

TUNBRIDGE WELLS RFC



**Mike Rigby's Chairman update
April 2024
- Email version**





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Ground
TN2 5LS**

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Purpose of tonight:

Engage

Listen

Reflect

Agenda

- Update on 5 years as chairman
- Update on the Clubs ambition
- Update on the Future of the Club
- Listen, answer questions, reflect

5 years as your Chairman:

On Pitch:

- Mens 1st XV finish 2023/24 in their highest ever league position
- Mens 2nd and 3rd XV have both won their leagues
- Ladies XV starts playing competitive games and makes it to the national league structure
- Academy is re-born with a professional Coach and Elite squad engagement
- #OneTWRFC sees the club get closer and more connected

Off Pitch:

- £240k invested in: Pitches; Decking; Café; Gym; New Storage containers; Planning permission
- Board/Exec structure reintroduced with added diversity
- Social media taken to a whole new level: Engagement up!
- Finances significantly improved: Membership; Sponsorship; Bar; Cash
- We have a plan for the future, in fact we have two.....



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Our ambition as a Club:

- TWRFC to be:**
- A highly valued community sports club
 - A top 3 Kent rugby side with the best facilities in the county
 - A centre of excellence for junior rugby
 - The No.1 choice to play womens rugby in Kent/Sussex

Facilities

- To install an artificial grass pitch within 4 years
- To improve the club house to allow for a more sustainable off field model

The 1st XV

Will win the league in the next 2 years to get promotion to National 2 (level 4)

The 2nd XV

The 2nd XV will get promoted to Counties 2 inside the next 2 years and Counties 1 in the next 4 years to close the gap between 1st and 2nd XV's at the club.

The academy, youth and minis

Will build and grow on our offering so that players coming from our mini/youth section want to remain with the club. National Cup champions

Ladies

Ladies' rugby at the club has grown consistently over the past few year. We want to invest to be able to provide the facilities to allow that to continue: Suitable changing rooms, more referee changing room options, more female toilets.



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How we get there

Facilities

Planning permission gained for St Marks. Funds will need to be raised and a business model developed that will enable the club to become sustainable. An alternative relocation option is in final stages of being ready. Two options for the members to consider.

On the field

If we are to win the 1st and 2nd XV leagues, we will need to retain and recruit players. This means we need to maintain our current playing budget, and when the time comes to moving up to the next league, have the ability to increase that budget.

Be in a position to attract players based on helping them find employment and accommodation at the appropriate level.

Grow the junior section especially U16 – U18 boys and all sections of the ladies.

To improve the level of coaching throughout all sides (including senior, junior and ladies sections)

Appointment of a full time Rugby Development Officer.



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Future of the Club



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Our aim for tonight:

- Socialise both options
- Seek your opinions on both options
- Get to a position where the Board feels they are making a decision that has the support of the Members. That decision will be:

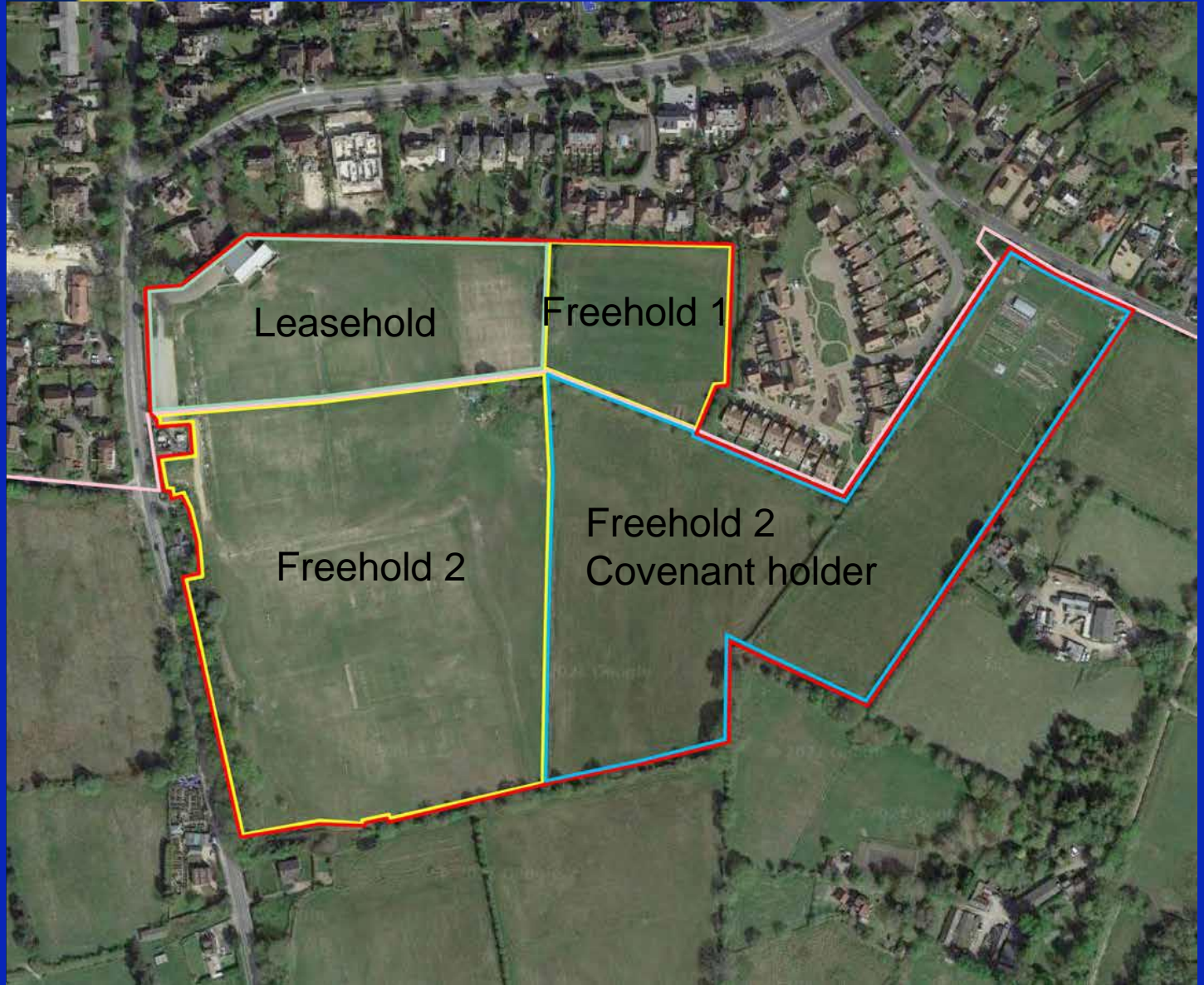
- A. Get fully behind the fundraiser to redevelop St Marks
- B. Get fully behind the relocation to Chase Farm site

Timescales:

The relocation option would see us sign an option agreement within 1 month

(There are several steps to go before we get to this point: including a Board meeting and potential EGM/AGM)

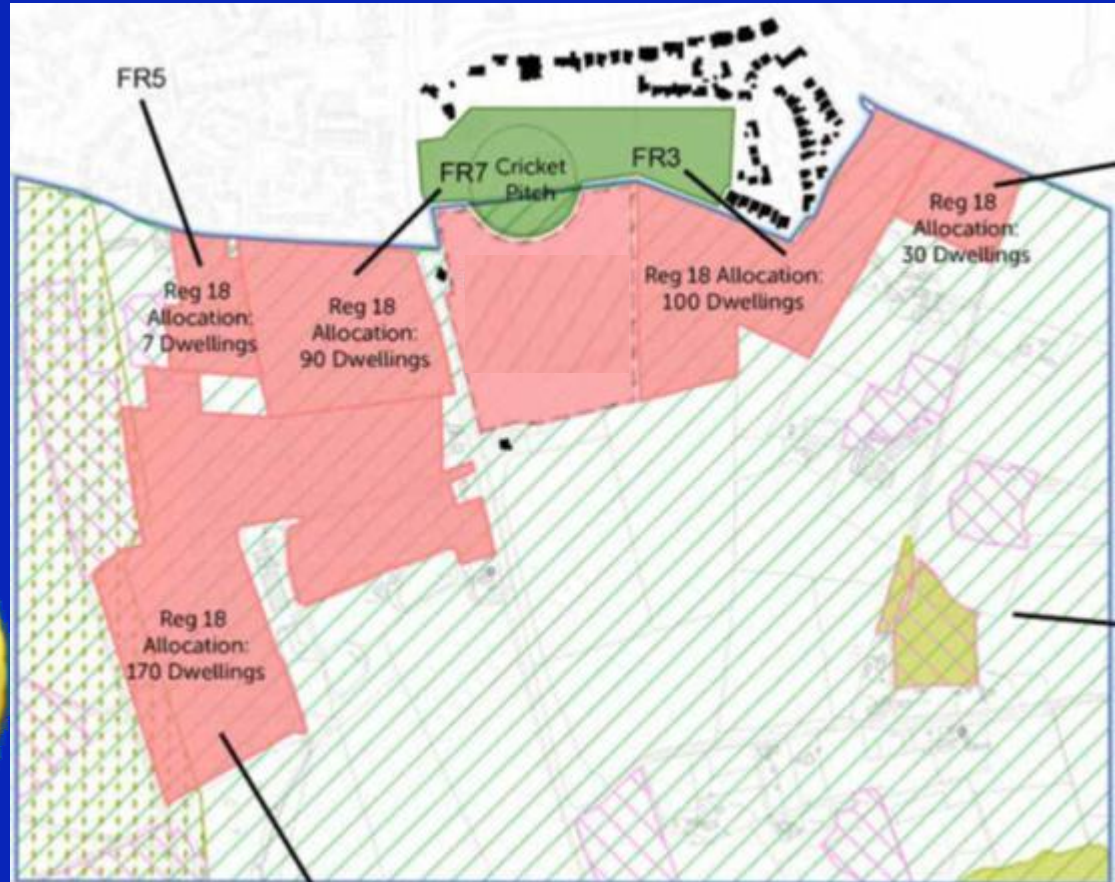
A quick reminder and background:



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The local plan: the future of life at St Marks..... there is lots of development planned around us



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Where is Chase Farm?:



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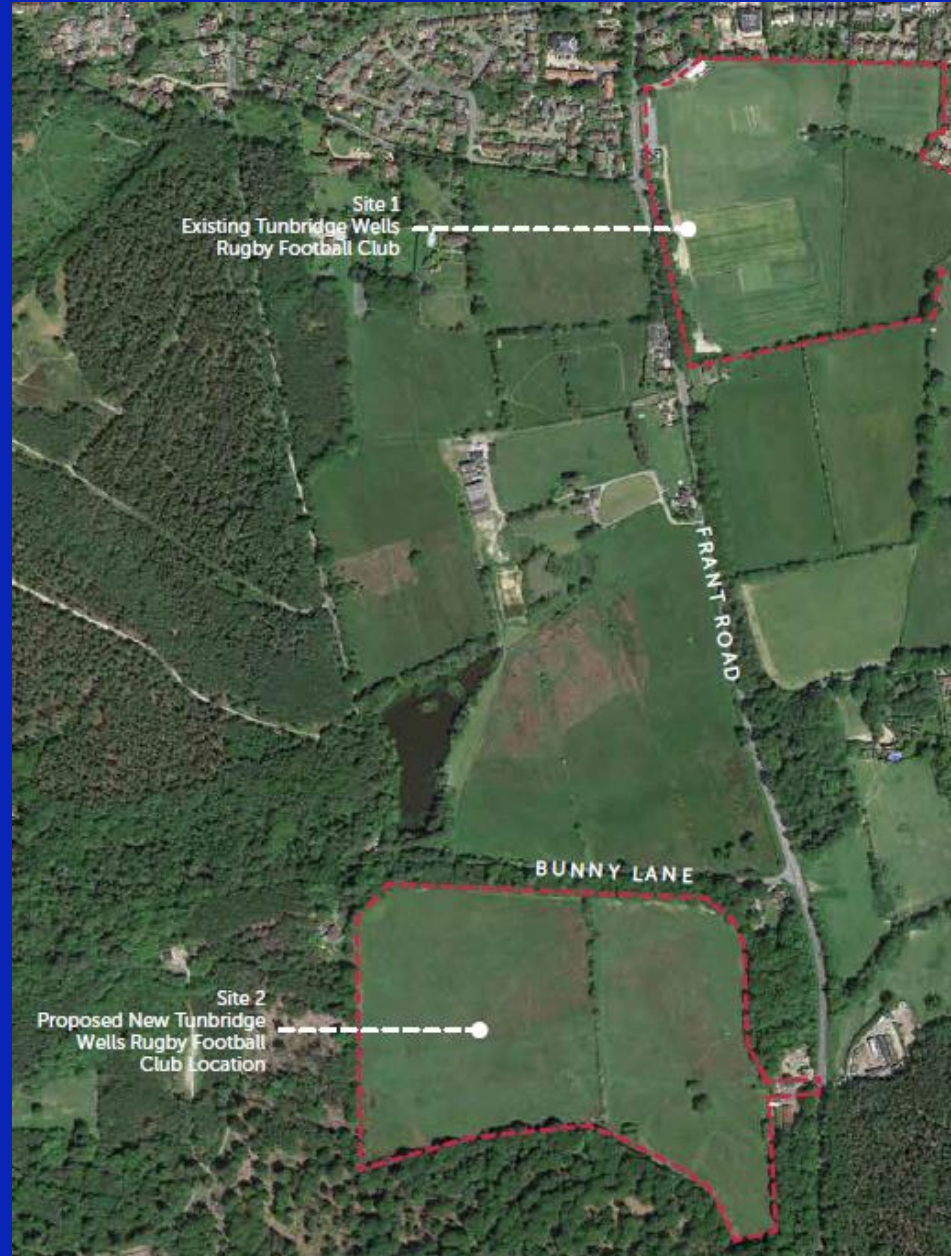
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Financial assumptions

- We have written two 10 year business plans based on both options. We have followed a consistent methodology for both options to make them comparable
- Like all assumptions they are open to debate, the key areas for challenge are: Hiring the improved club house facilities, utilisation rates of the AGP, membership fees, as well as all opex assumptions
- We also look carefully at taxation and make some 'reasonable assumptions' that need independently diligencing
- Lastly, we have made some assumptions on funding structures



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Financial assumptions

Headline use of funds and source of funds for both options

Investing in St Marks:

Total Costs: £2.45m

AGP £1.16m; Parking £198k; Clubhouse £594k; Cricket £475k

- Funded with: Grants £370k; Large donations £350k; Club fundraising £360k; Members/Club £141k, Loans £1,258k (AGP £884k, VAT £374k)

Relocating to Chase Farm:

Total Costs: £750k

VAT £510k; Contingency Capex £277k

- Funded with: Club fundraising £360k; VAT loans £426k



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Our future – part 1

Stay at St Marks:

- Improved Parking: 76 new parking spaces (Planning approved - £198k)
- New Cricket square and Pavillion (Planning approved - £495k)
- New Artificial Grass Pitch and social space area (Planning approved - £1.16m)
- Extend and improve Clubhouse 3k sq.ft to 4k sq.ft. (Planning required - £594k)



What next?

- Purchase new land; extend lease on St Marks; Progress to detailed drawings
- Re-start fundraising effort: Project 31; General fundraising; Grants; Loans
- The order which we build is defined: Cricket square > Parking > AGP/Clubhouse
- Aim for completion of Cricket/Parking by 2026, AGP 2028, Clubhouse 2028/30.



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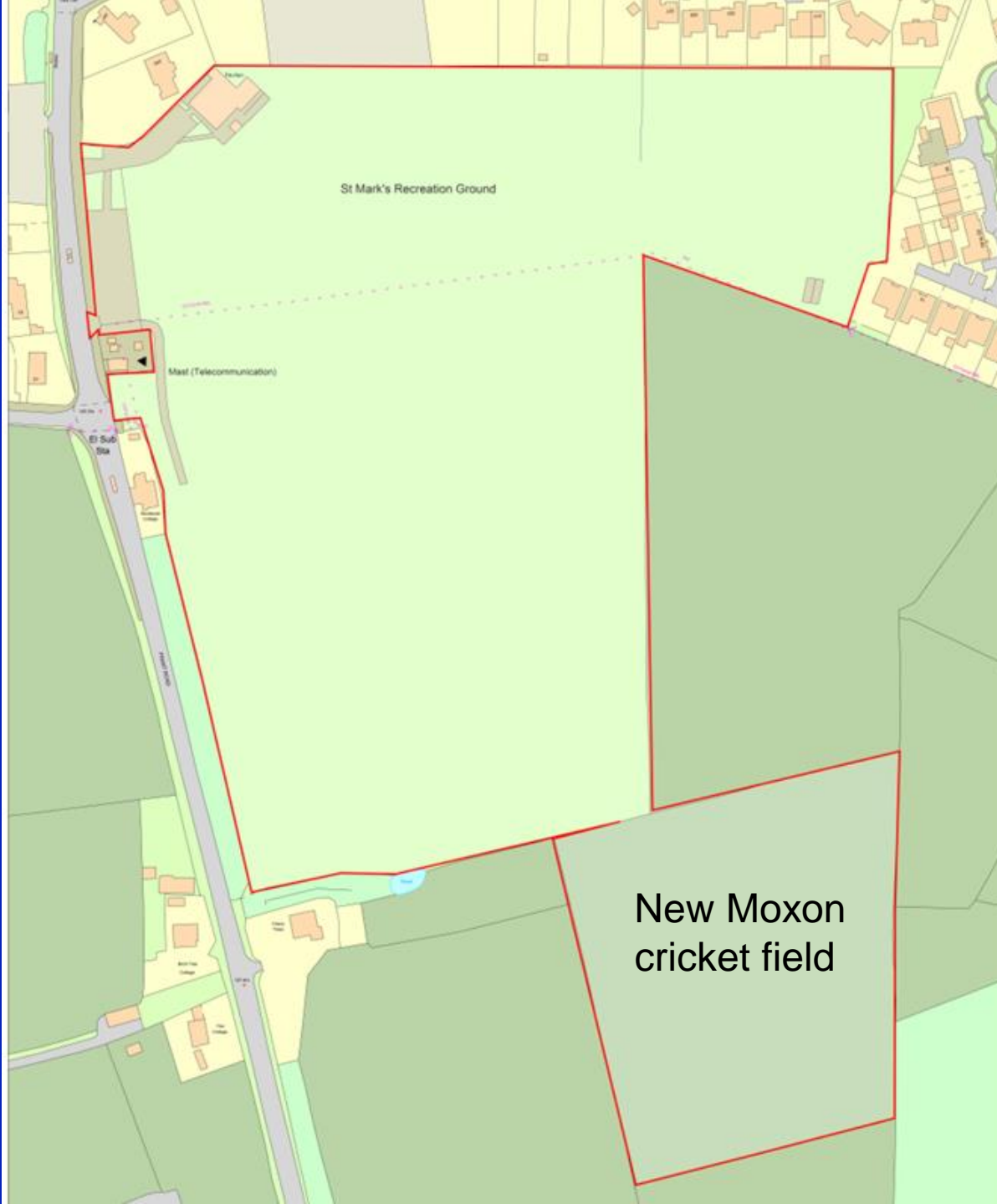
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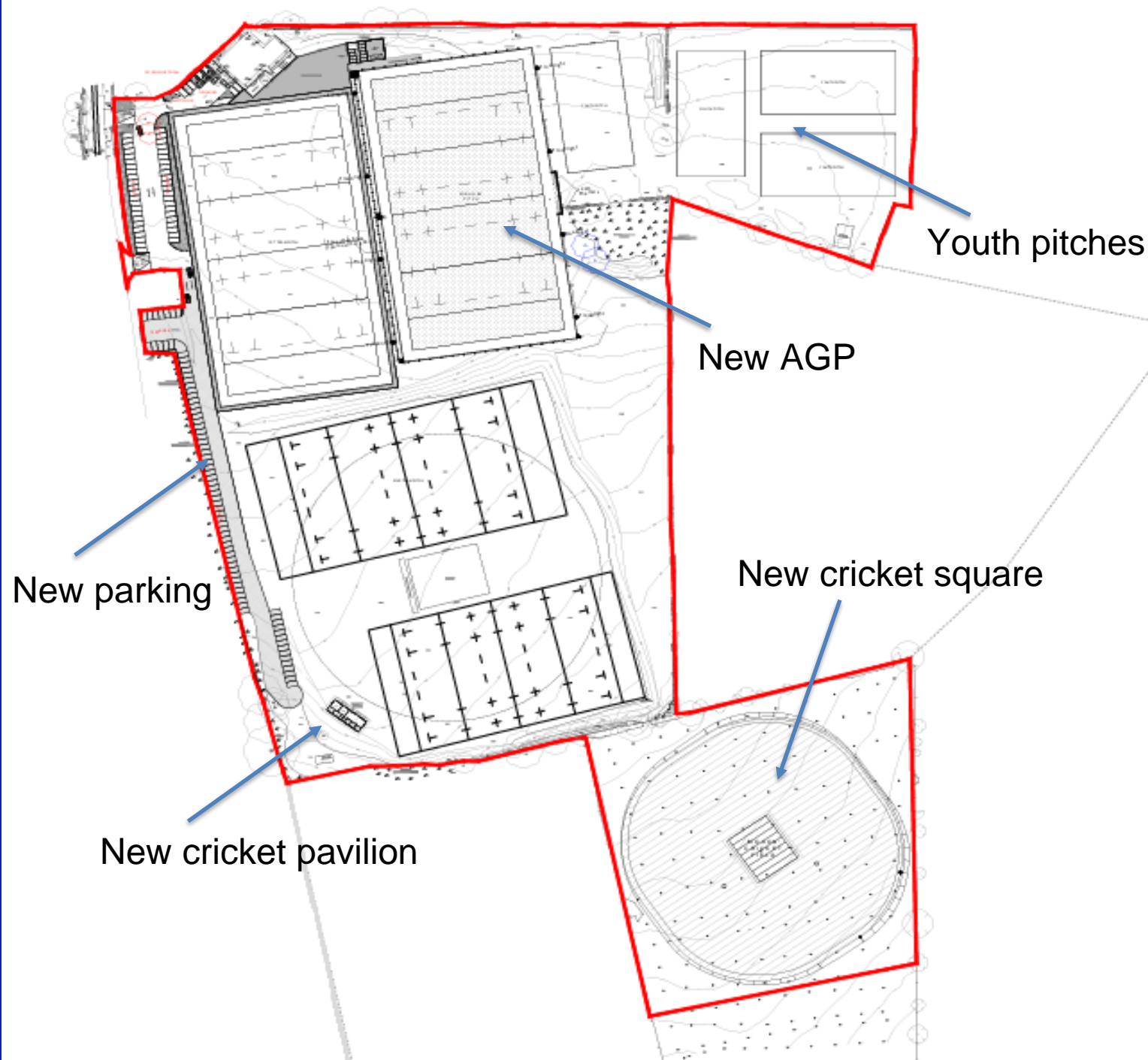
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New parking

New cricket pavilion

New AGP

New cricket square

Youth pitches

Our future – part 1

Stay at St Marks Summary:

- Delivering this, from a planning perspective, is in our own hands (excluding clubhouse piece)
- Lots of work to do with Lease extensions, new land acquisition, final drawings, contractors, new planning permission for Clubhouse etc
- Largest piece of work is fundraising £850k and getting Grants of £360k
- Business case: We start with £1.25m of Loans, It takes 6 years to get us to making an operating profit, 10 years after we start the build we still have £910k of loans outstanding (long amortisation period due to affordability)
- Absolute best base: AGP is in by 2027, realistically it will be when we can raise the money



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Our future – part 2

Move to Chase farm site:

- Improved Parking: 400 new parking spaces
- New Cricket square and Pavillion
- New Artificial Grass Pitch and social space area
- New storage facilities
- New Clubhouse (11k sq feet)



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What next?

- Sign option agreement for two years 2024 until 2026 (Can be extended)
- Building work takes max two years 2026 until 2028
- 2028 move to new site

Our future – part 2

Move to Chase Farm summary:

- Delivering this, from a planning perspective, is NOT in our own hands
- Developer to seek planning permission for housing on St Marks (and Adjacent land) with the backing of Homes England
- Pre-Planning application is already in with a date set for May
- Business case: We start with a £426k short term VAT Loan, It makes an operating profit in year one, no loan is outstanding in year 10
- Best case: We are in our new home by 2028
- Worst case: Planning permission not achieved and we are where we are now in 2026



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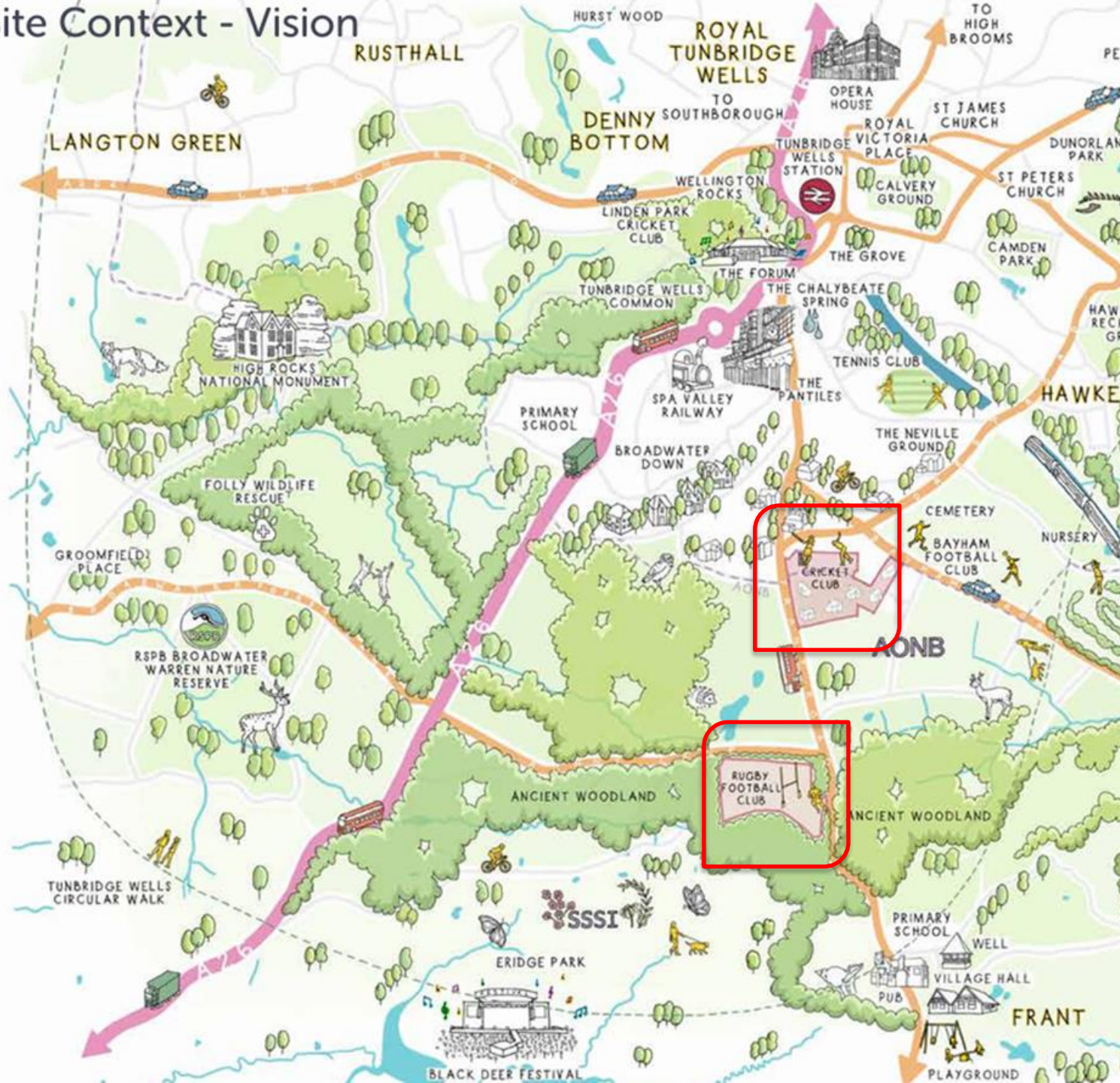
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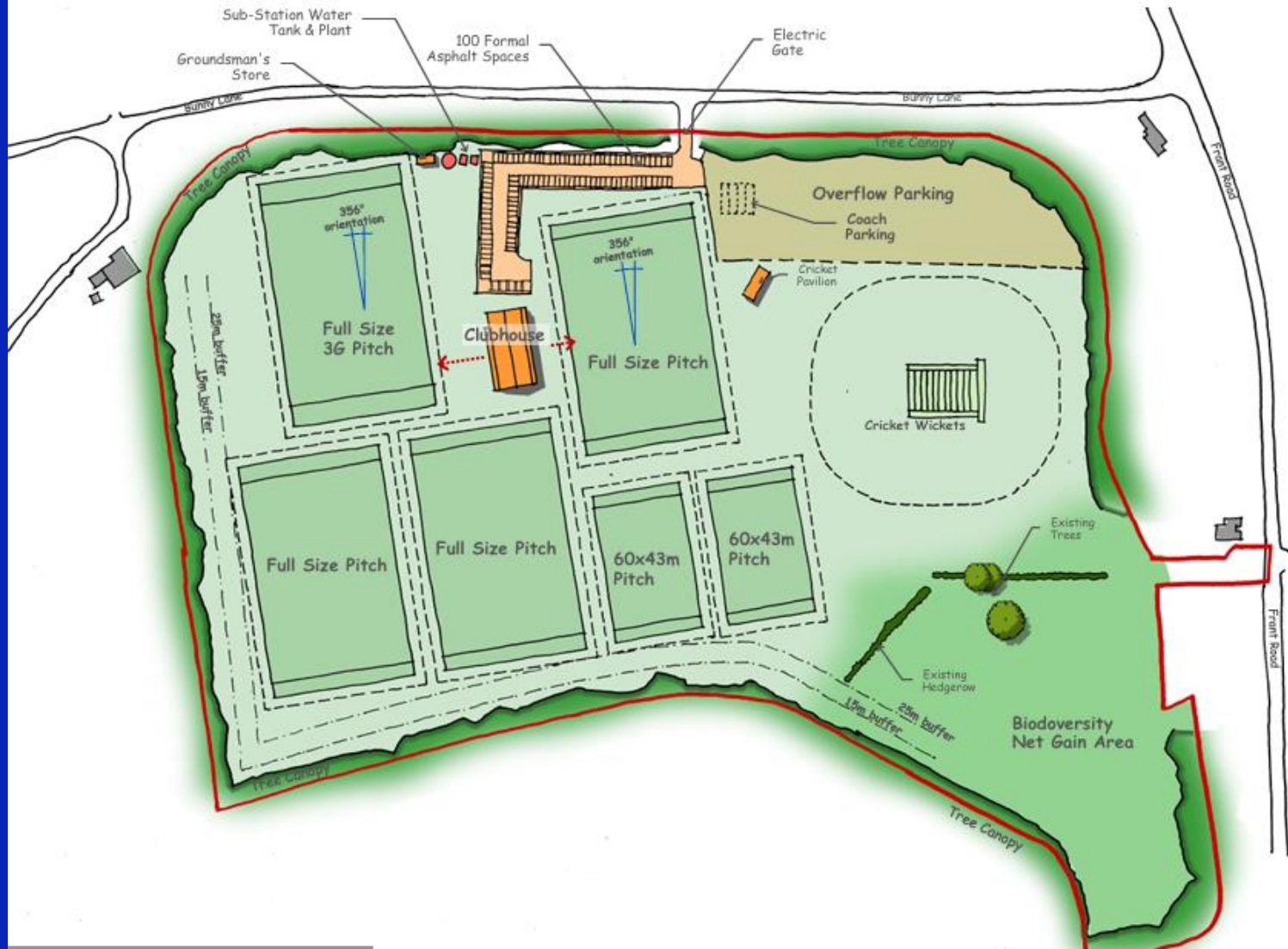
Site Context - Vision



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Chase Farm– Proposed layout and clubhouse design



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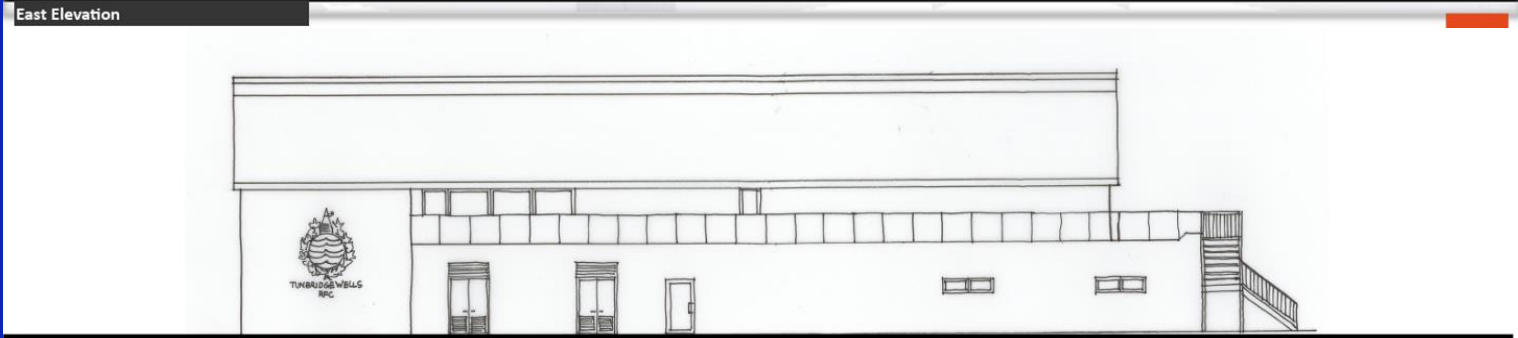
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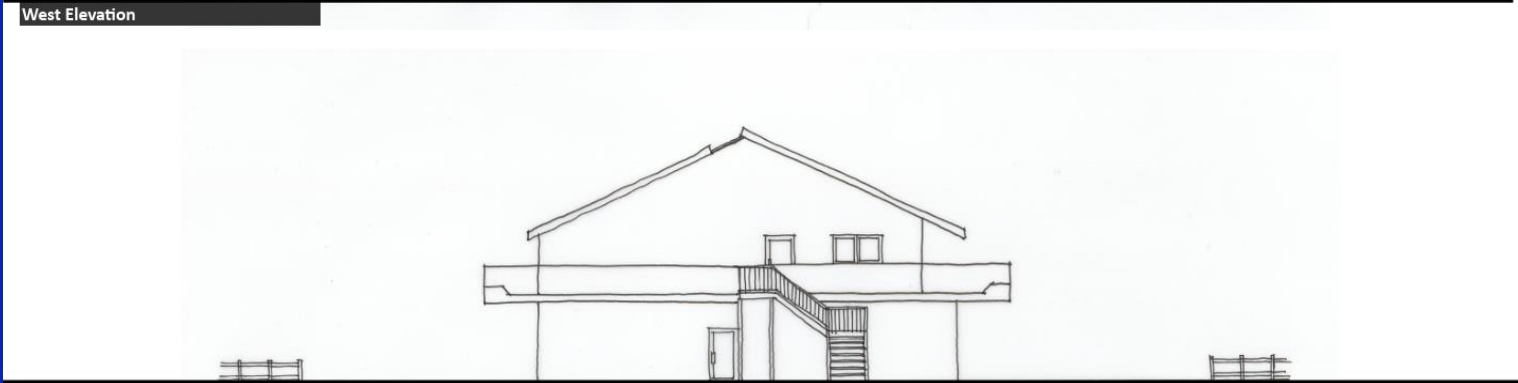
North Elevation



East Elevation



West Elevation



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So what do members think?

St Marks

Estimated cost:	£2.4m
Time to completion:	2030
Total debt on day 1:	£1.75m

Chase Farm

Estimated cost:	£0.8m (£300k contingency)
Time to completion:	2028
Total debt on day 1:	£0.43m (VAT)

Chair's thoughts

- Risk is we pursue Chase Farm and are where we are now in 2 years time
- Realistically it could take us three years to fundraise
- Time is critical but does not trump long term future of the club



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Thoughts?

Questions?

Reflections?



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Thank you.....



The progress we have made:

1st team

2019 - 20 - finished 6th out of 14 in Regional 1 (Level 5)

2020 - 21 – The Covid year

2021 – 22 – finished 13th out of 14 in Regional 1 (Level 5)

2022 – 23 – finished 6th out of 12 in Regional 1 (Level 5)

2023 – 24 – finished 4th out of 12 in Regional 1 (Level 5)

This is the highest position the club has ever been/finished.

2nd team

2019 - 20 - finished 7th out of 10 in Kent Invicta 1

2022 - 21 – The Covid year

2021 – 22 – Unable to field a team

2022 – 23 – finished 1st out of 8 in Kent Invicta 1 (Champions)

2023 – 24 – currently 5th in Kent Counties 3 (Level 9) in the RFU structured leagues

The 2nd team is a vital part of the club's structure. Currently half of the 2nd team has players who are challenging for their equivalent position in the 1st team squad



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The progress we have made:

3rd team – Social side

2019 - 20 - finished 7th out of 14 in Kent 5 Rural West

2020 - 21 – The Covid year

2021 – 22 – finished 5th out of 10 in Kent 5 Rural West

2022 – 23 – finished 1st out of 9 in Kent C Rural West (Champions)

2023 – 24 – finished 1st out of 11 in Kent B Rural (Champions)

This is the highest position the Social side has ever been/finished.

Ladies team

2019 - 20 – No Ladies team

2022 - 21 – The Covid year

2021 – 22 – Playing friendlies

2022 – 23 – finished 3rd out of 10 in Allianz IWS Kent & Essex

2023 – 24 – currently 2nd out of 6 in NC 3 South East (South) in the RFU structured leagues

The creation of a Ladies team was a strategic objective of the Board. Under Simon Parsons stewardship (over 10 years) it has finally made its appearance in the RFU League structure



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The progress we have made:

Academy (boys and girls)

The Academy has been a particular focus this season. New sponsorship has given us the resources to hire an Academy coach for the boys with Tammy coaching the girls. Additionally, we have 1st team players completing the A-list coaching squad. New shirts and some additional stash for the players has gone down well.

Next year sees the Academy membership exceed 100 and it will again start to feed talent into the senior squads. E.g. Jack Greig, Will Daniels and Louis Talbot this year.

Youth / Minis

The youth & minis section now has 750 members which is the highest membership in the club's history.

When the weather is kind it's fantastic to see how busy the club is on a Sunday with age groups either training or hosting visiting teams.



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