



Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust  
PO Box 43616  
LONDON  
SE22 OXA  
18<sup>th</sup> December 2011

FAO Susannah Pettit  
Planning Applications  
Southwark Council

Dear Ms Pettit,

**Greendale site, Burrow Road, SE22 (application number AP/11/2250).**

### **Introduction**

The Dulwich Hamlet Supporters Trust ('DHST') was formed eight years ago with three main objectives: firstly, to allow supporters to play a significant role in the running of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club; secondly, to secure a financially stable future for the club; and thirdly, to ensure that the club's football is played on a ground within the local vicinity of East Dulwich. DHST is established on solid principles that are democratic, non-political, not-for-personal-profit and community-based. Our members include both our local MPs.

Dulwich Hamlet's future is uncertain: its financial stability is unclear and its tenure at Champion Hill under threat. Our priority has been to obtain protection for the ground and, after a successful campaign, it was designated as 'Other Open Space' in the Southwark Plan.

The club itself has a proud history and is an important part of the community providing opportunities for youth development and sport as well as drawing visitors to the area. Recent on-field success has seen a sharp increase in attendances at home games, which will grow further if promotion is secured.

### **Response**

We have examined the plans for the proposed development of the Greendale site and would like to make the following comments.

We appreciate that this current application may raise important issues for the Council to consider carefully about protection of land that is the subject of open space designations.

We also understand that the intended use of the football ground shown on the drawings is that it is to be the new home of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club. You will be aware that the football club currently occupies the ground adjacent to the application site that is protected as "Other Open Space" in the Council's Core Strategy. We have assumed that

the intention of this present application is to facilitate some future development of the current football ground once it has been vacated – although we understand that there is no linked application for any such development.

**With this in mind DHST must point out that the facilities for the proposed new football ground do not offer an equivalent to those that exist at the current ground.** In order for any football club to operate in a league the ground must meet strict criteria that are laid down by the Football Association. The current ground meets all the requirements for the club to operate three divisions above its current level. This is in contrast to the proposed ground, which does not even meet the requirements for the club to continue to play in its current division. Key changes that would need to be made to make the ground of an equivalent standard to the existing ground include a second turnstile, a second covered area, and higher lux floodlights, amongst other items.

DHST also asks that the Council notes that even though the plans involve a fundamental change to the future of the football club, the facilities it offers and potentially the level at which it is able to play, there has been absolutely no attempt to communicate or consult with the club's supporters or DHST of which we are aware.

Notwithstanding this, DHST has written to the club suggesting that the application be revised and committing to working with them on any such revisions necessary to ensure that the club has a sustainable future including the ability to play at higher levels. We would welcome the involvement of council planners in these discussions to ensure that all the necessary requirements are being met.

DHST also requests that in line with the Council's policy on 'Other Open Space' designation, **planning permission for any future development of the current football ground should only be granted subject to a binding requirement on the developer that a new ground of an equivalent standard is provided before development commences.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. We look forward to hearing the outcome of this application, including how our concerns have been addressed, in due course.

Yours faithfully

Eddie Muraszko  
Chair, DHST

cc – Jack Payne, Chair, Dulwich Hamlet Football Club