

**Company No. 13792068**

**THE COUNTY GROUND STADIUM CUSTODIANS LIMITED (the “Company”)**

Minutes of a meeting of the board of directors held at  
on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 08:30hrs via Teams

Present:

Neil Hutchings (NH) (in the chair)  
Clem Morfuni (CM)  
Anthony Hall (AH)  
Chris Howell (CH)  
Robert Carter (RC)  
Steve Mytton (SM)

Apologies:

Jeremy Webb (JW)

**1. Preliminary**

- 1.1. A quorum being present, the Chair declared the meeting open.
- 1.2. The agenda for the meeting had been circulated in advance and all directors confirmed receipt.

**2. Matters Arising from 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 Board Meeting**

- 2.1 NH confirmed that the Company accountants had been notified that the financial year now runs to 31<sup>st</sup> May each year.
- 2.2 The outstanding sum of £41.12 owed to the JV by the Club in relation to the balancing payment for works undertaken under Business Plan no.1 has been paid in full.
- 2.3 It was agreed to arrange a separate call with UHY Ross Brooke to discuss their report with regards to lease incentives and Corporation Tax. **Action: NH**
- 2.4 It was confirmed that NH had now replaced SM on the Metrobank mandate.
- 2.5 SM confirmed that Valley Construction had been advised that the proposed fence and removal of the tree/s was no longer part of the Fanzone design (further update provided late in the meeting).
- 2.6 AH confirmed that the Legends Lounge refurbishment was about to commence (further update provided later in the meeting).

**3. Finance Update**

- 3.1 NH confirmed that the rent payment had been paid on time as promised by the Club.

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- 3.2 It was noted that the next business plan was overdue but remained reliant on the lease incentive tax discussions.
- 3.3 NH advised that the accountants had commenced work on the previous financial year accounts.
- 3.4 The balance in the Company accounts is £91,488.56 with a small number of invoices outstanding to pay with VAT due in August.

### **4. Fanzone Project Update**

- 4.1 SM provided an update on the current status of the project, planning and updated design (presentation attached at Appendix 1).
- 4.2 Meetings had been held with SBC with a view of securing planning consent by the end of July.
- 4.3 Upon securing planning consent, an updated cost proposal will be circulated for final approval at the next board meeting. **Action: SM**
- 4.4 So long as planning is secured by July and approval to proceed issued in August, the works could be completed by October 2024.

### **5. Don Rogers Stand Hospitality Project**

- 5.1 AH provided an update on the Club's thinking and current strategy with regards to the DRS hospitality project.
- 5.2 A "beauty parade" of potential architects is to be undertaken. AH will suggest dates and invite board members to attend and provide feedback. The Club will then make an appointment as a result of this review. **Action: AH**.

### **6. County Ground Development**

- 6.1 It was agreed that the CG development and DRS Hospitality Project should run in parallel so one does not delay the other. It was hoped that the same architect selected for the DRS project would also develop the overall stadium masterplan.
- 6.2 An outline CG stadium development plan is required and will be produced in conjunction with Peter Lawson and the appointed architect. However, it was agreed that full stakeholder consultation will be included (including residents, supporters, politicians and any other interested parties) once initial thoughts and concepts have been produced.

### **7. Legends Lounge Refurbishment**

- 7.1 AH provided details on the forthcoming refurbishment of the Legends Lounge which is programmed to be complete in time for the first home league game of the season against Walsall.

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7.2 The budgeted cost for the project is around £152k.

7.3 Contributions by the Company to the project were discussed. It was agreed that a final decision would be taken once the meeting with UHY Ross Brooke regarding lease incentives had taken place.

**Action: ALL**

**8. Any Other Business**

8.1 A proposal had been made before the meeting that the County Ground should be renamed as the "Nigel Eady County Ground" for at least the 2024/25 season. CM and RC agreed to discuss separately. **Action: CM/RC**

**9. Close of meeting**

9.1 There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

.....  
Chairman



County Ground Fan Zone / Community Area  
Planning Application S/24/0345

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of the County Ground



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SWINDON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

WHO ARE THE  
CHARITY TRUSTEES?

KEITH COATSWORTH

PAUL HEDGES

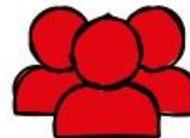
DICK MATTICK

ANDY COSSENS

VIC MORGAN

STEVE TROWBRIDGE MBE

STEVE MYTON



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FOOTBALL CLUB  
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OUR PROJECTS

WE PLAN TO SHOWCASE UNIQUE  
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PAST AND PRESENT CLUB LEGENDS

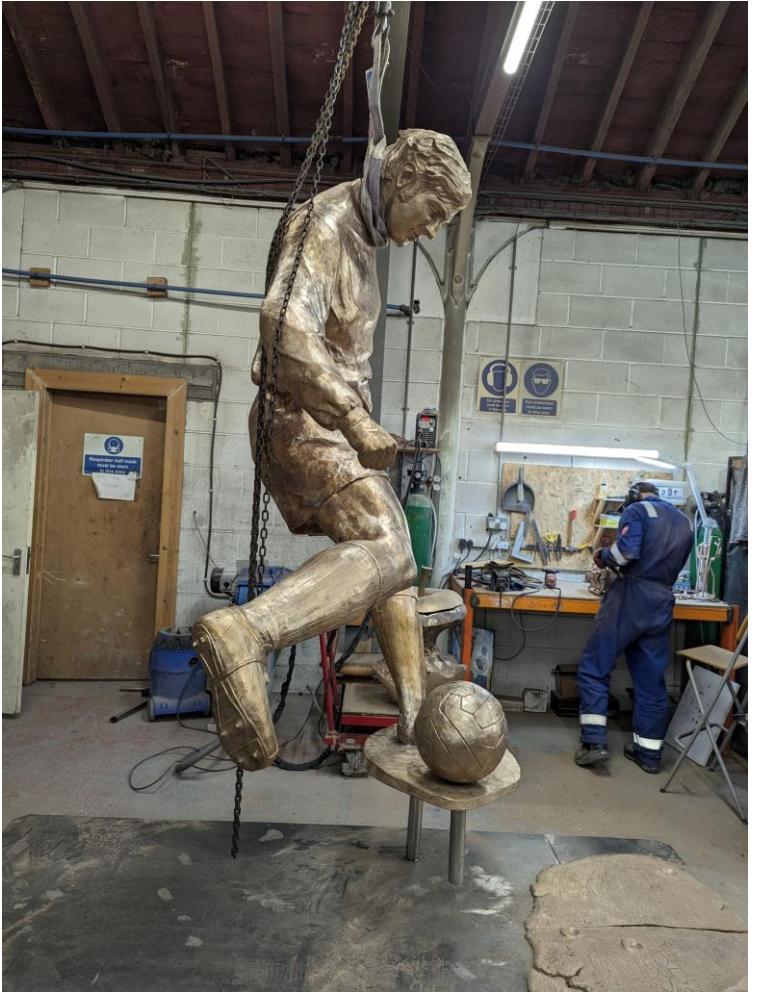


THE 1969 LEAGUE CUP PROJECT

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# Statue Construction



Colouring will be similar to this,  
with a hint of green

# The meaning behind the Statue

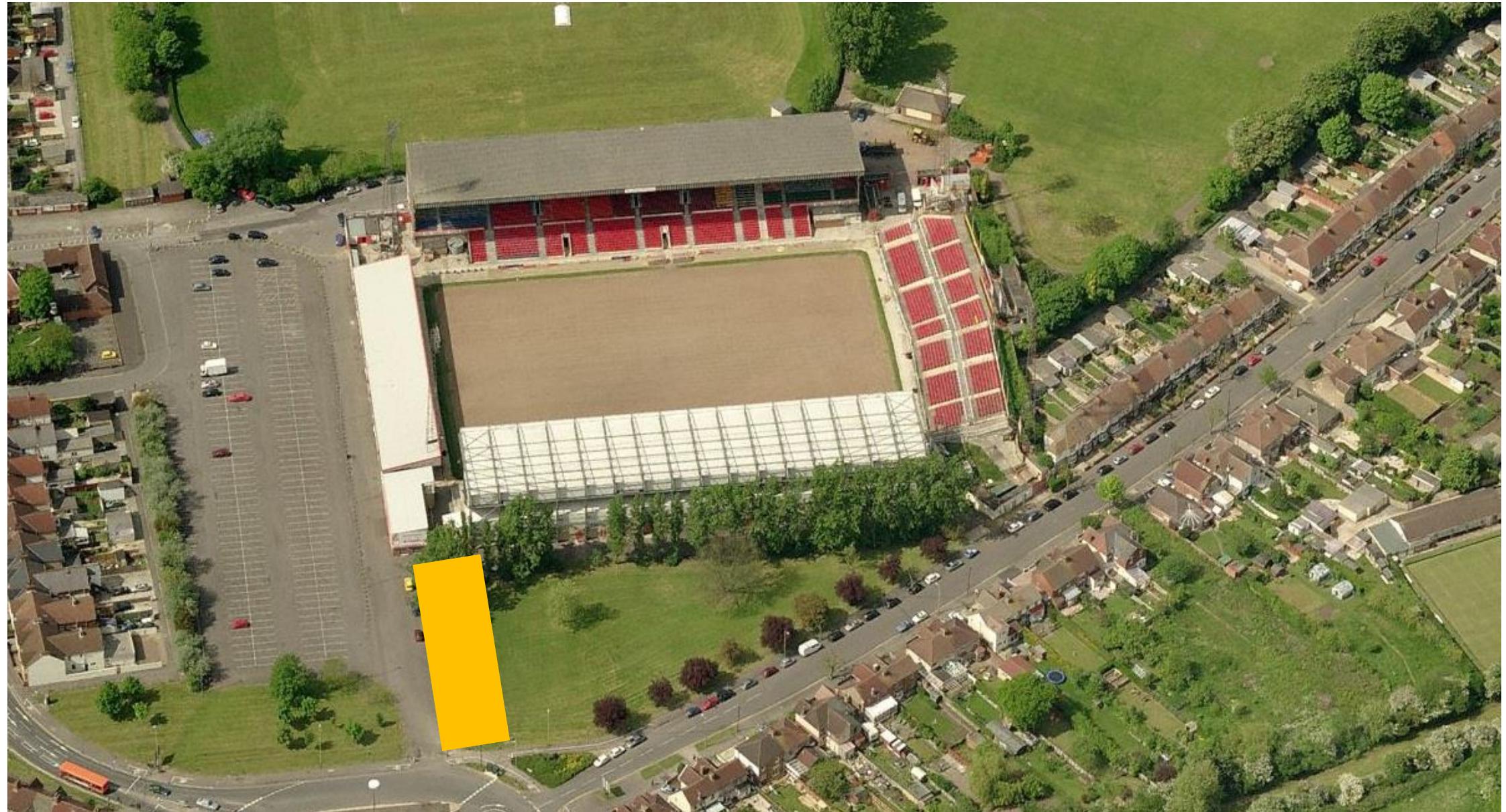


*Don Rogers scoring the decisive third goal for Swindon Town at Wembley in March 1969*

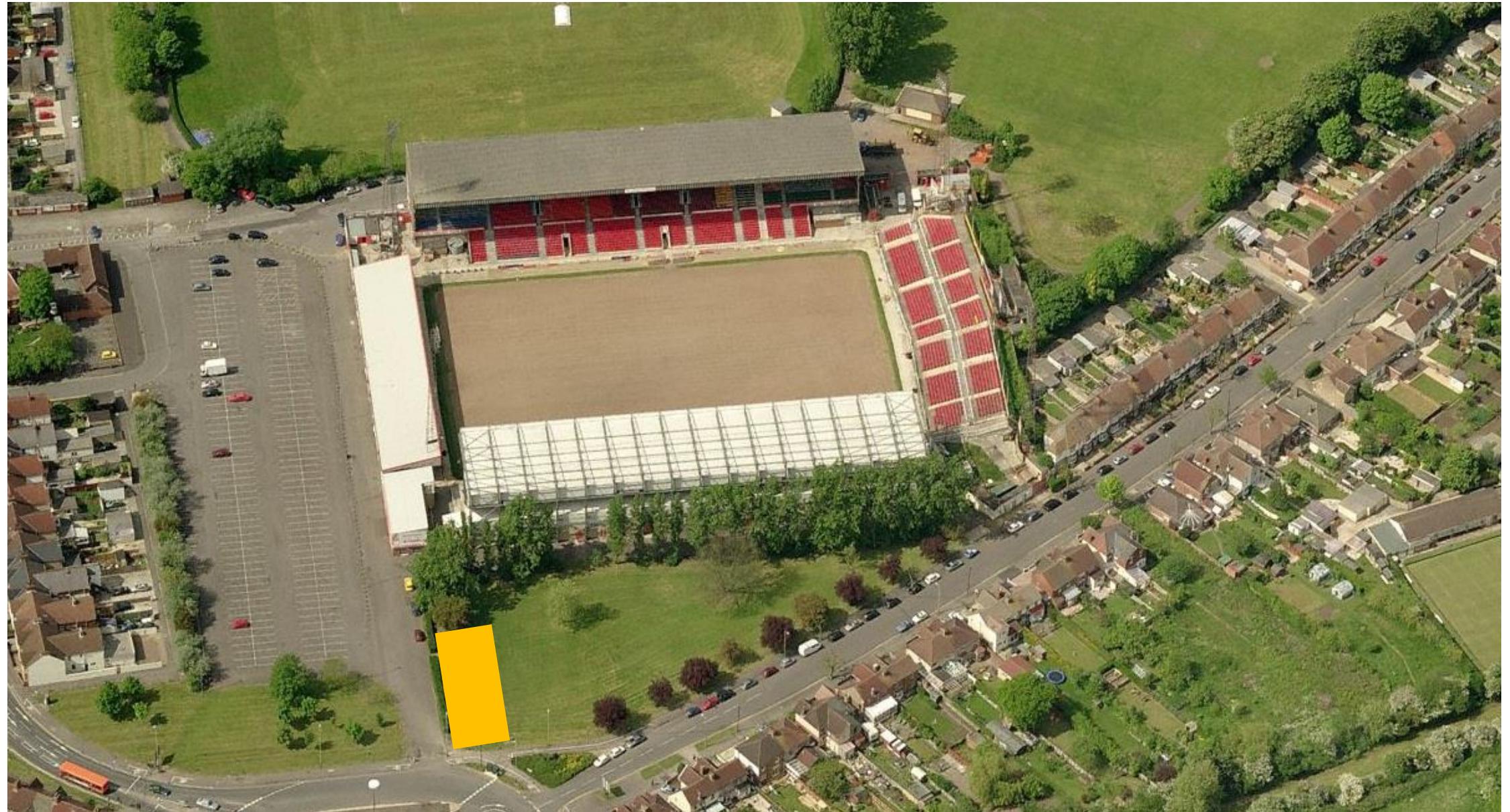
# Small Maquette Versions



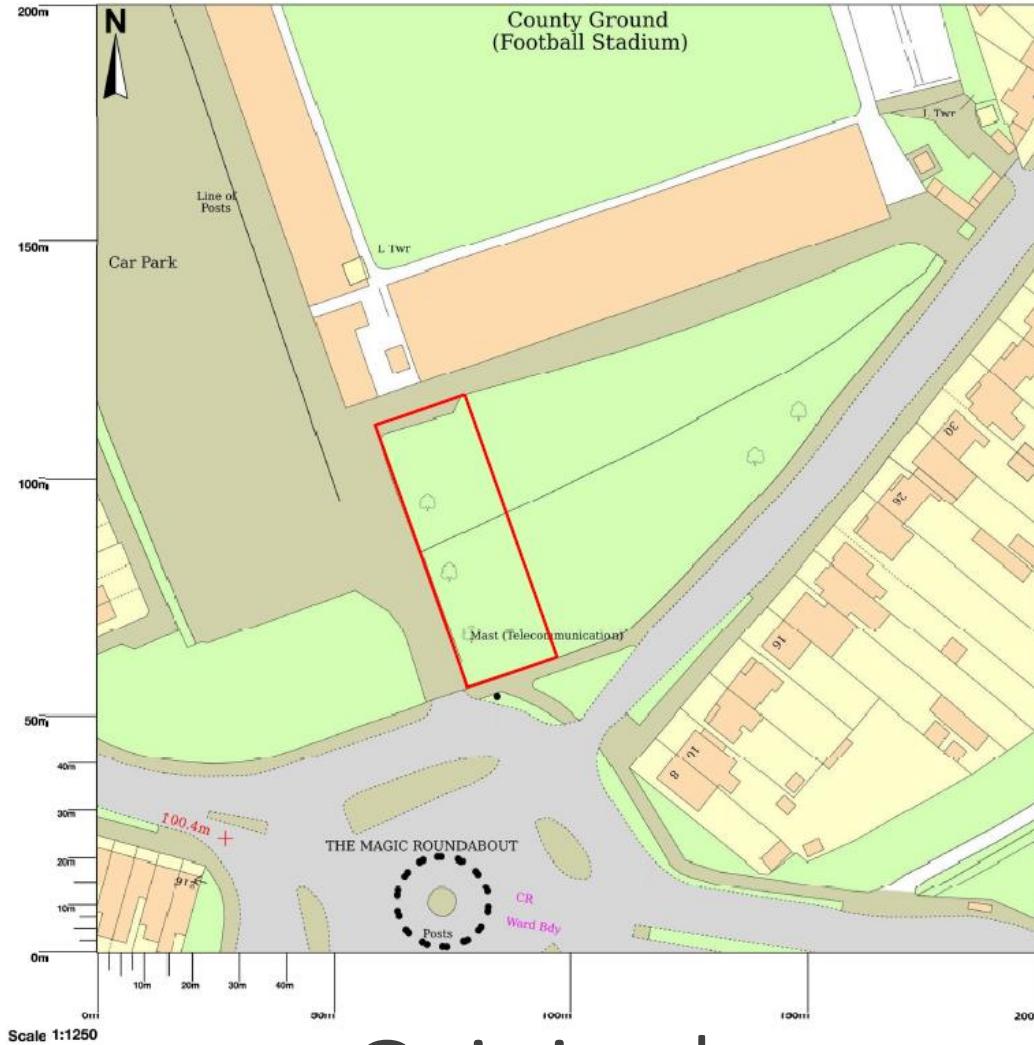
# Proposed Area – Original Application



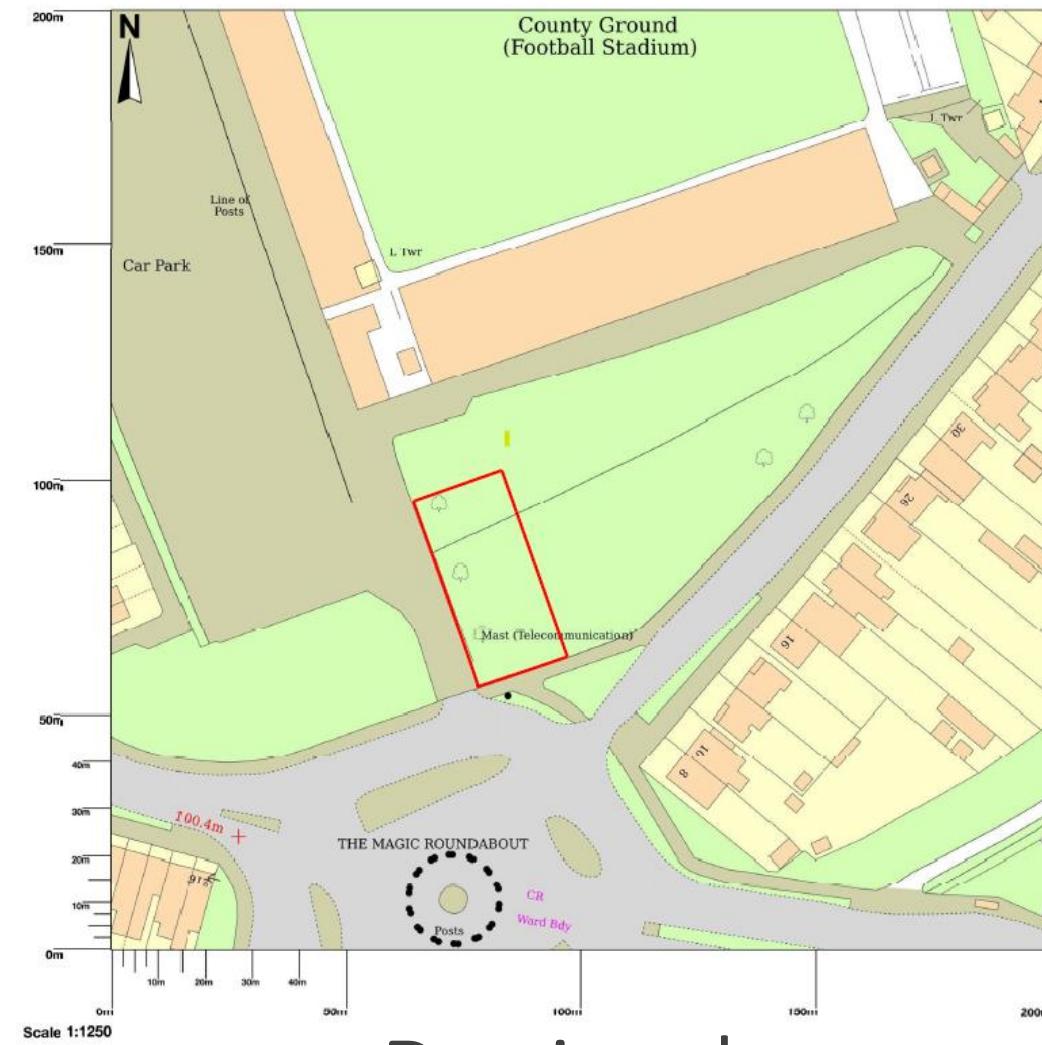
# Proposed Area – Revised Application



# Proposed Map – Original vs Revised

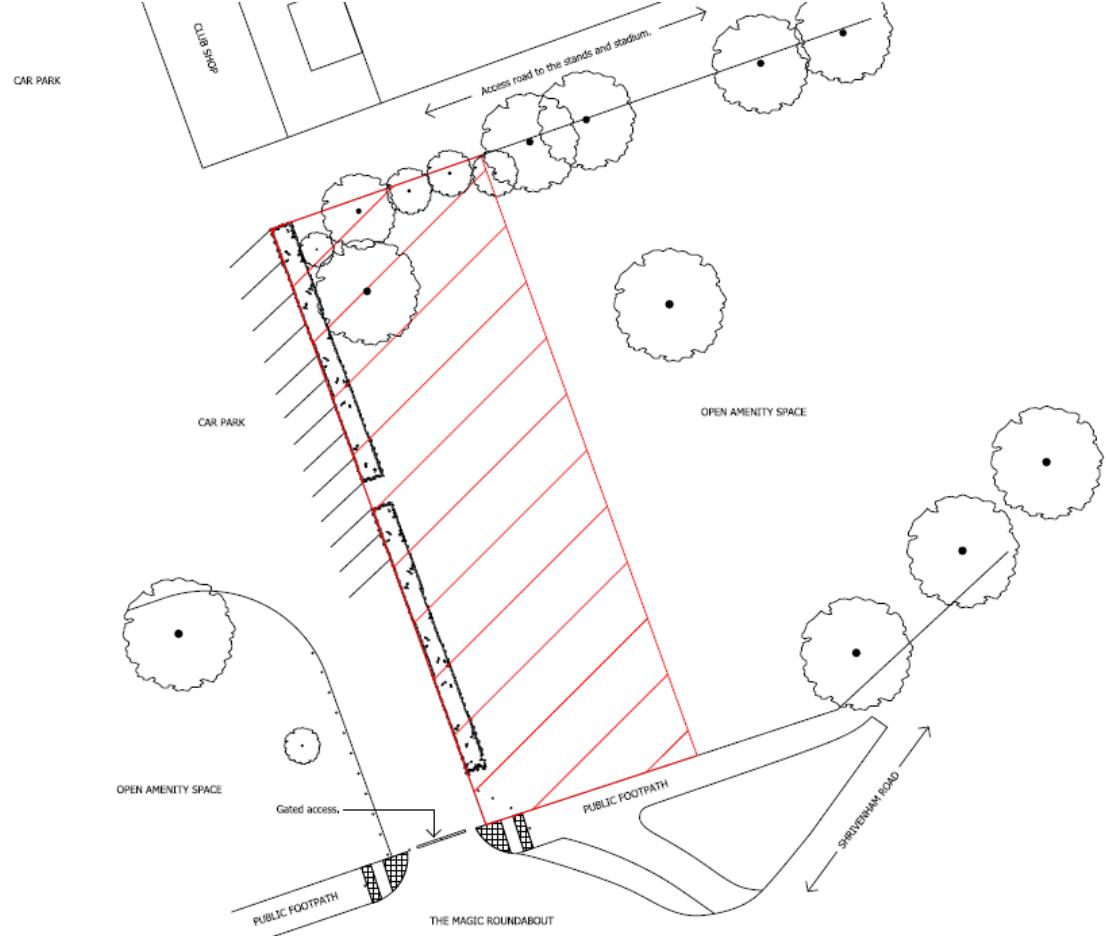


Original

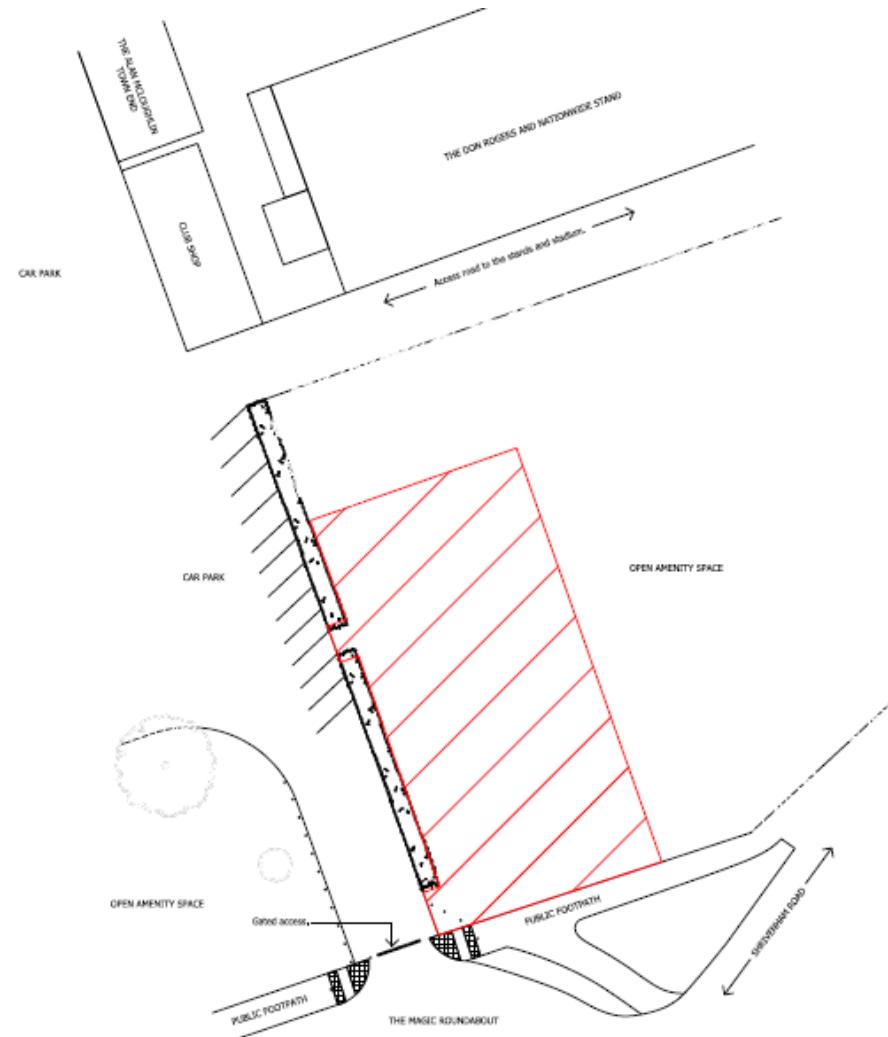


Revised

# Proposed Site Plan – Original vs Revised

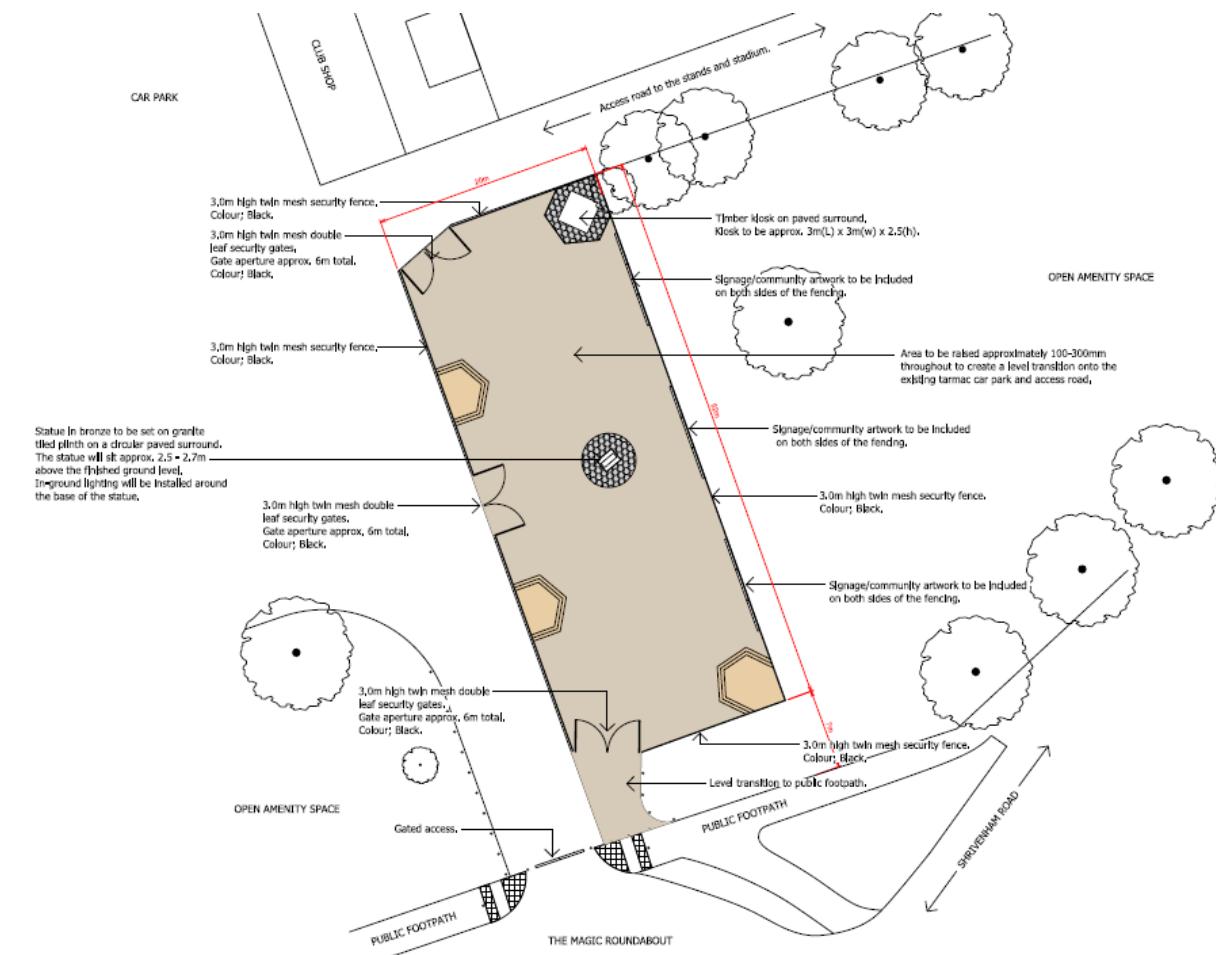


Original

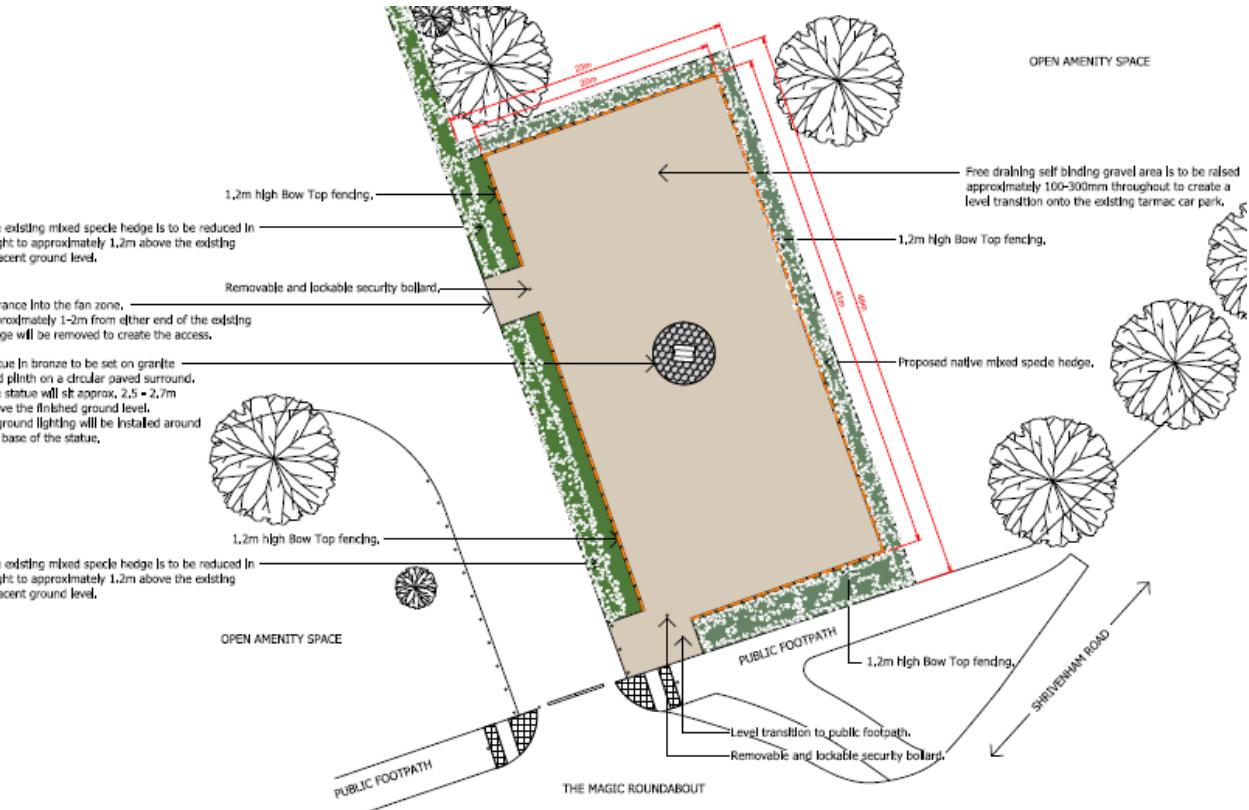


Revised

# Proposed Site Plan – Original vs Revised



# Original



# Revised

# Proposed Site Plan –Additional Hedgerow



Revised

## Hedgerow Maintenance:

### Specific objectives:

- To ensure early establishment and healthy growth,
- To maintain a dense hedgerow,
- To maintain year round appearance and visual interest.

### Maintenance operations:

All hedgerows, existing and proposed, shall be maintained substantially free of weeds. Work shall be done by hand. Hedgerows are to be checked prior to works for nesting birds, typically between 1st March - 31st August, no works are to take place which might harm nesting birds or destroy their nests. Works can be delayed until after the end of August if necessary.

### For trimming and pruning plants:

- 1) In summer trim back branches that may become untidy and unsightly, continue to do this annually.
- 2) In the second year, February, cut back growth by one third to a half.
- 3) In the second autumn, cut the topmost branch (leading shoot) to the desired hedge height continue to do this annually.

## Hard Surfaces and Fencing Maintenance:

- 1) Inspect the hard landscape areas on a minimum six monthly basis to identify and repair any damaged areas.
- 2) Surfaces are to be kept weed and litter free at all times,
- 3) All fencing shall be checked for damage/wear and when necessary shall be replaced/repaired as appropriate, this is to be completed on a minimum six monthly basis.

# South Swindon Parish Council

Parish Council Response:	No objection	X	Objection
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No objection and to make the following comments:

## Ecology

The Parish Council has concerns over the removal of the large bush and trees. The application is vague on how many trees will be removed and if any will be replaced. The Council suggests that the bush could potentially be incorporated into the perimeter of the proposed fan zone rather than being removed.

## Flooding

The field next to the proposed fan zone floods regularly and there is a lack of information in the application on how this will be mitigated and the impact it may have on residents nearby.

## Frequency of Use

Clarity required on how often the proposed fan zone would be in use. Would it be restricted to home matches, or would it be in use more frequently?

## Closeness to Magic Roundabout

The proposed site is close to the Magic Roundabout and the road, with alcohol on sale within, the council feels this could be a problem.

## Fences

The fences could be made smaller and less industrial looking.

## Loss of Amenable Space

The Parish Council is concerned with the lack of amenable and green space this proposal would leave local residents with, especially considering building on green space around Foundation Park.

## Ecology

Understood. We have revised our application, and we are no longer removing the large bush and trees. In fact, we are adding 151<sup>m2</sup> of new hedgerow to create a classier looking finish to the fan zone, which should also be considered as a new community area.

## Flooding

During periods of increased rainfall, the current area experiences poor drainage, resulting in waterlogged conditions. Our design approach aims to improve that situation and aligns with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles. We will use permeable materials, that enable water to infiltrate the surface instead of becoming runoff. In addition, the area is also being lifted up to the road kerb height, so there will be 300mm of natural drainage over the whole perimeter.

## Frequency of Use

This open-air space serves as a family-friendly gathering place for fans on match days. The area will offer a welcoming environment and while no plans are currently set in stone, there is potential for hosting additional events that support both the football club and the local community, further enhancing the space's role as a hub for residents and fans alike.

## Closeness to Magic Roundabout

The area will be managed by the club on match days, serving a variety of refreshments under license, including but not limited to alcohol. Many supporters currently cross the magic roundabout after visiting Drove Road pubs. By providing a controlled space for fans, we aim to improve the situation and minimise potential risks associated with alcohol consumption near the roundabout.

## Fences

The fences have been removed in our revised application, replaced by 1.2m railings and hedging.

## Loss of Amenable Space

We have taken the concern regarding loss of amenable space into consideration and have made adjustments to our plans. The area will now be enclosed by railings, allowing it to remain open and accessible to the public. While a small portion of grassland will be lost, we believe that the addition of an artistic work, in the form of a statue, will enhance the area aesthetically and create a new focal point for the community to enjoy.

# Ecology

I recommend refusal. The application will cause biodiversity loss, so would not be in accordance with Policy EN4, or the Environment Act (which required 'some' BNG at the time this application was submitted). The site is 0.19ha, so is defined as a Small Site within the Environment Act, meaning that the 10% biodiversity net gain provision did not apply to this site at the date of submission (26.3.24).

No ecology information has been submitted with the application.

While it may appear minor, this application will result in the loss of more trees and hedgerow in the town centre, which has few large trees, having an adverse ecological and landscape impact.

The structure could be smaller, protecting the existing trees, or could be built around the existing trees, including them in the enclosure. Why can't the security fence be behind the hedge? There seems to be no good reason to remove the hedge.

If you do approve the application, I recommend that the Arboricultural Officer should provide a suitably worded planning condition, requiring a tree and hedge protection plan and construction management plan to BS5837: 2012 to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA prior to the commencement of works on site.

If any trees will be removed, 2 x the number of trees and hedgerow to be removed should be replanted elsewhere at County Ground with proposals to be agreed by the Arboricultural Officer/Ecologist respectively. Replacement trees should be of similar height when mature as the trees removed.

If the hedgerow and/or trees will be removed between March-August inclusive, a nesting bird survey must be undertaken by a suitably qualified CIEEM ecologist within 48 hours prior to removal of the hedge/trees confirming that no nesting birds are present. The Ecologist's advice must be followed at all times and a copy of the report is to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to discharge the condition, which must be discharged prior to first occupation.

Reason: to follow legislation applying to nesting birds.

We acknowledge that our initial application did not include specific ecological information and are committed to addressing any concerns regarding the potential impact on the local environment.

We have taken the ecology officer's feedback on board and have revised our plans significantly and to ensure minimal disruption, we have limited our project's scope to removing a small patch of grass within an area that is surrounded by an abundance of similar grassland. This will help maintain a continuous habitat for local species.

We have also consulted with two ecological experts to assess the potential ecological implications of our project, and while a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been offered, we believe the minimal impact on the area may not necessitate such an assessment.

- The structure is smaller and protects existing trees
- The security fence is now behind the hedge
- No trees or hedgerow removed

Furthermore, we have committed to enhancement:

Planting 151 square meters of new hedgerow, which will not only contribute to the local ecology but also enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area.

Nonetheless, we remain open to collaborating with the ecology officer and relevant authorities to provide any additional information required to ensure our plans align with all ecological guidelines and best practices.

# Local Flood Authority

## Recommendation – Refusal

### Reason for Refusal

1. No Surface Water Management Strategy has been submitted and therefore the application is not in-line with current guidance and policy (Such as the SuDS Manual C753 or Non-statutory SuDS technical Standards and therefore the National Planning Practice Guidance) due to an inappropriate SuDS scheme being proposed.
2. The development has not demonstrated the method of disposing surface water is feasible by confirming how the SuDS scheme will be maintained and managed after completion with confirmation from the relevant authority that they will adopt any systems that are being offered for adoption.
3. It has not been demonstrated that the development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and therefore is contrary to Paragraph 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy EN6 of the adopted Swindon Local Plan 2026.

In response to your feedback, we recognise the importance of a Surface Water Management Strategy. To address this, we have consulted with industry experts and referred to Cranfield University's SoilScapes Viewer, which reveals that the existing soil conditions can hinder drainage, leading to waterlogged conditions during wet periods.

Taking this into account, our proposed Fan Zone / Community Area will utilise permeable construction, which does not require positive drainage and we believe this approach is in line with an appropriate SuDS scheme and offers an improvement over the current situation.

By combining permeable materials and raising the area to road kerb height, we aim to directly address and mitigate the existing waterlogging issues experienced during periods of increased rainfall and these efforts will help create a more resilient and sustainable urban landscape.

We appreciate your input and are committed to working collaboratively to ensure our plans align with best practices and serve the community's needs.

# General Questions

To assist with the processing of the subject Planning application, it would be appreciated if you could help address the following:

- Could the 3 metre high security fencing & gates around the perimeter of the proposed Fan Zone area be omitted from the proposed scheme?  
This would help with concerns around the adverse visual impact of the proposed development.  
It's also not clear what purpose the security fencing & gates would serve.
- Could it be advised what the purpose of the Fan Zone is? Is it to provide additional congregation space before matches, or to meet (ex) players, coaching staff & mascots?  
Has consultation taken place with Swindon Town FC supporters about the proposed Fan Zone? Is this a facility that has been requested? Survey results or meeting minutes would be welcome.  
Has fan feedback helped to inform the siting & design of the proposed Fan Zone?  
Have other ideas & locations for a Fan Zone experience been explored?  
Is the proposed Fan Zone area part of a wider re-development plan for the County Ground stadium & surrounding land?
- It is noted that a number of existing trees at the top/ north-western end of the proposed Fan Zone, as well as a hedgerow running down the western edge of the Fan Zone area, would be removed.  
Could mitigating soft landscaping, say along the north-eastern edge of the Fan Zone area, be proposed?  
I'll chase the Council's Tree officer for their formal feedback. I suspect their comments will be along similar lines to the above.

The fences have now been omitted.

The Fan Zone is actually more of a community area and is designed to serve as an open-air space where on match days fans can gather around a new landmark in the town, a statue that celebrates our history. The area will host various activities such as player interviews, live music and dance performances on match days, and we hope other events throughout the year, in collaboration with the Arts Council and Swindon Borough Council.

Fans were consulted and voted this their second highest priority (see next page)

In terms of locations, it took some time for the County Ground Joint Venture partners to agree the location as this is part of a wider stadium-wide re-development that will take years to come to fruition.

Other development suggestions would be built around this but would obviously be subject to the same planning scrutiny.

No trees or hedgerow now being removed.

## “Where would you like to see the statue located?”

Within stadium grounds / close to the stadium



87 (57.6%)

More towards the Magic Roundabout / visible to everyone



64 (42.4%)

# COUNTY GROUND: SHAREHOLDER FEEDBACK

We asked people to vote on whether our ideas were good or not:

New Idea	Average Rating (out of 10)
Conference facilities	9.0
Fanzone outside the ground	8.2
Indoor concert facility	8.1
Legends Lounge into Sports Bar	8.0
Club Museum	7.9
Supporters Wall	7.6
Stadium Tour Idea developed	7.4
Hotel	7.4
Cafe	7.2
Residential development	6.6
Gaming centre	6.5
Micro-Brewery	6.3
Multi-storey car park	5.1

People clearly want to see the Stratton Bank developed ASAP, ideally fully redeveloped though:

Stratton Bank	Votes	%
Completely redeveloped if poss.	395	65.0%
New roof is sufficient	178	29.3%
Other - see comments	23	3.8%
Leave it as-is	12	12.0%

People could only vote for one thing that they wanted to see happen first:

Which of these ideas would you like to see happen first?	Votes	%
Stratton Bank Improvements	318	52.3%
Fanzone outside the ground	101	16.6%
Corporate boxes	39	6.4%
Legends Lounge into Sports Bar	25	4.1%
Supporters Wall	21	3.5%
Indoor concert facility	18	3.0%
None of these ideas	18	3.0%
Hotel	15	2.5%
Conference facilities	11	1.8%
Club Museum	9	1.5%
Cafe	9	1.5%
Micro-Brewery	9	1.5%
Multi-storey car park	7	1.2%
Stadium Tour Idea developed	3	0.5%
Residential development	3	0.5%
Other sports facilities	2	0.3%
Gaming centre	0	0.0%

We need to find a home for Don's statue soon. We suggested inside a fan zone and people liked it. Other comments were about it being near the shop, corner of Don Rogers stand etc.

Don Rogers Statue	Votes	%
Centre of Fanzone	481	79.1%