



Cabinet 20 October 2010

Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project (Nov10/02)

1. Summary and Reasons for Recommendations

- 1.1 In 2008, the Borough Council set aside capital funding of up to £1m to further its aspiration to set up a community football project in Bury St Edmunds, including the relocation of Bury Town Football Club (FC) from Ram Meadow to a site set aside for recreational use at Moreton Hall.
- 1.2 This paper provides a means to deliver a Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project ('the Project') in partnership with Suffolk Football Association and Bury Town FC and a range of external funding contributors. It also provides the opportunity for the Council to improve local community facilities to the east of Moreton Hall.
- 1.3 There is a limited timeframe in which to bid to the Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund and this paper provides an update on the stages required to complete the Project. Planning permission is also still required for the scheme, which is being developed through consultation with the local community.
- 1.4 If successful, the paper also proposes that the Project would be led by Suffolk Football Association, thus providing the Borough Council and Bury Town FC with a national sport governing body as a project partner.
- 1.5 Suffolk County Football Association would establish a Development Centre as part of the community project.
- 1.6 The land on which the Project would be developed is owned by the Borough Council and would be leased to and managed by Suffolk County Football Association. Suffolk County Football Association would sub-let part of the site to Bury Town FC for their new football ground.
- 1.7 There would be no requirement for revenue funding to be contributed by the Borough Council for the Project.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:-
 - (1) the Borough Council confirms its existing commitment to the Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project, subject to the receipt of planning permission and external match-funding;
 - (2) external funding bids be submitted to the Football Foundation, Football Stadia Improvement Fund and other external funders for the Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project;

- (3) subject to the approval of their Board of Directors, Suffolk County Football Association be approved to lead the Project, in partnership with the Borough Council and Bury Town Football Club;
- (4) subject to successful funding bids, planning permission, funding and tenders being in place, that the project land be leased to Suffolk County Football Association for the purpose of developing and operating the Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project, with a sub-lease to Bury Town Football Club for their new football ground; and
- (5) that a further report be submitted to Cabinet for final authorisation, following the planning process, funding bid approval and, if successful, building tenders in 2011.

3. Corporate Objectives

3.1 Together with supporting several of the Cabinet's Commitments, the Community Strategies for Suffolk and West Suffolk and the Council's long-term vision (Vision 2025), the recommendations meets all four of the Council's Corporate Priorities as contained within the Corporate Plan:-

- (a) 'To raise standards and corporate efficiency';
- (b) 'To improve the safety and well being of the community';
- (c) 'To secure a sustainable and attractive environment'; and
- (d) 'To create a prosperous local economy'.

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4. Key Issues

Background

- 4.1 The Borough of St Edmundsbury has been identified in the Suffolk County Football Association Facilities Strategy as a potential location for a full size artificial football surface.
- 4.2 The Borough Council owns an 11 acre site at Moreton Hall allocated for recreational use. The availability of the land is the result of negotiations with the landowner starting in the early 1990s, and was part of the settlement for the granting of access rights to a much earlier phase of development of Moreton Hall which centred around Suffolk Business Park and subsequently residential land from Bedingfeld Way. Therefore, the delivery of this scheme pre-dates the current Local Development Framework process and is not linked to any Section 106 agreement with a developer.
- 4.3 On 3 December 2008 Cabinet considered Report Z386 and agreed to include a sum of up to £1m in the capital programme as the Council's contribution to any potential scheme; on the basis of the Council paying 50% of the cost or a maximum of £1m, whichever was the smaller. This decision was endorsed by full Council on 9 December 2008 (minute 64 (B)(5) refers).

Bury Town Football Club

- 4.4 The Bury Town Football Club ground is located at Ram Meadow adjacent to the public car park. The ground at Ram Meadow requires significant capital improvement to achieve league ground standards compliance. The cost of ground improvements to modern standards would be in the order of £750,000. The site has only one grass pitch which limits the number of games that can be played, training on the site and the potential for revenue generation. There is no room for expansion to provide the further pitches that the demand for football in the town requires. For example, for the past five years officers have been requested to provide additional junior pitches to meet the demands of new teams in Moreton Hall. The lack of any possible potential football participation improvements for the Ram Meadow ground precludes any external funding investment by the Football Foundation or Football Stadia Improvement Fund.
- 4.5 In addition, as landlord of the site, investing in ground improvements at Ram Meadow may preclude other options for the site to assist the future development of the town. In this context, the Borough Council is awaiting the outcome of the proposal to identify land in this vicinity as a development site in the Local Development Framework process.

Relocation and a community football facility

- 4.6 Relocating Bury Town Football Club to a site at the East of Moreton Hall, if coupled with the provision of a full size all weather football surface and additional grass pitches, would enable the development of a community football facility. This new community football club would develop senior and junior teams for both sexes, teams for players with disabilities and 'mini-soccer' through effective engagement with the local football clubs and community; thus increasing the provision of recreational facilities for the Moreton Hall area. The provision of a community facility of this kind in Bury St Edmunds has been identified as a priority by the Football Association and also as a site for funding support by the Football Foundation.
- 4.7 Following approval of capital funding for the Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project, as detailed in paragraph 4.2.8 of Report Z386 presented to Cabinet in December

2008, the Corporate Director for Community was authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Sport, to enter into an agreement with Bury Town Football Club to develop the Project on a grant funded basis, subject to:-

- (i) final approval of the Scheme being sought from the Cabinet;
- (ii) the granting of planning permission for the Scheme; and
- (iii) third party matched funding being secured.

A new partner – the revised proposal

- 4.8 In Report Z386 it was originally proposed that the new facility would be developed by and leased to Bury Town Football Club. However throughout the project planning process between the Borough Council, Bury Town Football Club, the Football Association and Suffolk County Football Association the latter has increased its participation in the Project and wishes to significantly increase its operational role.
- 4.9 The Borough Council has worked closely in partnership for the past few years with Suffolk County Football Association, the Football Association and the Football Foundation as tangibly demonstrated by the delivery of the new Haverhill Community Football Project which opened on 7 August this year.
- 4.10 Suffolk County Football Association (FA) wishes to include a classroom, an additional changing room and the creation of a Development Centre as part of the Bury Project. This is in addition to the full size artificial surface, Bury Town Football Club ground, club house facility, senior, junior and mini soccer grass pitches and the changing rooms and facilities to support them. The Suffolk FA Development Centre will primarily operate courses for players, coaches and officials.
- 4.11 On 18 August 2010, as part of the preparation process for the Planning Application and funding bids to the Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund, Suffolk County Football Association's Directors committed £15,000 towards the initial costs of the Project. Bury Town FC and the Council had also contributed £15,000 each to this process. Suffolk County FA's capital funding contribution to the project will be considered at their Board meeting on 14 October 2010 and the outcome will be reported to Cabinet at this meeting.

Facility Design

- 4.12 The proposed facility in the plan shown in Appendix 1 is based on:
- (a) creation of a community football facility;
 - (b) the inclusion of a Football Association Strategy-identified full size artificial grass (ATG) surface for football;
 - (c) relocation of Bury Town Football Club with facilities provided to their league level;
 - (d) the existing road network; and
 - (e) the result of consultation with the Football Association, Football Foundation, Suffolk County Football Association, Bury Town Football Club, the Council's Portfolio Holder, Ward Members, local football clubs and local residents.

Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF)

- 4.13 St Edmundsbury has been identified in the Football Association Facilities Strategy and Suffolk County Football Association Facilities Strategy as a priority for Football Foundation and FSIF funding. These bodies were the principal external funders for the Haverhill Community Football Project.

- 4.14 There is a limited window of opportunity to bid for the funding, which is in the order of £550,000, and Council officers have been advised by the Football Association's Regional Facilities Manager that the funding bid to the Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund should be submitted in December 2010. Officers have also been advised that the Bury project is one of very few that still are still identified for funding in 2010/2011 and 2011/2012.
- 4.15 The number of Football Foundation funded projects has been reduced. Officers have been advised by the Football Association's Regional Facilities Manager that, if the Project is delayed into the following year (2012/2013), the funding could be lost and without the Foundation/FSIF contribution the Bury St Edmunds Community Football Project cannot proceed.
- 4.16 There are a range of additional external funding bids being submitted to contribute to the capital funding plan, including Suffolk Environmental Trust and the West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership. Bury Town FC will also be required to make its own substantial contribution.

Timescales

- 4.17 There is a tight timescale based on the window of opportunity to bid for funding from the Football Foundation. The timetable is therefore:

2010

Consult Portfolio Holder	– 2 September
Consult Ward Councillor	– 8 & 9 September
Clubs consultation	– 8 September
Planning pre-application meeting	– 10 September
Public Consultation	– 27 & 30 September
Finalisation of Detailed Plans	– end October
Planning Permission Submission	– end October
Funding bid submission	– end November

2011

Planning Decision	– January
Football Foundation Decision	– January

Cost

- 4.18 The potential total cost of this facility is in the order of £2 million, dependant on the final Project design, which will need to reflect the outcome of community consultation. The Football Foundation has indicated that funding is available on a matched basis towards eligible costs for the community football club element of the Project. The maximum cost to the Borough Council if the scheme progresses is £1 million subject to match funding. If the cost is greater than £2 million the Borough Council's maximum outlay remains at £1 million.

Capital grant

- 4.19 In December 2008 it was proposed that the Borough Council enter into an agreement with Bury Town Football Club to develop the original scheme on a grant funded basis. However Bury Town Football Club have now requested that Suffolk County Football Association take the lead in developing the Project. Therefore, subject to final approval of the Project, planning approval and third party funding being secured, it is proposed that the Borough Council's capital be granted to Suffolk County Football Association

instead. This will not be required until the Project is approved for funding by the Football Foundation and FSIF and tenders have been accepted for the construction of the project. It is proposed that a further report be presented to Cabinet at that stage, potentially mid 2011.

Next steps

4.20 Any confirmation of grant funding would be subject to satisfactory resolution of a range of crucial matters shown below:-

(a) **Community consultation**

The final scheme will reflect the outcomes of the current community consultation (see appendix 2)

(b) **Funding bid to the Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund**

This comprises a Business Plan and Football Development Plan.

(c) **Business Plan**

This is to be approved by the Football Foundation Panel as part of the grant selection criteria.

(d) **Football Development Plan**

This is the programme for increased participation and development that is vital to the project. This is to be approved by the Football Foundation Panel as the major criteria of the grant selection.

(e) **Planning Permission**

The funding from the Football Foundation will not be granted without Planning Permission. The funding bid can be submitted pending the approval.

(f) **External funding**

This needs to be confirmed prior to the Football Foundation approval.

(All of the above were the steps the Borough Council had to go through to complete the Haverhill Community Football Project and the Bury Community Football Project is the same process.)

(g) **Suffolk County Football Association Board of Directors Approval**

As the operational managers of the Project, and as leaseholders of the site and funding contributors, the Project also has to be approved by the Suffolk County Football Association Board of Directors.

After grant approval

4.21 Once the Football Foundation and FSIF grants and additional external funding are in place detailed plans can be funded from the grants, and the tender process for the construction of the project can commence. It is proposed to bring a report to Cabinet at that stage which is due to be mid 2011 prior to the commencement of works on site.

5. Other Options considered

Alternative site

- 5.1 The land at Moreton Hall is available for this use as soon as permissions are granted. Although other sites have been examined, the timescale for Football Foundation funding, which needs to be bid for by December 2010, precludes the current consideration of any alternative location which could take years to bring forward into use.

Schools Organisation Review

- 5.2 The Suffolk County Council Schools Organisation Review (SOR) team had asked the Borough Council if it could consider placing the football project and in particular the artificial football surface within a new school planned for Moreton Hall. Borough Council Officers advised them in December 2009 that there was a limited funding bid submission period and that waiting for school proposals, which could be subject to delay, would jeopardise this external funding. However Officers also advised the SOR team that the project's all weather facility would be available for school daytime use.
- 5.3 All project partners (Suffolk Football Association, Bury Town Football Club, the Football Association, the Football Foundation and the Football Stadia Improvement Fund) were advised of these options and agreed with Borough Council officers that the Project should proceed to consultation at the proposed site East of Moreton Hall.

Asset Management Plan (AMP) options

- 5.4 The AMP process for assessing the property portfolio includes options appraisal. The agreed options are retain the land, consider the feasibility of alternative uses or with partners, to better meet the Borough Council's property objectives, and sell and reallocate the capital to better achieve corporate objectives and priorities.
- 5.5 This project involves a number of partners working together to achieve priority corporate objectives and therefore entering into a lease arrangement at the first stages is the most appropriate option to select.

6. Community impact *(including Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and diversity issues)*

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 This Project enables the development of a community football facility. This new community football club would develop senior and junior teams for both sexes, mini-soccer and football for players with a disability through the participation and engagement with the local football community. Officers have also regularly been requested to provide additional sporting facilities in Moreton Hall, particularly sports pitches and this Project meets that community need, at no ongoing revenue cost to the Borough Council.
- 6.1.2 As set out in Appendix 2 the scheme has been subject to consultation with local residents and their concerns will need to be addressed as part of the planning process.

6.2 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.2.1 The Project will meet the need to provide for senior, junior, women's and girl's and disability football as key constituents of the Football Development Plan. This is an Football Association requirement and funding cannot be granted without such provision.

<p>7. Sustainability Impact <i>(including environmental or social impact on the local area or beyond the Borough)</i></p> <p>7.1 The Project provides sporting infrastructure needed in the locality of Moreton Hall. The project retains green space albeit for pitch use and will be constructed to high environmental standards and also considering elements such as considering energy buy-back (see below). Parking and transport issues have been raised consistently in the consultation and will need to be addressed (see Appendix 2).</p> <p>7.2 Consideration is being given to taking advantage of the opportunity created by the Clean Energy cashback Scheme (April 2010) to install solar photo voltaic equipment.</p>
<p>8. Consultation</p> <p>Consultation</p> <p>8.1 Before submitting the planning application for the equivalent Haverhill Community Football Project, officers met with the Residents' Association at Chalkstone (CATRA) which resulted in their keen support for the project and participation thereafter in its development, particularly in relation to facilities for young people. This was seen as the model to adopt for the Bury scheme.</p> <p>8.2 The formal programme of consultation for the Project commenced with the Portfolio Holder on 2 September, Ward Councillors on 8 and 9 September and local football clubs on 8 September. However, consultation with local residents was seen as the most critical element of the process, including the Community Association and new Residents' Association.</p> <p>8.3 Together with the project architects, Wilby and Burnett LLP, Suffolk Football Association and Bury Town Football Club, the Borough Council held all day drop in sessions on Monday 27 and Thursday 30 September 2010 from 10am to 8pm at Moreton Hall Youth Action Group building. The aim was to enable residents and interested parties to have their questions answered personally, to establish concerns and aspirations, and then seek to address them. A summary of the feedback from that consultation is attached in Appendix 2.</p>
<p>9. Resource implications <i>(including asset management implications)</i></p> <p>9.1 For every £1 million of capital expenditure undertaken, the Borough Council loses up to £50,000 in revenue through lost interest. However, during 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, the interest rates expected on the Borough Council's investments have been projected at 3.5%, indicating a loss of interest of £35,000 per £1 million. The financial impact of the lost interest on this project was built into the Borough Council's budget setting process for 2009/2010 (and subsequent years) to ensure that the impact on local taxpayers is carefully managed and sustainable.</p> <p>9.2 At the current time, it is envisaged that the cost of financing the Project can be accommodated without any additional impact on the level of Council Tax in future years.</p> <p>9.3 The Project will be operated by Suffolk County Football Association and will not have revenue funding support from the Council.</p>

10. Risk Assessment *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

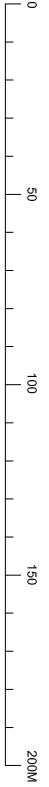
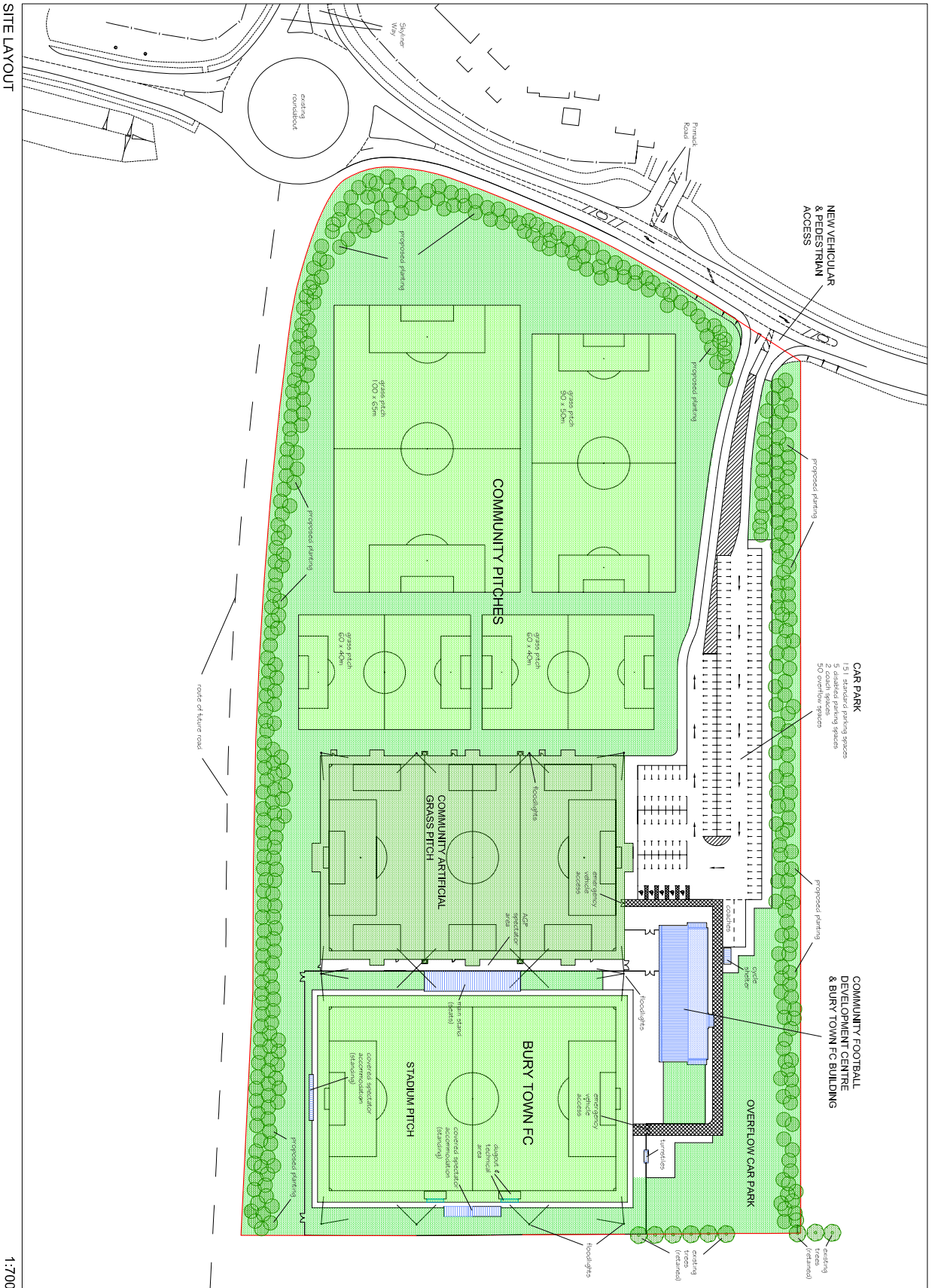
10.1

Risk area	Inherent level of Risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual Risk (after controls)
Football Foundation/FSIF not allocating funding which is critical to the project	High	Negotiations with Foundation and FSIF as part of preparation to bid.	Medium
Capacity of Bury Town FC to manage the project as a volunteer organisation	High	Facility will be managed by Suffolk County FA with building sub-lease to Bury Town FC	Low
Cost of project	High	Project will be value engineered as required	Medium
External funding: A number of external funders are not accepting applications e.g. FSA.	High	Searching for alternative funders	Medium
Suffolk FA not proceeding with the scheme	Medium	Increased participation in project preparation.	Low
Planning Permission not being approved	High	Consultation with residents	Medium

11. Legal or policy implications

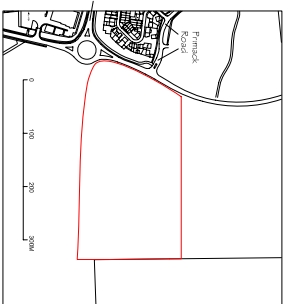
11.1 None specifically at this stage.

Wards affected	Moreton Hall Specifically, but all wards indirectly given scope of the scheme	Portfolio Holder	Culture and Sport
Background Papers		Subject Area	Leisure, Sport, Arts and Culture



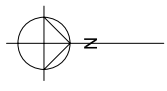
SITE LAYOUT

1:700



LOCATION PLAN

1:5000



BURY ST EDMUNDS
COMMUNITY FOOTBALL
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

BURY TOWN FC
ST EDMUNDSBURY BC
& SUFFOLK COUNTY FA

LOCATION PLAN AS EXISTING
&
SITE LAYOUT AS PROPOSED

WILBY & BURNETT LLP
Project Management, Architecture & Surveying

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Approved Members

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SEPT 2010 RDE

1:700 & 5000 @ A1



**Bury Community Football Project Consultation
27 and 30 September 2010
Moreton Hall Youth Action Group building**

Background

It was agreed with ward members to hold a consultation event prior to the project's planning application. Officers wished to establish the level of local support for the project and discuss concerns with residents and interested parties in the area where the Bury Community Football Project would be built. There would also be time to make some changes to the project plans before planning submission.

It had also been made clear to officer that the scheme was being seen by some people just as the relocation of Bury Town FC and that the community football aspects such as the all weather pitch, junior grass pitches and the Suffolk FA Development Centre were not fully appreciated. The realisation of its being a community scheme was much appreciated by visitors to the consultation.

A number of those attending the consultation were Bury Town supporters as well as local residents and were, for example, asking for more stand accommodation. The design of the new ground is based on the FA Ground Grading document. The funding from the Football Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund is based on this document which states that a new facility will be built to the league that the club plays in with an allowance for being promoted to the league above. The consultation gave the opportunity for officers to advise of this FA requirement.

The main concern raised by visitors on both days of the consultation was in respect of parking on site and there being enough to cope with Bury Town FC matches. Visitors were advised that for big matches such as the FA special arrangements would be made and this was appreciated. However the primary concern remained as to there being enough parking to cope with Bury Town FC matches.

While this exercise formed a major element of the project's consultation, meetings have also been held with the ward councillors and also with the newly formed Moreton Hall Residents' Association as well as the established Community Association.

1. How was the consultation conducted?

The 'drop in' event was held between 10am and 8pm on 27 and 30 September 2010 at Moreton Hall Youth Action Group building to allow public comment and consultation on the proposed plans for the Bury Community Football Project. The event was publicised in the Bury Free Press and through Moreton Hall Community Association and Residents' Association.

The format adopted for the consultation was for visitors to call in and, after receiving an individual briefing on the scheme, to express their support or concerns. This method of consultation was well appreciated by those participating. The aim was to gain input from residents in respect of the project design such that their comments would be taken into consideration and incorporated into final scheme for planning permission submission.

Access was open to everyone, and visitors were welcomed by a member of staff who after briefing them personally on the design and the issues gave them a feedback form to fill in.

Every effort was made to provide personal attention to visitors' queries. Many of the discussions took in the order of 30 minutes each.

Project partners from Suffolk FA and Bury Town FC and the project architects Wilby Burnett also visited the consultation as did the Ward Councillors, Moreton Hall Community Association and Moreton Hall Residents' Association representatives.

2. Who took part?

Over 80 people attended the event on 27 and 30 September with 60 completing feedback forms. These are analysed in this Appendix.

The data is not presented here in terms of this being a referendum or a representative sample of the local population. These are the views of 60 self-selected people who attended the consultation and discussed the information. It is an indication of what, when presented with information about the scheme, people felt the issues were.

After the briefing by officers, visitors were asked what they liked or were concerned about the scheme. In order to help analyse the results in more detail visitors were asked three demographic questions: age, gender and postcode.

Copies of the forms (with personal details blanked out) can be inspected on demand.

3. Findings

From the 60 completed forms 95% were supportive of the scheme in principle, along the lines of it being *"good for Moreton Hall"*, *"good for the community"*, *"good for Bury"* or having *"excellent facilities"*.

However it was important to particularly investigate the feedback from local residents with the IP32 postcode. 53% of the consultees were from the IP32 postcode and their primary comments are noted below.

- 91% supported the scheme in principle (*"good for Moreton Hall"*, *"good for the Community"*, etc).
- However, 59% had concerns that there were not enough car parking spaces on site to deal with Bury Town FC matches.
- 34% also had concerns in respect of site access and congestion, with Skyliner Way frequently mentioned.

4. Actions

Since receiving the feedback from the consultations, officers have been carrying out the following actions:-

- Discussions with the project architect in respect of the parking concerns and how parking spaces can be increased and access improved.
- Discussions with the local bus company to establish if additional buses can be provided on match days.
- Discussions with local businesses with parking areas to create a park and ride arrangement for the large attendance Bury Town FC matches such as the FA Cup.