

# JD Consulting

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August 11th 2017

David Thompson  
Principal Planning Officer  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge CB23 6EA

Dear David

## **Letter of Findings: contribution assessment for Bennell Farm (developer: Beechwood Estates (BE))**

### **1. Background/Experience:**

- a. JD Consulting (JDC) has worked for South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and on behalf of both Developers of the Northstowe site since 2004.
- b. JDC compiled and had approved a Sports Strategy as well as the Play and Youth Strategy for Northstowe Phase 1 (on behalf of Gallagher Estates)
- c. JDC compiled and had approved the Sports Strategy for Northstowe Phase 2 (on behalf of Homes & Communities Agency.
- d. They also wrote the Play, Sport & Active Recreational Facilities Strategy for an outline planning application for the whole Northstowe site in December 2007.
- e. JDC, therefore, has proven expertise and a strong working knowledge of sports and leisure provision in the District.

### **2. Methodology:**

- a. The sums put forward by BE have been considered under the terms of the (second) application (Ref: S/1812/17/OL). They total £327751.31.
- b. It is understood that SCDC are considering accepting a monetary sum via this application in lieu of the construction of the facilities, since they are not deemed to be what the community currently want.
- c. Consequently, SCDC want independent expert assurance that the money proposed would be sufficient to build these facilities to the expected and agreed specifications as set down in an earlier application..
- d. JDC has now met with Pegasus Group (Greg Shaw), planning consultants to BE.
- e. They have reviewed the documentation attached as Appendices to this letter.
- f. They have further discussed costed proposals with Beechwood Estates (BE: Mr James Arnold).
- g. These proposals surround the potential provision of:

1. A full sized adult grass football pitch
  2. A building comprising changing rooms and ancillary facilities to support play on that pitch
  3. An adjacent car park providing sufficient spaces for those playing, spectating at or servicing the facilities. It also has the function to provide overspill places at Comberton Village College.
- h. The site map has been considered to see how these facilities work together and where they are situated
  - i. JDC's approach has been to assess, if built today, that the selected firms could complete the jobs to the appropriate specification at the cost stated.
  - j. The response to the Local Plan (ref H/: h) has been noted.
  - k. The bona fides and experiences of the 3 chosen firms providing the quotations have been considered.
  - l. The specifications used by these firms have also been considered.
  - m. The agronomic report (Tim O'Hare) has been noted
  - n. JDC notes that the provision of these facilities also form part of an earlier active Planning Application (ref: S/2204/15/OL)
  - o. BE have confirmed that they:
    1. have the confidence in the firms providing the 3 quotations under consideration here, should they be required to construct the facilities under the terms of that application (see 2m above) at the 2017 costs stated.
    2. have worked with Ley Construction (LC) and E N Suiter and Sons (ES) previously – successfully in their view.
    3. view Agripower as highly experienced in the provision of turf sports pitches.
    4. these views are endorsed by Pegasus Group

### 3. Findings:

- a. **The site:** we have inspected the site map and seen the intended placement for these facilities.
  1. Access to the car park: this area is to be placed behind the changing room building with access to come off the intended highway available to the homes proposed. This would seem to create few traffic or line of sight issues as just 30 spaces are intended. So, the positioning seems appropriate. The appropriateness of the space as an overspill for the village college has not been considered.
  2. Volume of spaces to be provided (30 including 2 minibus spaces): this is based on the agreement with SCDC that this volume was sufficient from agreements reached surrounding the first Planning Application (see 2m above). These can be accommodated within 800m<sup>2</sup>.
  3. Landscaping for car park: there is already some landscaping on the (Green Belt) site itself. Though not mentioned, a modest amount of soft landscaping (low shrubs) would be planted, both around the parking area and among the spaces.
  4. Lighting for the car park; similarly, though not shown, there would be some lighting in the car park for safety and other access reasons. These lights can guide users to and from the clubhouse area. Again, this is contained in the selected quotation.

5. There will be disabled parking access in line with Sport England guidelines.
6. Changing area/clubhouse:
  1. Positioning relating to pitch and car park: the building, with all required utilities connected, would sit between car park and pitch, positioned behind one end of the pitch.
  2. Configuration: there would be a minimum of 2 changing rooms, and one for referees as well as a shower/toilet area and common parts for social use, storage/plant etc. It will be fully-fitted and ready for use.
  3. This building detail has not been agreed with SCDC but 150m<sup>2</sup> has been indicatively seen by SCDC as appropriate for 11 a side football matches, as may be played by an adult village team. One match being played with another match possible afterwards when changing areas are vacated. Consequently, 2 changing rooms are deemed sufficient.
  4. Since there is only 1 adult grass pitch to be serviced (as opposed to a Synthetic Turf Pitch) the frequency of usage will be modest. JDC agrees that this specification is sufficient to provide facilities for the uses pre-determined, assuming they are constructed to meet Sport England Guidelines as shown in the drawing supplied by LC (see 3cii below).
  5. There will be some soft landscaping around the building, paving to the car park and some paving/terrace outside the front of the building.
7. The adult grassed football pitch:
  1. 0.85 ha has been allocated to this to include run-off areas sufficient for adult use and it will be in line with FA Guidelines.
  2. The direction the pitch faces should not cause sunlight difficulties nor should an expected prevailing wind.
  3. The issue of usage by junior age groups for whom the FA have smaller pitch configurations was not part of the agreement.
  4. For clarity: the FA (including Cambridgeshire FA) recommends adult pitches should be 116m x 76m including run off or 8816m<sup>2</sup>. Pegasus has confirmed that these dimensions have been used in the cost and construction calculations by Agripower, though slightly larger than the area designated (0.85ha not 0.88ha).
  5. There would be no obstructions near run off areas after construction: all trees and other significant vegetation would be cleared within the work specified.
  6. Tim O'Hare Associates report states that the land for development would allow construction to meet Sport England Guidelines (ref: para 6.1 passim). We recognise that this firm has provided sufficient detail from which Agripower has produced its detailed quotation.

b. The firms selected for construction:

1. LC has been selected (instead of ES) but the independently produced quotations were similar in cost. LC are a local firm: '*an N.H.B.C registered builder with an unblemished claims record.*' (ref: LC website). They operate '*primarily throughout Cambs, Suffolk, Hertfordshire and Essex*' (ref: passim).
2. In our view either of these suppliers could complete these tasks to the correct quality standard. It is noted that ES's price for both jobs was £231702.72: c£3717 more than LC (i.e. under 2% differential). It was

confirmed by BE that the quotes were independently briefed and responses received accordingly.

3. Agripower have a range of appropriate trade association credentials including membership of Sport and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) and the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI). We have considered their experiences and credentials in the provision of turf sports pitches and conclude they are of the appropriate quality to do the work specified at the levels expected by Cambridgeshire FA and guidelines offered by them and by Sport England.
  4. No alternative bid was put forward by BE: in light of 3biii above we are comfortable this supplier has the correct bona fides.
- c. Specifications for each facility:
1. The adult football pitch: would be constructed in line with current FA and Sport England Guidelines: this is acknowledged by Tim O'Hare Associates and Agripower.
  2. The changing room building (Ley Construction): 150m<sup>2</sup> has been allocated for a minimum of 2 changing rooms, a referee's changing area, showers and toilets, common parts and social area, all with supplied gas/water/electricity supplies and meeting disability legislation. The size is in line with a prior agreement with SCDC, and meets the Sport England guidelines (ref: <https://www.sportengland.org/media/10792/2-clubhouse-design.pdf>. See para 3.0 Clubhouse accommodation), as has been confirmed by LC.
  3. The car park (LC): this will be built to Sport England standards (see 3cii above). Further, see Sport England's Car park and Landscape Design Guidance Note available at: [www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-costguidance/other-design-guidance](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-costguidance/other-design-guidance)
- d. Costings provided:
1. The adult football pitch (Agripower): we have considered each part of the costings provided in parallel with the agronomic report on which it is based. The total sum is £99765.31. We note there is a 5% contingency built into this figure which seems wise, considering the variety of skills to be employed and length of contract, which will include the checking of drainage provision and growing-in of the turf seeded.
  2. The changing room building (Ley Construction): costed at £164345 is based on the specification totalling an area of 150m<sup>2</sup> in 3c2 above (see letter from LC attached as Appendix 11). On being asked about a contingency being applied to these costs, BE stated that as both quoting suppliers were well-known to them; the work would be carried out as quoted under the first Planning Application, and, thirdly, the work was not complicated yet clearly established, so a contingency was not required. (A 5% contingency for both jobs would amount to c£11,000). The difference between the two quotes offered (£166272 v £164345) was £1927. This suggests that the quotations, independently derived, have been carefully put together and a contingency would not be necessary.
  3. The car park (Ley Construction): the car park is of simple tarmac construction and layout. The two quotations offered show little discrepancy between the two (£65480 v £63641). We are comfortable that this price is fair for the work to be undertaken.

#### 4. Summary of findings:

- a. The sum of £327,751.31 to construct
  1. A grown-in adult football pitch to FA Guidelines including appropriate drainage, grass quality and run offs.
  2. a changing/club building of 150m<sup>2</sup> to support two adult football teams playing consecutively, with a minimum of x2 player changing rooms, referee changing, wet area and social area, plus connecting paving to car park
  3. car parking for 30 cars and two minibuses on macadam, lit and landscaped.is deemed by JDC to be a fair price to complete these 3 integrated facilities.
- b Each facility has sufficient specifications declared at a sufficient level to allow them to be constructed at the prices shown.
- c Specifically, the report prepared by Tim O'Hare Associated is detailed to allow Sport England Guidelines to be met for turf pitch construction by Agripower.
- d LC has a specification already approved in the first planning Application (ref: S/2204/15/OL) to give confidence that the car park and ancillary works can be completed to budget.
- e LC has a specification to complete the 150m<sup>2</sup> building on budget which is sufficient, and confirmed by LC as Sport England Guidelines compliant, to provide the facilities to meet the brief for a single adult village football team.
- f All three quotations selected were procured by BE to support the first and still extant Application: that they feel confident to proceed on their own account gives added credibility to the sums provided.
- g We conclude that the sums put forward would allow the facilities to be provided at a quality acceptable to SCDC.

Yours sincerely

JONATHAN DICKINS  
JD Consulting

DATE:

#### **Attachments:**

1. Appendix 4 of Planning Statement prepared by Pegasus Group
2. Extract from the SCDC emerging Local Plan which allocates the application site for development and provides the details of the developer requirements to bring forward development at this location.
3. The planning reference for the approved planning application which proposes to deliver the pitch, changing rooms and car park in line with policy is S/2204/15/OL: the application forms which shows the 150m<sup>2</sup> for the changing rooms.

4. The Illustrative Masterplan supporting the new planning application for 90 dwellings only. The former car park, football pitch and changing rooms site is retained as agricultural land.
5. An addendum to the costs information which was submitted to SCDC in respect of the football pitch
6. An Agronomic Report (Tim O'Hare Associates) which was the basis for Agripower's quotation (submitted to SCDC).
7. Sport England Guidance on natural pitches.
8. Sport England Guidance notes on Clubhouse Design Guidance Notes (2016): <https://www.sportengland.org/media/10792/2-clubhouse-design.pdf>
9. Letter from Agripower confirming they meet the Sport England specification.
10. These are links to relevant parts of Agripower's website giving confirmation of experiences and accreditation.
  - a. <http://www.agripower.co.uk/casestudies/archive.php?cat=football>
  - b. <http://www.agripower.co.uk/about/accreditations.php> Link to AgriPower accreditations
11. Letter from Ley Construction confirming building (and car park) meets Sport England Guidelines and is in line with approved application S/2204/15/OL
12. Drawing supporting letter from Ley Construction (see 11 above) stated as in line with Sport England 2016 Guidelines on Clubhouse design (see 8 above)