

# **SML PAVILION TASK & FINISH GROUP**

## **NOTES OF ZOOM MEETING ON 1.2.21**

### **Present:**

#### **Eton Town Council:**

Cllrs George Fussey (Mayor), John Lovell (Deputy Mayor), Derek Bishop, Michael Blightman, Douglas Hill, Malcolm Leach & Town Clerk

#### **Windsor FC Youth (WFCY)**

Mr Paul Mitchell (Chair)

### **Also Present:**

Dr Ros Rivaz

Mr David Treder

Mr Peter Eaton

#### **1. Welcome & Introductions:**

- The Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting and outlined the terms of reference for this committee.

#### **2. Appointment of New Chairman:**

- A new Chairman was needed and it was agreed that Cllr Lovell would assume this responsibility, however for this particular meeting the Mayor would chair as he had all the relevant documentation to hand.
- It was agreed that Mr Treder be coopted onto the committee.

#### **3. Current Position:**

The Mayor outlined the current situation:

- Planning permission for the SML pavilion building extension expires on 9.3.21
- It has been established that only outside work constitutes commencement and not internal work. This can be simply digging a hole for the start of foundations.
- The major problem is building on Lammas land which is governed by the Commons Act of 2006.
- The SML Recreation Ground was given to the people of Eton in perpetuity. Specifically, the original purchase of the land was written under the provisions relating to Recreation Grounds of the Enclosure Act 1845-1878 and to be held by the Town Council in perpetuity for the people of Eton.

- There is insufficient ETC land elsewhere to arrange a land swap for a 3G pitch. Available land at Haywards Mead Recreation Ground is not enough and would need to be assessed by the Inspector for the Secretary of State as being sufficiently accessible to the people of Eton.
- The cost of a land swap would be £4,900 plus legal fees which could amount to tens of thousands of pounds, escalating if it ran to a public appeal, quite possible in this case

Paul Mitchell outlined WFCY position:

- WFCY serves Windsor, Eton, Eton Wick and Slough.
- The Club needs a hub and the Eton pavilion is an ideal location.
- The pavilion is an eyesore but suitably restored would be a local community asset.
- WFCY would like to attract girls' football and to cater for disabled footballers and the hub would be a valuable resource in meeting these ambitions.
- A 3G facility is important to enable regular daily usage of the Ground.
- The pavilion as it stands has little or no use.
- WFCY has been involved at SML for 10/12 years.
- WFCY would contribute financially to the redevelopment project.

There followed contributions on the following points:

- JL - The building development would require an extra 30 square metres on unused area.
- DT – Any development would be subject to Lammas land restrictions.  
Is a 3G pitch pivotal to WFCY involvement?
- PM responded: – A 3G pitch is needed but he would need to refer back to his committee. A smaller 3G pitch might be considered, or perhaps floodlighting to use the existing ground.
- PE – The proposed extension is to the recreation ground side of the building, not the area designated for car parking adjacent to the road, the subject of a second planning application (expires 7 June).
- RR – The planning application does not refer to Lammas land; the landowner has the responsibility for ensuring that the law is not broken.
- DB – Common sense should apply? The pavilion development is of a modest size.
- GF – ETC needs to take legal advice as it cannot do anything which breaks the law.
- PE – Why does the building need to be extended at all?
- PM responded:
  - a) The need for disabled toilets and changing rooms for girls and boys, rendering the current building too small.
  - b) The building is too small for community usage e.g. Eton Porny School.

- c) A larger building would enable greater usage and flexibility.
- ML – Should ETC approach the Secretary of State?  
Do the Lammas land restrictions apply to temporary structures?  
Why not consider two floors rather than increasing the footprint?
- DB – Possible problems with the foundations.
- DT – A cost v benefit for the Eton community needs to be applied.  
Is the current building legal?  
Is 3G pivotal?
- GF – Satisfied that current building is legal as it has been in situ for many years and there was a 1978 Enquiry into Lammas Land.
- ML – Is 2 floors acceptable to WFCY?
- JL - The proposed car park need not be tarmacadam, could permit the grass to grow through.
- PM – In theory, there is no problem with 2 floors. The building can be underpinned if required.
- DB - £35K is set aside in Section 106 funds for the pavilion development although this does not include planning or legal fees.
- PM – WFCY has £40K set aside for the pavilion development.
- RR – How important is car parking? There will be a need for off-street parking. The planning application does not include car parking, this is the subject of the second planning application. This is also not legal to install because of the Lammas land designation.
- PM – WFCY uses Eton College laundry for car parking although this is not always possible, depending on the security guards present. There is space on SML by the entrance which the Club uses currently. This can only be used at weekends.

#### **4. The Way Forward:**

The Mayor summarised the discussion as follows:

- Time has realistically run out to proceed with the two planning applications.
- Redevelop the current building is Option 1.
- An application for a 2-storey development is Option 2
- The extended building is Option 3 but would require a land swap and would incur expensive legal fees.
- Demolition is Option 4 but does not need to be considered at the present time.
- A 3G pitch is not possible owing to the Lammas Land designation and the provisions relating to Recreation Grounds of the Enclosure Act 1845-1878, which are held by the Town Council in perpetuity for the people of Eton. In addition, there would be issues such as building in the flood plain.

There followed contributions on the following points:

- DB – believes there was a 2-storey proposal originally.
- RR – Can using the current space be a temporary option?
- GF – ETC wants to do the best for WFCY and appreciates the contribution they make to residents who live in East Berkshire.
- PM – Agreed that we need to start somewhere.
- DT – A business case for the 3 options should follow, with the value of each to the Eton community.
- RR - Need to check whether the foundations can take an additional floor.
- JL – Need to check whether there are existing plans for a 2-storey pavilion.

The Town Clerk was asked to summarise his views:

- As Chair of Wargrave Women & Girls Football Club for the past 15 years, with 400 players, the biggest such club in the country, he fully supported the aspirations of WFCY in developing SML facilities to encourage more participation.
- The Eton community would benefit significantly from developing the pavilion with increased opportunities for local young people and for community usage.
- The pavilion project has been discussed for many years and needs to be resolved as soon as possible.
- PM needs to go back to his committee to ascertain whether the absence of a 3G pitch will affect their commitment to the project.

The Mayor concluded the Meeting by thanking everyone present and he would organise another meeting of the committee when the questions raised at this meeting had been when options 1 and 2 had been further researched. He paid particular thanks to Peter Eaton for his work in researching issues regarding Lammas rights, and also thanked Ros Rivaz and Paul Mitchell for their participation.

The Meeting concluded at 7.10pm