

Tenterden Town Council

External Committee

Report re possible football pitch provision: Appledore Road and 3G pitch at Homewood School

At a meeting on 15 November 2017 between –

- representing the town council: Alan Sugden, Mike Carter, Justin Nelson and the Town Clerk
- representing the football clubs: Graham Smith
- representing Tenterden Schools Trust (TST): Mark Seymour and Richard Grady

the parties' understanding of their organisations' respective wishes and constraints was discussed as follows (the numbered steps being put forward by the council, with the comments of others shown as footnotes) -

- 1 The footballers' principal aim is to secure the provision of at least adequate, and preferably expandable, football provision in the form of the following grass pitches –
 - 2x full size 11 a side pitches
 - at least one 7 a side pitch
 - at least 2x 5 a side pitches
 - ideally some training land in addition and
 - an appropriately-sized clubhouse with changing, catering and social facilities.
- 2 TTC's aim is to facilitate that
- 3 TST want to create a 3G pitch at their campus and, to this end –
 - a. *need* a Community Use Agreement *with an anchor club*¹ to secure Sport England's support for their planning application for the 3G pitch² (even if grant money is not needed for it) and
 - b. *desire* funding assistance
- 4 ABC recognise the merits having of a 3G pitch in Tenterden, and have identified the proposed pitch at TST's Homewood site as the best means of providing that
- 5 The footballers are prepared to provide item 3a, and ABC and TTC are prepared to provide item 3b, provided –
 - a. this is part of a solution that also provides item 1 and
 - b. the capital, maintenance and renewal costs of the 3G pitch are shared between Homewood and other users of that pitch fairly, reflecting their respective use of the pitch³ and
 - c. the funding by/through the councils of the 3G pitch is not so high as to prevent proper funding of item 1
- 6 Item 1 was to have been provided at TST's two fields off Appledore Road, but this has now been thrown into question by TST's wish to sell those fields for development
- 7 It is agreed that the proposals for grass pitches at Appledore Road, especially when coupled with a 3G pitch at Homewood, would satisfy the outdoor pitches required as a result of Tent1A and Tent1B.

¹ TST: No anchor club is needed, as TST will not be applying for a Football Federation grant, and they have a choice of different clubs to use as anchor clubs if they want to

² TST: Sport England have already indicated, in writing, that they will support the planning application

³ TST: In principle, the 40:60 split suggested by Ben Moyes (ABC) is acceptable

- 8 ABC advises that such provision would not go towards satisfying any further outdoor pitches required as a result of further development: more provision would be required, hence the need for expandability referred to in item 1⁴
- 9 The prospective developer is prepared to allocate one of Homewood's fields, and another field to the east (and perhaps more land) to outdoor/football pitch provision and a clubhouse
- 10 Planning permission for development of the site is not likely to be granted for some time: ABC is not including it in the current draft Local Plan (running until 2030) and, even if a planning application is made for its development before the draft Local Plan is approved, ABC will refuse to grant permission, and assesses that the chances of a successful planning appeal are no more than 50%
- 11 There is, therefore, no realistic prospect of the Homewood fields being part of a development scheme in the next few years, and meanwhile (subject to being available for development when planning permission is granted) could be used for football and a clubhouse
- 12 In view of TST's and the developer's plans, there seems to be no reason against:
- a. the right hand field being permanently allocated for football pitch(es) and clubhouse use and
 - b. the left hand field being allocated for football pitches use until required for development, whereupon
 - c. the top field could be allocated permanently for football pitches use, with room for expansion beyond
- 13 Funding for the grass pitches and clubhouse would require a grant from the Football Foundation, who will refuse a grant if there is a break option in the lease of land for football [*Query whether this is the case if the break option (a) only applies to the left field and can only be exercised if there is a commitment to providing the top field as a replacement?*]
- 14 As the freehold owner of the fields, TST could – with a Community Use Agreement (or better, such as a lease) in place – apply for a FF grant^{5 6}, repayment of which on change of use would be secured by a charge over the freehold interest^{7 8}.
- 15 TST could lease the two fields to the footballers, with a break option affecting the left field if the top field is provided instead, and the developer could transfer the right field and the top field to the footballers/TTC and provide expanded facilities to fulfil their relevant s.106 obligations
- 16 As far as the 3G pitch is concerned, the advice from ABC is –

⁴TST: The provision currently on the table (from Wates) is intended (a) in conjunction with the proposed 3G pitch, to replace the existing provision and supply the extra required as a result of Tent1A and Tent1B and (b) supply the extra that would be required as a result of developing the site at Appledore Road. Wates would not be obliged to supply any further provision for expansion. Graham Smith: Expansion into what is currently proposed as a country park would be possible; all a developer would need to do is supply (sell) the land, and the cost of creating pitches would be borne by others

⁵ TST: the school would be very reluctant to get involved in this

⁶ TST: A grant may not be available for a temporary clubhouse pending a future developer constructing a permanent one; Graham Smith disagreed: the indications are that this would be supported in the context of an overall scheme

⁷ TST: it is unlikely that their funding body, *Education & Skills Funding Agency*, whose consent is needed, would agree to a charge over the land – certainly, Mark Seymour has never heard of one being granted

⁸ Graham Smith: A solution might be for any prospective developer to agree to repay the grant as part of the cost of acquiring the land

- a. TST will have at least 40% use, probably more, and should bear an equivalent proportion of the capital, maintenance and surface replacement costs
- b. Tenterden Tigers should be the anchor community club, with use charged at below market rates [TST are suggesting £60 per match, with market rate being £85 per match]
- c. Tigers should have priority use on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons and one evening per week (of their choice) from 5pm to 9pm
- d. TTFC (adults) should have priority use on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings and two hours' training one evening (selected by them) per week
- e. Changing rooms for players and officials needed, along with "social space"

The outcome is that TST is very reluctant to get involved in anything that might possibly affect any application for planning permission for housing development, however tangentially. They strongly prefer to "wait and see" – they fully expect a planning application to be made shortly for housing development.

A possible alternative would be for the football clubs to have temporary use of TST's pitches at the rear of their main campus while awaiting progress regarding possible development at Appledore Road. These would need to be inspected for suitability, and money would need to be spent on improving them.

If any progress is to be made regarding possible football provision at Appledore Road, the prospective developers would need to be directly involved in discussions (and TST would be happy to be a part of those), or the council will simply have to wait and see what provision is offered as part of a planning application, without being involved in shaping it.

Proposal:

That a working group comprising at least two of Cllrs Sugden, Carter and Nelson, with the Town Clerk (or Deputy Town Clerk), be delegated to discuss the provision of football pitches and other facilities with all prospective developers of large scale housing sites in Tenterden and involving representation of the local football clubs, with a view to shaping such provision, but without any authority to support any particular proposed development or commit the council in any way, and with an obligation to report back to the council (and the Sports Review group) after each meeting.

Alternative proposal:

That the town council resolves to make no further attempt to shape football provision in Tenterden, except by way of discussions direct with landowners without any associated development plans being involved.

EXTERNAL 7E

	Stage 1 Pre-feasibility Study	Stage 2 Site Options Appraisal	Totals
Architect	Nil	£4750	£4750
Business Consultant	£2850	£1600	£4450
Quantity Surveyor	Nil	£2950	£2950
Totals	£2850	£9300	£12150

Agenda Item 7E Cinema Focus Group

Stage 1 covers viability and what type of cinema would be appropriate

Stage 2 – (If stage 1 is positive) advises where the facility should be sited