

PPS Scenario: Increasing the use of 3G Football Turf Pitches (FTPs)

During the last decade 3G FTPs have played an increasing role within the national game. They are regarded by the Football Association (FA) as the optimum facility for training by clubs. In recent seasons they have also become more popular for competitive matches. With this in mind, before developing the recommendations and action plan for this PPS, two scenarios have been looked at to help with understanding what demand there may be for full size¹ floodlit 3G FTPs in Epping Forest District, if increased amounts of play were to take place on them.

In order to do so, information from the 'Assessment' stage of developing this PPS, alongside details from the FA, have been used to help answer the following questions:

How many full size floodlit 3G FTPs may be required to meet demand within Epping Forest District if:

- i. All teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G FTP to train on once a week?*
- ii. All matches for teams currently playing competitive football on Epping Forest District managed natural grass pitches were played on full size floodlit 3G FTPs?*

The answers to these questions are set out below and are based on full sized floodlit 3G FTPs which have full community use during peak periods². However, the results should be viewed as providing an indication of the 'full size pitch equivalents' that may be demanded. In practice, the most appropriate ways of meeting any such increase in demand will vary depending on the nature of the local area. For example, in some areas new full size floodlit FTPs may be appropriate, whereas in others small sided provision to cater for increased training use, or securing greater community use/hours of existing provision may be the best way forward.

Given the above, what the answers may mean for the Epping Forest District area, taking into account the wider findings from the Assessment stage of developing the PPS, is also presented below. These details have been used to help inform the development of the PPS's recommendations and the action plan.

Scenario Results

- i. If all teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G FTP to train on once a week.*
 - As a guide the FA suggest that 1 full size floodlit 3G FTP could potentially accommodate this training demand from 42 teams (Ratio of 1:42³).
 - The information from the Assessment stage of this PPS indicates that there are 249 teams playing competitive football in Epping Forest District.

¹ A full size 3G FTP measuring 106m x 70m including run off/safety margins.

² Weekdays 17:00 - 21:00 (or 19:00 on Fridays) and 09:00 - 17:00 on weekends.

³ The FA developed the training ratio following their facilities strategy vision to provide all affiliated clubs with access to a 3G FTP for training. An original ratio of 1:56 was based on a full size pitch providing 56 slots per week (Mon-Thurs 6-9pm, Fri 6-8pm). The ratio was subsequently revised to 1:42. This was due to evidence of a number of local authority areas reaching the perceived required number of 3G FTP facilities based on the 1:56 ratio yet still evidencing latent demand. Further FA analysis of 3G FTP facility usage also showed that many affiliated teams seek more than one slot for training and that significant amounts of non FA affiliated and recreational demand also use 3G FTPs during the peak time, creating a need for further 3G FTP provision.

- Using the FA's 1:42 ratio suggests that 6 full size floodlit 3G FTPs would be required to meet this increased training use within Epping Forest District.
- ii. *If all youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and min 5v5r teams playing competitive football on natural grass pitches were played on full size floodlit 3G FTPs.*

- The FA is keen to work with LAs to understand the potential demand for full size floodlit 3G FTPs should all competitive youth 9v9 and mini matches, currently played on natural grass pitches, be transferred to one. This is in line with the Football Foundation's objective to improve the experience for young players by increasing the usage of 3G AGP's
- Table 1 takes information from the Assessment stage of this PPS to present the number of teams playing on natural grass pitches (not including school sites or sites leased to clubs) and the relevant peak periods.

Table 1: Number of youth and mini teams playing natural grass pitches

Pitch Type	Pitch Size	Peak Period	No. of Teams
Adult	(11v11)	Saturday PM	0
Youth	(9v9)	Sunday PM	19.5
Youth	(11v11)	Sunday PM	0
Mini	(5v5)	Sunday AM	21
Mini	(7v7)	Sunday AM	24

- The FA suggest an approach (see below) for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G FTPs that teams may demand for competitive matches. Table 2 presents the results of this approach for the teams set out in Table 1.

Table 2: Number of 3G FTPs that may be required

Format	No Teams per time (x)	No matches at PEAK TIME (y)= x/2	3G units per match (z)	Total units required formats (A)=(y)*(z)	3G pitches required B= (A)/64
5v5	48	24	4	96	1.5
7v7	42	21	8	168	2.6
9v9	39	19.5	10	195	3.0
11v11(Y)	0	0	32	0	0.0
11v11(A)	0	0	32	0	0.0
					7.2

- Transferring all youth 9v9 and mini matches for teams currently playing competitive football on Epping Forest District natural grass pitches may equate to a demand for 7.2 full size floodlit 3G FTPs for all the different formats of the game.
- The FA approach for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G FTPs that teams may demand for competitive matches is based on:

- A team playing a 'home' match every other week - therefore dividing the number of teams by two with the result rounded up to provide a figure for the number of matches a week during the peak period (Table 2 Column y).
- A 3G FTP being available for 4 hours⁴ a day during the peak period (e.g. 10am to 2pm). Therefore, all demand being programmed over the four hour period.
- Using a unit measure which can be applied to the different formats of the game to quantify how a pitch can be used during this 4 hour period (Table 2 Column z). One unit is taken as equating to a quarter of a full size 3G FTP for 15 minutes. Therefore, a full size 3G FTP provides 4 units per 15 minutes and 16 units per hour. Across the four hour period this totals a capacity of 64 units (16 units per hour x 4 hours).
- As set out in Table 3 below, each format of the game will require a certain amount of units of a full size 3G FTP per match based on the required pitch size and match duration.

Table 3: FA set units of a full size 3G FTP per match for each format.

Format of the game	No. of pitches that fit on a full size 3G FTP	No. of matches per hour on a full size 3G FTP	No. of matches per 2 hour period on a full size 3G FTP	Number of units per match
5v5	4	4	8	4
7v7	2	2	4	8
9v9	2	2	2	10
11v11 Youth	1	0	1	32
11v11 Adult	1	0	1	32

Current Supply

- There is currently a total of 3 full size floodlit 3G FTPs available for community use and club training.
- 3 of the total 3G FTPs are listed on the FA's 3G FTP register⁵ and deemed suitable for competitive matches.
- 3 of the total 3G FTPs are available for what could be expected to be the full community use hours across the week (or very close to the full hours).
- None of the total 3G FTPs have particularly restricted community use hours.
- There are no further full size 3G FTPs which are not currently floodlit.
- There are no further full size 3G FTPs currently unavailable for community use.

⁴ The rationale for 4 hours is based on a standard approach for match programming nationally and the ability to facilitate 2 adult games.

⁵ The FA has established a 3G FTP register to help users identify facilities that are fit for purpose for competitive matches <http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>.