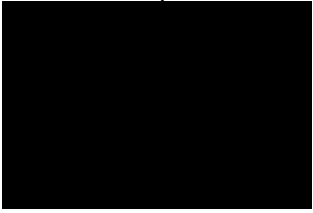


Mr A Ashcroft Independent Examiner Cumnor Parish NDP By email		Mr R T Fitzjohn 
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6 February 2021

Dear Mr Ashcroft,

Re: Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

I write further to the email received from Mr Robyn Tobutt, Senior Planning Policy Officer (Neighbourhood) Planning, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils dated 28 January 2021, forwarding your questions relating to our response to the Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In response to your questions I would confirm the following:

Question 1

Does the Cricket Club have a view about the public's use of the hard surfaces (to the east of the clubhouse and the nets and along the access drive) within the ground as an informal footpath?

The park is private property and there is a "Private property" sign at the main entrance to the site. Obviously, we understand that people walk around the site and frequently people do not keep to the designated footpath, which runs down the south side of the site along the tree line. Since there is no practical way to police this, we accept generally welcome local members of the public provided they respect the club's facilities. As noted in our submission this specifically relates to dog walkers and the need to keep the site clean.

The nets to the east of the clubhouse are out of bounds to the public. These are locked and monitored by CCTV. This facility is only open to members of the club or such people as may be provided with a licence to use them on a commercial basis (e.g. cricket coaches).

The hard surface around the club house is the car park and access road to the club house.

Question 2

Section 3 of your letter of 29 October 2019 to the Parish Council draws attention to the Club's concerns about the potential implications of Park Field's proposed designation as a local green space on the future viability of the Club. Is the Club's principal concern that such a designation would affect the Club's ability to improve/extend/adapt the existing built facilities within the ground (such as the works included in the first and second bullet points in Section 3)?

There are a number of issues in terms of viability of the club

- Our original concern raised with the Parish Council was that the green space designation would potentially prevent any development / expansion of the existing facilities thereby affecting the club's ability to attract new members and income streams. For example;
 - We have a medium term ambition to develop women's cricket and a longer term ambition to develop disabled cricket.
 - We are also seeking to make greater use of the club as a venue for local events (e.g. parties / christenings / weddings) and possibly as a training / meeting venue to provide an income stream for the club to enable some of our plans around e.g. women's and disabled cricket.
 - All of these plans would potentially include some development of the existing building (e.g. opening up the upstairs area / re-configuring the bar and kitchen areas) and potentially some slight enlargement to allow for further changing and shower facilities, disabled toilets, improved access etc.

When we raised this with the Parish Council, we were assured that this would not be affected by the green space designation. We would need to be assured that this remained the case and that the green space designation would not restrict flexibility in the site's development to enable other income streams subject obviously to the normal planning permissions.

- In addition, there is an area of the park in the SE corner, which we have identified as a potential development site for a single dwelling, subject planning permission. This option was explored some time ago but we did not progress it at the time due to lack of funds. We believe this was excluded from the original green space application following our initial discussions with the Parish Council and we would need to be assured that this remains excluded in the final plan. In addition, we would need assurance that the green space designation does not preclude access to this site across the existing road since this is the only viable access.
- There is a longer term viability issue linked the Q3, which is that if the club is constrained in developing such that it is unable to remain viable, one last option has always been to relocate and develop the site to enable investment in a new site and facilities in the Cumnor area which allow for the expansion planned. This would again be prevented by Green space designation.
- I would highlight the fact detailed in all of our submissions that the grounds are held in trust exclusively for the purposes of playing cricket. As such any development would be undertaken with that objective.

Question 3

The final bullet point of Section 3 of the October 2019 letter comments about potential scenarios which could arise based on future requirements of cricket leagues and/or governing bodies. Does the Club have any further information at this stage on the following matters:

- *when the requirements of the cricket leagues/governing bodies may change; and*
- *their specific requirements on Park Field/the Cumnor ground?*

We have already highlighted the additional requirements to make the club suitable for e.g. women's cricket. In addition, Cumnor's senior 1st team has consistently been in the 1st or 2nd division of the Cherwell League for many years. To progress from here we would be required to move to the Home Counties Premier League (HCPL), which has more stringent requirements including;

- Stricter requirements in terms of pitch size and quality. We believe we are advised that we would have one of the smallest pitches in the league and that there is pressure for ground sizes to be increased to accommodate the higher standards of semi-professional cricket.
- In addition, due to the added pressure of more matches, we are advised that clubs in the HCPL typically require a second pitch to avoid over-use and maintain standards on wear and tear, drainage etc. As noted previously our preference would be to expand at the Cumnor site provided land to the south or west could be obtained. This would require development which could be precluded by green space designation as would the alternative move away from the site to a larger venue nearby as noted above.
- In addition the HCPL requires improved facilities for players and umpires (including the ability to provide cooked meals) which would require the type of improvements to existing facilities and require an increased income stream all of which are conditional on the development discussed above.

I trust that this is satisfactory however if you require any additional information please contact me at the above address.

Yours faithfully

Richard Fitzjohn
Co-Chair

Ken Mannering
Co-Chair