



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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15/03053/FULL1 – Flamingo Park, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6HL

I write to place on record my support for application 15/03053/FULL1 to build a two/three storey football stadium at the Flamingo Park Club, including the associated proposals related to this application.

The application, submitted by Cray Wanderers FC (CWFC), is one that I am aware has the backing of many local residents, a number of whom are already closely involved with the Club. CWFC's community outreach is well documented in the Planning Statement, Community Access Statement and Statement of Community Impact, and is something I am very familiar with as the local Member of Parliament. Particular recognition should be given to the 12 youth teams, and academy at Coopers Technology College, the Club runs. Its involvement in the area has grown to the stage where it is now linked, through coaching schemes and non-term time holiday camps, to a total of 19 schools, becoming a part of the fabric of the community. While sharing facilities with Bromley FC has temporarily served a purpose, for its community work to continue, and expand, it has become clear that CWFC will need a permanent home of its own.

The application is compliant with all relevant guidance laid out in the NPPF, London Plan and Bromley UDP. Although the Park is situated on Green Belt, the provision of appropriate new facilities for outdoor sport and recreation is listed as an exception under paragraph 89 of the NPPF, and the modest development of 28 residential flats will be of the same height and footprint as the pavilion currently on site, falling exclusively on previously developed land. Indeed, the location, orientation and design of the new development, not to mention the demolition of the scaffolding yard and nightclub, will in fact reduce the visual impact of the site and maintain the openness of the land.

In accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF, local authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, including by providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation. This will be achieved through 2 new community sports pitches, and relocation of 3 existing football pitches, all of which is a significant upgrade on the currently underutilised playing fields. I note that in his letter of 4 March 2016, Mr Pollock, the current owner of Flamingo Park, confirms that the recent decline in sporting use of the site is due to business decisions he took while operating the site's nightclub, and is not indicative of a lack of demand for on-site sport, or as a result of any perceived transport



limitations. The scheme will allow the site to realise its full potential, providing a hub for the local community and rejuvenating former sports assets, something welcomed by *London Sport*.

This has already been achieved at KCC's County Ground in Copers Cope Road, which was addressed on the same policy basis. Indeed, a far greater number of residential units were required to finance that project, something I understand the Directors of CWFC, at a personal cost, have intentionally tried to avoid, keeping the residential element of the project as small as possible. This amenable approach has also been demonstrated at the pre-application stage by reducing the stadium capacity from 2,000, as originally intended, to 1,300 based on discussions with the London Borough of Bromley.

I firmly believe this project will be for the good of the community. It gives a disused and unfulfilled local asset a new lease of life, provides a historic club with a permanent home, and in full accordance with the NPPF, provides much needed opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation where none currently exist.

I would be most grateful if you could circulate this letter to Members in advance of consideration, which I understand will be on 19 April.

Bob Neill MP