

# Welcome

Evolve Project Management are holding this exhibition to share our ideas for the development of a new golf course with a multi-sport facility at Windmill Hill Golf Course, Far Bletchley.

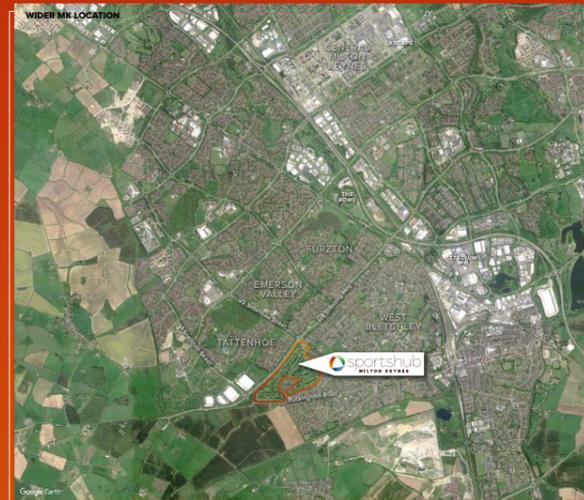
As a named 'European City of Sport for 2020', Milton Keynes is focused on helping unlock new opportunities to use sport to improve people's quality of life. Our proposal for SportsHub MK will help to turbo-charge the Council's ambition to involve more people in sport and activity.

Over the past 12 months Evolve have been engaging with Milton Keynes Council as the landowner of the golf course, national and local sports organisations and key local stakeholders to help shape the SportsHub proposal.

We held local consultation last summer in West Bletchley so that local residents and those

directly affected by the proposal could offer feedback on the initial ideas. Their views have helped us refine the scheme. The purpose of this exhibition is to share our refined proposal and current masterplan with both local communities and a wider MK audience. The exhibition is accompanied by a short questionnaire so that people can provide us with feedback on what they have seen.

A summary of the SportsHub concept and each element of the proposed scheme are provided in the following boards. More detailed information on each aspect can be found on our website ([www.sportshubmk.com](http://www.sportshubmk.com))



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# Background

Grassroots sport in the UK is struggling to make ends meet. Each year, funding from local councils, Sports Governing Bodies and Central Government continues to get less and less.

Unless we find a new and better way to fund grassroots sport to protect it for future generations, sporting and leisure facilities will become less accessible and it is likely that our National sporting teams will begin to struggle to find the next generation of talent.

### WHAT IS A SPORTS HUB?

The SportsHub concept is a multi-sport facility where a number of sporting and leisure facilities are co-located on a site, and are part-funded by the commercial facilities and businesses operating elsewhere on the site. A sporting charity established as part of the SportsHub will receive 5% of the revenue/rent of every business each and every year to enable the charity to be on hand to help with funding the operational costs of those sports organisations on site (such as new equipment for example).

Its overarching purpose is to help keep existing sites in long term sports and recreation use and to enable these uses to be viable over the long term.

### WHY IS SUCH A CONCEPT NEEDED IN MK?

Since 2010, as a result of the UK government's financial austerity Milton Keynes Council has suffered budget cuts totalling £150million, and over the next four years is facing an additional £18million in cuts as it tries to manage increasing demand for social care and other vital services whilst its core funding continues to reduce. Thus, although MKC remains in good financial health, it has no choice but to scale back the number of services it provides. Local leisure services is one of the areas that has faced the biggest budget cuts.

Milton Keynes is a growing city, with a significant proportion of families and young people as well as a maturing population who wish to remain healthy and active into later life. To continue to be able to provide services to meet the wide range of sporting and leisure needs of this diverse and growing population, MKC needs to begin working with other public bodies within the sports sector as well as other third parties including private companies such as Evolve.



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# Site & concept

In the UK, 18-hole golf courses are falling in popularity due largely to the drastic change in how people are living their lives, with fewer people now having the time to spend a whole day completing an 18-hole round of golf. Although no statistics are available about how many 18-hole golf courses have officially closed over the last 5 years, we do know that within this period an average of five 18-hole clubs per year have disaffiliated from England Golf.

### WHY IS THE SPORTSHUB LOCATED AT WINDMILL HILL GOLF COURSE?

The 18-hole Golf Course at Windmill Hill is owned by Milton Keynes Council, and is currently managed via a contract between 1Life Leisure and the Council. Despite the closure of the 18-hole golf course at Wavendon at the end of 2018, there are currently less than 300 members at Windmill Hill. This number is far below the average of 1,000 members needed to keep such a facility financially viable and sustainable.

As a consequence, the Council need to explore innovative ways of keeping Windmill Hill in use as a golf course. Otherwise, there is a real chance that over the next few years the facility will be unable to stay in business and will be at risk of closure and wholesale redevelopment.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE CURRENT USES ON SITE?

At present, the Golf Course facility comprises an 18-hole course with covered floodlit driving range, practice greens and chipping areas. A clubhouse and health and fitness studio is also located on the site.

Golf will continue to be provided on site as part of the SportsHub proposal, but in a different format from the current 18-hole arrangement. Associated facilities including a new clubhouse, driving range and wellness centre are also to be provided.

The following boards set out the SportsHub proposal in more detail and explain how it has evolved since last summer in response to local consultation.



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# Evolution of the SportsHub proposal

As a concept, the SportsHub idea is one that has been in place for some time. However, each location has specific characteristics and recreational needs and aspirations which influence and shape its components.

The original concept for SportsHub MK was shared with residents of West Bletchley and the local Parish Councils in July 2019 at a public exhibition held close to the site.



INITIAL CONCEPT (JULY 2019)

In the feedback we received after the exhibition, many local people thought that the concept of a SportsHub charity to support grass root sports in a new and better way was a good idea.

However, there were a number of concerns raised by those that live immediately adjacent to and around the golf course, and by those who are members and/or regular users of the current golf club. The main concerns expressed related to:

- the loss of the 18-hole golf facility at Windmill Hill;
- increased traffic on local roads and pressure on car parking;
- the need for more housing;
- loss of residents' views;
- loss of trees and public access to the site; and
- noise from outdoor sports.

Following initial feedback, the proposals were revised over the summer of 2019 to reduce the impact of development on the residents of Wentworth Way, reduce the land area for residential development, replace football pitches with a 4,000 seater sports arena, and concentrate the SportsHub buildings in the south west of the site. These revisions were presented to the Parish Councils in October 2019.



REVISED CONCEPT (SEPTEMBER 2019)

### CHANGES TO THE 2019 PROPOSAL

Since October 2019 we have continued to refine the SportsHub proposal taking into account local concerns and continued engagement with sports organisations and Council.

The current proposal shown on the following boards incorporates the following changes:

- relocation of all built elements of the SportsHub to a single location in the northern part of the site;
- removal of the 4,000 multi-sport arena and senior football pitch, and replacement with a cricket centre;
- replacement of the single Par 3 course with a Par 3 Course and a 9-hole Course;
- replacement of the petrol filling station and drive-through coffee outlet with a coffee outlet at the centre of a new local public square;
- reduction in the amount of residential development from c.154 to c.125 homes;
- replacement of the stand-alone business hub with potential for smaller scale commercial space to be provided as part of the active frontages of buildings around the public square;
- removal of the mini-roundabout onto Buckingham Road (so no vehicular access from the site to Buckingham Road); and
- replacement of the proposed roundabout access onto the A421 with a single left-in left out junction in the same location.

This has enabled a greater proportion of the site to be left unbuilt, maintaining a golf offer which addresses the ability to play 18 holes, and still providing a multi-sport facility with sufficient commercial development to ensure it remains viable.

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# sportshub MILTON KEYNES

EMERSON VALLEY

V2 Tattenhoe Street

Tattenhoe Lane

TATTENHOE

H8 Standing Way

Buckingham Road

**Pavilion café & local square**  
A new local square with a coffee outlet at its centre, around which the SportsHub buildings are arranged.

**Steelbacks cricket centre**  
A regional high-performance cricket training facility, with both indoor and outdoor facilities.

**Racquet centre**  
A regional hub for racquet sports, including both indoor and outdoor courts with coaching available.

**Hotel**  
A mix of 3\* and 4\* accommodation with hotel facilities with extensive views over the golf courses and lakes.

**Trim trail**  
Extensive footpath network in and around the site, including exercise stations, a picnic area and new signage.

**Swim school centre**  
A public swimming pool with teaching/coaching for those learning to swim.

**Gymnastics centre**  
A gymnastics centre potentially operated by MK Springers to replace their existing facility.

**Planned new homes**  
Up to 125 new homes, with a mix of houses and flats and a range of house sizes to meet local housing need, with 31% affordable homes.

**Soft play centre**  
A soft play centre to serve the western part of MK, where younger children can be active.

**Golf centre**  
A 60 bay driving range including ball tracer technology and teaching bays, a short game practice area and putting green.

**Wellness centre**  
Relocation of the existing health and fitness studio, focused on encouraging people into sport after illness, injury or inactivity.

**Golf courses**  
Provision of two golf courses—a Par 3 and a 9-Hole Course—membership and 'pay and play' both available.

- Other elements**
- Outdoor tennis courts
  - Decked parking
  - Hotel gardens
  - Driving range
  - Surface parking
  - Potential for parking spaces related to school
  - Left-in, left-out junction access onto A421 Standing Way
  - Retained and enhanced planting where required
  - New water features/ponds as part of golf courses
  - Emergency access only on to Tattenhoe Lane
  - Golf maintenance building



Google Earth

CONSENTED DEVELOPMENT (EMPLOYMENT)

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT (SALDEN CHASE)



GOLF COURSE YARDAGES					
9-hole course			Par 3 course		
Hole	Yards	Par	Hole	Yards	Par
1	326	4	1	195	3
2	354	4	2	112	3
3	159	3	3	136	3
4	485	5	4	117	3
5	115	3	5	142	3
6	394	4	6	111	3
7	297	4	7	129	3
8	563	5	8	148	3
9	180	3	9	109	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,873</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Out</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>27</b>
			<b>In</b>	<b>1,867</b>	<b>27</b>
			<b>Total</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>54</b>

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As part of the early planning for the SportsHub, Evolve have researched the availability and accessibility of different sports across Milton Keynes.

This ensures that the facilities to be provided meet current needs but will also meet identified sporting demands to serve a growing population in the MK area and reflects the priority to be given to innovative ways of increasing sports participation as part of MK's status as a European City of Sport for 2020.

Each of the sports uses included in SportsHub MK has been identified in consultation with key stakeholders, both at a National and local level, as well as MK Council Leisure Services. To date, organisations involved with SportsHub MK include the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLI), Northamptonshire Steelbacks, and MK Springers Gymnastic Club.



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**GOLF**  
At SportsHub MK we are looking to create a golf facility to meet the needs of every type of golfer.

Following consultation responses received last year regarding the loss of an 18-hole golf facility, rather than the one 9-hole course previously proposed, we have redesigned the site to incorporate a Par 3 Course and a 9-hole Course which consists of 3 par 3s, 4 par 4s and 2 par 5 holes. This arrangement will challenge all golfers from beginners learning the game to seasoned golfers who prefer a longer more challenging shot.

Adjacent to the course is the golf centre, comprising a 60 bay state of the art driving range, with 30 bays dedicated to the latest ball tracer technology and 30 additional bays for beginners', intermediate and professional lessons, together with a short game practice area and putting green.

We intend that SportsHub MK will become a National Centre for golf excellence with the finest instructors enhancing the reputation of a fully inclusive learning facility. The golf facility will be available to use for anyone, with memberships available along with pay and play options for both golf courses and driving range.

**RACQUET CENTRE AND OUTDOOR TENNIS COURTS**

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), the national governing body of tennis in Great Britain, and Bucks Tennis, the county association, as key supporters of MK's European City of Sport 2020 status, are looking to create a regional tennis hub in Milton Keynes, and have specifically offered their support to SportsHub MK, including helping to fund the Racquet Centre, the first of its kind in this region.

The racquet centre will include six indoor tennis courts as well as facilities for badminton, squash, and padel tennis, a fitness suite and food and beverage amenities, plus six floodlit outdoor tennis courts and additional mini tennis courts. Facilities and coaching within the racquet centre will meet the needs of play at every level of ability. Milton Keynes is especially attractive to the LTA and Bucks Tennis because of the shortage of open access community racquet facilities and MK's ambitious plans to become an international sporting city.

**STEELBACKS CRICKET CENTRE**

A local and regional need has been identified for a high-performance capable facility for grassroots and elite cricket development. The cricket centre comprises of indoor and outdoor facilities including four hybrid nets, four indoor lanes, a gym, treatment rooms, male and female changing facilities and a shop. The centre will become a cricket base, offering training benefits for officials, coaches and players with the potential for video analysis and scenario simulation using virtual reality technology.

Interest in operating this facility has been expressed by the Northamptonshire County Cricket Club.

If the SportsHub is approved, it will formally host eight sports, including tennis, badminton, squash, cricket, swimming, gymnastics, golf, and running, all in one location. There would also be opportunities for other local clubs to hire space for other sports and fitness activities, such as Zumba or yoga for example.

**GYMNASTICS CENTRE**

MK has a number of gymnastics facilities, with the main centres in Kingston, Blechley and Kin Farm. MK Springers, a local charity and highly successful gymnastics club, is currently based at Kin Farm but is in need of a new home in the very near future. Providing a new gymnastics centre in the western part of Milton Keynes for MK Springers would help maximise the catchment population for each of these centres.

**SWIM SCHOOL CENTRE**

Evolve's early research identified the need for a new swim school pool in this part of Milton Keynes. Demand is very high for this sort of teaching facility and swimming lessons in public pools are often oversubscribed. Having a teaching pool to serve the south west Milton Keynes catchment population will help to ensure as many people as possible can access a pool locally. SLI, a local charity who run a number of swimming pools in the region, have expressed interest in operating the swim school facility here.

**SOFT PLAY CENTRE**

A soft play centre is also proposed to complement the formal sports facilities within SportsHub MK. Getting children active from an early age is important for their development, and providing facilities for those with young families as part of the SportsHub will encourage 'linked trips', perhaps dropping older children at their sports club whilst their parents and younger siblings use the soft play facilities, for example.

**TRIM TRAIL, EXERCISE STATIONS AND PICNIC AREA**

There will also be better facilities for those wanting to use local open spaces for informal recreation. At present, there are three separate sections of public rights of way within and around the site. As part of the SportsHub, a more extensive and better connected network of footpaths will be created incorporating a 'trim trail' and 'exercise stations' within the site so that people can exercise as part of their running or walking routes.

There is also the potential, subject to consultation with other stakeholders, to create a 5km signposted running route through the site and surrounding area, starting and finishing at the SportsHub square. There are also opportunities to improve signage and wayfinding to improve connectivity with the wider Redway and leisure routes in the surrounding area so that people can get to and use the SportsHub facilities on foot or bike from the surrounding areas.

More detail on this aspect is provided on the board entitled 'Landscape, Open Space and Public Access'.

The SportsHub concept is based on the sports and leisure facilities being supported by the commercial facilities and businesses such as the hotel and driving range operating on the rest of the site.

Some additional enabling residential development is also required to ensure the SportsHub can remain commercially viable and sustain its sports and leisure uses over the long term.

**PAVILION CAFÉ & LOCAL SQUARE**

Within the core of the SportsHub area, the range of buildings which accommodate each sports use are positioned around a local square with a coffee outlet at its centre, which will provide somewhere for people to go before or after using the sports facilities, or to meet at the start or end of a walk, run or bike ride.

**WELLNESS CENTRE**

The current wellness centre at Windmill Hill (a health and fitness studio) will be relocated within the golf centre. Designed to encourage people back into sport—particularly those who are new to fitness or recovering from an illness or injury—this will allow people to maintain their fitness levels within a wider sports and leisure environment, encouraging them to see and try other sports.

**HOTEL**

A new hotel is proposed to the south of the core SportsHub buildings. Planned to provide a mix of 3' and 4' accommodation as well as hotel facilities (restaurant, meeting/conference rooms etc), the orientation of the hotel buildings and gardens will offer unrivalled views out over the lakes and golf course. The hotel can provide accommodation for participants and spectators coming to any sporting events at the SportsHub, but its facilities can also be hired and used by local people (for weddings, business meetings and the like).

**PLANNED NEW HOMES**

The sporting and leisure facilities planned as part of the SportsHub would not be deliverable without the proposed housing. The money raised from the sale of the housing will repay the investment made by Evolve in the construction of the sports facilities and the necessary infrastructure (roads, drainage etc) to serve the SportsHub.

At our public exhibition in July 2019, most who commented said that they would be more supportive of residential development if the mix and types of homes met the needs of the local community and would enable more local people to afford homes close to their existing community.

We have revised the mix of housing proposed to reduce the number of residential units from the approximately 154 apartments previously proposed to approximately 125 new homes, with a mix of houses and flats and a range of house sizes more representative of the local housing need.

In line with the Council's planning requirements, affordable housing will be provided as part of the residential element of the SportsHub proposal, split between affordable rent and low cost shared ownership. This will widen the opportunities for home ownership and support those households who wish to move out of affordable rent into home ownership.

We are still early on in the formal planning process, and the detailed layout and design for the housing has not yet been fixed. The precise number of overall homes and the tenure mix for the affordable homes will be confirmed as part of pre-application planning discussions.



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At the moment, although the current golf course is accessible to the local community, it does not benefit from 'formal public access'. Many local residents access the site on a daily basis for dog-walking, but this is only by way of informal arrangement.

Under the Sports Hub proposals, the open green space and associated facilities will become 'formally accessible' open space. A network of new footpaths around the site will link a picnic area and areas of new public open space created within the site, including a new public square and open space adjacent to the proposed housing. These footpaths – the alignments of which will be settled as part of the detailed landscape design of the golf course and wider site – will be designed to provide

routes which are overlooked and able to be well maintained.

In the design and layout of the building and golf courses, we have sought to avoid the unnecessary removal of trees. As we have a target of achieving 'no net loss of trees' on site, any tree that has to be removed (due to its age, condition or location) will be replaced and additional trees planted to enhance existing boundary landscaping.



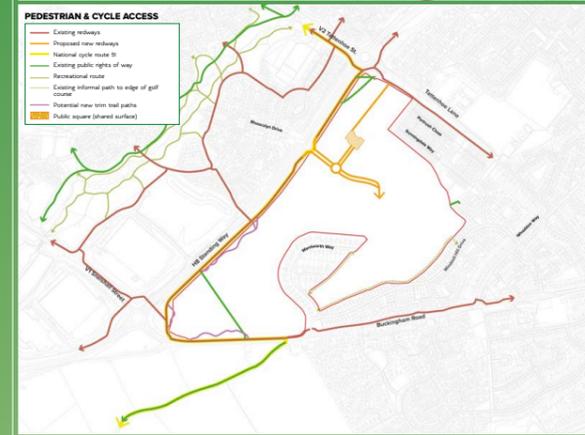
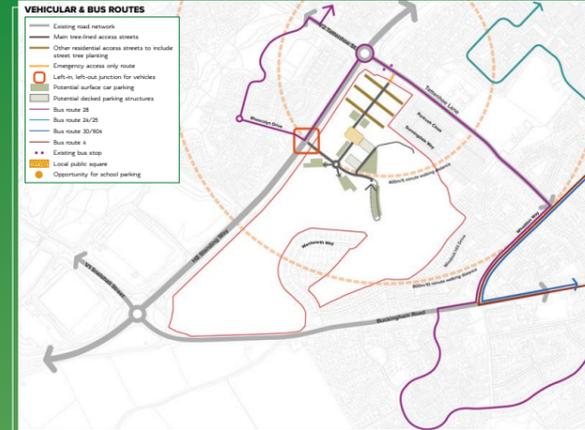
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Traffic, access & movement

The proposed development has been designed to incorporate and encourage sustainable walking/cycling access as a priority, particularly local trips. However, because the SportsHub will serve a wider catchment population than just the local area, people will also choose to drive or come by public transport.

We also know from previous consultations that the local community are concerned about increased traffic within the residential area of West Blechley, particularly on Buckingham Road and Tattenhoe Lane.

The transport and movement elements of our master plan have been designed to address these specific issues, ensuring that any potential impact on the local roads is minimised and sustainable travel is at the core of the proposals for accessing the SportsHub.



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Environment & design

The wider environment within which the SportsHub MK sits is as important as the buildings themselves. Our masterplan aspires to create a new destination in this part of Milton Keynes, which is welcoming and easy to navigate around for both local users and visitors.

The entrance to the core area of the SportsHub will be a well-designed point of arrival, drawing people in towards the local square and on towards the hotel and driving range.

lined streets and the potential for green walls, so that the outside environments are as welcoming as the inside.

Rather than being a series of standalone sports units, the SportsHub itself has been designed to provide activity on the ground floors, with tree-

Elsewhere within the site, the layout of the hotel has been designed to maximise its south-westerly aspect and enhance the existing environmental assets within the site.



Thank you for taking the time to visit this exhibition. If you like what you see, or have any comments or questions about what is proposed, please do fill in our questionnaire here, or go online at:

[www.sportshubmk.com](http://www.sportshubmk.com)

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