Operational Statement

Playing Pitches and Youth and Community Hub
Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester

On behalf of Greater Manchester Youth Federation
December 2023

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Operational Statement has been prepared by Asteer Planning LLP ('Asteer Planning') on behalf of the Greater Manchester Youth Federation ('GMYF') to inform the operational requirements of the following facilities:

- 2 no football FA standard grass pitches;
- Associated netball / basketball court and cricket wicket;
- Youth, Sports and Community Hub; and
- Associated car parking.

1.2 This document sets out GMYF's strategy for the operation and management of the facilities.

Greater Manchester Youth Federation

History

1.3 The origin of GMYF dates to the mid 1800's. The founding 'Lads' Clubs' were established in Manchester and Salford by groups of businessmen as a solution to the growth of 'Scuttling Gangs', which had come to prominence in many of the poorest communities in the area. Representing and defending particular streets, these gangs would meet on waste ground and battle one another using a variety of lethal weapons. The original clubs, some more than 500 members, were formed to provide a basic education and positive recreational opportunities in a safe and secure environment to distract young men from crime.

1.4 Although many of the original clubs have disappeared (Adelphi Lads' Club) or are now under the ownership and control of their own charity (Salford Lads' Club), the movement continues today with the same ethos of providing a programme of positive, focused activities and training for the young people and volunteers of GMYF's affiliated clubs. As well as clubs in Manchester and Salford, they can now also be found across Trafford, Stockport, Tameside, Rochdale and Oldham.

Current Status

1.5 GMYF currently works with a wide variety of voluntary youth groups and projects throughout the most disadvantaged communities of Greater Manchester. These provide a diverse range of opportunities for young people and volunteers. The programmes aim to provide as many opportunities as possible for young people to grow and be the best

that they can be, helping them to move beyond their boundaries. In simple terms, it is about getting young people off the streets, into clubs and doing something positive with their time. The mission is 'Supporting Aspiration, Creating Opportunities' and this is delivered through boxing, football, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, table tennis, outdoor pursuits, art, media, sound and many more activities.

1.6 The charity owns land across Manchester and Salford, including the application site. GMYF also holds:

- The leases (as custodian trustee with Manchester City council as landlord) of Norbrook Youth club in Wythenshawe and previously Whitemoss Youth Centre in Charlestown which is now under the control of GMYF and no longer a custodian lease with a committed improvement programme of £200k.
- as owner of Jimmy Egan's Boxing Gym in Wythenshawe;
- custodian trustee of centre in Tameside;
- In April 2022 the charity took on a 99yr lease from Trafford MBC in relation to a disused youth centre in Partington. Partington Youth Centre re-opened to the young people 4 months later after a £400k refurbishment was completed by the charity. We now have over 300 young people registered as members and using the facility. This facility is also to benefit from further funding through LUF as the charity partnered with Trafford MBC in relation to its successful Partington bid;
- Ownership (split 50:50 with LABGC) of Ormside Mill Outdoor Pursuits Centre nr Appleby in Cumbria.

1.7 Any use of land or other facilities owned and operated by GMYF is on a not-for-profit basis to meet the requirements of its charitable constitution. GMYF is not allowed (under its constitution) to enter into legal or other arrangements with organisations that do not share their charitable objectives.

The Site

1.8 The site has come forward as part of a wider proposed development at Land at Mount Road, Gorton, Manchester.

1.9 The proposals will see the existing vacant site, and former playing fields, redeveloped to bring forward 2no grass football playing pitches, ancillary basketball/netball court and cricket wicket, a youth, sports and community hub, 36no independent living

accommodation for young people working with Centrepoint and 267no high quality residential dwellings.

1.10 This Operational Statement relates to the management and operation of the grass football pitches, ancillary basketball/netball court and cricket wicket and youth, sports and community hub only.

1.11 The proposed sports, youth and community facilities which will be owned and operated by GMYF comprise:

- 2no grass football playing pitches which is for youth football and can be played as 11 v 11, 7 v 7 or 5 v 5;
- Ancillary netball/basketball court and cricket wicket;
- A youth, sports and community hub, providing a space for a range of different youth-led activities and programmes ran by GMYF plus access for community clubs and organisations to host their own events particularly in the day time (excluding school holidays). The community aspect of the hub is intended to be a multi-generational offering and not restricted to young people. We believe that the involvement of the wider community is one of the key ingredients to the long-term success of our work with young people. It brings in volunteers to work with young people, promotes a wider sense of community ownership and enables intergenerational respect.

1.12 This Operational Statement submitted as part of this application, outlines how the facility will operate with regard to staffing, use and management.

2 VISION AND USES

2.1 This section envisions how GMYF will ensure the site contributes to the local community through providing sporting access and other opportunities.

2.2 GMYF strongly believes in its statement of Supporting Aspiration and Creating Opportunities. The work we do with our young people is aligned to this statement and so our vision would be:

- Create a welcoming space for young people to own as their own with their own art work, their chosen activities, their chosen furniture and decoration. Where they can drop in on their way home from school to spend as much or as little time as they want. Where they can get some food and a drink and find a welcoming ear, a quiet space, a space for fun and activities – a space where they can be themselves with no other pressures.

- By employing well trained and motivated youth workers we would aim to offer a variety of activities to the young people including:

    - Trips to our outdoor pursuits centre in Ormside;

    - Participation in Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at nil cost;

    - Participation in outdoor education around Manchester e.g. sailing at Debdale, ski-ing at Chill Factore, fun at Waterparks in Cheshire; and

    - Arts, craft and music in dedicated rooms at the Hub.

    - Well being, mentoring and psychological support in the 3 small rooms upstairs

- The two grass football pitches would be used to offer local teams a base to call home. We would be offering teams and coaching working with partners who want to be embedded in the locality and see the success of their local people. We are also very much committed to diversity in our sports offer and would like to see the football use be reflective of the diversity of the community of Gorton .

- The additional provision of a basketball/netball court and cricket wicket expands the sports offering for local young people within our youth club and affiliated youth clubs.

Youth and Community Hub

2.3 The youth and community hub will act as a safe space for young people who participate in GMYF programmes but will also be available for use by the local community, primarily during school hours.

2.4 The Hub will be a two storey facility approximately 10,000 sq ft in size. Downstairs will comprise:

- A community room capable of seating 50 people for a community lunch. This room will be available for day time use for exercise classes, meetings, general chats, Eid and Diwali celebrations etc. There will be an associated storage area facilitating multi-functional use of the room. The community room will have direct access to the kitchen via a roller shutter.

- A large dedicated youth space which the young people can decorate and use as their own. Whilst available for use by others in the day time this will only be if those groups can accept and respect the young people's use of the space. There will be associated storage allowing for multi-functional use of the space. The youth room will have direct access to the kitchen via a roller shutter.

- A meeting room capable of seating up to 10 people with facilities for digital access for meetings using Zoom etc.

- An office for staff seating up to 3 people. GMYF is a relatively paper free organisation. All of our staff are provided with lap tops and phones fully encrypted by our IT consultants. This helps us meet our GDPR and Safeguarding requirements and allows our staff to work from wherever suits them. On this basis we do not need a lot of room for staff, just hot desks.

- Toilet facilities which will be non-gender specific. Each toilet will have its own washbasin. We find this is more acceptable to young people who feel safer. It also helps us not to have a space where young people can congregate and cause an element of disruption.

- On the second floor, accessed by stairs and a lift, we will have 5 rooms. 3 for one to one consultations (well being etc.) one for art/music and other for drama and dance rooms.

Football Pitches and Ancillary Facilities

2.5 The football pitches and ancillary facilities (netball / basketball court and cricket wicket) will be owned run and managed by GMYF. These facilities will be made available for use to:

- Local grass root football clubs for young people and to affiliate with GMYF
- Clubs who are affiliated to GMYF

2.6 If a club is affiliated to GMYF it means that they accept that they need to abide by our affiliation terms. In this way we can ensure that safeguarding measures are satisfactorily in place along with insurance and GDPR compliance. It also gives the affiliated club access to our whole programme of events including visits to Ormside Mill at nil cost, the chance to request contributions to equipment up to a cost of £500 and the chance to join in events with other clubs in our affiliated organisation. We aim to support the organisations with training and know how so that they feel supported.

2.7 The proposed grass football pitches, will provide year-round football facilities for GMYF.

2.8 The design and layout of the youth and community hub has enabled the potential for future facilities to be incorporated should use for them be identified at a later date.

2.9 All equipment for running and maintaining the fields and ancillary facilities will be stored externally in 5 metal storage containers place around the fields for ease of access. GMYF intends to maintain the fields itself (as it has done in the past) and will be storing its own tractors, line marking equipment, fertilisers, sand etc.

2.10 The grass football pitches will run independently of the youth and community hub but we do not want them to operate as separate silos - we need to seek elements of cross over between the work of all so that we keep a sense of community. One way of working this into the efforts of youth club and football could be to arrange for football coaching at a discounted rate for those young people who are members of the youth club – as long as they keep up their attendance at youth club. Another example of cross over work could be ensuring that football volunteering could be an important component of Duke of Edinburgh scheme volunteering or skills training. It will be important to ensure that the football clubs we work with see the importance of the whole community effort of the site and not just the football aspect.

3 MANAGEMENT

3.1 This section details how the site will be controlled by GMYF with day-to-day management of the facilities, operational hours, and other security measures.

Staff

3.2 Staffing numbers will depend on the specific use of the hub at the associated time.

3.3 GMYF will aim to provide a ratio of one staff to every 10 young people using the hub depending on behavioural standards. If behaviour requires more staff these will be provided. Staff for the youth element will be employed by GMYF and will not be expected to be involved with the community use as they will be trained professional youth workers.

3.4 In relation to use of the first floor of the hub (arts, music , drama and well being sessions) GMYF will bring in suitably qualified staff to run appropriate courses and sessions.

3.5 In relation to the use of the community hub, this will be under the control of the Hub Manager who will facilitate the cleaning, booking and use of rooms. It is anticipated that a Hub Manager will be employed for approximately 20 hours a week initially and that this will rise to full time in due course. The Operational Director for GMYF will be heavily involved in the initial set up and the first few years of running the hub to ensure standards are set and maintained. The operation of the hub can use the operations of Partington as a blue print where for example:

- We subcontract Health & Safety (including fire safety) so that we can constantly achieve best practice;
- Our IT support is subcontracted and enables us to ensure an excellent level of cyber security which is essential when the WiFi is key to the function of the building;
- We employ our own cleaning team to enable us to keep to the high standards we require;
- Our security is tailor made for our use and we have had no problems with vandalism, break ins etc.

3.6 GMYF also anticipate the need to employ separate cleaning staff 2-3 hours a day 5 days a week plus further hours to meet the cleaning requirements of the changing facilities within the Hub.

Operational Hours

3.7 The community hub will be open as and when required 5 days a week, but it is not anticipated that it will open earlier than 10 a.m. nor close later than 10p.m. It may be possible to allow trusted community groups to have access at the weekends.

3.8 The Youth element will be open for the use of young people from 3pm to 7pm each day Monday to Friday for the first 2 years and we would hope to expand those hours in the years to follow. The youth hub will also be made available for Holiday Activities when it is anticipated it will be used 10a.m. to 4p.m. during school holidays. We would also look to open the hub at weekends subject to demand and the costs of doing so.

3.9 The sport pitches provision will operate for a maximum playing time of 4.5 hours per week and outside of that will be for ad hoc use subject to maintenance programme.

3.10 The ancillary sports facilities (netball / basketball court and cricket wicket), will be available for use to those affiliated with GMYF outside of hours where the pitches provision are in use, subject to agreement with GMYF.

Equipment

3.11 All relevant equipment will be held on site and storage provision has been made within the design. GMYF will be responsible for its own equipment, but it is anticipated the community groups may want to have storage space for their own equipment and they will be responsible for this. Kitchen to be equipped to feed a minimum of 50 people. Storage for tables and chairs, community room 'multi use'. The need for this type of storage has been incorporated in the design. Commercial equipment will be provided and training in its use will be given

3.12 Each of the youth and community rooms will have their own separate storage areas allowing for tables and chairs to be brought in and out of use. This will make each of those main rooms multi-functional. The kitchen will have adequate storage for all crockery and utensils sufficient to feed 50 people at any one time. All kitchen equipment will be provided to catering standards and people using the kitchen will be trained in food handling safety.

Health and Safety and Fire Safety

3.13 GMYF is accustomed to running centres similar to the proposed development and has experience with Health and Safety ('H&S') compliance, procedures, and insurance. GMYF are currently under contract with Worknest to managed H&S (including fire) compliance at the Partington Community Centre; they have other contracts for the management of Legionella, fire alarm and air con systems on site.

3.14 GMYF's insurance is fully comprehensive and takes into account all activities. The proposed users of the site will be required to provide copies of their risk assessments and safeguarding policies. GMYF will provide support to users with all aspects of statutory compliance and will not allow groups to use our premises without compliance. This is a requirement of GMYF's insurance policy.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

3.15 GMYF holds safeguarding as one of its core standards and requirements. We comply with all legislative requirements and also require that our affiliated clubs do the same; it is part of our affiliation agreement. Where necessary or desired, we provide training to our clubs and to our staff and make arrangements for training to be updated.

3.16 We have a Designated Safeguarding Officer, who is trained to the highest level and are capable and experienced in delivering a full in-house training package. We also use a software system called 'Views' which enables us to track safeguarding concerns; this is enormously helpful and allows us to monitor, for example, if a series of minor issues are building up into a different more concerning issue. It also allows our staff to know all the young people we work with. All young people and their parents are made aware that this system is in place so that we comply with GDPR requirements.

3.17 We also have a Lone Working Policy as sometimes this becomes necessary, but we try and keep this to an absolute minimum for the safety of our own staff. Lone Working is normally only ever done with the consent of the young person's parents or carer.

IT and GDPR

3.18 Our IT management is contracted out to a reputable IT specialist firm based in Stockport. All of our computers and phones are encrypted before staff are permitted to use them. Staff all have 'work' phones to allow compliance with GDPR and safeguarding rules. We have recently run a test of our system, allowing three IT specialists to try and hack our system. This proved impossible to do and gave us great satisfaction in relation to our cyber security.

3.19 We have a GDPR policy in place and an appointed GDPR manager who is regularly trained. All staff are also trained in GDPR and are fully aware of its crossover into safeguarding. For example, all photographs of young people are kept secure on a cloud based system and before any photographs are used we double check that we have the necessary consents. If we do not have specific consent we either do not use the photograph or block out the young person's face.

3.20 We work on a cloud based system and any paperwork is kept to a minimum. If hard copy documents are kept with personal information they are stored in a locked cabinet.

Security

3.21 GMYF do not anticipate using a separate company for security. GMYF currently work on authorised key holders able to open/lock up on their own and have not experienced any problems with this. Access to the hub is then anticipated to be controlled so that access can only be gained with permission.

3.22 We anticipate having CCTV installed at the youth and community hub as this does act as a deterrent. Security systems are evolving all the time and we will use the system most appropriate at the time of construction. We would like to be able to facilitate access to trusted groups without the presence of a caretaker/centre manager on site.

Parking

3.23 The sports, youth and community facilities will benefit from 40 secure car parking spaces with GSM access and 20 secure cycle parking spaces for visitors to utilise during operational hours. At the current time GMYF do not anticipate making a charge for use.

Booking System

3.24 To book the community hub, GMYF anticipate the most effective method will be ringing the hub to make a booking, with a phone line operational during opening hours of the hub backed by an answer machine for messages. It will also be possible to call in to discuss bookings when the hub manager is available. At the current time GMYF do not anticipate making a charge for use. Access for key holders and others has been explained above.

3.25 Booking of sports pitches on an ad hoc basis is not anticipated. The use of the sports pitches will be dealt with by creating partnerships with local providers so as to create a sustainable relationship and community football ethos.

3.26 Information regarding the booking of facilities will be placed on the GMYF website.

Terms of Use

3.27 All community groups and other users will be expected to sign an agreement regulating their use. This will contain the terms of use. Any complaints or reports will need to be made to the hub manager.

3.28 All groups will need to comply with the terms of GMYF insurance explained above.

4 PLAYING PITCH AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES USE

General Principles of Use

4.1 The pitches are to be affiliated with grass root junior football clubs based within the local community. A number of local clubs have approached GMYF already and since the Community Consultation, are keen to be affiliated clubs.

4.2 Those clubs affiliated with local youth cricket, basketball and netball clubs and interested in using the ancillary facilities can do under agreement with GMYF.

4.3 All affiliated partners will have to adhere to rules of use and will have to agree and sign Hire Agreements. Only affiliated clubs will be able to use the pitch/sports element.

4.4 Hire Agreements duration to be of a decent length of time for clubs to have security of use to help establish and build up club and sport membership with young people from local community.

Age Groups

4.5 Users will be of 8-17 years of age on average.

Operating Hours

Term Time

4.6 Late Spring/Summer Monday- Friday 6-9pm subject to planning permission (note no floodlights installed although ducting will be provided for future installation- the reason for this is due to energy usage and cost)

4.7 Autumn and Winter Monday – Friday 6pm-9pm

4.8 Saturday and Sunday available from 10am-7pm

Outside of term time

4.9 Available Monday- Sunday depending on season due to daylight available with formal play from 6pm-9pm

4.10 Please note that each grass pitch will only be suitable for 4.5 hours of play per week.

4.11 It is not envisaged at this stage to have all sports (football, cricket, basket/netball) played at the same time. Usage will dovetail to prevent overuse and pressure on parking, highways and noise.

4.12 The pitches/courts will only be used for the specific sports use intended for.

Cost

4.13 There will be no cost to use these facilities to our affiliated clubs.

4.14 All users to be affiliated and on a Hire Agreement.

Weather

4.15 The pitches will be of FA standard and will have a substantial new drainage system installed by an accredited civils engineer and pitch contractor with a robust maintenance regime managed by GMYF in accordance with SE/National groundsmen protocols to ensure the pitches are never closed to use and can withstand the proposed 4.5 hours of play per week per pitch.

4.16 The pitches and courts will be open to the elements and expectation is that they can be used during wet weather.

4.17 There will be an appropriate watering programme during period of hot dry weather.

4.18 Extreme weather such as hard frost and snow would halt usage due to Health and Safety reasons and potential for slips and trips.

Appropriate Footwear

4.19 Only suitable sports footwear will be permitted to be used on the grass pitches and courts

4.20 Boot/footwear checks and brush down area provided and required prior to going into building. The brushes will be secured to external station and an external cold water tap and trap grid over drain to allow for water run off and collection of grass/mud to prevent blockages.

4.21 The pitches and courts will be secured and part of a robust appropriate maintenance programme to ensure they can be used to their full potential.

4.22 There will be a regular weekly inspection and record of condition.

4.23 No smoking /vaping on site.

4.24 No dogs permitted to be on site within court/pitch areas.

4.25 No food to be consumed within pitch/courts area.

4.26 Only water bottles permitted in pitch/courts area.

4.27 No signage (fixed or mobile) to be erected without approval of GMYF.

4.28 The use of mobile phones and cameras is prohibited when pitches and courts are in unless approved by GMYF- (safeguarding reasons)

4.29 All users and spectators to sign in to access court/pitch areas. Roll to be recorded by lead Coach/Team user.