

For discussion on  
27 September 2021

## **Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**

### **Consultancy Study on Provision of Sports Facilities in Hong Kong**

#### **Purpose**

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has commissioned a Consultancy Study on Provision of Sports Facilities in Hong Kong. This paper briefs Members on the key findings and the proposed way forward.

#### **Background**

2. The provision of sports facilities is instrumental in meeting the Government's sports development policy objectives, namely to promote sports in the community, support elite sports and maintain Hong Kong as a centre for major international sports events. A Study on the demand and supply of sports facilities in Hong Kong was commissioned in 2017. The 2-phased Study provided a scientific basis on assessing the demand and supply as well as the provision standards of sports facilities in Hong Kong. The Study also provided recommendations on the planning of sports facilities with a view to better addressing the evolving needs for sports facilities arising from an ever-changing sports behaviour and pattern based on an adaptable approach.

#### **A Two-phased Study - Phase One**

3. Phase one was conducted between 2017 and 2019 through international case studies and telephone surveys. The Consultants formulated a facility hierarchy, identified the sports activities more popular to members of the public, devised new population-based provision standards for core sports facilities for community usage, introduced a new methodology to assess provision levels for sports facilities and proposed a mechanism to regularly identify changes in sports pattern and facility design standards. Details are set out as follows-

## (A) Facility Hierarchy

4. The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) classifies recreation activities as “core” and “non-core” activities where core activities were defined as “[r]ecreation facilities of greatest popularity to cater for the widest range of population”. The existing list, covering 16 core activities, has not been updated since the Study of Leisure Habits conducted in 1997. HKPSG sets out the major facilities and sports and leisure centres where core activities could be played. Out of the nine venues<sup>1</sup>, four are planned according to population-based provision standards at the community-level, one is planned at the district-level and three are planned at the territorial-level. While there seems to be three informal hierarchies for sports facilities, namely population-based, district-based and territorial-based, the HKPSG does not clearly define the intended purposes, their design requirements and provision standards, etc. of each hierarchy for sports facilities.

5. To better align the function of individual sports facilities with the Government’s sports development objectives as well as to avoid user conflict, the Consultants recommend a new facility hierarchy. It provides guidance on both qualitative and quantitative aspects on the planning and design of sports facilities, which include locational considerations, land and design requirements. Facilities will be categorised based on the following hierarchy-

- (a) **Territorial:** facilities serving territory-wide needs that can be used for hosting international events;
- (b) **Regional cum Competition / Training:** facilities primarily serving local competitions and/or elite athlete trainings while also serving the needs of larger local population catchments; and
- (c) **Community:** facilities that serve the daily sporting needs of a neighbourhood population.

## (B) Identification of Popular Activities

6. To have a better picture of the latest population preferences for sports activities and demand for various sports facilities, the Consultants conducted a telephone survey in 2018. Based on the findings, the top 20 activities that have a participation rate of 0.5% and above are considered “Popular Activities”. The list of Popular Activities is at **Enclosure I**.

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<sup>1</sup> The nine venues are (1) Sports Centre; (2) Leisure Centre; (3) Sports Ground / Sports Complex; (4) Swimming Pool Complex (standard); (5) Swimming Pool (leisure); (6) Indoor Stadium (multi-purpose); (7) Indoor Stadium (sports); (8) Outdoor Stadium; and (9) Water Sports Centre.

(C) Provision Standards for Core Sports Facilities for Popular Activities

7. HKPSG sets out the provision standards of the core activities. There is, however, an issue of “double-counting” sports facilities as it is often the case that more than one core activity could be catered for on a single surface. For example, if a multi-purpose court is counted towards the provision standard for basketball, there may be double-counting if the court is also counted towards the provision for volleyball.

8. To avoid double-counting, the Consultant recommends redefining the venue for carrying out Popular Activities in four facility types (**Enclosure II**)-

- (a) **Core sports facilities for Popular Activities<sup>2</sup>**: identified as purpose-built sports facilities that are predominantly multi-purpose in nature and cater for the majority of Popular Activities identified. These facilities will be referred to as “Core Sports Facilities”, each of which will be assigned a population-based provision standard after taking note that there is an international trend towards providing more multi-purpose facilities.
- (b) **Indoor activity rooms for Popular Activities**: indoor activity rooms that can serve different purposes (e.g. fitness training, martial arts, dancing, etc.). They will not be standalone facilities, but located in indoor sports venues. No population-based provision standard will be assigned.
- (c) **Active outdoor space**: demand for outdoor activities that do not require specific spatial dimensions (e.g. jogging, tai chi, rope skipping, children's play, etc.) will be addressed by outdoor exercise space in open space development. These areas shall be provided in line with the existing open space provision standards.
- (d) **Other sports and recreation facilities**: facilities for activities not deemed popular (i.e. participation rate below 0.5%) will not be included in the list of Core Sports Facilities. Demand for these activities could however be flexibly accommodated in the multi-purpose facilities at the aforementioned categories or individually planned on need basis taking into account factors such as the prevailing sports policy, public need and district sentiments.

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<sup>2</sup> (1) Swimming Pool; (2) Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Court; (3) Outdoor Standard Multi-Purpose Court; (4) Football / Rugby Pitch; (5) Futsal/Mini Soccer Pitch; (6) Tennis Court; and (7) Athletic Sports Grounds

9. The list of Core Sports Facilities mostly responds to community-level sporting needs. However, with a view to fully utilising precious land resources, Core Sport Facilities may be incorporated in different sports venues, and they play multiple roles, for example, to cater for training or competition of various scales in addition to community use. There are three types of sports venues in which the Core Sports Facilities may be found (“Sports Venues”)-

- (a) **Swimming pool complex:** facilities with multiple number of Swimming Pools, and ancillary facilities;
  - (b) **Indoor sports centre:** facilities with indoor standard multi-purpose courts, fitness rooms and multi-purpose activity rooms, and ancillary facilities; and
  - (c) **Stadium / athletic sports ground complex:** facilities providing a combination of football/rugby pitches, track and field, and ancillary facilities.
- (D) Methodology to Assess Demand and Supply of Sports Facilities and Fill in the Gaps Identified

#### Counting of Provision

10. The prevailing methodology adopted in the HKPSG counts facilities via its actual number (“*Actual Provision*”) to determine whether there is an over- or under-provision. This does not cater for factors such as opening hours and maintenance periods and may lead to problems like “double-counting”. For example, the same multi-purpose court may be counted towards the provision standard for basketball, volleyball and badminton. The Consultant recommends adopting a standardised measurement to assess the demand and supply of each facility type.

#### Supply of Sports Facilities

11. The recommended population-based standards for Core Sports Facilities will count, in a standardised manner, the *supply* of sports facilities through measuring “facility weekly user hours”, taking into account factors such as the capacity and opening hours per week of a specific facility type. This new unit of counting facilities is named “*Countable Provision*”. The supply will no longer only count the number of sports facilities available, but also the facility types, their respective capacity, opening hours with seasonal adjustments (if any), as well as maintenance closing periods (if any). For example, if a sports complex has one badminton court, instead of counting one court, the supply will record approximately 378 facility weekly user hours

(assuming there are 4 players every hour at 13.5 opening hours per day, 7 days a week). Similar calculation is conducted for all seven types of core sports facilities, except athletic sports ground which is mainly reserved for schools' athletics meets and NSA training, and has a fundamentally different utilisation pattern.

### Demand for Sports Facilities

12. Similarly, to determine the *demand* for sports facilities, information on the number of hours demanded by sports participants for each facility type is collected via the survey. The following has been taken into account when tapping the demand –

- (a) actual sports participation as reported in the survey; and
- (b) potential demand where the interviewees in the survey indicated their intention to participate more in sports as a forward looking component. Such potential demand unfulfilled by existing provision of facilities is named *suppressed demand*.

### Provision Gap and New Population-Based Provision Standards

13. With the supply and demand quantified and standardised by Countable Provision, the provision gaps can be derived. Population-based standards can be derived for each type of Core Sports Facility based on the population figures provided by the Census and Statistics Department (“C&SD”). The new population-based standards for the seven types of Core Sports Facilities will assist the Government to assess the adequacy of sports facilities.

14. Survey results reflect that a significant portion of Hong Kong residents choose to participate in sports activities provided by different facility providers including schools, private sports clubs, public housing and private residential developments. The eight broad categories of facility providers in Hong Kong are set out in **Enclosure III**. They can be grouped into two tiers-

- (a) **Tier 1:** includes facilities supplied by the Government and broadly accessible to the general public; and
- (b) **Tier 2:** includes facilities that have restricted access to specific user groups, for example paid members of private sports clubs, private residential estate residents, students or alumni of education institutions, etc.

15. Both Leisure and Cultural Service Department (LCSD) and non-LCSD facilities play a significant role in meeting community recreation and

sporting demand. The Consultants recommend the Government to focus on fulfilling the gaps identified for Tier 1 facilities in view of user behaviour and utilisation pattern. Based on the population projection by the C&SD for 2026, the new population-based provision standards and gap analysis for the Core Sports Facilities have been worked out (**Enclosure IV**). Three Core Sports Facilities will have a shortfall in Tier 1 supply -

- (a) Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts;
  - (b) Football/Rugby Pitches; and
  - (c) Athletic Sports Grounds.
- (E) Facility Design Standards and Locational Guidelines

### Facility Design Standards

16. The existing HKPSG does not contain full information on the source documents as regards design standards of facilities. Discrepancies on facility design dimensions are identified between the standards currently documented in the HKPSG and those in the most recent publications of the respective international federations and/or NSAs upon a cross-checking exercise by the Consultants. Furthermore, the rationale and origin of the land requirements and specifications (e.g. dimension and seating capacity) of Sports Venues have not been documented in the existing HKPSG.

17. To ensure sports facilities are planned and constructed as per the prevailing design standards of the respective international federations and/or NSAs, the Consultants recommend a review mechanism to be put in place by the Government to ensure facility design standards are up-to-date with international standards. A guide to sports facilities dimensions could be separately drafted and appended as a stand-alone document as reference. The recommended standard dimensions of Core Sports Facilities are at **Enclosure V**.

### Locational Guidelines

18. The existing HKPSG provides general locational guidelines for recreation facilities as summarised below-

- (a) Good quality sites;
- (b) Located close to major transport routes and interchanges;
- (c) Environmental issues should be considered (i.e. air and noise);
- (d) Traffic impact assessment for large facilities should be considered; and
- (e) Different impact assessments to establish the suitability of sites within coastal areas should be considered.

19. The Consultants recommend that every effort should be made for sports facilities to be as conveniently located as possible, most notably in proximity to an MTR station, public transport interchange or within walking distance from a place of residence. The location-based approach should be aspirational for existing urban areas and mandatory for developments in new development areas in order to provide sufficient flexibility within existing built-up urban areas. The proposed locational guidelines should respond to the three facility hierarchies –

- (a) **Territorial** – conveniently located near an MTR station; serve the entire Hong Kong population for attending sports events;
- (b) **Regional cum Competition / Training** – conveniently located near an MTR station; serve a large population catchment for attending sports events and regular exercise; and
- (c) **Community** – conveniently located (public transit ride or walking distance) from place of residence; serve a local/neighbourhood catchment for regular exercise.

20. A new guideline will be included to suggest that priority be given to available sites near public housing estates and clusters of old private housing areas without clubhouse facilities when planning for new public sports facilities. In view of the heavy patronage of sports facilities at private residential developments and that "vicinity to home" was reported by survey participants the predominant factor affecting the choice of venue for sports participation, the Consultants consider it safe to assume residents with access to private clubhouse facilities will usually and continue to participate in sports activities thereat. It is therefore logical to prioritise planning of public sports facilities in locations that are closer to the population without access to private sports facilities.

21. In addition, a flexible co-location approach should be encouraged to align with the Government policy on "single site, multiple use". Two strategies are recommended to encourage co-location:

- (a) **Clustered sites** – allocate multiple land parcels adjacent to each other to create a "sports hub" so different sports venues/facilities can be provided in close proximity to each other; and
- (b) **Single site, multiple use** – co-locate sports and recreation facilities in a composite development or within public joint user buildings that also contain such as welfare or community facilities.

## **The Study - Phase Two**

22. While phase one focused on community sports facilities, phase two, which was conducted from 2020 to 2021, focused on the provision of territorial and regional sports facilities. It provided both quantitative and qualitative analyses on the demand and supply of regional and territorial sports facilities.

23. The Consultants researched on the four selected jurisdictions<sup>3</sup> on their methodology to analyse the demand and supply of territorial and regional sports facilities and their approach and consideration to provision of such facilities. It has been revealed that these jurisdictions adopt a mixed approach in guiding their provision of sports facilities and take into account locational and spatial considerations to facilitate strategic planning. For example, Guangzhou, Sydney and Vancouver keep an inventory of sports facilities, where Singapore, Sydney and Vancouver conduct survey with sports groups to ascertain their demand for facilities. When it comes to the planning of the larger scale sports facilities for hosting major international competitions, it is predominantly policy led on a case-by-case basis aided with a strategic master plan.

24. For the case of Hong Kong, the Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP) under construction will be the territorial facility to contribute to the sports development of Hong Kong. Besides providing a range of facilities for community use, KTSP will host major international competitions and meet the training and competition needs of athletes.

25. To better understand the need of “national sports associations” (“NSAs”) on the supply of regional sports facilities for elite training and competition purposes, the Consultants made reference to the case of Sydney and surveyed over 100 NSAs on their current sports facility demand and usage as well as their forecast in five and ten years. In analysing the data, the Consultants considered relevant factors, such as the current pattern of facility usage and characteristics of individual sport, and worked out the number of additional Core Sports Facilities required to be built by the Government in five and ten years to cater for elite training and competition needs so identified. Translating such demand in terms of Countable Provision, the gap analysis for the Core Sports Facilities serving territorial, regional and community needs have been worked out at **Enclosure VI**.

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<sup>3</sup> They are Guangzhou, Singapore, Sydney and Vancouver.



## **Way Forward**

26. With a revamp in the methodology in assessing the demand and supply and hence provision of sports facilities, the Consultants will engage the various stakeholders. Taking into account of their comments, revision to the HKPSG will then be prepared as necessary.

## **Advice Sought**

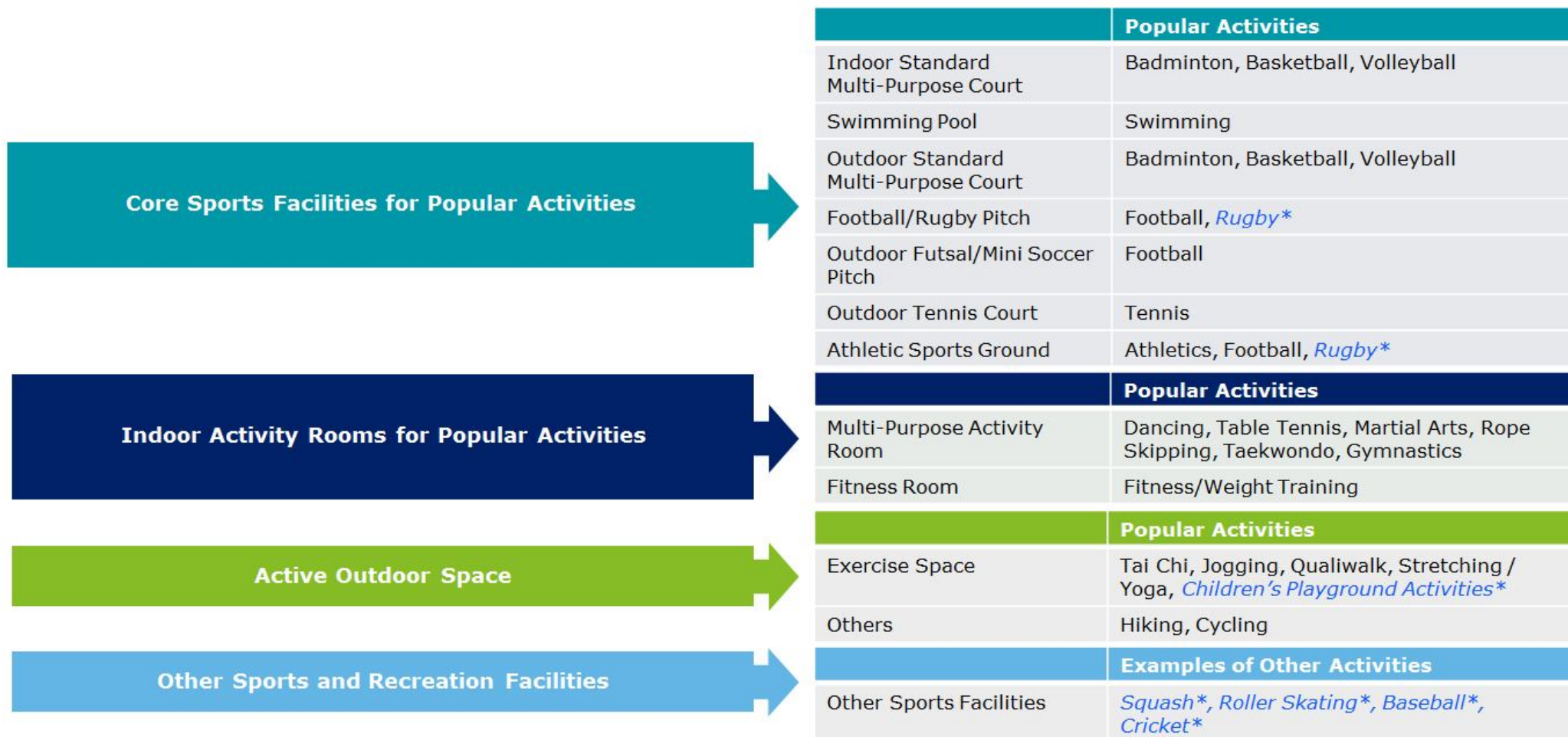
27. Members are invited to note the findings of the Study.

**Home Affairs Bureau**  
**September 2021**

**The List of Popular Activities**

<b>Sequence</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Participation (%)</b>
1	Jogging	18.94%
2	Qualiwalk	12.50%
3	Swimming	11.60%
4	Badminton	8.07%
5	Stretching / Yoga	7.86%
6	Hiking	6.19%
7	Fitness / Weight Training	5.99%
8	Basketball	5.37%
9	Cycling	3.80%
10	Dance	3.49%
11	Football	2.72%
12	Tai Chi	2.40%
13	Table Tennis	2.35%
14	Volleyball	1.17%
15	Martial Arts	0.83%
16	Rope Skipping	0.82%
17	Athletics	0.81%
18	Tennis	0.74%
19	Gymnastics	0.69%
20	Taekwondo	0.54%

**Grouping of Popular Activities into Facility Type Categories**



*\*existing Core Activities that are no longer ranked in Top 20 Most Popular Activities*

Note: each facility category listed above may also accommodate sporting activities beyond the top 20 Popular Activities

**Category of Sports Facility Providers**

**1. Sports Facilities Managed by Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)**

**(Category: Open to the public)**

Sports facilities managed by LCSD have no membership requirements. Facilities hire charges depend on the types of facilities being booked or used but are generally at low cost. Some facilities such as hard-surface pitches are provided free of charge. Public accessibility to such facilities is generally deemed to be high and booking arrangements are easy and transparent.

**2. Sports Facilities at Public Housing Developments (PHD)**

**(Category: Open to the public)**

Sports facilities located at PHDs share similar features to those managed by LCSD apart from booking arrangements which may be somewhat less transparent for the general public not living in PHDs. These PHDs include public housing developments under Housing Authority, as well as certain developments under Housing Society, including: 1) rental estate; 2) rural public housing; 3) estates under Flat-For-Sale Scheme; 4) estates under Sandwich Class Housing Scheme; and 5) estates under Subsidised Sale Flats Project. Nonetheless, there are no membership requirements and access to such facilities is considered affordable.

**3. Sports Facilities Operated by “national sports associations” (NSAs)**

**(Category: Restricted access)**

Some of the sports facilities operated by NSAs are located on Short Term Tenancy (STT) sites and other sites (e.g. restored landfills). The general public can use these facilities by direct booking, enrolling in relevant courses or by becoming a member at an affordable cost. Such facilities are considered highly accessible to the general public as the barrier to use facilities is low. As at September 2021, there are altogether 19 sites STTs or other sites operated by NSAs in Hong Kong.

**4. Sports Facilities Operated by Community Organisations on Private Recreational Leases (PRLs)**  
**(Category: Restricted access)**

Sports facilities operated by community organisations on PRLs generally have affordable membership fees and an open membership policy. At present there are 38 sites granted to non-profit making organisations such as social and welfare organisations and NSAs.

**5. Private Sports Clubs on Private Recreational Leases (PRLs)**  
**(Category: Restricted access)**

Unlike sports facilities operated by community organisations on PRLs, those operated by private sports clubs are subject to relatively expensive membership fees which make these sports facilities more exclusive in nature. Although private sports clubs are required to dedicate a minimum number of facility hours to eligible outside bodies, they are still deemed relatively inaccessible due to high membership costs.

**6. Primary and Secondary Schools**  
**(Category: Restricted access)**

Sports facilities located in primary and secondary schools are typically available for exclusive use by students, staff and alumni for free or at a low cost. Depending on the management of each school, some may rent out facilities to outside bodies on a case-by-case basis.

Under the “Opening up School Facilities for Promotion of Sports Development Scheme” jointly launched by the Education Bureau (EDB) and Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) in 2017/18 school year, schools (including Government, aided and caput schools and schools under Direct Subsidy Scheme) are encouraged to open up their facilities for use by NSAs and their affiliated club members, district sports associations (DSAs), sports organisations subvented by LCSD and other eligible non-profit organisations, to hold sports programmes during non-school hours. Participating schools may levy hire charges according to the prevailing guidelines issued by the EDB and will receive an additional subsidy from EDB and HAB to cover the relevant expenses incurred in opening up the school facilities. EDB and HAB will respectively call for applications from schools and sports organisations every year around mid-July.

## **7. Tertiary Education Institutions** **(Category: Restricted access)**

Sports facilities located in tertiary education institutions are exclusive to students, staff and alumni only either for free or at a low cost. Some institutions rent out their facilities to outside bodies on a case-by-case basis. There is very limited access to the general public unless an individual has ties to students, staff or alumni.

## **8. Private Residential Development** **(Category: Restricted access)**

Private residential developments account for the largest percentage of restricted access facilities. They are available exclusively to residents for free or at a low cost and there is generally no access to the general public unless they are guests of residents. Examples of such facilities include club houses with swimming pools and fitness rooms in larger housing estates.

## Enclosure IV

### Gap Analysis and Tier 1 Provision Standard (2026)

	<b>Tier 1 Provision Standard</b>	<b>Tier 1 Provision (2026)</b>	<b>Tier 1 Required Provision (2026)</b>	<b>Tier 1 Calculated Gap</b>
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1 CP per 293 900 (incl. 1 heated CP per 658 100)**	59 (incl. 23 heated)	27 (incl. 12 heated)	32 (incl. 11 heated)
<b>Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Court</b>	1 CP per 34 900	174	224	(49)
<b>Outdoor Standard Multi-Purpose Court</b>	1 CP per 30 800	1 130	253	877
<b>Football / Rugby Pitch</b>	1 CP per 172 200	42	45	(3)
<b>Futsal/Mini Soccer Pitch</b>	1 CP per 22 100	408	353	55
<b>Tennis Court</b>	1 CP per 41 500	311	188	123
<b>Athletic Sports Grounds*</b>	1 Athletic Sports Ground per 250 000	27	31	(4)

*\*Recommended methodology is not applied to Athletic Sports Ground*

*\*\* I.e. there should be a provision of 2.24 swimming pool in which 1 will be a heated swimming pool*

## Enclosure V

### Recommended Standard Dimensions of Core Sports Facilities

Core Sports Facility		Court Size (m)	Margins			
			Side to Wall (m)	Base to Wall (m)	Court to Court (m)	Clear Height (m)
<b>Swimming Pools</b>						
Swimming Pool (FINA)	Main Pool	50m x 25m with 10 swimming lanes (3.5m circulation area around and 0.5m peripheral overflow channel around)				
	Secondary Pool	50m x 20-25m with 8-10 swimming lanes (3.5m circulation area around and 0.5m peripheral overflow channel around)				
	Training / Teaching / Multi-purpose Pool	25m x 10m-25m with 4-10 swim lanes (3.5m circulation area around and 0.5m peripheral overflow channel around)				
	Leisure Pool / Fun Pool / Diving Pool	As appropriate				
<b>Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts</b>						
Badminton (BWF)	Major Events	13.4 x 6.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	12.0
	Other Events	13.4 x 6.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	9.0 (12.0 preferred)
Basketball (FIBA)	Standard	28 x 15	2.0	2.0	-	7.0
	3 x 3 format	15 x 11	1.0	1.0		
Volleyball (FIVB)	Official Event	18 x 9	5.0	6.5	-	12.5
	National (HKPSG)		5.0	8.0	5.0	9.0
	Recreation		3.0	3.0	3.0	7.0
<b>Outdoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts</b>						
Badminton (BWF)	Same as provided under Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts (except Clear Heights)					
Basketball (FIBA)	Same as provided under Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts (except Clear Heights)					
Volleyball (FIVB)	Same as provided under Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Courts (except Clear Heights)					
<b>Football / Rugby Pitch</b>						
Football (FIFA)						
International	11-a-Side (max)	110 x 75	3.0	3.0	-	-
	11-a-Side (min)	100 x 64				
Non-International*	11-a-Side (max)	120 x 90	3.0	3.0	-	-
	11-a-Side (min)	90 x 45				
Football (HAB)						
International matches and premier leagues	11-a-Side (max)	105 x 68	3.0	3.0	-	-
	11-a-Side (min)	100 x 64				
Community uses including lower tier and youth leagues	11-a-Side (max)	105 x 64	3.0	3.0	-	-
	11-a-Side (min)	95 x 60				
Rugby (World Rugby)	National	100 x 70**	5.0	5.0	-	-
	7-a-Side (Int'l)	94 x 68**				



Core Sports Facility		Court Size (m)	Margins			
			Side to Wall (m)	Base to Wall (m)	Court to Court (m)	Clear Height (m)
<b>Futsal/Mini Soccer Pitch</b>						
Futsal (FIFA)	International (max)	42 x 25	-	-	-	4.0
	International (min)	38 x 20				
	Non-Int'l (max)	42 x 25				
	Non-Int'l (min)	25 x 16				
Futsal (HKFA / HAB)	Local Matches	40 x 20 (most ideal)	3.0 (with padding) / 5.0 (most ideal)	3.0 (with padding) / 5.0 (most ideal)	-	4.0
<b>Outdoor Tennis Court</b>						
Tennis (ITF)						
Singles	Recreation (min)	23.77 x 8.23	3.05	5.49	-	10.67
Doubles	Recreation (min)	23.77 x 10.27			3.66	
	International (min)		6.40	9.0 / 12.0		
	Int'l (preferred)		4.57	8.20	0	12.19
<b>Athletic Sports Ground (IAAF)</b>						
Multi-Purpose Grass Pitch		120.0 x 100.0	-	-	-	-

\* length must be longer than width

\*\* excluding 10m (National) / 6m (International 7-a-Side) in-goal area

## Enclosure VI

### Gap Analysis for Territorial, Regional and Community Sports Facilities

	<b>Territorial (2026)</b>	<b>Regional cum Competition / Training (2026)</b>	<b>Community (2026)</b>
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	0 Kai Tak Sports Park	(1)	32 (incl. 11 heated)
<b>Indoor Standard Multi-Purpose Court</b>		(4)	(49)
<b>Outdoor Standard Multi- Purpose Court</b>		(1)	877
<b>Football / Rugby Pitch</b>		(1)	(3)
<b>Futsal/Mini Soccer Pitch</b>		0	55
<b>Tennis Court</b>		(3)	123
<b>Athletic Sports Grounds</b>		0	(4)