

# Welling United

Football Club and Community Scheme

## Design & Access Statement

Volume 1 - Rev A

December 2023

Prepared on behalf of: Woolwich Road Limited

*a partnership between...*







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## 1.1 The Team

Client (the Applicant):	Woolwich Road Limited	Partnership between Lita Homes & WUFC
Architect: Landscape Architect	Create Design	Design & access statement Public realm & landscape
Planning:	Stantec	Planning statement Economic Benefits Statement
Transport Consultant:	Motion	Transport assessment Active Travel Zone Assessment Event Management Plan Delivery & Service Plan Stadium Travel Plan
Viability Consultant:	ULL Property	Financial viability assessment
Structural Engineer	Lita Homes	
M&E Energy/ Sustainability/ Overheating	Mendick Waring	Energy & sustainability report Overheating assessment Whole life cycle carbon assessment Circular economy statement Foul sewage & utilities assessment
Fire Consultant	Fire Safety Services	Fire strategy report
TVIA Heritage Archaeology Tree survey	Brindle & Green	TVIA assessment Heritage assessment Archaeological desk based report Tree survey & arboricultural impact assessment
Communications	Cratus	Statement of community engagement
Construction Management Plan	BPM	Site Waste Management Plan & Construction Management Plan
Ecology	HCUK Group	Ecological assessment Biodiversity net gain
Daylight & Sunlight	T16 Design	Daylight/ sunlight assessment
Air Quality Noise	Hawkins Environmental	Air quality assessment Noise Assessment





## 2.0 Executive summary

### Introduction

This document describes the proposed design of a mixed use residential development which partly refurbishes and partly rebuilds the Park View Road stadium for Welling United Football Club in the London Borough of Bexley DA16.

Within this Design and Access Statement we will explain the evolution of the design, the ethos and reasons for the building layouts and the quantum of development planned with this major new development within Welling.

Within the submitted application documents, the design team has sought to assemble a collective body of information which highlights the significant community benefits generated by the proposed redevelopment scheme. Our studies and reports demonstrate that the project benefits significantly outweigh any potential harm caused through site redevelopment, thereby meeting the requirements of a 'very special circumstances' case expected of developments of this nature located on previously developed land within the MoL.

### The key benefits of the scheme

A key benefit of this scheme is the ability to exponentially increase the number of people that can play football or train at the Park View ground on a weekly basis. With currently over 26 youth teams playing and training across the borough, this has the secondary benefit of freeing up playing space elsewhere for other teams and groups to use.

As a result, Welling United FC and the Welling United Academy, can foster and expand as a community hub for football and its associated activities in way that was previously impossible for its 500+ players

and staff. Much of this change is made possible by the inclusion of a new 3G astro playing surface which will replace the traditional turf pitch. In addition to the pitch, the ground will have new covered seating and standing areas; new changing and physio rooms; and the ability to use the hospitality areas as classrooms for training purposes.

The sales revenue from the residential portion of this proposal enables the changes and upgrades to the football facilities possible as well as providing 104 much needed new homes within the borough of Bexley.

### The current site and facilities

Over the preceding years, the club has struggled to attract the major investment needed to maintain, improve, and operate its facilities to the standards required by the Football Association and other ground safety bodies. This project represents a one-time opportunity to address those shortcomings and allow the club and community to grow through the investment this project represents, and enjoy a period of stability to plan for the future. As the photographs in this document attest, much of the current Welling accommodation is in partial dilapidation and is not fit for purpose. Therefore the need for investment and redevelopment is important for the club's medium and long term continuity.

### Project objectives

The objectives of this project are relatively clear and straightforward and can be described as follows:

- Create a new fit for purpose home (and associated facilities) for Welling United FC and Welling United Academy to support the 500+ players and staff of the youth and senior teams.





- Create an exemplar community based sustainable development for the Club to expand it's community engagement and outreach activities.
- Maximise the residential portion of the project to enable the vision of the club to be viably delivered.
- To secure the long term future of the Club.

### Process

The design team has embarked on a process of engagement and consultation over the last 12 months which has had a significant impact on the development and evolution of the project. The following list is a summary of the consultees.

- London Borough of Bexley - 4 pre application meetings
- Design South East - design review panel
- The GLA
- Community engagement
- Ward councillors
- Sport England
- The Football Association
- The National League
- Secured by Design & Counter Terrorism Security Advisor
- Welling United FC
- Welling United Academy
- Welling United Supporters Club

Where practically possible we have listened and modified the proposals to improve the scheme to help reduce the impact of the development on the surroundings and establish a project which is deliverable from a viability and environmental

perspective.

### Site challenges

This project has some unique design challenges. We can summarise the main challenges to be addressed as follows.

- The footprint for the residential enabling development is restricted due to the substantially landlocked nature of the site.
- As a result, site access is also relatively limited for both spectators and vehicles. This in turn creates further challenges regarding the evacuation of the football ground in an emergency situation.
- The constricted building footprint makes providing suitable parking space for the quantum of residential units proposed very difficult.
- The restricted footprint means that we need to build higher than the neighbouring buildings in to meet the aspirations for the redevelopment of the football ground.
- The overall height of the proposals requires careful evaluation relative to any potential harm caused to the setting of the MOL, and urban character of the locale.

### The proposal

**The current design proposal consists of the following spatial elements.**

- Ground + 7 storey residential development.
- 104 New homes.

- New football facility for Welling United FC & Welling United Academy supporting 40+ football teams.
- The refurbishment of the Erith & Belvedere Stand and recreation hall (reverting to Welling United use)
- A multi-purpose FIFA Approved 3G Pitch .
- Approximately 4,000 spectator ground capacity - combination of covered seating and standing.
- New hospitality areas (for hire) which as double classrooms for teaching and community use.
- New club shop/ticket, cafe/bar, and food outlet units.
- New changing rooms for players and match officials
- New physio, medical, and first aid facilities.
- 8 Blue Badge parking spaces.
- Introduction of a Car Club with two spaces.
- Provision of secure cycle parking for all users; residents, commercial employees, club supporters, youth teams, club staff, and visitors.
- Grade level commercial space. Circa 204m2 (excluding plant, storage and cycle store rooms).

### Conclusion

The challenge for the applicant team is to demonstrate that the benefits of this scheme significantly outweigh the concerns. And where there are justified concerns, these are properly addressed, quantified, and robust mitigation strategies are adopted to reduce or negate their impact.

At present the football club operates within a semi-derelict facility, which is not fit for its current purpose. The operational expenditure is focused on maintaining a sense of usability rather than making qualitative improvements to the facilities. Clearly, there is a real need for a significant financial and development intervention to provide new premises and safeguard the future of the club at this location.

The proposed scheme represents a one-time opportunity to reposition the club within the English Football League and the local community.

Welling United FC have been rooted in the local community for many years, but their venue (Park View Road stadium) cannot serve as a football community hub due to the condition of the facilities and the nature of the playing surface. Given the club and the academy support almost 40 football teams and 500+ players this represents a missed opportunity to foster a sense of belonging to a larger football community within Welling and Bexley.

The introduction of an artificial playing surface is literally a game-changer. Instead of 10 hours of use (in favourable weather) per week for a grass pitch, the usage can comfortably increase to 50+ hours a week in all weathers. This would allow a significant proportion of the youth teams, supported charities, and schools to use the ground for play, training, and classroom-based activities throughout the week. The intention is to allow a proportion of these facilities can be rented out **for private** hire providing the club with a valuable secondary means of income. Furthermore, the increased use of the Park View site will naturally free up much needed playing field space at other locations within the borough.

Our aim is to provide a sustainable scheme in terms of social impact, financial stability, and a low carbon





solution reusing as much of the existing facilities as is practically possible. To achieve this and meet the club's aspiration.

The main benefits of the scheme can be summarised as follows:

- A new purpose-built state of the art sports venue for Welling United FC and the local community.
- The new all-weather pitch allows greatly increased usage of the facilities.
- Many more local players and coaches will be able to access the facilities.
- Subsequently there will be more sports pitch availability in other venues across the Borough.
- Long term security for Welling United FC
- Promotion of sustainable modes of transport
- Improved public realm and street scape.
- A low carbon energy efficient solution retaining and reusing the Erith & Belvedere buildings.
- 104 new homes for the LB of Bexley

Despite the challenges, we believe the benefits of this scheme are considerable to the local community providing a re-purposed sports field amenity, a mix of housing, and providing new jobs to support the economy.

We look forward to further discussion and development to realise this exciting project which can re-energise this part of Welling into a more cohesive neighbourhood.









### 3.1 Project brief

The design team has been tasked to provide the following facilities and accommodation.



#### The Club

- *New FIFA approved multi-use 3G football pitch*
- *Stadium for 4,000 spectators with 1,400 seats*
- *New hospitality areas for spectators and visitors*
- *Classrooms, training facilities, and equipment storage*
- *Modern changing areas for match officials and players*
- *Club meeting and administration space*
- *Public toilets, first aid, and physio room*

#### Residential & Commercial

- *Deliver sufficient enabling residential to facilitate the new Club facilities*
- *Activate Park View Road with Club and commercial space where possible*
- *Maximise dual aspect residential units*
- *Minimise the impact on the Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)*

#### Community

- *Provide a football hub open to all ages and abilities within the community*
- *Provide multi purpose space for community uses and private events*
- *Promote the Club through continued community engagement*



### 3.2 Project Benefits



***A new club venue for Welling United FC fit for the current league and future promotion***



***A brand new FA regulation size all weather pitch with over 4,000 crowd capacity, sheltered spectator zones, and hospitality areas***



***State of the art team facilities and changing rooms for 500+ resident players, the football academy, and visiting teams.***



***104 new high quality low carbon energy efficient homes with rooftop amenity space***



***New community facilities, commercial areas, and a public cafe/ bar and shop.***



***Promoting the use of sustainable transport modes through the provision of a car club and extensive secure cycle storage***



***Environmental and ecological enhancements through extensive greening and use of photovoltaic panels***