



CHAMPION HILL - A COMMUNITY STADIUM FOR ALL: FINAL REPORT

A Consultation on the Issues Surrounding the
Future of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club and Greendales

NOVEMBER 2004

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PREFACE BY MICK O'SHAUGHNESSY, CHAIR, DHST

I am pleased to present *Champion Hill: A Community Stadium for Dulwich: Final Report* from the Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust (DHST). This Report is intended to map out a way forward for Dulwich Hamlet Football Club in the light of the recent refusal of planning permission for a new ground on the Greendales site.

The work is based on the returns from an inclusive consultation exercise conducted by DHST with the club's main stakeholders including the owners, freeholders, leaseholders, community groups and the fans. These groups and individuals were invited to respond to proposals relating to the future of the stadium produced by DHST in an *Interim Report* and a consultation evening held at Champion Hill in July 2003. The response has been excellent: the viewpoints have been informed, balanced and thought provoking, and they have been crucial in shaping the recommendations produced throughout this document.

Underpinning the recommendations are two basic objectives: firstly, a desire to see the football club continue to play in East Dulwich; and secondly, for the local community to continue to benefit from the facilities based at Champion Hill and Greendales. Key to the recommendations is a renovated, multi-purpose 'stadia hub' at Champion Hill that will attract a range of different sports other than just professional football - rugby and hockey, personal fitness and aerobics. Managed by a broad-based management committee comprising of representatives from all stakeholders with an interest in the facility, and being put to use by local schools, local sports clubs and other community groups, the 'stadia hub' can become a thriving community asset, promoting health and fitness in the area. Indeed, only by opening up the use of facilities to these groups and making it multi-use will Champion Hill attract the revenue streams required to ensure a sustainable home for Dulwich Hamlet.

For the future of the football club to be secured key players must now show the will and commitment to translate this vision into a reality. The Council, shareholders in the football club, the supporters' trust and local business need to come together and build on these proposals. The last section of the Report, the 'Next Steps'; provides a way that they can do just this. I hope they will respond accordingly as the future of this historic club lies in their hands.

Mick O'Shaughnessy

Chair, Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust

FOREWORD BY RT HON TESSA JOWELL MP

I am pleased to have the opportunity to write the foreword to 'Champion Hill: A Community Stadium for All: Final Report', which I believe has the potential to represent a turning point for Dulwich Hamlet Football Club and its local community.

Supporters' Trusts up and down the country are proving that football fans can and do bring real benefits to the club beyond the traditional 'supporting the team' role. Whether it be complete ownership of the football club such as at York City, or sponsorship of the shirts as the Trust at Dulwich has done, supporters bring a depth and weight of experience that can enhance the management and running of clubs, while at the same time connecting them to the community at large.

Dulwich Hamlet Football Club has been at the heart of life in Dulwich since 1893. Like a lot of clubs outside the Premier League, they are having to adapt to survive. The recommendations contained within this report represent an important and worthwhile contribution to the debate on what the future holds for Dulwich Hamlet. They represent practical and realistic ways in which the club can meet and overcome the challenges it faces.

I welcome the fact that the local community is at the heart of the proposals. As football clubs are recognising all over the country, the key to survival is engaging with their local communities. The Club is already working with Southwark Council through the Dulwich Hamlet Football Academy. The facilities at Champion Hill and on Greendales have the potential to bring real benefits to the community, and this report represents a worthy first step in an attempt to maximise those.

I wish both Dulwich Hamlet FC and Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust well in their endeavours to secure the Club's place at the heart of the local community in SE22.

Tessa Jowell MP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 23 May 2003 the Planning Inspectorate decided not to overturn Southwark Council's ruling to refuse planning permission for a new ground for Dulwich Hamlet. Had the proposed development been granted permission it would have secured the future of the football club, provided first class sports facilities for the local community, as well as regenerating an area of land that has fallen into disrepair.

The Inspectorate's decision now means that the viability of Dulwich Hamlet football club hangs in the balance. With only 7 years remaining on a lease from Kings College London to play at Champion Hill and less than 11 years remaining on a lease from Southwark Council to use Greendales (on which it hosts a 7-a-side Leagues that provides an essential income stream to subsidise the costs of the football team) the club may soon be facing life without a ground. If the club loses its ground it loses one of its most important revenue streams – gate receipts - and, as Wimbledon Football Club will testify, there is precious little hope of finding a new site in South London, let alone within its traditional environs of East Dulwich. In the context of rocketing land values in London and ever more complex restrictions on land use the fact that there is no guarantee of renewing either lease means prospects for this proud football club steeped in history look very grim.

The club has reached a dead end; it is bereft of ideas, money and partners. With no future development, a declining fan base, dwindling revenue streams and insecurity over its tenancy, Dulwich Hamlet need to look to new ideas and fresh impetus to reinvigorate this club and restore its bonds with the local community. To this end Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust, a community focussed organisation representing supporters and stakeholders in the club, has produced this Report to highlight the way forward. Through a series of recommendations this Report provides a road map that the club can use to find a way out of the current impasse.

The key to these problems lies in the management and use of the current stadium and the land round Greendales. Effective and inclusive management of this land and attracting new sports to the area will unlock the potential of Champion Hill by drawing in new revenue streams and in doing so regenerate the area. The report calls for local Council to seize the opportunity now, before it is too late, and call a high level working group represented by the major stakeholders in the club to discuss the recommendations raised by this report.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1. – A solution to the long term future of Dulwich Hamlet and Champion Hill should be found on or adjacent to the existing site, or within the vicinity of the community it serves.

RECOMMENDATION 2. – Some form of covenant or Council land designation defined in the Southwark Plan be created to secure the ground or ensure a suitable alternative be found in the vicinity.

RECOMMENDATION 3. – DHST to enter into negotiations with Southwark Council and Kings College London with a view to exploring all possible alternatives with the aim of securing and maintaining Greendales.

RECOMMENDATION 4. - The existing facilities on the Greendales site to be renovated with the views of local residents to be taken into account.

RECOMMENDATION 5. - The club, the Council and DHST to explore further security arrangements and agree a budget and action plan.

RECOMMENDATION 6. – Management structure should look for opportunities for other clubs to ground share at Champion Hill to maximise revenue streams and ensure the stadium fulfils its potential as multi-use sports facility.

RECOMMENDATION 7. - A community hall is developed for community groups.

RECOMMENDATION 8. - Plans for future ground developments should meet Football Conference standard, at a minimum.

RECOMMENDATION 9. – A museum of the football club be developed in any new plans.

RECOMMENDATION 10. – A dedicated fundraising officer be appointed by DHST to source streams of funding for the football club and community activities.

RECOMMENDATION 11. – Implement the 'Next Steps'

Introduction

Dulwich Hamlet Football Club has been an essential part of the community for some 111 years. Recently however, the very existence of the club has come under serious threat. The threat comes in two forms: firstly the very ground the club plays on at Champion Hill, is on a very short lease, which is due to run out; and secondly, the bonds between the community and club, once healthy and strong, have become eroded, leaving both its supporter base, and therefore main revenue stream, steadily diminishing.

Given this background the Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust believes it is essential to inform its members and other interested parties of the issues at stake. This Report seeks to address these.

Club

Dulwich Hamlet is the second oldest non-league club in London and one of the most successful clubs of the amateur period of football. A club's identity is intimately connected to its historic location. Geographical area still defines the name of most London football clubs and there is a strong sentimental reason for keeping London's clubs within their historic community, but the reasons are more than sentimental. As a recent report from the GLA states

'It's clear that football clubs can play a valuable role in the identity of an area and be a source of civic pride'¹

Dulwich Hamlet has an illustrious history in football, the pink and blue colours and the ideals and former success of the club still remain world famous.² Famous football clubs put the area they play in on the map. As one local resident of Brentford commented:

'without [the club] Brentford would become just another suburb of west London'.³

Local authorities in London also acknowledge the importance of local football clubs for the area. Islington Council states that 'Arsenal puts Islington on the map'⁴ and Hounslow Council noted that 'a football club can offer a common interest and focus for people whether they have lived in the area for many years or are new arrivals.'⁵ The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham stated that professional football in their borough 'provides a major source of entertainment and contributes to the life of the community'⁶

The London boroughs of Hounslow, Islington and Hammersmith & Fulham have all attached great importance to the role that local football clubs can play within their borough; all three have endeavoured to keep clubs close to their historic communities as a focus for civic pride, regenerative growth and community projects⁷.

The London Mayor's planning team said that there are '...cultural, economic, social, regenerative, public transport and sustainability benefits for keeping football clubs close to their communities.'⁸ All of London's professional clubs do a great deal of work within their communities providing coaching for many different groups, particularly with children, and many other services. 80,000 people participate in Fulham schemes, 154,435 in Tottenham Hotspur's and 178,432 with West Ham United.

There is much potential for Dulwich Hamlet F.C. to work with the council on such schemes which would prove to be a valuable asset to the local community, especially in such a deprived borough as Southwark.

¹ Away From Home- scrutiny of London's football stadiums, GLA report June 2003

² A team in Japan has been named 'Dulwich Ham' in honour of the club.

³ Away From Home, 2003, E-mail from Des Slattery, March 2003

⁴ London borough of Islington, February 2003, printed in Away From Home, p.11.

⁵ Away From Home, 2003, E-mail from Des Slattery, March 2003

⁶ London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Unitary Development Plan

⁷ Away From Home- scrutiny of London's football stadiums, GLA report June 2003

⁸ GLA Planning Decisions Unit, March 2003

Health

Southwark Council has a series of targets for improving health in the Borough, and sport is one way to do this. Getting people involved in sport is good council policy and football clubs, and the stadiums with the health and fitness facilities they occupy, have a role here. Football is 'sexier' than a Council. Kids are much more likely to sign up to 'keep fit and be healthy with Dulwich Hamlet FC' programmes than with 'keep fit with Southwark Borough Council'. The club can add to the attraction by using the attraction of star players to promote schemes further. The contracts of many professional footballers contain clauses that state players must do a set number of hours work in the community, and there is no reason Dulwich, in partnership with the Council cannot do this.

Community

Sport is a wonderful way to encourage inclusivity and help bring marginalised communities into wider and more visible engagement with the local community. Dulwich Hamlet did conduct some initiatives in the community in the past, but it's not initiatives that are needed but sustained engagement with all sections of the local community with resources committed to supporting it. The Council needs to take the initiative here.

Clubs are a great focus for engendering a sense of a wider, cohesive community that leads to lots of benefits. The club cannot cut crime in itself, of course, but most of the initiatives used in things like regeneration, New Deal for Communities, Community safety all use the nebulous word community, but always have difficulty giving this word wider expression. Football Clubs don't have any trouble here, and are perhaps the most visible and tangible evidence of a community.

Regeneration

Sport has a role for regeneration, especially where new grounds are concerned. The importance of Dulwich Hamlet to the local economy is something the Council should want to preserve - matchday income for local shops, making public transport more viable, providing employment (especially on matchdays), football club employment itself, and associated contractors - all jobs that would be lost if Champion Hill were lost. Dulwich can play up to 33 home games in a season, including cup games, and some teams in the Division such as AFC Wimbledon bring over 1000 supporters to the area on match days. if you collated this up over the course of a year it would add to a considerable loss in income to the area. Most fans treat Saturday football as a day out and in effect become tourists to the town they are visiting for the day, buying refreshments and visiting shops.

Planning

One of the recommendations of the 'Away From Home' Report in reviewing UDPs (Urban Development Plans), was that boroughs should

*'...identify sites for major international, national, and local sports stadiums and facilities that meet the requirements of the English Institute of Sport's national network of sports centres (including Crystal Palace) and the needs of more specialist sports activities such as football academies.'*⁹

Dulwich Hamlet already run a successful football academy in conjunction with Southwark College and Southbank University, involving some 30-35 people. Examples of good practice such as this joint initiative could be widened and developed further. The Supporters' Trust are also organising a community day at Champion Hill for local community groups and children to attend with a range of activities and competitions. Yet the potential for the club to do more and really contribute to the life of the area remains huge and could dovetail in with many of the Council's own targets to promote a cohesive community.

Ground

...Champion Hill lies empty. But our community is full - full of possibility and talent. It is waiting to be ignited. Why can't the football club provide the catalyst for this?

[Respondent to the Interim Report]

Dulwich Hamlet finds itself with only 7 years left on a lease from Kings College London to play at Champion Hill, with no guarantee of renewal. Without the security of a long term lease the club runs

⁹ Away From Home- scrutiny of London's football stadiums, GLA report June 2003.

the risk of not having a ground and, with the exorbitant costs of land in the Borough, little chance of finding another suitable site in the area¹⁰. As the freehold of the land belongs to Kings College London they are free to sell off the ground for development. The temptation to sell is strong because without restrictions on its use, the land is worth millions of pounds to a developer. Kings College London could offer little in terms of hope that the ground could be secured - in response to our consultation exercise Kings College London responded:

We wouldn't support any proposals which reduce the College's future flexibility eg proposals to place restrictions on the use of the land, just because none of us knows what the future will bring and I would have thought that we would want to maintain flexibility
[Kings College London –April 2004]

Not only is the ground's future unsecured, but the design of the buildings have made it difficult to manage resulting in high running costs, poor facilities for supporters, and terrible security. The poor security in particular has proved particularly problematic, allowing vandals to cause thousands of pounds of damage and making parts of the ground look degraded and ugly.

The insecurity of the lease also fuels an attitude of short-termism that prevents long term investment into and care of the facilities. With such an uncertain future why should resources be channelled into the stadium when the owners can sell the land from beneath them? Coupled with vandalism the ground has deteriorated which in turn puts people of visiting the ground, reduces attendances and prevents further progress.

From my experience on being on the Football Committee of Dulwich Hamlet I know that new initiatives regarding extending the use of facilities and developing the ground generally are simply not actioned because people are not sure whether we are going to even have ground in a few years time. With this sort of constant threat hanging over your head its not surprising that new ideas are stymied.
[Response to Interim Report]

The football club's lease on Greendales is separate to the ground lease provided to the club by the Council. The Greendales lease has less than 11 years left to run and is in serious danger of not being renewed.¹¹ One of the reasons the lease may not be renewed is the poor maintenance record of the club, who as part of the condition of their lease, have to maintain Greendales. However, they have not done this effectively and the area is in a state of extreme disrepair.¹²

The astroturf pitch and Greendales playing fields especially lie vandalised and the club have found it impossible to put this space into useful service. The land itself has fallen into disrepair: people walking their dogs and allowing them to foul everywhere prevents use as a playing field; burnt out cars and mopeds from joy-riders make it look like a breaker's yard; discarded needles suggest it is a haven for drug users; and the changing rooms and astroturf pitch are heavily graffitied and vandalised. As there is no noise barrier to reduce the noise for residents on St. Francis estate nearest to the astroturf pitch the facility has attracted criticism from local residents. These problems severely disrupt the lives of local residents and people using the current facilities. Greendales is Metropolitan Open Land but could be more accurately described as a 'green wasteland'¹³.

Yet these problems are indicative of poor management and neglect, they are typical inner city problems derived from youngsters who have nothing to do and little opportunity to get involved with activities. It is paradoxical that in the midst of these neighbourhoods deprived of entertainment, properly maintained facilities and identity that you should have a potentially excellent stadium that lies empty, coming to life little more than once a fortnight. It is an underused asset in an area crying out for opportunity, access, excitement and belonging.

Community

¹⁰ The Planning Inspectorate Report notes that 'No suitable or alternative pitch has been identified this side of Bromley', op cit., p. 7.

¹¹ The 21 year lease from Southwark Council to Dulwich Hamlet Football Club runs out in March 2015.

¹² The Planning Inspectorate described the management of the Greendales facility as part of a 'regime of neglect', Planning Inspectorate, Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/A/02/1098655, Dulwich Hamlet Football Ground, Edgar Kail Way, Dulwich, London SE22, Clause 36, p. 6.

¹³ A phrase coined by the local press since a dead body was discovered after several months being there.

The other threat facing the club is more long term and mirrors the problems that many clubs across the country have. In essence, the club has lost touch with the community and the community has lost touch with Dulwich Hamlet. The club, and the ground at Champion Hill, should be a natural focus for the community, attracting support throughout Southwark and beyond, but simply does not fulfil its potential.

Supporters do come primarily from the local vicinity but also from further afield - Farnborough, Maidstone, Gravesend, Brighton, Bracknell, Liverpool and even Manchester. Yet the longer term picture is more telling. Crowds have been steadily falling since the club's height in the 1940s and 50s, when over 10,000 spectators would pack into the stadium to watch the club, to average gates of around 250. The club has not been able to engage the local community effectively and attract much needed new supporters, and the falling attendances mean falling revenue. This in turn has contributed to the club's difficulties in maintaining the ground. The club is in a slow, but certain, spiral of decline that needs arresting. The key to ensuring this is the ground and nearby facilities.

Unfortunately, the recent rejection of the joint application with Cliveden and Homebase has effectively deprived the local community of the chance of regenerating the facilities. The Charter School could have used the renovated sports ground and other schools and colleges suffer from a lack of inadequate sports facilities and/or travelling long distances for them. Local community and youths groups have problems of nowhere to meet or pressure on their current facilities which are often not suitable for purpose anyway. For instance, the Dulwich Sea Cadets, a voluntary youth organisation which has allowed the youth of the community to learn new and useful skills and get involved in a wide range of activities for well over 80 years, faces great uncertainty about gaining a new lease and there are no suitable alternative sites available in the local area.

Potential

However, the club should not be in this position. The ground is superbly situated in East Dulwich and should be able to take advantage of being located among a vibrant population providing a number of diverse services that other stadiums around the country offer such as, health club facilities, local bar, restaurant, retail outlets and of course football facilities. The club, and the stadium it occupies, should be the hub of the community attracting new investment, offering opportunities and services for the local population and welcoming visitors.

The stadium should contribute towards the economic health of East Dulwich and Southwark by initiating a 'multiplier effect' whereby its running acts as a spur to economic growth and activity through creating employment and stimulating demand for services such as fitness and health services, as well as consumable and related merchandise. These benefits should 'trickle down' to the overall benefit of the community. All activities should have a virtuous, ripple out effect for the entire area, contributing to increased wealth, urban regeneration and employment opportunities. However, the stadium is under-utilised at present and needs the right management and drive to make these benefits felt.

There are a number of funding streams that provide thousands of pounds for buildings and schemes that can deliver services to the local community. The *Community Chest*, the *Awards for All* scheme and the *Community Fund* all provide large sums of money, up to £100,000 in some cases, to bodies that work in the community and can deliver community based objectives. Schemes such as providing learning centres for disadvantaged children or Information and technology centres for adult teaching or even 'community spaces' for voluntary groups to use would be eligible schemes and attract such funding. The central position of the football club and its natural focus for the community make it ideally situated to offer such services and facilities, and of course, also take advantage of the funding available to host such schemes. If the right organisations and authorities were brought on board such schemes could be easily managed and delivered to the benefit of all.

The potential is there, but it needs a clear vision, the right back up and strong management to make it realisable. Indeed there are strong assets that the club can rely on, for instance, the 7-a-side facilities already serve over 1000 people and are heavily over-subscribed bringing in considerable income from football fees and bar receipts. Likewise, the health club also benefits from excellent subscription rates and the bar also is a profit-making venture. These parts of the club's operations should contribute to making the club a sustainable and secure community asset, however despite this potential its existence is still threatened.

RESPONSES TO THE INTERIM REPORT

The Interim Report presented proposals and discussion points and asked for respondents to address key questions that arose from them. The proposals concerned the club, the ground, the role of key stakeholders and future plans generally. The questions are given below along with a summarised account of respondents' answers, and then the recommendation of DHST.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT - Secure the ground

A long, secure lease placed in the hands of a strong, democratic community-focussed group such as the Supporters' Trust, combined with the strict planning conditions on the development of the ground would solve the major threat facing the club's ground.

As an additional security measure to ensure the club is never without a home, DHST in co-operation with the council would ensure that the use of the ground can only be changed from sports to another use if an equal or alternative site is provided either within the borough of Southwark or possibly a in a neighbouring borough.

The first step that is required is for the council to place further planning restrictions on the stadium. The precedent has been set by the London Borough of Hounslow who have attached planning (Section 106) conditions which state that permission to change Brentford FC's Griffin Park site from a recreational site to a residential site will only be granted should another site for the club be identified within Hounslow or an adjoining borough. The site would also be subject to a provision of green space and a percentage of affordable housing. In addition, the club's community work should continue within the Brentford area. Also the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham has marked the Craven Cottage site as a site for recreational and sporting use only. Like Hounslow, permission to change the use of this site would only be granted should another site be identified within the borough.

Following these examples the future of Dulwich Hamlet F.C. would be virtually secure if a sports only covenant allied with a planning restriction that the covenant could only be changed if an equal site is found at another location within the London borough of Southwark was placed on Champion Hill stadium. It is hoped that the council will do this in order to secure the future of the club.

The security of lease would also mean that the community use of facilities would be widened and the club and associated facilities - bar, astroturf and health and fitness club - run for their benefit. A rolling funding programme would be developed to secure monies for renovating parts of the ground for community use and introduce new schemes at the club. The new initiatives would breath new life into the club and attract new supporters to the matches, with the obvious advantage of raising gate receipts. The current area and facilities will be adapted and improved immeasurably, with little new building, but will not be harmful and disruptive to the environment or local residents.

QUESTION 1. Should the Trust be looking to secure Dulwich Hamlet Football Club's future at the current ground rather than an alternative site?

All responses indicated that the club should remain at their current site.

'Without a doubt, our priority must be for DHFC to remain at Champion Hill, either on the present site or adjacent to it.'

'I believe that at the present time, the current site represents the best opportunity for the club to move forward, as well as being within the area in which the club has historically played. Given the scarcity and price of land in the borough, it would be difficult in any event to locate an alternative site.'

'It is vital to ensure that Dulwich Hamlet FC remains on its present ground. I fully support the proposal in the first paragraph. It is vital that the Council places further planning restrictions on the

stadium so the site remains in perpetuity as a sports ground. Will you attempt to get this incorporated in the Southwark Plan?

RECOMMENDATION 1. – A solution to the long term future of Dulwich Hamlet and Champion Hill should be found on or adjacent to the existing site, or within the vicinity of the community it serves.

QUESTION 2. If the club is to remain at Champion Hill how should security of tenure be sought?

Respondents indicated that either a covenant or Council designation be sought.

'The application for a covenant restricting the use of the land for recreational and / or sporting use represents the best opportunity for the club to obtain security of tenure. Without this, the rest of the plans outlined in the document would be unlikely to succeed. If the land is available for retail or residential use, the value that this represents to the freeholders means that they may have no option but to sell the land to a developer. Whilst Kings College is a charity, and is therefore established to provide benefits that are of a non economic nature, they are restricted to doing this within their charitable purposes. Development of sport in the community is unlikely to be one of the objectives listed in Kings' charter.'

'It is imperative that the trust lobby the Council to designate the Ground as Borough Open Land [BOL] or Other Open Space [OOS]. My understanding is that the Council could easily make an amendment to the existing Southwark Plan as part of its pre-inquiry changes and designate it as BOL or OOS, whichever is the more appropriate. Such a designation would ensure that planning permission would not be granted for either a development or change of use that would result in the loss of or damage to playing fields and sports grounds. As far as I can see this would include outer buildings of the club as well, which would safeguard the premises too.'

RECOMMENDATION 2. – Some form of covenant or Council designation in the Southwark Plan be created to secure ground or ensure a suitable alternative be found in the vicinity.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Renovation of Greendales

DHST would seek to obtain either the freehold or long lease to the Greendales playing fields and ensure a strict covenant preventing use of the land except for sporting or community use is put in place.

The grass on Greendales is of extremely poor quality and it is doubtful whether it could ever be turned into a decent playing surface and certainly not without heavy investment and years of work. One solution would be to introduce an artificial grass pitch which allows heavy use and requires low maintenance. Installing this pitch on Greendales would allow the club to diversify the use of the ground and allow not only football, but also other sports such as rugby and hockey all year round. The current Astroturf pitch is wearing out from more than 10 years of heavy use and will also be replaced with an artificial grass pitch. New changing facilities will be provided which are comfortable, heated when necessary, and have showering facilities. The same building would secure and house all equipment needed to service the facilities to be stored.

The technology of floodlights has moved on a great deal in the years since the previous development. The current floodlights will be replaced with new ones which will reduce vastly the impact of light pollution on local residents. All new floodlights will also be of the same type using the latest floodlight technology to mitigate the problem of light pollution; this would be achieved by the use of reflectors, internal baffles, and cowl skirts to reduce both glare and obtrusive light pollution.

The security and safety problems of the whole site need to be addressed to stop the problems previously described. It is difficult to have a security fence/wall and have an aesthetically pleasing area that still looks like open land. A security fence/wall will be placed round the site but this will be made into a 'living wall' like the one to be built at the Oval. Trees could be planted around the site, including

on the hospital side where they will also act as a noise barrier. This combined with the 'living wall' will secure the site, and will be much more aesthetically pleasing and a greatly improved natural environment acting as a real 'Green Lung'. All of the remaining space in Greendales will be tidied up and enhanced to form small nature reserves which will increase biodiversity and can be used to teach children about the natural environment.

The current tennis courts will be refurbished and made more flexible so they can also be used for netball, 5-a-side football, etc. The Trust would be responsible for maintaining the ground and managing the staff to do this.

QUESTION 3. - Should the Trust seek to acquire the freehold/leasehold to Greendales, and the associated facilities?

The majority of respondents replied that the trust should seek to acquire the freehold or leasehold to the ground, but some were sceptical of the chances of achieving this. Other respondents put forward alternative ideas.

'The freehold / leasehold to Greendales should be held for the benefit of the football club, ownership by the Trust appears to present the best opportunity for this.'

'In an ideal world DHST should acquire the freehold on Greendales and Champion Hill because as a community-focussed organisation it would ensure that the interests of the community would be served and that the ground would not just be sold off for profit. But I'm not sure how you would go about convincing the local council, [the owner of Greendales] and Kings College London [the owner of the ground] to give up or sell the land as a reasonable price.'

'I don't think either the leasehold or freehold are feasible. Why would Greendales be given to the Supporters' Trust with no track record of ground management? A better solution would be for the Trust to ensure that they have representation on whatever body is managing Greendales; from this position they could act as an independent monitor and ensure that the area was maintained.'

RECOMMENDATION 3. – DHST to enter into negotiations with Southwark Council and Kings College London with a view to exploring all possible alternatives to securing and maintaining Greendales.

QUESTION 4. - Should the existing sports facilities be renovated and extended in order to provide for local schools as well as the football club?

A majority of respondents indicated that the sports facilities should be renovated, but commentators indicated that they wished for the current use of Greendales to continue and were concerned over changes in use:

'It is also vital that the right of public access to Greendales is retained — many of use walk through this space regularly, and enjoy using this small remaining green space in this otherwise heavily built-up area.'

'I was particularly disturbed by the suggestion that because the grass is claimed to be "of poor quality" there was a suggestion of replacing this with artificial turf. This would appear to be somewhat in contradiction to your professed desire, elsewhere in the proposal, to retain Greendales as a real 'Green Lung''

'There are already three artificial pitches so I am opposed to more grass being replaced by yet another artificial surface.'

It is worth noting that the Inspectorate's Report on the Appeal against the refusal to grant planning permission states that the grass is of 'poor quality' in both sporting and biodiversity terms, also trees are far more effective at absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen and so the nature reserves and planting of trees will mean that Greendales will be a vastly more effective Green Lung.

RECOMMENDATION 4. - The existing facilities on the Greendales site to be renovated with the views of local residents to be taken into account.

QUESTION 5. - Do the Trust's security proposals provide a suitable level of security, and what else could be done to secure the site?

Respondents gave a variety of suggestions to this question:

'Given the location of the Greendales site and the problems associated with it, the security arrangements are probably the best that can be devised under the circumstances. The "living wall" is a good idea; appropriate, well maintained vegetation can be visually attractive, increase biodiversity, be an effective shield against noise, and in the case of mature dense or thorny vegetation, provide a deterrent barrier to vandals and other criminals. High maintenance would however be required to keep the vegetation attractive and free from litter etc.'

'A decent secure fence, whilst letting light through, should be erected around the whole site. Perhaps similar, if not the same, as the metal fencing that surrounds the adjacent St. Olaves grounds. CCTV would be helpful as well, & in fact should be a top priority.'

'I believe the site must be fully enclosed to keep general members of public from using it as a walkway; cut through; dog walk; meeting point for unsociable elements of society; dumping ground for fly tippers; somewhere to dump & burn stolen cars & so on as it is now! Even the local police have been known to trespass on the land to exercise their horses'

RECOMMENDATION 5. - The club, the Council and DHST to explore further security arrangements and agree a budget and action plan.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Ground share

Having a multi-use stadium would mean the club could offer its facilities to other sports clubs. The feasibility of this arrangement is demonstrated by Fisher Athletic FC, who are currently using the facilities at Champion Hill. These arrangements bring in further revenue streams and utilises the stadium to its full potential. Another possible ground share client is the Rugby League club, South London Storm. A ground share between football and rugby league would work well as there are numerous examples where this is already the case, for example in London Brentford FC and London Broncos share Griffin Park.

The idea of shared resources might be able to be developed into areas such as physiotherapy, finance, administration, commercial thereby saving the duplication of some costs for the clubs concerned. It would also enable both clubs to be a better position to bid for grants from funding bodies such as Sport England.

QUESTION 6. - Should the Trust and the Football Club be looking to ground share with another sporting clubs, or should it be looking at alternative ways to boost income and funding opportunities?

The current two-year groundshare with Fisher Athletic F.C. has been viewed favourably by Dulwich Hamlet supporters and while some responses to this document were cautious about the long-term results of a groundshare agreement fearing that this was the start of a process of merging the two

clubs, the majority were enthusiastic. Some respondents expressed concerns that sharing would stretch the resources to breaking point, others raised the point that Fisher Athletic belong more to Bermondsey rather than East Dulwich and as such should play there. Other respondents raised concerns over idea of sharing the ground with a rugby league club:

*'I'm not entirely sure about a ground-share with a rugby club, but this is a personal thing... call me a traditionalist, but I believe a soccer stadium should be the exclusive domain of the Association game...My main concern however, would be the playing surface — could it take it? If the synthetic grass option, mentioned in the document, is used, is this compatible with rugby? I am aware that such ground share arrangements do work. In Hull the local authority entered into a PPP with Kingston Communications and built a stadium which accommodates Hull City FC and Hull FC (rugby league).'*¹⁴

'I agree with ground sharing with e.g. South London Storm in principle, but any ground sharing agreement needs to ensure that the football club remains as the primary user of the ground, we must safeguard ourselves against losing our ground to our tenants, which has happened to football clubs before. We also need to ensure that any ground sharing agreement with a club playing in the summer clearly allows time for work on the pitch to take place outside the football season.'

'The prospect of a ground-share with South London Storm would also bring another set of people down here, and that may lead to an increase in attendance of the [Dulwich Hamlet] games'

'South London Storm Amateur Rugby League Club would make an excellent ground share client.'

'Should the pitch(es) & facilities be up to the usage then, of course, the ground should be developed into a multi-use stadium. With care being taken that the tenants do not become bigger & more powerful than Dulwich Hamlet football Club & subsequently take control & start to push them down the pecking order as tenants as I believe has happened at Kigmeadow Stadium, where the roles of landlord & tenant have been reversed with the long established Kingstonian Football Club & the recently formed (2002) AFC Wimbledon.'

RECOMMENDATION 6. – Management structure should look for opportunities for other clubs to ground share at Champion Hill to maximise revenue streams and ensure the stadium fulfils its potential as multi-use sports facility.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Community hall

The squash courts could be converted into a sports and community hall which will act as an indoor sports hall for local school, colleges, and clubs. It will also act as a meeting hall for local community and educational groups.

QUESTION 7. Should a community hall be developed at Dulwich Hamlet Football Club?

Respondents generally indicated that this initiative should be taken further:

'The community hall does of course also have non revenue benefits in terms of links with the community, which also needs to be balanced with the revenue considerations.'

'The community hall is an excellent idea that would provide a much needed facility for local groups to meet in – I know our group would use it!'

RECOMMENDATION 7. - A community hall is developed for community groups.

¹⁴ The pitch mentioned here is compatible with Rugby use.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Improvements to Champion Hill

When the new Champion Hill stadium was built it fulfilled the ground grading requirements for promotion at the time, however these have since changed and the stadium no longer meets them. The ground will be improved to meet the needs of all current and anticipated ground grading and safety requirements for promotion to the Football Conference for which it was originally intended. This will improve facilities for supporters of both Dulwich Hamlet F.C. and South London Storm including such things as improved and covered terracing, greatly improving viewing of matches, and a secure area from which to run club shops and sell programmes.

The pitch in the stadium would be improved by injecting synthetic grass fibres into the roots which intertwine with the natural roots and provide a much more stable playing surface allowing much higher usage. The newest generation of artificial surfaces combines the advantages of similar playing characteristics as natural turf, including increased player comfort and safety, with low maintenance and extended usage. This would allow the stadium to host more ground hires, bringing in more revenue, and enabling Dulwich Hamlet F.C. to manage the costs of the ground. The newest generation of artificial surfaces combines the advantages of similar playing characteristics as natural turf, including increased player comfort and safety, with low maintenance and extended usage.

A museum will be established, located under the improved and extended terracing at the car park end, which will house sections celebrating the illustrious past of Dulwich Hamlet F.C. and the history of the local and surrounding area. This museum, which hopefully can be made interactive to make it interesting and accessible to all age groups, which symbolise the combined and inter-linked past of Dulwich Hamlet F.C. and the community which will remerge with this project.

QUESTION 8. - What would be the most appropriate ground grading standard for the ground to be developed to, bearing in mind the likely playing status of Dulwich Hamlet FC in the future?

It was difficult to establish an overall consensus on this issue, but the minimum recommendation from any respondent regarding future ground grading standard for Champion Hill was the Football Conference:

'The Football Conference is a reasonable long term aspiration for a club of Dulwich Hamlet's current size and position, and the ground should be developed to this standard.'

'I believe that all improvements to the current ground, & all buildings works on a brand new stadium, should be at least up to whatever the current gradings are for the top division of the [Football] Conference.'

RECOMMENDATION 8. - Plans for future ground developments should meet Football Conference standard, at a minimum.

QUESTION 9. How best could the history of the club and the local community be incorporated into the design of a renovated stadium?

Respondents who answered this question were unanimously in favour of this proposal:

'I support the idea of an exhibition space to show the history of the club and community, the scale and nature of the facility would have to depend on what market research showed to be the likely usage of such a facility'

'The idea of securing funds from the heritage commission to pay for a dhfc museum (so that a stand may be built on top of it) is an ingenious one'

'A museum would enable the historic photographs and other items to be seen by far more people than have so far been in the boardroom. This is a positive proposal.'

RECOMMENDATION 9. – A museum of the football club be developed in any new plans.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Funding

The Trust will set up a number of schemes and initiatives involving community groups using the facilities at the stadium. The Trust has already been successful in raising funds through grant applications. As part of a rolling programme of fundraising, a number of applications for funding will be made by a dedicated team looking to maximise the number of revenue streams coming into the club. By being a non-profit making body, community-based organisation, the Trust can access grants that a private limited company like the football club cannot.

Schemes like the Princes Trust Football Initiative, which helps improve the skills of young unemployed people, and Positive Futures, which aims to reduce young offenders and drug use through regular participation in sport, are good examples of such schemes. An additional advantage of using the stadium to host initiatives is that it brings new people to the ground who are the next generation of supporters for the club

QUESTION 10. - How best should funding be secured for the project?

Responses to this question were varied, but two respondents recommended that DHST appoint a board member to specifically to investigate the issue further.

RECOMMENDATION 10. – A dedicated fundraising officer be appointed by DHST to source streams of funding for the football club and community activities.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – How will it work

Pitches will be available to schools, colleges, and other educational groups (including the Dulwich Hamlet academy run in conjunction with Southwark College and Southbank University) from 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 12:00 on Saturdays during term time.

They will be allocated fair timeslots by a 'Community Officer' managed by the Trust, and use will be heavily discounted or even free of charge. In school holidays there will be an extension of the soccer schools and other coaching for sports will be provided. The pitches will be available to Dulwich Hamlet Juniors from 17:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 17:00 Sundays. Pitches will be used for the '7's' from 19:00 to 22:00 Monday to Friday.

The main pitch in Champion Hill stadium will be available to Dulwich Hamlet F.C. and South London Storm RLC at all times with the exception of [SLSFA cup finals and LFA cup finals, etc.]. South London Storm RLC will be guaranteed 15 matches per year.

All parties are responsible for the facilities in their time slot and will be required to pay for any damage occurring during their time slot.

Southwark council and Hamlets Health Club will contribute to cover the cost of maintenance and to employ a Community officer to manage and maintain the site.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Are the proposals viable?

The proposal fulfils all of the following Southwark Council's planning stipulations:

- Unitary Development Plan objective C4: to facilitate a range of different leisure and recreation, protect existing facilities and welcome new ones.
- Unitary Development Plan objective C5.1: to protect and enhance playing fields
- Unitary Development Plan objective C5.4: restraining loss or damage to [Public Open Space], playing fields and sports grounds, whether publicly or privately owned.
- Unitary Development Plan objective C5.7: enhance open nature and character of Metropolitan Open Land by increasing its use for recreational activities.
- Strategic guidance for London Planning Authorities RPG3 imposes a presumption against inappropriate development that would be harmful to its open character.

- The Planning Inspectorate report on the appeal on the Homebase application states that 'the open-air facilities would not be inappropriate in Metropolitan Open Land' this proposal has similar but more enhanced facilities.
- The Planning Inspectorate for the appeal on the Homebase application stated the use of the latest floodlight technology would mitigate the problem of light pollution.

TRUST DISCUSSION POINT – Summary and further comments

This project has the following advantages:

- Improves the local natural, built, and living environment.
- Provides an educational facility in the form of a museum in the area.
- Facilities and coaching will be provided for schools, colleges, and clubs for a wide range of sports.
- Provides adolescents with new entertainment and leisure facilities.
- Adapts and improves on current facilities so will not cause major disruption or harm to the environment or local residents.
- Improves security and safety of local area.
- Improves area aesthetically.
- Reduces light and noise pollution for local residents.
- Will not have an impact on traffic and current parking provided is more than adequate and in fact underused during the day time).
- Gives the community a new hall available for a variety of uses.
- Secures the future of Dulwich Hamlet F.C. and allows the club to meet costs and grow.
- Gives Dulwich Hamlet Juniors pitches to play on.
- South London Storm will have a base to grow, develop, and would be able to facilitate any foreseeable increase in playing and ground grading standard.
- Dulwich Hamlet F.C., South London Storm, and the community are drawn closer together and have a going concern and vested interest in each others future.
- The total number of people using the whole site rises from 50,500 to over 230,000.
- Puts the site in the hands of a community group with an interest in sports and prevents any development on the site.
- As the area will be regenerated and put to heavy use whilst enhancing the environment and it's 'openness' the status of Metropolitan Open Land will be enhanced.

Of the respondents that addressed this section there were various suggestions of the next way forward. The DHST board has collated the information and incorporated these suggestions in the 'Next Steps' below.

RECOMMENDATION 11. – Implement the 'Next Steps'

NEXT STEPS

Step 1 Council to organize and host a high level action group to discuss the future of Champion Hill and Greendales; consider the recommendations raised in this document and develop terms of reference to investigate solutions. Representatives from the following organizations to be invited:

- Regional officer, Sport England¹⁵
- DHST
- Dulwich Hamlet Football Club
- Kings College London
- Southwark Council
 - Strategic Development Manager for Sport (Nigel Robinson)
 - Executive Member for Equality, Culture and Sport (Columba Blango)

¹⁵ Sport England can advise on similar successful completed projects that will be used as a benchmark.

- Head of Youth Service (Karl Murray)
- Football Development Officer (Nicola Donnelly)
- South London Storm
- Besemer Grange School

Step 2 Agree Terms of Reference for group.

Step 3 Draw up an action plan, including a budget for works done at the ground.

Step 4 Develop a Management Committee to specifically run and maintain the Greendales facility.

The Management Committee will be made up of the following:

- Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust community officer: who will serve as a representative of both the community and football interests;
- Representative of schools and higher education: it is hoped that the schools and higher education facilities involved could form themselves into a group and have a representative sit on the committee to ensure their needs are met;
- Council Youth Service representative: to represent young peoples sporting needs which lie outside of the education system.

APPENDIX 1. – Suggested action plan for developing Champion Hill

Extensive research has been done using a number of sources particularly information available from the Sport England website. The next step would be to lobby the council about this proposal, if they agreed then below is a roadmap of how to take things forward.

The key to a successful project is the appointment of competent consultants to form a design team (1).

- Contact regional officer of Sport England who can advise on similar successful completed projects that will be used as a benchmark.
- Draw up a design brief. This will include details of the functions that the finished sight must perform, meaning rather than a site and floor plan of the changing rooms it will specify how many teams/people need to change there plus the facilities they will need.
- Contact the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Civil Engineers who can suggest consultants and firms in the required fields.
- Invite the suggested firms and consultants to tender based on the design brief and a site visit.
- Evaluate tenders and appoint a lead consultant who will administer the project with the assistance of other consultants.
- The lead consultant will advise what other consultants should be appointed. This may be likely to include a planning supervisor (to deal with health and safety issues), a chartered quantity surveyor (who looks after our financial interests), and possibly a chartered services engineer and/or a chartered structural engineer maybe required to help the lead consultant. This design team will develop the design in accordance with the design brief, arrange for a tender and administer the contract on site.
- Based on evaluation of tenders a contractor will be employed for the construction work under a standard joint contract tribunal (JCT) form of contract recommended by the design team.
- Construction work takes place perform by the construction firm and administered by the design team.
- When the construction work is finished the site will be handed over to the management group.

Management Committee

It is proposed that once work has been completed on the site a management committee will take over the site. This committee will meet regularly to allocate time slots and take bookings for parties who wish to use the facilities. It will also be responsible for keeping the site well maintained and in good working order.

The committee will be made up of the following:

- DHST community officer: who will serve as a representative of both the community and football interests.
- Representative of schools and higher education: it is hoped that the schools and higher education facilities involved could form themselves into a group and have a representative sit on the committee to ensure their needs are met.
- Council Youth Service representative: to represent young peoples sporting needs which lie outside of the education system.

Proposed time slots for pitches:

Weekdays term time

0900-1730	Schools and higher education establishments
1730-1900	Local junior football clubs training

1900-2200	Pitch 1: '7's' football run by DHST Pitch 2: Training for university football and hockey clubs.
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During school holidays the timeslots for schools will be replaced by soccer schools and other coaching courses.

Weekends

0900-1300	School and junior club matches
1300-1800	Available for local clubs

The '7's' football will allow a full-time trust community officer to be employed who will be responsible for the smooth running of the site overseeing it's use and arranging for maintenance. Also this income will pay for the running costs and general maintenance, and allow the trust to be able to make Dulwich Hamlet Football Club a financially stable club.

APPENDIX 2 – Response to DHST Consultation Document, Dulwich Hamlet Football Club, 31st July 2003.

Lawrence Marsh (LM)

LM summarised the main purposes of the document:

- i. to generate ideas on how to improve the club and ensure that it was run as an asset for the community
- ii. to identify what arrangements would be needed to secure the football ground.

Responses to the consultation document would be written up in a final report to be made publicly available in mid September.

With regard to the ideas for the development of a community club, **LM** argued that the club had lost touch with its community and the community had lost touch with the club. The ideas presented in the document sought to address these issues. As such, there are a number of initiatives and examples of good practice that have been included in the consultation document, but DHST would welcome more ideas.

With regard to the ground, **LM** stated that following the planning inspector's recent decision to uphold Southwark Council's ruling to refuse planning permission for a new ground, the immediate objective for DHST and the wider supporter base should be to lobby for a covenant to be placed on the ground which would prevent any development work, unless an alternative but equal site for a new ground was found in the Borough. Such restrictions had precedents at Brentford and Fulham, with the borough councils taking an active and assertive role in ensuring the club's chief asset, the ground, could not be sold leaving the club homeless.

Andy Tucker (AT)

Noted that there are a number of funding streams that could provide much needed funds for organisations that work in the community. As a community-based, not-for-profit and democratic body, DHST was in an ideal position to apply and access these funds. DHST has experience in applying for grants having already applied to the Co-operative Dividend fund and the Bridge House Trust for funds totalling sum £3,500, in order to host a 'community day' at the club.

LM

If a stadium was designed and run as a 'multi-sports' facility, there were large funding bodies, such as Sport England and the Community Fund, who would be willing to provide substantial sums of money (in the region of £100,000s). The new stand at Macclesfield Town provided an excellent example of how to develop a ground using external funding while still retaining community use.

However, the short-term nature of the lease could present a problem here. This would need to be investigated further.

Lee Shailer (LS)

DHST's involvement would be key to accessing this money because as a community-based organisation it could ensure the ground would be for community use.

Martin Eede (ME)

Any proposals about developing Greendales are welcomed. The real difficulty about proposing any development on Greendales was that public right of way was still needed.

Mishi Morath (MM)

The issue of public right of way and access behind Greendales needs further investigation.

MM

The best option for the club would be to stay at Champion Hill, but as a contingency plan it is useful to know what other grounds in Southwark are available and what the possibility of using them as stadiums would be. Southwark Sports Ground and Herne Hill were possible sites, although there would be difficulties with floodlights at the Southwark Sports Ground.

It was generally agreed that ensuring a planning restriction on the ground should be first priority. The views of Steve Dye, Kings College and Southwark Council were key to achieving this.

LS

If possible, the final report should try to identify areas of mutual interest between the club, DHST, Southwark Council and Kings College.

MM

The proposal for allowing South London Storm to use Champion Hill would have big implications for the ground. How serious were the plans to include the rugby league club?

AT

Although there was no confirmation, South London Storm were very interested in the idea and would take the idea seriously if approached.

ME

Volunteered to ask Steve Dye for feedback on the document and see if he would meet with representatives of DHST to discuss the finer details. It was agreed this was an excellent suggestion.

MM

Asked who would be sent the document.

AT

The final report including all the consultation submissions would be widely disseminated to the following bodies and individuals:

- Local MPs
- Local Councillors
- Tessa Jowell MP
- DHST Members
- Local papers
- Website
- Southwark Action for Voluntary Organisations
- Supporters Direct
- Steve Dye
- Kings College
- Mayor of Lewisham
- Southwark Council

Further suggestions for recipients would be welcomed.

Tony Squires (TS)

It would be a good idea to send the document to local tenant's associations and voluntary organisations to ensure a wide as possible consultation and lay the foundations for a broad consensus.

LS

Representatives from DHST were due to give a presentation at a networking meeting of local organisations on September 1st and this provided an excellent opportunity to introduce the document.

Philip Mitchell (PM)

The views of Lordship Lane Building Community and Chamber of Commerce should also be sought.

Paul Reagan (PR)

The views of Dulwich Businesses should also be sought

NEXT STEPS

AT

Final deadline for submissions was 31st August. Everyone was encouraged to read the consultation document carefully and make a submission.

MM

Another meeting prior to the publication of the final report should be arranged.

LS

Minutes from this meeting would be made available on the website and DHST noticeboard, but they would be sent by post to those who preferred it.