



WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

ADDITIONAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOLLOWING DROP IN SESSION HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2017:

QUESTION: Why was I not informed about the drop in session of 13th November 2017.

ANSWER: We held a drop in session, on 13th November following the publication of the statutory advertisement of the Council intention to dispose of Roehampton Playing Fields (by way of a lease) which was published in the Wandsworth Guardian on 9th November 2017, with an additional paragraph detailing the session. Additionally, the statutory advertisement was delivered to the properties that surround the playing fields and was e-mailed to all existing user organisations of the playing fields, and known interested parties including Dover House Road Residents' Association. The aim of this drop in session was to give the local community the opportunity to find out more about the proposals.

QUESTION: Why was an e-mail address not included in the statutory notice for comments and objections rather than requesting these must be made in writing to the council address?

ANSWER: The standard notice was issued in accordance with the provisions of section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 which requires the placing of statutory advertisements in the local press for two consecutive weeks notifying the public of the Council's intention to dispose of open space plans and inviting objections.

The information packs held at Roehampton Library and the Customer Centre at the Town Hall provides an e-mail address for objectors to comment. Following the drop-in session on 13th November 2017, a designated-email address for the proposals has been created RoehamptonPlayingFieldsProposal@wandsworth.gov.uk and is detailed on the assigned information portal which can be found at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehamptonplayingfields

QUESTION: What happened with the previous tender award to the University of Roehampton?

ANSWER: In May 2005 the Council's Executive Committee approved a proposal to replace the pavilion with a two storey building with changing rooms and a crèche and upgrade the overall facilities of the playing fields. (Committee Paper 05-345)

In November 2007, an advertisement was placed in the local paper inviting expressions of interest in the proposal.

Although the University of Roehampton sought to progress taking a lease of Roehampton Playing Fields in 2007 by September 2014, the university then decided that it no longer wished to proceed with the proposals.

QUESTION: What notification and/or consultation has taken place on the current proposals, as I was unaware of the opportunity to tender?

ANSWER: On 11th July 2016, the Council's Executive Committee approved the tendering of a new concession contract to redevelop and manage the existing pavilion and playing fields at Dover House Road. (Committee Paper No. 16-242) which included addressing many of the concerns raised in the objections received in August 2014 including:-

- a) A lease for 30 years
- b) Protection for existing users for the full length of the 30 year lease
- c) For the term of the lease, hire fees for existing grass sports pitches would be at the current rates with annual inflationary increases as approved by the Council.
- d) Re tender the proposals therefore existing users would have the opportunity to bid for the management of the site.

In October 2015 officers contacted the existing users of Roehampton Playing Fields advising that the previous negotiations with the University of Roehampton had become abortive hence the Council was in the process of reconsidering potential improvements of facilities there. As part of this process, the Council sought comments from the existing users of the playing fields on the draft heads of terms for the redevelopment proposal. (A key aspect of these fresh proposals was that the preservation and retention of all the existing users of the facilities at Roehampton playing fields for the entire length of the lease.)

In autumn 2016, the Council openly sought expressions of interest from the market for this concession contract for the management and maintenance of the Playing Fields and redevelopment of the site. As part of this process the Council advertised this opportunity on 20th and 28th October 2016 in the South London Press and on 1st and 15th November 2016 the opportunity was advertised in Leisure Opportunities (a national trade press publication).

Although the existing user organisations at Roehampton Playing Fields were individually invited to submit expression of interest, ultimately none of those organisations chose to submit.

Following a two stage tender process, TFC Leisure Limited emerged the preferred bidder for this opportunity.

QUESTION: In the final tender submission from TFC only 25% of the usage time is allocated to existing users, is this correct?

ANSWER: As part of the terms of the letting the protection of existing customer's use of the facility is included, therefore their current usage will not reduce under the terms of the new proposals. This quote of 25% usage time related to the previous process with Roehampton University. To re-iterate, as part of the terms of the letting agreement the protection of existing customer's use of the facility is included, therefore their current usage will not reduce under the terms of the new proposals.

The only change in the current grass sports pitches is a proposal to replace the existing grass 9v9 junior pitch by a full size 11v11 artificial grass pitch, to enable all year round play to be offered and greater use of the site. This proposal equates to an area of 8,512m² out of a total site area of 4.75 hectares. This leaves the rest of the site as grass playing fields and the 5no. tennis courts/ 4 netball courts will also be retained

The proposed opening hours of the new site following the improvements will be 9.00am – 9.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 7.00pm on the weekends. To achieve these hours, floodlights and a new full size artificial grass pitch are included in the proposal, to meet current demand for training facilities for young people and adults. These improvements plans will be subject to planning approval, if the decision to grant a lease is confirmed.

QUESTION: I understand the existing users submitted a proposal but their covenant was not considered good enough, can you explain the reasoning for this?

ANSWER: Although the existing user organisations at Roehampton Playing Fields were individually invited to submit expression of interest, ultimately none of those organisations chose to submit.

QUESTION: Existing users would like to use the playing fields more but the current rates are too high.

ANSWER: The current Council charges for the grass sports pitches at Roehampton Playing Fields are similar to those elsewhere in the borough, are approved annually by Council and annual increases are in line with inflation.

QUESTION: It is not acceptable to have floodlighting in a conservation area.

ANSWER: TFC Leisure Limited's proposed improvements will require planning permission which will be a separate rigorous process aside from the decision to dispose of the site by way of the grant of a 30-year lease. With the separate planning process, impacts on neighbouring residents and biodiversity are expected to be key parts for the consideration to determine the planning decision.

QUESTION: How can the Council dispose of the land by way of a 30-year lease when the plans for the improvements have not been finalised or approved?

ANSWER: The intention is to enter into an Agreement for Lease first followed by the granting a formal Lease following practical completion of TFC Leisure Limited's works. There are various long stop dates (the last day by which something must be done) in the Agreement for Lease such as;

- Approved Design of the pavilion – 6 months of entering into the Agreement for Lease;
- Planning permission– 18 months from the date of Approved Design; and,
- Conditions (approved design condition, planning condition, development condition, parking condition and statutory consent condition) – 42 months of entering into the Agreement for Lease
- Completion date – the later of;- (i)10 working days after satisfaction of all the Conditions; and (ii) 25 working days after the practical completion date.

Copies of the Agreement for Lease and the Draft Lease have been released and are available to view on the assigned information portal for the proposed developments of the playing fields which can be found at

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehamptonplayingfields

TFC Leisure Limited's offer for Roehampton Playing Fields is not dependant on it obtaining planning permission for the floodlighting and the artificial grass pitch

QUESTION: There will be an increased flood risk from the proposed artificial playing pitch.

ANSWER: The improvement plans are subject to planning approval which are understood to include a Flood Risk Assessment as part of the future **planning application**.

QUESTION: How can the Council promote an artificial pitch with a lifespan of 8 years in place of a grass pitch and the associated replacement issues?

ANSWER: An artificial pitch can take far more use all year round than grass pitches. The Football Association, (The FA) recommend grass pitches are played on between 4 – 10hrs a week subject to drainage where as an artificial grass pitch can take anything between 40 – 60 hours a week usage regularly. An average life span of an artificial grass pitch can be anywhere between 8 – 12 years depending on usage and maintenance and the contractor will be expected to replace the top surface at twice during the 30 year lease and this has been taken account of within the business plan submitted with the tender along with a sufficient sinking fund. The provision of an artificial pitch will mean community and school uses will be able to continue to use the site even in times of inclement weather when grass sports maybe cancelled. The FA currently has an objective of 50% of all junior football being played on artificial grass pitches by 2020. The council's Playing Pitch Strategy

adopted in 2014 identified the need for up to four additional artificial grass pitches in the borough to meet existing demand for sports training and matches.

QUESTION: There will be increased noise from the increased usage of the site.

ANSWER: The improvement plans are subject to planning approval which will include a compliance with the Planning Policy Guidance 24 (PPG24) which guides local authorities in England on the use of their planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise. It outlines the considerations to be taken into account in determining planning applications both for noise-sensitive developments and for those activities which generate noise. A Noise Risk Assessment will need to be submitted as part of the **planning application**..

QUESTION: Local families will not be able to enforce bedtime with the floodlighting, whistles and music until 10pm.

ANSWER: It is proposed that all play will have a curfew of 9pm. The proposed hours of operation would be:-

- Monday to Friday: 9am – 9pm; and,
- Saturday and Sundays: 9am – 7pm.

A Noise Risk Assessment will need to be submitted as part of the **planning application**.

QUESTION: There will be increased parking from the proposed artificial playing pitch.

ANSWER: The Council and TFC Leisure Limited are aware of the concerns about the possibility of increased parking of which both parties are working on possible solutions to mitigate this, which will be presented as part of the planning application for the facility improvements to the site.

QUESTION: Can a Controlled Parking Zone be introduced for Longwood/Coppice Drive?

ANSWER: The introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), or changes to an existing zone, are considered in response to demand from local residents and businesses. Any proposal would require a demonstration that it has widespread support among local residents. The process is detailed here:

http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200459/parking_zones/458/parking_consultation
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QUESTION: How can the Council show such little concern for the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Borough?

ANSWER The provision of improved sports and playing field facilities will hopefully help those already using them to continue to have a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. The proposals will hopefully also assist those living and working in and around Roehampton Playing fields to be more active and participate in a wider range of sports on the site, such as tennis, netball, football, and cricket both through local schools, clubs, community users and through the ability to pay and play for activities which is not currently available at the site. The new operator will also be more proactive setting up new sessions to fill gaps in the current booking programme, as the site is generally under used, through more social and community based sessions.

QUESTION: There will be a conflict between the financial gain for the Council from the proposed concession contract and the granting of the planning application.

ANSWER: The granting of the lease and the planning approval are two separate and distinct processes. Under its role as the landowner, the Council is currently advertising its "Intention to Dispose" of the site (by way of a 30-year lease). Following the end of the notice period on 8th December 2017, the Council will collate all comments and objections received and present these to the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive to consider the objections and decide whether the proposed lease agreement should be granted. Should the Council's decision be to proceed, the Council will proceed with the proposal to grant the Agreement for Lease to TFC Leisure Limited. At that juncture, TFC Leisure Limited will need to prepare an application for planning permission which would be submitted for consideration by the Council in its separate role as the local planning authority.

QUESTION: What happens if planning permission is not achieved?

ANSWER: TFC Leisure Limited's offer for Roehampton Playing Fields is not contingent on it obtaining planning permission for the floodlighting and the artificial grass pitch. In planning terms, the aspirations for floodlighting and the artificial grass pitch are likely to be the most challenging aspects of TFC Leisure Limited proposals.

QUESTION: Can the Heads of Terms and the Proposals put forward by TFC be shared?

ANSWER: The heads of terms and proposals put forward by TFC Leisure Limited are commercially sensitive and therefore cannot be disclosed or released.

Committee Paper No. 17-285 does provide draft proposals for the winter and summer sports pitch layouts, information on the proposed single storey pavilion including the internal facilities to accommodate six changing rooms with showers. These plans may of course change as the project develops. . The final plans will be

subject to planning approval, in line with the timelines detailed in the Agreement for Lease, once and if the decision to grant a lease is confirmed.

QUESTION: TFC Leisure Limited is a commercial enterprise and Roehampton Playing Fields is different to Rocks Lane in Barnes which is bounded by open space and trees and not residential properties.

ANSWER: TFC Leisure Limited have given an undertaking to engage with the local community to ensure they deliver facilities appropriate for their needs and wishes in order to create a sporting and social community hub. TFC Leisure Limited has confirmed they will provide opportunities for free and discounted access to facilities for local residents and run social sessions for all age groups. All state schools within the borough will be able to access the facilities and coaches at a discounted rate and they will work with the Council, National Governing Bodies and Sport England to deliver initiatives to target key inactive participation groups, previously inactive, 14-25 year olds, female players, ethnic minorities, disability groups and over 60's i.e. walking football. TFC Leisure Limited will also introduce a Scholarship Scheme for high achieving juniors to increase their opportunity to access coaching. The improvement plans are subject to planning approval once and if the decision to grant a lease is confirmed.

QUESTION: Ark Academy is set to double its intake. Will the increased numbers of children be catered for in the new development at existing rates?

ANSWER: Currently the Ark Academy and formally Elliot school did not and do not make much use of the playing fields, Their existing usage in the 12 months before any lease is confirmed will be protected and there is currently some capacity to increase their usage during the school day going forward should they require it. However, the schools should make contact with Council Officers and the current contractor Idverde if they wish to use the site more often. In the future, the proposal of an artificial pitch as previously mentioned will help improve capacity at the site as it can be used far more regularly than grass pitches.

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

ANSWER: No. Following the Council's previous statutory advertisement where is published its intention to dispose of this site to the University of Roehampton back in 2014 the Council duly considered the 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. for 30 years. The view of the PPSSA (Putney Primary School Sports Association) is that they feel they will benefit from the change as they will be getting better all year round facilities at the same cost as before.

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 or RoehamptonPlayingFieldsProposal@Wandsworth.gov.uk

For further information please visit www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehamptonplayingfields