happen to the teams currently playing at one of the 3 hub sites whilst the hubs are being built?

All displaced teams have been offered alternative provision for the coming season.

21) Who will operate the hubs?

A commercial operator will be procured to operate all 3 hubs and be responsible for delivery of the aims and objectives of the Parklife Programme. The hubs will be the responsibility of the operator, operating under the direction of The Sunderland Football Trust.

22) What is the Football Trust?



The Sunderland Football Trust will be established and bound by Articles of Association to be agreed with the FA. The trust will oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the appointed operator. The board members will include Sunderland City Council, The FA, Durham FA, Sunderland AFC and The Foundation of Light. There may also be additional community representation.

23) Can I become a trustee?

An independent trustee recruitment pack is currently being finalised and will be circulated in July. Anyone who feels they meet the criteria can apply to become an independent trustee.

24) Why is there a need to engage an operator to manage and maintain the sites?

It is an essential selection criteria set by the national funding partners that every football hub will be operated and managed by a competitively appointed operator. The criteria are non-negotiable for the City Council.

25) Who is funding the Parklife Programme in Sunderland?

60% of the overall programme funding will see contributions from The FA, The Premier League and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) via Sport England. The remaining 40% will be contributed by Sunderland City Council.

26) Will the proposals lead to any surplus grass playing pitch provision across the City?

The effect of these proposals will mean there will be a number of surplus grass football pitches. However, the Council is liaising with Sport England and the other playing pitch national governing bodies i.e. Cricket, Hockey and Rugby to ensure that the current Playing Pitch Strategy ensures enough facilities for each sport.

Any pitches not falling within the city’s wider football delivery model may be available to be leased to clubs. Any information on this will be distributed accordingly in time. The city council will be assessing the impact of the hub sites over a 2 year period and a refreshed playing pitch plan will be completed in late 2021 with recommendations.

27) Will other clubs or organisations be able to apply for Football Foundation funding to support a club moving onto a surplus site?

Clubs are free to contact Durham FA in the usual way to discuss facility aspirations in the first instance. The Football Foundation have however indicated that once the Parklife hubs are operational in the city, no funding requests for 3G pitches will be processed until the impact of Parklife has been measured. As with question 25, this will be 2 years from the opening of the Parklife sites.

28) What will be the opening hours?

Planning regulations stipulate that the opening hours for all 3 hubs can be as follows.

Days of the Week	Opening Times
Mon - Fri	10.00 - 22.30
Sat	09.00 - 20.00
Sun	09.00 - 18:00
Bank Holidays	09.00 - 18.00



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29) How much will the hire fees be for partners clubs and how have you determined these?

The proposed training and match pricing policy has been agreed as follows:

- Training / Evening Rate per ¼ pitch - £22.50 per hour
- Seasonal and single affiliated match play prices TBC however prices will be based upon current Sunderland City Council hire fees.

Please note that these costs are associated to use of all 3G playing surfaces only and have been determined by considering current pricing policies from competitors.

30) What will the hire fee be if we are not a partner club?

This is yet to be determined. The operator in agreement with the Sunderland Football Trust will agree fees for non-partner usage when the tendering process for operators has been concluded.

31) Who will set the prices?

The Sunderland Football Trust will work with the operator to ensure pricing structures are agreed and adhered to.

32) Will all prices be the same across all 3 hubs?

Yes. The cost of play from each hub will be consistent.

33) How will the operator prevent anyone accessing the sites?

Each hub will have one entry and exit point via the pavilion building. A turnstile system will be in place at each reception area. The perimeter of the hubs will be fenced along with additional typical high fencing you would see around individual 3G pitches.

34) Will extra car parking be provided?

Yes. Each hub is expected to accommodate a minimum of 200 car parking spaces. A minimum of 250 spaces will be required for the hub identified to host a health and fitness offer. The city council has based car parking numbers on a thorough transport assessment which was completed in advance of the full application.

35) Will the hubs be available to host social occasions/club nights in addition to playing opportunities?

Yes. Once clubs have playing agreements in place with the operator, the detail of hosting club nights can be discussed.

36) Why are floodlights required and what about light pollution?



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Floodlighting is required to provide greater flexibility with kick-off times and to provide a more flexible offer. The floodlights will only be directed to illuminate the playing areas of the 3G pitches

37) Are there any health concerns to playing on rubber crumb 3G pitches?

Further information can be found on the following link

<http://www.thefa.com/news/2017/jun/28/statement-on-3g-pitches-280617>

38) What will happen if as part of the technical surveys it is determined one or more of the hub sites cannot progress?

The three hubs are the priority; if one was to not progress another hub would be considered.

39) Will there be transparency of the financial accounts of the operator?

The operator will be a charity and so will register with the Charity Commission. The contract with the operator stipulates that the Funding Partners and the Council must be provided with regular financial accounts and updates.

40) If the operator makes a surplus what will happen to this?

It will be gifted to the Sunderland Football Trust and reinvested within the city of Sunderland.

41) If we are a partner club at other football foundation funded facilities (schools, academies etc.) will it impact our ability to be a Parklife partner club?

No you can be a partner at more than one facility however the partner needs to realise they are signing up to an annual agreement on the usage.

42) Why can't the partner clubs have more than 40% of the overall time?

The operator must be open to the risk of the market it operates in. By protecting more than 40%, legal counsel considered that it stopped that from happening.

43) If we are a partner club that is growing year on year can we have more time each year allocated to us?

Yes the contract with the operator allows for more time every year providing that the overall usage doesn't go above the 40% partner usage across all of the hubs.

44) If we are a partner club will we have a contract with the operator?

Partner clubs will have a licence which will be reviewed annually to ensure both parties are happy with arrangements.

45) If we were a partner club and an opportunity arose for us to progress with an asset transfer could we cancel our contract?

Yes you can during the annual review.

46) If my club only wants to play on grass pitches will that pitch we have always hired still be available?



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Grass pitches play a vital role in grassroots football and the hubs will not change that. The grass pitches that will be available in future will be determined annually as part of the allocations process, as is the case currently.

47) How long would we be a partner club at the hub?

Each club would be required to become a partner for the duration of the operator's contract. This could be a minimum of a 10 year commitment however annual review would take place with all clubs.

48) As a partner club can we book additional time slots?

Yes, however now that the programmes of use have been completed; this would need to be discussed with the operator and may not be at the partner club rate.

49) If we are not successful in becoming a partner club now does that mean we would never be able to be a partner club?

The overall partner usage is capped at a maximum of 40%. For a new partner club to enter into a formal agreement, sufficient capacity would need to be available.

50) If we are not a partner club can we still book the hub to train and play matches?

Yes, absolutely. Only 40% is allocated for partner clubs, the remaining 60% of the time will be available to hire from the operator.

51) Who will operate the sites and when will they be in place?

An operator will be appointed in autumn 2018. Further detail will be made available at this time.

52) Who are the partner clubs?

11 partner clubs were identified by the Parklife board as follows.

- Downhill
 - Improtech Soccer FC
 - Foundation of Light FC
 - Velocity FC
- Ford Quarry
 - Humbledon and Plains Farm FC
 - Ryhope CW FC
 - Sunderland City FC
 - Sunderland West End FC
- Washington
 - NSG Athletic
 - Washington AFC
 - Washington Athletic
 - Washington Juniors
 - Washington Rugby Club



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53) Can partner clubs and those wishing to book the facility begin discussions with the operator from this point?

The 12 identified partner clubs can begin discussions with the operator in autumn 2018. Further information for all other interested users will be made available at this time..

54) When will we be able to see plans of the sites?

Site plans are included in the appendices at the foot of this document. In addition, the full planning applications for the 3 hub sites can be found on the Sunderland City Council planning portal www.sunderland.gov.uk/planning-applications

55) Do partner clubs have to do anything between now and the sites opening?

No. Partner clubs will continue to be updated via email and updates will be provided on the dedicated Parklife webpage. In addition, partner clubs can always contact the council direct should they have any specific queries. simon.wardle@sunderland.gov.uk / 0191 561 4598

56) We are an identified partner on the Downhill Parklife Hub. Is it possible to receive reduced rates for use of the health and fitness suite?

Further details will be available when an operator has been appointed.

57) We are looking to play our home games on the hubs. Is this possible?

A number of local leagues will be allocated slots for match play at the hubs. Further discussions will take place with league secretaries on which fixtures will be allocated to these slots.

58) At this time, we don't wish to play on any of the hubs for the purposes of training or match play. Can we still hire grass pitches outside of the hubs?

Some leagues have proposed to play central venue fixtures on the hubs and a stock of grass pitches will still be available. There will however be a reduced council stock of grass pitches.

59) Has planning been approved?

Yes. Planning has been granted at all 3 sites.

60) Who will be constructing the hubs?

The Projects Framework Management Consultants Gleeds have recently completed the tender process. Subject to a positive funding decision, formal relationships will begin in July.

61) Will it be possible for clubs to have site visits throughout construction?

The football trust and city council will begin detailed discussions with the construction contractor once appointed. Early indications suggest that a programme of site visits for partner clubs can be integrated into the programme. These visits will likely to be limited to a small number of attendees from each club.

62) Will the site names remain the same?

At this moment, site names are referenced in their current format.



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63) Will an official opening be planned and can my club be involved?

As things stand no official opening has been planned, however this is something which will be progressed in 2019.

64) Can partner club branding be incorporated into internal plans for the building?

A generic Parklife brand will feature throughout the hub sites. There may be smaller scale opportunities for clubs to have some form of identification within the interior however the fine detail of this is yet to be confirmed. For example, in Sheffield each partner clubs shirt is displayed on a mannequin within the entrance foyer.

If you wish to discuss further please contact Simon Wardle 0191 561 4598 or email

simon.wardle@sunderland.gov.uk



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Appendix 1a - Downhill

NOTES
1. THIS SITE PLAN IS SUBJECT TO THE LOCAL
PLANNING AUTHORITY'S APPROVAL OF THE
PLANNING APPLICATION.



1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN (OVERALL)
1:1250

APP: 19/01/17 - Development	APP
Doc: 19/01/17 - Development	APP
PLANNING	
LK2	
Sunderland City Council	
Sunderland City Council	

<p>Drawn: J. Jones Title: 19/01/17 - Development Date: 17/01/17 Scale: 1:1250</p>	
<p>928.001.1 A</p>	<p>10/08 A00</p>



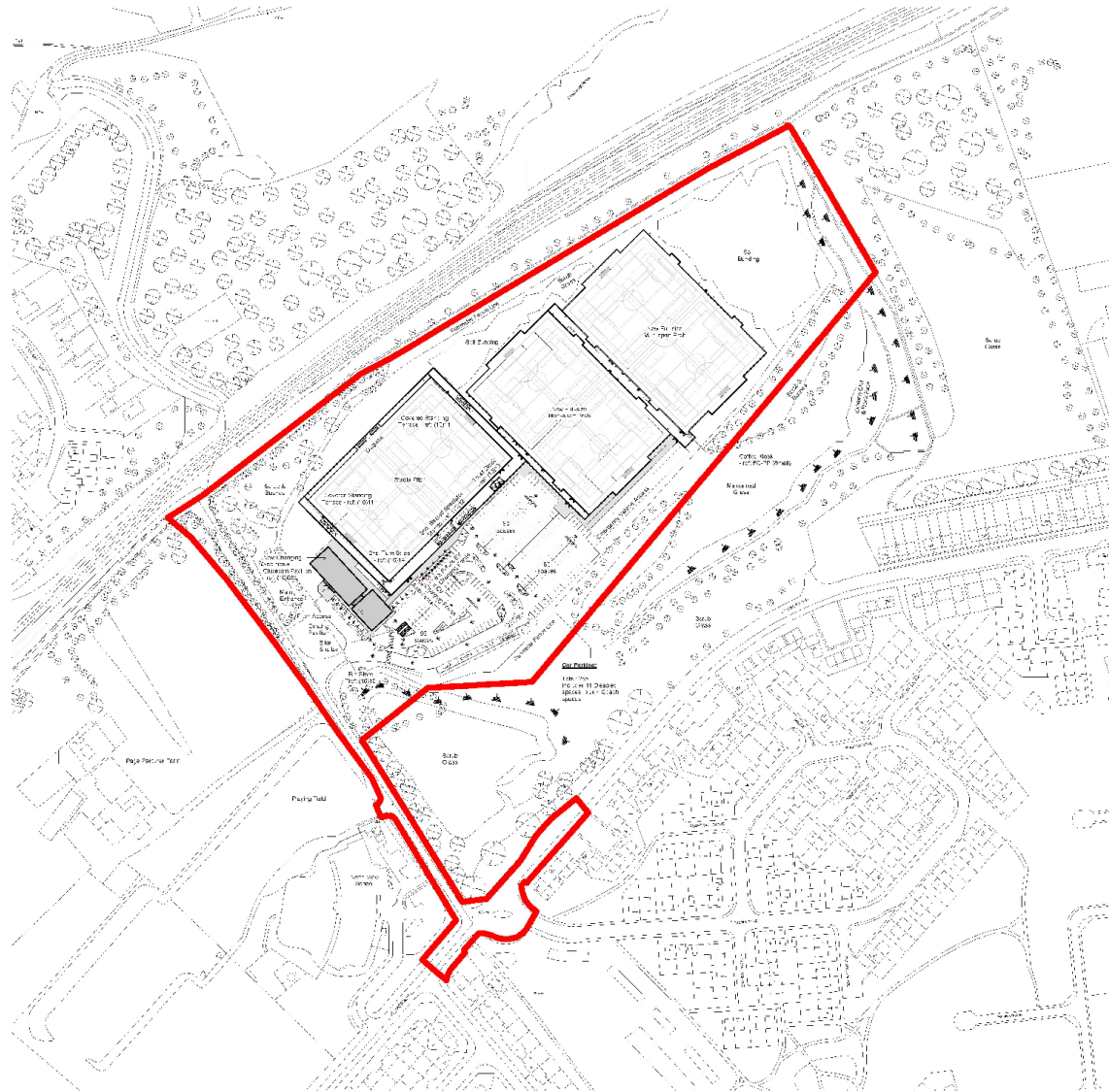
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Appendix 1b
Ford Quarry



NOTES

- 1. No structure or building shall be erected on the site.
- 2. A development shall be carried out in accordance with the above.

AD3	22/07/17	Strategic Planning	NR
AD3	22/07/17	Strategic Planning	NR

PLANNING

LK2

City of Sunderland
Planning Department
0191 2753777
www.sunderland.gov.uk

Prepared for: Sunderland City Council

Sunderland
City Council

Sunderland City Council

Ford Quarry Partlife Hub
Ford Quarry Complex, Sunderland

Proposed Site Plan (Overall)

Prepared for: Sunderland City Council
City of Sunderland
Planning Department
0191 2753777
www.sunderland.gov.uk



Sheet Ref: 928.001.2 A
Date: Dec '17
Author: TA
Checked: NB
Drawn: NB
Scale: (10)04 A00



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Appendix 1c
Washington Northern Area

