

# Sport and Regeneration

## Introduction

As the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games approach and new sports facilities emerge from former dereliction in east Manchester, it is timely to look at the role of sport in urban and rural regeneration.

How effective can sport be as a catalyst for regeneration? What examples of successful sporting regeneration can be seen in this country and elsewhere? What are the key ingredients of a successful scheme? What role does the planning system have in the process of regeneration? This bulletin explores the issues and provides examples of appeal decisions that touch on regeneration from the Planning Appeals Database [www.sportsappeals.co.uk](http://www.sportsappeals.co.uk)

The Manchester Commonwealth Games venue – Eastlands Sportcity – is a large-scale, high-profile site of sporting regeneration. However, a massive amount of effort and investment is also going into small-scale, less prominent locations around the country. An example of sport as a regenerative tool at a local level can be found in Knowsley on Merseyside, one of the Government's

Beacon Councils chosen to demonstrate how regeneration through culture, sport and tourism can be achieved. The bulletin includes practical information on the Knowsley project, on Eastlands Sportcity, and on other projects that are using sport as a regeneration tool.

## Policy background

The term 'regeneration' can be interpreted in a number of ways. Traditionally, it has been thought of mainly in economic and environmental terms, but recently more emphasis has been placed on the social and community aspects of regeneration. Increasingly, regeneration is linked with social inclusion, seeking to reintegrate groups of people that have become excluded from employment, education and sporting opportunities.

In December 1997 the Government created the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), with a brief to produce 'joined up solutions to joined up problems'. The SEU set up a number of Policy Action Teams (PATs), which produced reports on a range of issues, including PAT 10 on the arts and sport, which is referred to in more detail in the next section.



Published in November 2000, the Urban and Rural White Papers address regeneration and social inclusion issues – the first under the ‘urban renaissance’ banner and the second in the context of ‘a working countryside’. The Urban White Paper emphasises the value of well-managed parks, children’s play areas and sporting areas and the recently formed Urban Green Spaces Task Force, due to report in March 2002, will play a major part in taking forward this aspect of the White Paper. On a more general level, the Urban White Paper acknowledges the importance of culture, leisure and sport as important ‘components of our quality of life and as economic sectors in their own right.’

The Rural White Paper takes a similar line to its urban counterpart and mentions the funding available for improved facilities at primary schools through the Spaces for Sport and the Arts scheme.

Planning policy guidance on regeneration issues has been emerging from the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions – now the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions – for some time. PPG1 *General Policies and Principles*, issued in February 1997, noted the importance of urban regeneration and the re-use of previously developed land in creating more sustainable patterns of development. High quality, mixed-use developments, such as ‘urban villages’ would be characterised, among other things, by a range of employment, leisure and community facilities and access to public open space and green spaces. While making effective use of land within urban areas, open space such as playing fields should be protected.

The revised PPG3 *Housing*, issued in March 2000, continues and strengthens the theme of re-using previously developed land thus minimising the development of greenfield. The note advises that the Government's target of providing 60% additional housing on previously developed land by 2008 should not mean building on urban green spaces. Annex C defines previously developed land and specifically excludes 'land in built-up areas which has not been developed previously, for example parks, recreation grounds...' A footnote to the guidance provides additional advice on development within the curtilage of a building defined as previously developed land – not all of a curtilage should necessarily be developed and policies such as those protecting open spaces and playing fields should also be taken into account.



PPG7 *The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development* was issued in February 1997. It recognises the move towards farm diversification, including sporting activities such as equestrian centres that can provide important sources of income and employment. The recent foot and mouth crisis will undoubtedly increase interest in diversification of agricultural land and buildings.

Issued in October 2000, PPG11 *Regional Planning* notes that most sports and physical recreation developments will primarily serve local catchments. However, it goes on to note that some may have sub-regional or regional significance and may be required in support of bids for major international sporting events. The note also re-emphasises the point that, in planning for urban renaissance, there will be a need for adequate provision

of suitable open and other green spaces, particularly in areas of high housing density.

PPG13 *Transport*, issued with revised content in March 2001, continues the theme of using land use planning as a means of delivering the Government's integrated transport strategy. As with all developments that will generate large amounts of travel, major new sports facilities should be provided in locations that are well served by public transport.

The original PPG17 *Sport and Recreation*, issued in September 1991, referred to the contribution of urban space in attracting business and tourism as part of the urban regeneration process. The draft revision issued in March 2001 makes a similar point, but is somewhat contradictory as it also promotes the relocation of



recreational facilities to 'sites where other forms of development are precluded', particularly where such relocations would allow the release of a site to meet other economic or social objectives identified in local plans.

Sport England's *Planning Policies for Sport* provides the following objective in relation to sport and regeneration: 'Planning Policy Objective 12: To promote sport in its contribution to urban regeneration and to support regeneration proposals that incorporate sport as part of the comprehensive planning of an area.

'Sport England is seeking the inclusion of policies in development plans that:

- acknowledge the role that sport can play in regeneration schemes in terms of economic, social and environmental benefits
- encourage the provision of new sports facilities to sustain the vitality of towns and cities and rural communities
- encourage the use of redundant land and water for sport
- encourage any major development to consider the potential for sports elements
- recognise that sport itself has to be regenerated by improved and new facilities at schools, clubs, public and commercial operations.'



### Development plan policies

There are relatively few examples of development plan policies that specifically address the issue of sport and regeneration. The following examples contain some element of regeneration:

#### Sefton Unitary Development Plan, Policy R4 (adopted 1995)

##### Recreation Improvement Areas

- 1 Resources will be directed to the improvement of the parks and public open spaces identified as Recreation Improvement Areas on the Proposals Map.
- 2 Priority will be given to the following:
  - Bowersdale Park, Seaforth
  - Longfield Road, Litherland
  - Derby Park, Bootle
  - South Park, Bootle
  - Brookhill Road Open Space
  - Palmerston Avenue Open Space, Litherland.

#### Stockton-on-Tees Unitary Development Plan, Policy EN19 (adopted 1997)

The reclamation and use of derelict land in the countryside will be permitted provided that subsequent uses and activities:

- I contribute to farming, diversification of the rural economy, forestry, tourism, sport or recreation
- II do not adversely affect the character of the countryside or the amenity of adjacent or neighbouring uses
- III include satisfactory parking and access arrangements
- IV accommodate the existing nature conservation interest of the site where possible.

## Halton Unitary Development Plan, Policy RG3 (1st Deposit Version)

### RG3 Action Area 3 Widnes Waterfront

Within the Waterfront Action Area the following uses will be acceptable:

- employment uses (B1, B2 and B8)
- residential uses (C2 & C3)
- leisure uses (D2)
- open space
- food and drink (A3).

### Principles of Development

- 1 The nature and design of new development should take advantage of the waterside location beside the St Helens Canal and Mersey Estuary.
- 2 A significant improvement should be made to the waterside environment.
- 3 Provision should be made for increased public access to the waterside.
- 4 Access into the area should be improved, particularly in relation to public transport access.
- 5 The visual quality of the built and natural environment should be enhanced including along routes into the area.
- 6 Development should not prejudice the overall objective of securing a further crossing of the Mersey east of the existing bridge.
- 7 Development should not be unsightly nor a source of noise, dust, odour or pollution that is considered to be detrimental to the future regeneration prospects of the area as set out in the Action Area Plan.

## Warrington Unitary Development Plan, Policy EMP8 (1st Deposit Draft, June 2001)

The following areas of central Warrington are currently inefficiently used or under-used and are identified as having potential to be brought into use in ways which can contribute positively to the regeneration of the borough in economic, environmental and social terms.

- 1 Arpley Meadows
- 2 Monks Hall site
- 3 Winwick Street / Winwick Road (west) area
- 4 Winwick Road / Hawleys Lane area
- 5 Dalton Bank site
- 6 Winwick Street (east) / Cheshire Lines Building area
- 7 Farrell Street (south) area
- 8 Wilderspool / Bridgefoot / Wilson Patten Street (south) area
- 9 Britannia Works site, Bewsey Road.

While no proposals have been made for the specific mix of land uses, form of development, or relationship to the town's transport infrastructure that would be most appropriate to each of these areas, their future development should be shaped according to application of the following general principles:

- In the interests of contributing to sustainable development, achievement of either a mix of uses including employment, housing and service provision of a scale and type appropriate to the site and to its location within its particular community area, or for a single use, where this would complement the mix of uses in the surrounding area. While the contrasting

characteristics of the areas and the variety of opportunities that they offer in terms of contributing to the council's overall promotion of urban regeneration make it inappropriate to propose a common set of specific land-use priorities applicable to all areas, the following priorities will be taken into account in guiding their development:

- Provision of residential accommodation targeted as meeting identified local needs.
- Maintenance and, if possible, widening of the range of local employment opportunities.
- Provision of services and facilities that contribute to the availability of community, leisure and open space in the local area.
- Provision and maintenance of amenity open space, wherever possible incorporating measures which contribute to the implementation of the Greenway and Greenspace networks and to realisation of the Mersey Forest strategy.
- Development to be facilitated by and controlled within the framework of a comprehensive redevelopment and improvement scheme to be led, wherever possible, by a planning brief drawn up in partnership between the borough council and land-owners and other stakeholders having an interest in the area.
- Development to relate well to its surroundings, in terms of design, layout and massing of built development, within an appropriate landscape context, supported by transport measures which

support the council's drive towards integrated transport and are well integrated with the development scheme in both functional and urban design terms.

- Existing active uses within the area to be accommodated within a more efficient overall pattern of development.
- Land uses which would be incompatible with, and may undermine the overall Unitary Development Plan strategy not to be permitted.
- Development to support the vitality and viability of nearby town, district or local centres, wherever achievable.
- Development to be of a quality that, wherever possible, can contribute to and act as a stimulus for regeneration of a wider area beyond the boundaries of the Development Opportunity Area.

Planning permission for development that would be likely to seriously prejudice the contribution that a development scheme as a whole could make to regeneration of the town may be refused for that reason.

The Government's strategy for sport *A Sporting Future For All* was published in April 2000 and contains a commitment to invest 75% of the Sport England Lottery Fund in community sport, particularly in areas with significant facility shortfall. As part of the Government's commitment to neighbourhood renewal, it is asking all funding bodies in sport to ensure that the promotion of social inclusion is a key part of their work.

The follow up *Action Plan*, published in March 2001, updates progress made in implementing the sports strategy. It introduces a new consultative body, the Community Sport Alliance, which will bring together key stakeholders to identify and tackle the key challenges facing sport in the community.

As the Government's key agency for developing sport at a strategic level, Sport England has a major role in providing new and improved sporting opportunities in deprived parts of the country. The *Lottery Fund Strategy 1999–2009* describes sport as a catalyst for both urban and rural revival, with capital projects providing considerable employment potential in their construction and subsequent operation. The strategy establishes a number of principles, including:

'We will:

- ensure that at least two-thirds of Lottery funding is invested in the Community Projects Fund for facilities or activities that everyone (including disabled people) can use or take part in
- ensure that at least 50% of the Community Projects Fund is invested in areas of deprivation
- take decisions on the priorities for Lottery funding at the appropriate level with local priority-setting for local projects
- ensure that projects to improve and upgrade existing facilities are given equal priority as those aimed at providing new facilities

- act in partnership with other organisations (Lottery distributors, local and national government departments, major governing bodies of sport, private sector investors) to maximise the effect of Lottery funding
- make certain that the projects we fund provide equality of access to sport for all people. This means providing sport in a location and at a cost that makes it accessible, targeting funding quite explicitly at those areas and groups that are economically and recreationally deprived and ensuring that all projects, where practicable, provide full access for disabled people.'





The following Lottery-funded programmes and initiatives are relevant to this bulletin:

**Sport Action Zones** – designed to bring the benefits of sport to deprived communities, the Sport Action Zones (SAZ) have initially been set up in 12 locations in urban and rural England including Liverpool, which is the subject of a case study later in this bulletin. There will eventually be up to 30 zones, within which the focus will be on making the most of existing facilities, providing new facilities where required and developing effective partnerships to contribute to wider social and economic well being.

**Active Communities Development Fund** – a revenue fund intended to increase sporting participation among ethnic minority communities, people with disabilities, women and girls and people on low incomes. At least half the fund will be used to tackle urban and rural deprivation.

**Community Capital Programme** – supporting capital projects, the fund can normally finance up to 65% of successful schemes. However, under the Priority Areas Initiative (PAI) up to 90% of the cost of new capital schemes can be met from the fund. The PAI covers the 100 most deprived local authority areas, all rural development areas and other pockets of deprivation.

**Community Revenue Programme** – intended to support other programmes, such as the Community Capital Programme. The focus is on tackling social exclusion.

**Space for Sport and the Arts** – this programme will provide new multi-purpose sports and arts facilities in primary schools to serve children and the wider community. Funding of £75 million is available to deliver the new and improved facilities.

**Green Spaces Programme** – Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces Programme, known as the





Green Spaces Programme. The aim is to provide, protect and improve playing fields and green spaces with financial assistance provided by the New Opportunities Fund. Fifty per cent of the funding will be targeted at areas of urban and rural deprivation. A maximum of 95% of funding will be available within priority areas and sport action zones.

**Outdoor Basketball Initiative** – although this initiative has now been completed and funding is no longer available, 9,000 new basketball goals were provided on 4,342 sites throughout England. Goals were provided in all but two local authority areas, with many authorities having multiple sites. For example, Manchester City Council has 204 goals serving a population of 429,000 – one goal for every 2,100 people.

Further information on these and other programmes is available on the Sport England website [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

In addition to the Sport England programmes mentioned above, regeneration funding is available from other mainstream sources, such as the European Union, the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and New Deal for Communities. Linked programmes, including Education, Employment and Health Action Zones will also contribute towards the regeneration of particular neighbourhoods.

### Research into sport and regeneration

The Social Exclusion Unit explores innovative ways of tackling social exclusion via a number of Policy Action Teams (PATs). PAT 10's report *Arts and Sport* was published in July 1999. The action team had a remit to report on 'best practice using arts, sport and leisure to engage people in poor neighbourhoods, particularly those who may feel most excluded, such as disaffected young people and people from ethnic minorities' and 'how to maximise the impact on poor neighbourhoods of Government spending and policies on arts, sport and leisure.' The action team's goal was to:

'Draw up an action plan with targets to maximise the impact of arts, sport and leisure policies in contributing to neighbourhood regeneration and increasing local participation.'

Key findings of PAT 10 included:

- Arts and sport, cultural and recreational activity can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and make a real difference to health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities.
- These activities make such contributions because they relate to community identity, encourage collective effort and help build positive links with the wider community.
- Barriers to be overcome include:
  - short-term perspectives
  - lack of hard information on the regeneration impact of arts/sport.

- Principles that help to exploit the potential of arts/sport in regeneration communities include:
  - valuing diversity
  - embedding local control
  - supporting local commitment
  - connecting with the mainstream of art and sports activities.

The report contained numerous recommendations aimed at a number of mainly government-related bodies. A progress report on the achievement of the recommendations contained in the PAT 10 report was published in February 2001. The progress report noted that 'culture and leisure have become part of the neighbourhood renewal process' and that 'If having nowhere to go and nothing constructive to do is as much a part of living in a distressed community as poor housing or high crime levels, culture and sport provide a good part of the answer to rebuilding a decent quality of life there.'



Noting that local authorities are producing Local Cultural Strategies following DCMS guidance that cultural services play a crucial role in tackling social exclusion, the report refers to the announcement of Beacon Councils – those councils that exemplify excellent practice in social and economic regeneration through culture, sport and tourism. One of these councils, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, is discussed in the following section of this bulletin.

A further key development was the commitment by Sport England and the Local Government Association to investigate the feasibility of local authorities undertaking a comprehensive audit of sports facilities in their area. If this does prove to be feasible, the intention would be to compile and maintain a database of sports provision that would form the basis of strategic planning for sports development.

In 2000 the issue of sport and regeneration was explored in some detail in a report by Coalter, Allison and Taylor for the Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. *The Role of Sport in Regenerating Deprived Urban Areas* examined the role that sport had played in the regeneration of urban areas in Scotland and also explored wider evidence for the assumption that sport can contribute positively to aspects of urban regeneration and social inclusion. Some of the report's key findings were:

- sport is most effective when combined with programmes addressing wider personal and social development

- there is little research on the regenerative potential of investment in sport, or the long-term benefits to local communities of sports-led investment strategies
- sports facilities can make an important contribution to the physical infrastructure of communities, providing a social focus and affecting people's perception of their neighbourhood
- the maintenance of under-used community facilities and wider environmental recreation-related improvements have a significant role to play in the development of the quality of life in communities.

The report also considered the impact of sports events on local economies. For example, it noted that the 1996 Masters Swimming Championships in Sheffield had been estimated to generate £3.9 million additional expenditure and 99 full-time equivalent jobs. However, despite these short-term benefits, there appears to be little evidence of the medium- and long-term economic effects of sports event-led economic regeneration strategies. On a more positive note, the building of a multi-purpose sports centre in a Priority Partnership Area in Glasgow had led to physical improvements to the appearance of the area, raised confidence in the community – which previously had a 'bad reputation' – and significant employment benefits.

**Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport** – has considered the wider benefits of staging sporting and other events. It noted that Euro '96 attracted over



280,000 visiting spectators and media to England, spending approximately £120 million in the eight host cities and surrounding regions. The Select Committee echoed the concerns expressed in the Coalter report on the relatively small amount of work that has been carried out on the economic impact of sporting events.

Referring to the intangible benefits of hosting major sporting events, the Select Committee cited two previous Commonwealth Games venues: Brisbane, which hosted the Games in 1982, was transformed 'from an introspective town to the hub of the fastest growth area in Australia', while the Kuala Lumpur Games in 1998 provided a 'boost to the spirit of the country'.

Looking forward to the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, the Select Committee quoted the Prime Minister who has said that the Games 'will be a tremendous showcase, not just for Manchester but for the whole of Britain'. Additionally, the fact that the Games will take place in the Queen's Golden Jubilee Year is likely to give the event special significance, both nationally and internationally. Further details on Manchester Eastlands Sportcity can be found elsewhere in this bulletin.



Although major sporting events such as the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and Euro '96 can produce major economic and other benefits, sporting activity can also produce ongoing benefits at a local level. In July 1999 the Football Research Unit based at the University of Liverpool produced a report on the economic benefits of professional football to the city of Liverpool. The report contained the following headlines:

- in the region of 3,000 full-time jobs in the Merseyside economy are dependent on the football industry
- on match days 1,400 part-time jobs are provided by the clubs
- five in every 100 jobs in the retail sector around the two grounds are dependent on match days
- nine in every 100 jobs at the clubs' suppliers are dependent on trade with the clubs
- for every £1 spent by the two clubs combined, 31p remains within the local Liverpool economy
- the figure rises to 34p within the broader Merseyside economy
- for every £1 spent in businesses around the ground, 5p is attributable to match days.



## Case studies

Sport can be used as a regenerative tool in any number of ways. The following examples range from the major facility-led Barcelona Olympics and Manchester Commonwealth Games, to local sports development-led initiatives in Knowsley and Liverpool.

### Barcelona

Barcelona is perhaps the most dramatic large-scale example of the use of sport and a sporting event to regenerate an area. The city hosted the 1992 summer Olympics, which acted as a catalyst for many projects that had been thought about for years but never implemented. Lord Rogers, Chairman of the Urban Task

Force, has described Barcelona as perhaps the most interesting example of urban regeneration in the western world today. Tourism doubled in the 1990s, with much of the increase coming from the USA.

In addition to the sporting stadia and buildings constructed for the Games, Barcelona also provided the following additional facilities:

- Poble Nou Olympic Village, developed in a waterfront area of disused factories and housing
- Valle d'Hebron Olympic housing for non-athletic participants, developed on former industrial land
- modernisation of Barcelona airport



Barcelona 1992 – Olympic diving

- construction of the Collserola telecommunications tower
- construction of Cintura del Litoral, a high-speed ring road connecting the airport with the main sports facilities and the Olympic Village.

Although the period following the Olympic Games saw a slowdown in the rate of regeneration and lower tourist numbers, the mid-1990s saw further growth and new developments centred on the city's Mediterranean frontage.

The statistics associated with the Barcelona Olympics are impressive:

- 128,000 jobs created or perceived to have been created
- increase in number of tourist nights from 4.1 million in 1991 to 6.5 million in 1995, 7.5 million in 1998 and 8 million in 1999
- increase in number of hotel rooms from 10,812 in 1991 to 15,076 in 1995
- increase in price of new housing by almost 250% between 1986 (year of Olympic nomination) and 1993
- increase in price of existing housing by 240% between 1986 and 1993.

That these Olympics were used as a means to achieve wide regeneration of the city and surrounding region can

be gleaned from the fact that investment in sports infrastructure and facilities represented only 9.1% of total Olympic investment. Investment in Olympic-related projects was split between private investors (33%) and public investors (67%). Only the 1964 Tokyo Games generated more investment than the Barcelona Olympics.

The impact the Games had on the regeneration of the city and region can, in part, be measured by the fact that, prior to the Olympics, Barcelona was ranked sixteenth most popular European tourist destination. By 1999, it had risen to third, behind only London and Paris.



### Manchester Eastlands Sportcity

The Manchester Commonwealth Games will be held between 25 July and 4 August 2002 and will be the biggest Commonwealth Games ever, with over 5,000 athletes from 72 nations competing in 14 individual sports and three team sports. The Games are intended to play a major role in continuing the physical, economic

and social regeneration in Manchester and the surrounding region.

Seven new venues are to be provided for the Games including the City of Manchester Stadium, now under construction, and the Manchester Aquatics Centre, which was officially opened in October 2000. Details of the major facilities are given in the table below:

Project	Completion date	Comments
Manchester Aquatics Centre	Opened 12 October 2000 by Her Majesty the Queen	<p>Games swimming and diving venue.</p> <p>Completed on time and on budget (grant of £22 million towards project costs of £32.7 million).</p> <p>Partnership between Manchester City Council and universities within the city.</p> <p>The only centre in the country with two 50m pools.</p> <p>Long-term use for community/students, city-wide swimming development, and English Institute of Sport (EIS) programmes.</p>
Belle Vue Leisure Centre	Due to open autumn 2001	<p>Games hockey venue, approx one mile from Sportcity (main venue).</p> <p>Grant of £2.9 million towards project costs of £3.5 million.</p> <p>Long-term use for community sport (hall sports, cricket, hockey), EIS hockey programmes, potential as 'house of sport' housing governing bodies of sport and EIS personnel.</p>



Manchester Eastlands Sportcity. Left: English Institute of Sport (north west) Right: City of Manchester Stadium

Project	Completion date	Comments
Manchester Sportcity	<p>City of Manchester Stadium due to complete March 2002</p> <p>Non-stadium facilities due to complete February 2002</p>	<p>Games track cycling, athletics, rugby sevens, squash and table tennis venue.</p> <p>Seating capacity 38,000 for the Games, 48,000 when phase two is completed in August 2003. Manchester City FC will be the anchor tenant, and there is a commitment to community use.</p> <p>Non-stadium facilities comprise: the existing National Cycling Centre (3,500 seats, 250m track), the National Squash Centre (six courts, 1,500 seat 'centre court'), indoor athletics centre (200m training track), 400m outdoor athletics track, indoor tennis centre (six courts), health and fitness facility, science and medicine support facilities.</p> <p>Substantial long-term benefits for sport, economic development, health education, and social programmes are anticipated. For example, it is estimated by Manchester City Council that over 5,500 jobs will be created in and around Manchester, 40 hectares of derelict land will be reclaimed, and a new Metro-link from the city centre to East Manchester will be developed.</p>
Bolton Arena	Opened June 2001	<p>Games badminton venue.</p> <p>Grant of £11.3 million towards project costs of over £15 million.</p> <p>Long-term use as Lawn Tennis Association regional centre, sporting events, and for community use.</p> <p>Facilities include hall tennis and other sports, health and fitness, sports education theatre, outdoor pitches.</p>
National Shooting Centre, (Bisley, Surrey)	Opens autumn 2001	<p>Games shooting venue.</p> <p>Grant of £6 million towards projects costs of £6.7 million.</p> <p>National Rifle Association/National Small-bore Rifle Association consider the range of new facilities will ensure Bisley is the most comprehensive competition and training centre in the world.</p> <p>Long-term use for shooting and other sports.</p>





Manchester Eastlands Sportcity – Indoor tennis centre

Additionally, the Games will utilise existing venues including the International Convention Centre, the GMEX Centre, the Manchester Evening News Arena and the National Cycling Facilities Centre.

Eastlands Sportcity will form the heart of the Games and is located east of Manchester's city centre in an area formerly characterised by heavy engineering that has seen major dereliction and social problems in recent years. The east Manchester area has been the subject of numerous regeneration initiatives including SRB, New Deal for

Communities, Health, Education and Sport Action Zones and other area-based initiatives. In order to bring together the various strands of government initiatives and to maximise private sector investment, the area was designated as one of the three national locations for the Urban Regeneration Companies (URC), which were established in 1999/2000.

Key to the effectiveness of the URC will be the extent to which the benefits of the Commonwealth Games accrue to local people. The major new sports facilities, which will

supplement the existing velodrome, will represent an anchor development which it is hoped will provide an uplift in land values, acting as a lever for wider regeneration of the area.

Central to the theme of regeneration is the need to involve local communities at all stages of the regeneration process. Much effort has therefore been put into a legacy programme that is intended to ensure the opportunities presented by the Games are explained in the short, medium and long term. Manchester City Council has produced a Sports Strategy that will use the Games as a catalyst for:

- significantly increasing participation in sport, particularly by young people
- developing easily accessible pathways for more talented/committed young athletes
- providing quality sports facilities for which there is sustainable after-use and genuine need, not only for use during the Commonwealth Games but also for long-term community benefit and sport development activities.



### Knowsley Beacon Scheme

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council is one of four local authorities (with Sunderland, Nottingham and Gateshead) that have been selected by the Government to demonstrate how councils can achieve regeneration through culture, sport and tourism.

Knowsley, situated on Merseyside between Liverpool and St Helens, was ranked sixth overall in the 1999 Index of Deprivation, with unemployment at 11.4% and over one-third of all households in receipt of housing benefits. In its bid for Beacon status, the council identified a number of partnerships with the private, public and voluntary sectors and with local communities. This included the work of its own Leisure and Community Services Department, which had refocused its services and internal structures so that all its activities, including sport, were seen as means to a regenerative end, rather than ends in themselves. Culture and sport were also being used as key elements of the SRB and Objective 1 funded programmes in the borough.

At a practical level, the council has used the Healthy Living Initiative (funded by the New Opportunities Fund) to provide seven community health apprenticeship posts for local people, a capital fund to support new facilities and a development fund to assist community-based initiatives.

Additionally, in the Northwood Active Communities project a number of programmes are operating under the Active Communities umbrella. These programmes are aimed at disaffected young people and under-

represented groups including girls and women, single parents, ethnic minority communities, disabled people and the over fifties. They will provide access to a range of leisure activities that will provide individuals and groups with a sense of achievement, personal fulfilment and enjoyment.

Although the Beacon scheme is still in its infancy, the council expects the following positive outcomes:

- improvements in key indicators – health, employment, education and community safety
- more effective use of resources
- high community esteem and expectations
- positive impact on quality of life
- a more inclusive society.



### Liverpool Sport Action Zone

A short distance west of Knowsley is the Liverpool Sport Action Zone located to the south and south east of the city centre in the Dingle, Granby/Toxteth and Parks area. The area has a population of around 55,000, of whom approximately 15% are from ethnic minority communities. Some 70% of households do not have access to a car and unemployment levels are about 30%. The area was chosen for designation because:

- it displays high levels of economic and social deprivation
- it provides an opportunity to link into existing regeneration schemes such as Objective 1 and New Deal for Communities
- it provides opportunities to link with other related initiatives such as Active Sports, School Sport Coordinators and Education and Health Action Zones.

Core funding of some £70,000 per year for five years has been provided by Sport England, with additional funding schemes being developed with local organisations. A key role for the Sport Action Zone Manager will be to assist local organisations obtain fast and easy access to relevant funding sources, including Sport England Lottery Fund programmes.

Like the other 11 Sport Action Zones (including East Manchester), the Liverpool SAZ will be working very closely with a cross-section of local community groups, the city council and national organisations such as Sport England.

September 2001

### Rockingham Raceway

Built on the former site of the Corby steelworks in Northamptonshire, the Rockingham Raceway motorsports circuit was officially opened in May 2001. The raceway comprises a 1.5 mile oval circuit and a variety of long and short car and motorcycle tracks.

A good example of brownfield development, this £50 million facility will eventually have 27,000 permanent seats and employ 40–50 full-time staff,

increasing to 400–500 on race days. Further investment is expected in the form of adjacent hotel and leisure facilities.

The East Midlands Development Agency notes that motorsport is a £6.4 billion industry in the UK. Together with the Silverstone motor racing circuit in the southern part of the county (also planning major new investment) and the Santa Pod drag racing track in nearby Bedfordshire, the Rockingham tracks will bring major tourism benefits to the area.



Rockingham Raceway





The Parks Sports Centre, North Shields

### The Parks, North Shields

The Parks Sports Centre is a major element of the £30 million regeneration of the Meadowell estate in North Shields, North Tyneside. Built with funding from the Sport England Lottery Fund, City Challenge (now North Tyneside Challenge), English Partnerships, Tyne and Wear Development Corporation and North Tyneside Council, this £10.2 million complex includes the following facilities:

- an eight-rink indoor bowls centre that can accommodate regional, national and international matches
- a six badminton court-size multi-use sports hall
- four floodlit artificial turf five-a-side courts
- outdoor multi-use area

- gym and health suite
- two aerobics/dance studios
- function room
- indoor soft play area
- bar/cafe.

In order to encourage use by local residents the council has adopted a pricing policy and a keycard holder scheme that offers discounts to frequent users. The facility has hosted international badminton matches and tournaments but is also heavily targeted towards local clubs, schools and colleges. It is also a Premier Coaching Centre for **sports coach UK** (formerly the National Coaching Foundation) and is used as a centre for coach education sessions linked to the Active Sports Initiative.

### Planning appeal decisions

The planning appeals database contains very few cases that deal with sport and regeneration. However, the following two cases do cite regeneration as a benefit of the proposals.

**Football academy including indoor facilities and external pitches on land at Whitburn Moor Farm, Sunderland Road, Cleadon, Sunderland – South Tyneside MBC – February 2000**

**Reference: APP/A4520/A/99/1023406**

**Decision: Appeal allowed**

This case was previously reported in Planning Bulletin *Seven Stadia, Football Academies and Centres of Excellence*, published in March 2000. This summary concentrates on the regeneration aspects of the Inspector's report and the Government Office's letter.

The site for the proposed football academy was in open countryside at Whitburn Moor in the Green Belt between Sunderland and Tyneside. In seeking to demonstrate very special circumstances to justify what was accepted as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, Sunderland AFC had suggested that the following points constituted such circumstances:

- The significant advantages in terms of the image and profile of South Tyneside that would result from the provision of a modern, high quality sporting facility that would be of regional importance.

- The advantages to the community and local economy that would accrue as a result of the increased ability of Sunderland AFC to compete in UK football, which is now a major national and international leisure industry.
- The generation of additional employment opportunities. In addition to securing the jobs of staff transferred to the site, it is envisaged that the academy would generate a need for about 20 additional non-playing employees.

The Inspector broadly agreed with these claims and went so far as to state that 'the success of the club, on and off the field, would have positive benefits for the local economy due to improved attendance at work, production levels etc from those who support the club or who identify with it and, in my view, would be a significant positive factor for regeneration in the region.'

Objectors to the scheme did not disagree with these points but felt that they were not unique to the site and would occur wherever the academy was built. Consequently, the objectors claimed that these factors did not constitute very special circumstances and did not justify building the academy in the Green Belt. However, the club had demonstrated to the Inspector's satisfaction that no alternative, non-Green Belt sites were available. He therefore recommended that planning permission be granted.

The Secretary of State accepted the Inspector's report in respect of the identified regeneration issues although he did not elaborate on them – planning permission was granted.

Subsequently, an application for the approval of reserved matters has been refused by the council and is the subject of an appeal. It is understood that the academy buildings are causing concerns to South Tyneside MBC councillors and the result of the latest appeal will be reported in a future issue of the Planning Bulletin.

**Business park, golf course, residential development and open space at Waterside Park, Audenshaw, Tameside, Greater Manchester – Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council – November 2000**

**Reference: PNW/5087/219/51**

**Decision: Application refused**

This case demonstrates the need to balance regeneration objectives with recreational objectives.

This called-in application was the subject of a lengthy public inquiry from October–December 1999. It involved 97 hectares of land predominantly occupied by two golf courses on the western edge of the borough of Tameside, some four miles from Manchester city centre and a similar distance from Eastlands Sportcity.

The development of the proposed business park would result in the loss of one of the two golf courses on the site and the rearrangement of the other course. Sport England had objected to this aspect of the proposals.

The business park was in accordance with a site-specific policy in the adopted Tameside Unitary Development Plan but it did not accord with other borough-wide policies that sought to protect recreational open space.

During the inquiry emphasis had been put on longstanding structural problems with the area's economy and the contribution that the proposal would make to addressing those problems. However, the Secretary of State fundamentally disagreed with the Inspector on this aspect of the case. The Inspector came to the conclusion that, although the proposal did not fully accord with all the criteria for Regional Employment sites set out in the Regional Planning Guidance, on balance the application should be permitted.

The Secretary of State took a contrary view, noting that the proposal would not involve the development of previously used land. He was also concerned at the proposed loss of a golf course and the lack of definite proposals for a replacement course. The Secretary of State consequently refused to grant planning permission.

This case is particularly interesting as it shows that regeneration and new employment opportunities must be balanced against the loss of recreational land, including golf courses. Although the Inspector did give due consideration to the issue of recreational provision in the area, he appears to have given rather too much weight to earlier consideration of these issues at the UDP inquiry five years earlier. The Secretary of State placed far more emphasis on the Government's emerging sustainability objectives and recreational, landscape and amenity issues.

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Further reading

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Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport – various reports

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SPORT ENGLAND

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#### Companion titles in the Planning Bulletin series

Issue 1: *Playing Fields*

Issue 2: *Strategic Planning for Sport*

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Issue 4: *Planning Obligations for Sport*

Issue 5: *Sport in the Urban Fringe*

Issue 6: *Land-based Motor Sports*

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Issue 8: *Playing Fields for Sport Revisited*

Issue 9: *Planning for Water Sports*

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Copies of the appeal decision letters referred to in this publication are not available from Sport England or Steven Abbott Associates. Readers wishing to obtain copies are advised to contact the Planning Inspectorate.

#### **Sport England mission statement**

Sport England aims to lead the development of sport in England by influencing and serving the public, commercial and voluntary sectors. Our aims are:

- **more people involved in sport**
- **more places to play sport**
- **more medals through higher standards of performance in sport**



Sport England is the brand name of the English Sports Council, which is a distributor of Lottery funds to sport.



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