

# **Development of artificial football pitches Ashburton Playing Fields / Woodmere Avenue**

## ***Initial views and perspective from Shirley North Councillors***

**Prepared by Cllrs Sue Bennett, Richard Chatterjee and Gareth Streeter**

On 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018, Cllrs Sue Bennett, Richard Chatterjee and Gareth Streeter met with officers from the Croydon 'Place' team to be briefed about a planned development of two artificial football pitches on the Woodmere Avenue end of Ashburton Playing Field.

This documents sets out our understanding of the scheme and initial reactions. In summary:

- The scheme itself will provide benefits for Croydon as a whole and significantly increase access to superior sporting facilities for teams across the borough
- Some of the additional facilities – such as a gym and a possible café - might also be attractive to some in the wider community
- However, our initial view is that the benefits of the scheme will not be ones that appeal to its proposed immediate neighbours – the residents of Woodmere Avenue and other nearby residents.
- The scheme would however, present potentially significant challenges to residents such as loss of view, closing off of MOL, light/noise pollution and increased traffic.
- As such, it is highly unlikely that the Shirley North team of councillors would feel able to support the scheme without significant and substantial changes

### **Scheme details**

In order to ensure maximum awareness of the scheme, the Councillors have asked officers to give careful consideration to the nature and the breadth of the consultation. However, our current understanding is that the scheme would consist of the following:

- 2 x artificial pitches
- Changing rooms
- Community room
- Car parking
- Small community gym

There is also the potential for a community café although it is not currently clear if that would be an additional facility of located in the community room.

The initial funding for the project would come from the Football Foundation (Premier League) and would be run as a commercial venture. The London Football Trust would give / sell the long lease (25 years) to a contractor to run.

### **Site location**

The site would occupy 5 hectares of land (currently classified as MOL) at the corner of Woodmere Avenue. The map below details where the site will go (NOTE: this map has been constructed by the Councillors based on a verbal briefing and has not been provided by the officers behind the scheme):



**Proposed location**

### **Potential problems / risks / concerns**

- Closing off of MOL (there would be fencing surrounding the site)
- Flood lighting on the pitches and potential light pollution
- Noise pollution
- Road access from Woodmere Avenue would be created
- Increased traffic down Woodmere Avenue and surrounding roads (Orchard Avenue / Glade / Gladeside and others)
- Risk of on-street parking issues despite presence of car park
- Loss of view for some Woodmere Avenue residents
- Loss of privacy – particularly depending on how vehicle access is managed
- High risk of significant change of character

### **Potential material planning considerations**

- Change of character
- Environmental – noise / light pollution
- Contravening local policies (building on MOL)
- Loss of privacy

### **Timings**

Officers are planning to submit a full planning application in 'late summer' with a full consultation commencing soon.

### **Next steps**

- Councillors to discuss scheme and planned response with MORA and residents
- Consider organising a public meeting and inviting Cabinet member responsible