

CONFIDENTIAL

Options for future management of the former Newbury Town Football Club.

Background

Currently the pitch is in a very poor condition. Like other grassed areas and sports pitches the recent drought has had an impact. I have instructed our contractor to begin cutting the grass and to irrigate the pitch. There will however need to be a period of restoration/autumn maintenance in advance of a full years use.

The area surrounding the pitch is not safe and there is no possibility of opening the site as a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) for public use without the area to be used for this purpose being fenced off from the rest of the site. Note however that MUGAs almost always have high fencing surrounding the site in order to contain footballs and the activities of those using the facility, the following link is an example of a range of facilities similar in size to the one proposed for the former NTFC:

http://www.trevormay.co.uk/mugas.asp?gclid=EAlalQobChMI7em63r-P3QIVx7HtCh399g70EAAYASAAEqK92_D_BwE

The advantage of fencing the MUGA on its perimeter is that the MUGA is then isolated from any activities on the surrounding land, so any demolition works, or construction works, abandoned equipment and features associated with the former football ground can be dealt with whilst the MUGA is operational.

Low fencing is desirable between the 2 pitches.

Current Limitations

Grass pitches clearly are not pre-marked in the same way that artificial surfaces are and this presents some difficulties in marking out for a range of sports games; netball, 5-a-side, hockey etc. It's not impossible to do so, just more difficult, and of course more expensive. It is suggested that we start with 5 a side and then determine demand from other sports over time.

There is uncertainty over floodlighting, i.e. the condition of the current floodlights or whether there is potential for replacement floodlights to allow use of the site in the evenings. Without floodlights the facility can only be used daytime. Floodlighting increases the options for evening use and maximising income generation. This report is based on providing the basic minimum to get the proposal off the ground.

The facility is unmanned, therefore solutions have to be found to allow individuals/groups to access the facility. Solutions are available however. One such

solution is Clubspark, an IT solution which allows venues to be booked and access provided using unique access codes (operates at Victoria Park tennis Courts):

<https://clubspark.com/>

Without a system like this there are security issues to overcome.

Options:

There are two possible options, note that both operations require a perimeter fencing solution of some kind.

Option 1.

Manage the whole area, currently a football pitch, as a MUGA and open it to the public on a 'free to access' no booking required, basis. This provides a facility which serves the whole community. The MUGA will require suitable fencing at 3m or 4m (preferred) high, which allows the MUGA to be self-contained and independent of the rest of the site.

The facility can be marked out with 2 no. 5 a side pitches with goals and nets and possibly an area for families to sit and watch children play.

The pitch will require ongoing maintenance to include; regular cutting, autumn and spring maintenance, irrigation on occasion, pitch marking, daily visits and security checks.

Option 2.

As option 1 but the MUGA is booked in advance (preferred). The facility can be hired to clubs for training purposes and for 5 and 6 a side, for all age groups from juniors' upwards. We will receive an income towards its maintenance and to offset other management costs. There is no wider ad hoc community use.

Access to the site is controlled in a similar manner to the tennis courts at Victoria Park. This is operated using a mobile app booking system which provides a unique code to access the location. How this operates requires further investigation but it appears to be suitable for small, enclosed venues and allows a hands off management approach to bookings. There is an opportunity to discuss this requirement with the proposed online booking software provider currently being considered by IT colleagues.

There are advantages and disadvantages in both options.

Option 1.

Advantages: Wider community use permitted which fits with the general message we discussed regarding this site.

Disadvantages: It's going to be difficult to control the use to which it is put. There will be long periods during the daytime on weekdays, when there will be very little public use and therefore could attract unwanted antisocial behaviour. There will have to be some security visits daytime and evenings in order to manage activities and open and lock the facility. Actually getting kids out of the facility could be a difficulty.

Option 2.

Advantages: The booking system removes any concerns about security and antisocial behaviour. The site will only need occasional security visits in the evenings. The option may well prove to be less expensive to manage. As the site is locked until the user arrives this reduces the security requirement. there will be income from bookings to offset costs.

Disadvantages: Community use is limited to those who book, mostly organised teams, with reduced access by the wider community.

Costs;

| Feature | Expenditure (£) (one off costs) | Expenditure (£) (ongoing costs/pa) | Income |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Fencing with gates @ 3m | 60,000 | | |
| Fencing with gates @ 4m. (preferred option) | 65,500 | | |
| Goals, nets and ancillaries for maintaining the pitch, i.e. hoses and watering points | 3000 | | |
| One off maintenance to bring up to maintainable standard | 300 | | |
| Ongoing maintenance annually includes pitch marking. | | 4900 | |
| Clubspark booking system. | tbc | Tbc/annum | |
| Security: school holidays and weekends | | tbc | |
| Potential Income costs | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| TOTAL | £68,300 | £4900/annum | * £10,000 - £15,000/annum |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|

** Based on an income of £35 per pitch, max 4 games per day on each. All year use daytime. Figures given are approximate and allow for periods of inactivity.*

Conclusion

Further work is required on these options. Should option 2 be preferred then we can start out with a bespoke booking system in the short term until a more robust system is implemented.