



ST ALBANS
SCHOOL

FROM THE HEADMASTER – Mr J T Silvester MA
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R Warren Esq
Planning Manager
South Team & Active Environments
Sport England

By email: roy.warren@sportengland.org

4 December 2024

Dear Mr Warren

Old Albanian Sports Association and the proposals for Woollam Park

We write jointly on behalf of the Trustee of the St Albans School Woollam Trust (SASWT – the landowner) and the trustees of the Old Albanian Sports Association (OASA the lessee) in relation to the changes that will occur should the Woollam Park planning application for a new residential development be successful.

OASA occupies its current grounds on Harpenden Road under a lease granted by SASWT for 250 years from 2002. When the lease was being structured, both parties felt that, at some point in the future, the city of St Albans might eventually need to expand. The northern edge around the playing fields would be a logical location for this growth.

As a result, the lease includes provision for SASWT to take back some of the OASA's pitches (identified as "Area A"), on the proviso that they are relocated to the area identified (defined as "Area X") which abuts their existing site, and that the new pitches would provide at least the same area and quality as the current pitches.

This relocation was anticipated to take place if Area A were to gain consent for re-development and, once the new pitches were ready for occupation, then be sold. Area X would be leased to OASA on the same terms as the original pitches and with the same residue of term (i.e. with an expiry in September 2252). In these circumstances, OASA will receive a significant share of the sale proceeds.

The current proposed plans for the new OASA pitches satisfy the requirements of the lease. They are in the defined Area X, and they provide the same or better facilities, including the following:

- A larger area than Area A of usable playing field which will be at least the same quality as Area A.
- The larger area will enable marking out of the existing size and number of rugby pitches together with the nine-wicket cricket square, but now with full run-off around each pitch, plus additional space for cricket.



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- The relocated pitches include a new cricket non-turf wicket in addition to the grass wickets, providing significantly greater capacity for cricket on site, particularly through the week and for juniors.
- In line with ECB's recommendations, there will be a new pavilion annex that meets ECB specifications, which will significantly improve the opportunities for cricket. This provision also recognises the small extra distance from OASA's main pavilion (Area X compared to the original Area A) which will continue to be the main hub and social space. This pavilion annex will also provide improved safeguarding for all the users of Area X (e.g. washroom facilities adjacent to the pitches to obviate the need for juniors to travel to the main pavilion).

OASA manages the current playing pitches on Area A and OASA's management role will transfer to the pitches on Area X plus the pavilion annex. OASA confirms that it is content that the small additional running costs form part of OASA's overall business plan; this plan includes the share of proceeds from Area A should it be sold following the grant of planning consent, and the likely receipts from increased community use on the new pitches.

We are pleased to be able to provide you with copies of the TGMS reports and plans for the replacement playing field area, together with the plans and accommodation brief for the pavilion annex. These will be submitted as part of the application for the North St Albans development, but if you have any feedback at this stage, this would be welcomed.

Yours sincerely

R Hepper MA FCA

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**Company Secretary,
The St Albans School Woollam Trustee
Company**

**Bursar, Clerk to the Governors of St Albans
School**

C Tallents

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**Chief Executive Officer,
The Old Albanian Sports Association**

cc: *Alastair Woodgate, Director, St Albans School Woollam Trustee Company*
Edward Saunders, Head of Strategic Property, St Albans School