



Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust
PO Box 43616
LONDON
SE22 OXA
13th December 2011

Nick McCormack
Owner, Dulwich Hamlet Football Club
Edgar Kail Way
LONDON
SE22 8BD

Dear Nick,

PROPOSED NEW GROUND ON GREENDALE

I am writing on behalf of Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust ('DHST') in respect of the proposals submitted by Dulwich Hamlet Football Club to re-develop the Greendale site. These are currently being consulted on by Southwark Council (Ref no. 11/AP/2250). The plans include a football ground which we assume is intended to be used by Dulwich Hamlet as its main ground at some point in the future.

If this assumption is correct, then the plans lodged with the Council appear to us not to meet the grading standards required for the level at which Dulwich Hamlet currently play (ie 'Step 4' football). They therefore fall even further short of 'Step 3' requirements which the club is battling to reach and 'Step 2' with which the current ground complies.

It may be that the plans currently with the Council have been revised as a result of concerns raised by others or as part of ongoing negotiations. If so, we would be grateful for confirmation of any changes. However, if our interpretation is correct and the plans on the website are indeed the up to date proposals, then **DHST respectfully asks that the application is temporarily withdrawn with the intention that it be re-submitted in the near future.** Doing so will have two advantages:

1) The Plans can be Revised

As stated above, we believe the existing ground meets the requirement for 'Step 2' football. The plans for the new football ground as submitted do not appear to even meet the minimum standards required for 'Step 4' and therefore fall further short of the standards for 'Steps 2 and 3' – which are the levels at which the club has historically operated. Examples of how the plans appear to fail to meet the grading requirements are provided in the Annex to this letter. Please accept our apologies if any of these are incorrect – we don't claim to be experts.

Furthermore, were permission to be granted for the existing plans, the chances of being able to upgrade and improve facilities later would be extremely low because of its

location on Metropolitan Open Land. If so, this would lock the club into whatever (lower) level of football it is allowed to play at. DHST also believe that if the owners' eventual intention is to redevelop the current football ground in some way, then the designation of that ground as Other Open Space requires the provision of equivalent or better facilities to be provided elsewhere before development is permitted. The plans appear to be clearly neither equivalent or better.

2) The Plans can be Communicated

Although a potential move of ground is of fundamental interest of supporters – especially given the issues above - there appear to have been no attempts to explain the plans and how they fit with the owners' vision for the football club and the rest of the site. There is no indication of what this would mean for the finances of the club and what the future of the health club and five-a-side businesses would be. There is also no indication of the freehold, lease or tenure arrangements and therefore no judgement can be formed as to the future viability of the whole arrangement.

We understand that there may be a meeting for fans in the New Year. However the formal consultation ends on the 18th December and we have to respond on the only information available, which are the plans on the council website and nothing else.

Summary

The football club is currently enjoying its best season for a long time and is beginning to show its potential. The team are challenging for promotion, recent attendances are roughly double the average of two seasons ago and the link with Gavin Rose's ASPIRE programme is producing players that attract the interest of professional clubs.

However, we are aware that financially all is not well, and would stress that DHST are in no way opposed to the concept of development or even re-location of the ground if the plans and terms are right. Indeed, we recognize that if the club is to survive long term, then some form of development is likely to be needed. DHST supported the car park development application in principle (which has now been withdrawn – again without explanation).

DHST wants to be in a position to support the plans that the owners and freeholders have for the club and work constructively together to achieve them. However, as there has been no communication and the plans do not appear to be able to sustain the current level of football at which the club plays, it is difficult to see on what basis we can do so.

Therefore, if the submission remains unaltered, DHST will respond in that vein by 18th December. If the plans have been altered but not updated on the Council's website, we would hope to be able to respond more positively.

We would like to avoid a response that is not supportive of the proposals. We think that for the long term future of the club a short delay, to ensure that the plans are properly communicated and that they are revised so that they do not hamper the club's ability to progress in future, would be extremely beneficial. It would also provide a real opportunity for the club to mobilise the fans in support of whatever proposal emerges.

We remain ready to meet and discuss this issue or the wider future of the club (and whether DHST can help) at any time. Please note that we will be advising DHST members and other supporters of the request in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Eddie Muraszko
Chair, DHST

Copy: Jack Payne, Chairman, DHFC

ANNEX

Apparent examples of failure to meet Step 4 standards

	Current Proposal	Minimum Required
Minimum capacity	c 1300	1300 with ability to expand to 1950 - not clear if such expansion is possible.
Covered Accommodation	200 seats	300 (of which 150 seated)
Development around ground	1 side	2 sides
Turnstiles	None apparent	2
Press facilities	None apparent	2 seats and lighting
Directors Box	None apparent	24 seats home, 12 away
Separate Boardroom	None apparent, though bar can be divided	Separate room for 24 people

Apparent examples of failure to meet Step 3 standards

	Current Proposal	Minimum Required
Minimum capacity	c 1300	1950 with ability to expand to 3000
Covered Accommodation	200 seats	500 (of which 250 seated)
Development around ground	1 side	2 sides
Turnstiles	None apparent	2
Press facilities	None apparent	4 seats and lighting
Directors Box	None apparent	24 seats home, 12 away
Separate Boardroom	None apparent, though bar can be divided	Separate room for 24 people

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