

LUTON RUGBY CLUB RELOCATION

Forte Developments Ltd. 

Welcome to our newsletter about our proposals to relocate Luton Rugby Club from its current grounds at Newlands Road to new grounds off Sundon Road, Lower Sundon.



BACKGROUND

Luton Rugby Club, which plays in the lower leagues, is proposing to relocate to a site on Sundon Road, Lower Sundon, which would be developed into a modern rugby facility with multiple pitches and a clubhouse.

The Club's current facilities, which are over 50 years old, require a significant upgrade to bring them in line with the modern standards required by Sport England, the cost of which the Club cannot afford.

Like many organisations, the Club has suffered financially during COVID-19, with long periods without income. Furthermore, the Club is currently reliant upon a single sponsor for its continued operation, which is not a tenable long-term solution.

The Club is proposing to redevelop the old home ground for housing, which will help to fund the move to the new grounds and enable the construction of modern facilities.

The move will also help to secure the Club's long-term future and offer much-needed additional sporting facilities for the residents of Central Bedfordshire. The relocation would also mean that the day-to-day running costs would be more sustainable for the Club, while the facilities would also provide additional revenue streams through the hiring of pitches to local community groups, residents and other local sports teams.

OUR CONSULTATION PROCESS

Public and statutory consultation for the Club's original planning application began in 2019 and, following a review of the feedback collected during this initial consultation, the Club decided to withdraw its planning application to allow more time to consider potential revisions to its proposals.

Over the last two years, the Club has made significant changes to its plans as a result of feedback from the members of the public, councillors and stakeholders. These changes have addressed many of the issues raised during the original consultation process and have helped to significantly enhance the Club's overall proposals.



OUR REVISED PROPOSALS

Our revised plans still consist of a modern rugby facility with multiple pitches and a clubhouse, however, following feedback, changes to the proposals include:

- Revision to the site layout – relocation of the clubhouse to the western boundary
- Additional screening on the east of the site to be used as a ‘buffer’ with many additional trees
- Amended clubhouse design – creating a low-profile building to make it appear, from the surrounding area, to be a one storey building designed in an agricultural style
- Reduced scale of development – the new scheme covers 1,304 sqm, 15% less than the previous application
- Reduced number of pitches from seven to five, including 3G all-weather pitches
- Parking for approximately 160 cars (10 disabled access spaces), up to three coaches and three minibuses
- Overflow parking area for a potential additional 40 cars
- Retractable floodlights

RUGBY CLUB ACTIVITIES

The playing season lasts from September to April, with matches being held on Saturdays and some use on Sundays for youth or mini games. Rugby training would be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 7 and 9pm. In addition, there may be the occasional mid week school tournaments.

The peak periods on Sundon Road occur during the week, with significantly fewer vehicles at weekends. Most of the Club’s visits will occur on weekends with Saturday matches and Sunday youth-mini games. They will not therefore put pressure on the nearby roads in the peak periods.



SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

We are committed to open consultation. We will produce a consultation report which will summarise our full consultation process and the feedback collected.

If you would like to provide feedback for us to consider for this report, please send us your comments by 18th March 2022.

You can send us your feedback via:

- Email – consultation@proteus-cg.com
- Freephone - 0800 044 8103
- Website – complete an online feedback form at www.publicconsultation.online/projects/relocation-of-luton-rugby-club

Once we have completed a review of feedback from this second round of consultation, we will submit a revised planning application for the new grounds in spring 2022.