

## **Chipstead Sailing Club – Proposed New Storage Sheds version 4.0 01/09/2021**

### **Introduction**

Chipstead Sailing Club has operated on Longford Lake since the 1950s.

Over the last 10 years there has been a significant expansion in the service it provides to the local community, notably in training provided to schools, sea cadets and local juniors and adults. It now also houses Wealden Sailability, a volunteer run charity that is one of the largest providers of sailing activity to the disabled in in the Southeast of England.

To provide and support these additional activities it has been necessary to house many additional boats with all their ancillary kit.

Modern kit is expensive, and the current facilities do not allow it to be properly stored or kept secure.

The existing sheds are not only inadequate in terms of size but rather old and dilapidated. The additional sheds for which we seek planning permission are all for the training, disabled sailing, and external group activities, not for general sailing club use.

### **About Chipstead Sailing Club**

Chipstead Sailing Club is a dinghy sailing club. It is a Community Aided Sports Club (C.A.S.C) The registered number is CH10118. As well as being an RYA Champions Club, it is also an RYA Sailability Centre.

The club operates at Longford Lakes near Chipstead village near Sevenoaks. The club takes pride in being a centre of excellence for RYA dinghy sailing, racing, and training for adults, children and the disabled. The club offers a fully inclusive membership opportunity for anyone who wants to participate in the sport of dinghy sailing. Dinghy racing takes place on Wednesday evenings, Saturday afternoons and on Sunday. Regular attendance is 20 to 30 boats per race.

The Saturday morning kids club normally has 50 participants each week. In addition to dinghy racing and leisure sailing the club offers RYA sailing and power boat training to the public. There are three tranches of dinghy sailing and power boat training each year, Spring Summer and Autumn.

Usage of the club has grown significantly over the last 10 years, and it is now used by several local schools and youth groups; Trinity School, New Beacon School, Knole Academy, Radnor House School, Dulwich College, Westerham and Orpington Sea Cadets. The club provides instruction to these groups on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings throughout the season.

The club's disabled sailing section is called Wealden Sailability. Wealden Sailability is a registered charity (no.1125286). It won the Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2105 and was runner up in Sevenoaks Council Charity of the Year 2017. Like the sailing club it is entirely volunteer run. Wealden Sailability operates on two days a week between April and October and hosts many schools (Marjorie McClure School, Oxted School, St Stephens Junior School and Valence School amongst others). There are also visits from independent sailors and many other organised groups and carer centres for the disabled e.g., Aspen (formerly Pembury). A normal session day will see more than 50 disabled participants taking to the water. Wealden Sailability anticipates a huge demand for its

services now that we are exiting from the Pandemic with many local charities (e.g., Maypole Project) starting to use its services and many more enquiring.

Chipstead Sailing Clubs facilities are also used by Bromley Canoe Club and a local open water swimming and triathlon training group (TriSwim). Bromley canoe club use the lake on Friday evenings and on Saturday and Sunday evenings. Triswim operate on Tuesday and Thursday early mornings and also on Saturday and Sunday.

There is also a growing Paddle Boarding section now comprising 100 members many of whom are from the local villages (Chipstead and Chevening). This group includes a great many young people and especially local mothers.

The Model Yachting group that meets on many mornings of the week and race a regular fleet of 30 plus model boats is mainly formed of more elderly members many of whom have been previous dinghy and big boat sailors. Like Paddle Boarding this group is expanding rapidly and is adding to the diverse pool of membership at the club.

The club makes regular attendance submissions to Sport England and is keen to expand its services to the wider community. We expect this growth to continue in the coming years, as we come out of lockdown after the COVID 19 pandemic.

### **About The Proposed Development**

The club has not extended its storage or club house facilities since 2008 and now urgently needs to replace two existing storage sheds with four new sheds to create additional secure covered storage space and remove a potential safety hazard (asbestos).

The location on our site that incorporates the current and proposed new sheds is the dinghy storage area (a car park for boats). This location is bounded by a wooded area and is close to the lake shore to the north. The existing ground level is significantly below the level of the private access road (>3metres) and separated from the access road by the established woodland. The existing and proposed new sheds are 23 metres and 17 metres respectively from the western boundary. The new sheds will maintain the distance to the southern boundary of approximately 8 metres. The access road is a private road that provides access to the Cheshire Home, Chipstead Sailing Club and the Homesdale Angling Society fishing lake.

The existing sheds and the proposed new sheds cannot be seen from the opposite shore of Longford Lake or be seen from any other dwellings, the Cheshire Home or the local foot path that crosses the access road some 400m to the East.

Picture 1: The following picture shows the existing sheds:



The private access road can just be discerned behind the sheds. Longford Lake is behind the photographer.

Picture 2: The following photograph shows the site from the north shore of Longford Lake. Note that this view is not possible from the public footpath which is many metres back from the North shore of the lake.



The sheds have been named (for simplicity) as Sheds 1 through 5 from left to right.

Note that only Sheds 1,2 and 3 are shown in Pictures 1 and 2.

Shed 1 (left) will remain untouched by the changes proposed. Sheds 2 and 3 will be dismantled and replaced by new sheds 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Picture 3: The new sheds will each look like:



The new sheds will each be: 7.32 x 4.88 x 3.05m. The clubs existing enclosed storage area is 226m<sup>2</sup> and the new proposed enclosed storage area is 328m<sup>2</sup> representing an increase of 102m<sup>2</sup>.

The sheds will be constructed out of wood with black corrugated bitumen roofs. They will have wooden floors that will be supported on paving block piers. Each shed will have a small concrete access ramp to the front door. Note that Shed 1 has an existing concrete ramp. The existing concrete bases for Shed 2 and Shed 3 will remain unchanged to minimise the amount of ground works.

The proposed external finishes will match the existing finishes in both form and colour. To reduce the visual impact of the new sheds, we have set the front elevations back by more than one metre, as advised by the District Council in the consultation period.

No flora or fauna will be disturbed by the proposed development, and there will be no need for any tree removal or surgery to accommodate the new sheds or their installation. There will be no drainage or sewage ground works associated with the installation.

## **Justification for the Proposed Development**

Two of the existing sheds have been on the site for over 25 years and have become dilapidated. When they were put in place Chipstead Sailing Club (CSC) was simply a club for members who had their own boats, and it was usual for them to keep all the necessary accessories at home.

Like many other successful clubs CSC has had to adapt over the years both to provide for its members and to better serve the wider community. Three principal developments support this:

1. Since 2000 CSC has been accredited by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) as a Training Centre providing accredited courses to children and adults. Alongside this there is a thriving junior club, "Chipmates" and an adult club. These groups aim to attract new members and encourage participation in the sport of sailing.
2. Wealden Sailability now operates two days a week at CSC to provide sailing opportunities for disabled people of all abilities. Wealden Sailability moved to CSC from Bough Beech in 2011.
3. Several schools now regularly use the club's facilities, including RYA instructors and boats, for their pupils, thereby increasing the scope of sporting opportunities for the younger generation. These schools also store their own boats and equipment at the club.

To support the above initiatives CSC now has around 50 dinghies that are available for training and also rental for newcomers. Wealden Sailability has around 35 boats that are specifically designed or adapted for people with a wide range of disabilities.

The need to keep sails, safety equipment, spares and accessories has therefore grown massively, and the available storage space has been exceeded such that equipment cannot be properly stored. Furthermore, the need to fill every corner of the current sheds and pile things on top of each other leads to costly damage.

CSC wishes to continue to serve the various stakeholders: club members, local people interested in the sport and the disabled, by providing a good standard of training and equipment. Taking in external groups such as Wealden Sailability (for whom the additional shed is needed and will be provided at Wealden's cost) has stretched CSC's capacity to, and arguably beyond, its current limit.

The existing (three) sheds together with the boat house (at the Eastern end of our site) are no longer large enough to house the rescue boats and associated essential equipment, including spare parts, safety equipment and clothing, necessary for the functioning of the sailing club. Due to the increase in the popularity and usage of the sailing club, additional equipment is required to be stored at the sailing club.

The club needs additional storage facilities and wishes to refurbish one shed and replace two of the existing sheds with four new larger sheds. This will create much needed additional enclosed, secure storage space for a variety of sailing equipment. This development will also allow us to remove a potential safety hazard which is the roofing to the larger shed, as it has some roof sheeting which contains asbestos.

### **1. Security**

- The existing sheds (other than Shed 1) are not the right size to accommodate a safety boat. This means that we have to store two of our safety boats outdoors when they are not in use. This means that they are at risk of being vandalised. Chipstead Sailing Clubs site is not secure and enclosed by fencing.

- The lack of storage space means that other items of equipment that might better be stored under cover are having to be left outside.
- Many different groups use our facilities (Wealden Sailability, our own Training Centre, Model Yachters, numerous school groups etc. The lack of storage space mean that we cannot adequately separate the equipment belonging to different groups. Items of equipment and spare parts get “borrowed”.

## **2. Health and Safety**

- The existing Shed 2 is more than 50 years old and is now in a dangerous state of repair. It is literally falling down, and the back wall is only upright because of the proximity of the internal racking. It is dangerous and should not be accessed.
- The existing Shed 2 has a part asbestos roof (concrete encased corrugate white asbestos) that will need to be removed and disposed of safely. This represents a dangerous environment that should not be used by visitors (sometimes children) when obtaining buoyancy aids and other pieces of equipment.
- The existing sheds (other than Shed 1) are not the right size to accommodate a safety boat. This means that we have to store two of our safety boats outdoors when they are not in use. We cannot leave them with outboard motors attached. This mean that our safety crews are regularly having to lift heavy outboard motors on and off the boats. With the new sheds these two boats will be stored in Sheds 2 and 3 respectively with their engines on them.
- One of the boats that is stored outside is designated that the “Emergency Safety Boat”. This boat is intended to be available to any club member so that it can be launch quickly in an emergency when organised activities are not taking place at the club (during these times members are allowed to sail for practice and leisure). In order to use this boat the engine has to be obtained from the shed and put on the boat before it can be pushed (on its trolley) to the pontoons for launching. With the new sheds this boat will be stored under cover with its engine in place ready for use.

## **3. Flexibility**

- The new sheds will be allocated as follows:
  - Shed 1 (existing CSC Training store (safety boat 3).
  - Shed 2 - new CSC Training store (safety boat 4: emergency Power boat).
  - Shed 3 – Schools Groups
  - Shed 4 - Wealden Sailability
  - Shed 5 – Paddle Boards, Bromley Canoe Club and Sea Cadets and TriSwim.
- The new larger sheds will each offer their respective groups the facility to:
  - Undertake boat maintenance activities under cover.
  - A temporary space in which possibly soggy group can gather for short (in front of white board) training sessions between on water training sessions.
  - Space to house more equipment including long items like masts. Some of our masts are up to 22 feet in length (hence the size chosen for the new sheds).
  - It will not be necessary to climb over existing equipment to get to the “stuff at the back”.
  - It will not be necessary to unload much of the shed contents to get to items at the back (as is the case for Wealden Sailability (existing Shed 3) now.

- There will be space for the groups to expand their stock of equipment and accommodate larger fleets of boat and therefore support more users.