



WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Intention to dispose (by way of a 30 year lease) of Roehampton Playing Fields, Dover House Road, London SW15

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

QUESTION: Are the council selling the playing fields?

ANSWER: No, the council is proposing to lease the site to a third party under the Local Government Act 1972, Section 123 (2A) to continue to provide playing fields for local schools and clubs and the council will retain the freehold.

QUESTION: Will the successful bidder be able to change the use of the site?

ANSWER: No, the lease requires the successful bidder to continue to maintain the site as playing fields and sport facilities.

QUESTION: Will the existing users schools and local sports clubs be kicked off the site?

ANSWER: No, following the last disposal notice in 2014 and feedback from local users and residents to the previous scheme the council confirmed that any new lease would protect existing users for the full length of the lease, i.e. 30 years.

QUESTION: Will the charges for existing users to use the site be increased significantly to price them out of the site?

ANSWER: No, the Council will protect the hire fees and charges for the existing grass sports pitches at the current rate and the successful bidder will only be able to increase them by inflation in line with the council charges for similar grass sport pitches elsewhere in the borough. In addition, the charges for the proposed new floodlight artificial grass pitch submitted as part of the tendering process are in line with charges for similar council facilities elsewhere in the borough and will form part of the contract with the successful bidder subject to the statutory process.

QUESTION: Are there going to be floodlights?

ANSWER: The proposed improvement plans include provision of a new full size artificial grass pitch including floodlights to meet the aims of the council's Playing Pitch Strategy as there is a shortage of this type of facility in the borough to meet current demand for training facilities for young people and adults. However, these improvement plans are subject to planning approval a separate process, once and if the decision to grant a lease is confirmed.

QUESTION: What are the likely opening hours of the new improved playing fields?

ANSWER: The proposed opening hours of the new site following any improvements will be 9:00am – 09:00pm Monday to Friday and 09:00am – 07:00pm Saturday to Sunday.

QUESTION: Will there be increased usage of the site?

ANSWER: Yes, currently the site is underused, particularly the tennis courts and given growing demand for sports pitches across the borough the site is important to help increase participation in sport and physical activity particularly for children and young people. The proposals allow the successful bidder to protect existing users whilst making the most of all the facilities throughout the week so that they are used to their potential.

QUESTION: Will the new club house be licensed?

ANSWER: The improvement proposals include a new pavilion which will have a café for users and passing trade but there is no provision to sell alcohol or become a drinking club or sports bar for members only. The site may as the current situation apply for temporary event notices for one off events, but that is no different to what could happen now under the current arrangements

QUESTION: Will there be additional parking?

ANSWER: We are aware of the concerns about the possibility of increased parking of which we are working on solutions to mitigate this, which will be presented as part of the planning application for the facility improvements to the site.

QUESTION: Are my bookings secured for next season?

ANSWER: Bookings are secure for this winter season (2017-18) and next years summer season (2018) and probably next winter season (2018-19), before any improvement works would start and the operator will try and minimise any disruption to pitch provision during any works. This is the first stage as planning permission will need to be sought during the next 12-18 months should the council grant a lease.

QUESTION: What happens next?

ANSWER: Following the end of the Notice period for the Disposal Notice, the council will collate any comments and if there are any objections received another committee report will be prepared for the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider any objections and whether the proposed lease agreement should be granted or not. If no objections are received the council will grant the said lease. The lease will set clear timelines for the proposed site improvements to ensure they are carried out in a timely manner with the least disruption to users.

If you have any further questions about the proposed disposal, by means of a lease, of Roehampton Playing fields please contact Joanne Shearer, Leisure and Culture Contract Manager on jshearer@wandsworth.gov.uk

Comments and objections to the intended disposal must be made in writing addressed to:-

The Director of Environment and Community Services (F.A.O. Ms. Jo Shearer),
Wandsworth Borough Council, Unit 1F Tadmore House, Frogmore Complex, Dormay
Street, London SW18 1EY by no later than 8th December 2017.