

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 18 October 2017

Subject: Leeds United Football Club's Training Ground Proposals

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	Beeston and Holbeck	
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

1. Leeds United Football Club has their home ground at Elland Road, where they have played competitive football matches since their foundation in 1919. As an all-seater football stadium situated in Beeston, Leeds, it is the 12th largest football stadium in England, and the fourth-largest ground outside the Premier League. Leeds United Football Club is an important part of the city's regional, national and international profile. For the last two seasons it has had the highest average home attendance of any other Championship Club at approximately 30,400, higher than several Premiership Clubs. It is also home to Leeds United Foundation, a charity that runs education and sport development programmes across the city in schools, local youth projects and sports clubs as well as providing grant funding to local organisations.
2. Over the last decade the City of Leeds has been on a steep upward trajectory, including the opening of the award winning First Direct Arena, Trinity Leeds and Victoria Gate, the development of proposals for HS2 and South Bank, the hosting of the 2013 Rugby League World Cup and the 2015 Rugby Union World Cup. Over the same period Leeds United Football Club has been in a period of flux. The played in the semi-finals of the European Cup in 2001, were relegated from the Premiership in 2004 and the Championship in 2007 which had a profound effect on the Club and its business. This prolonged absence from the Premier League has

undoubtedly negatively impacted global awareness for the city, international inward investment for the region and ultimately civic pride.

3. This position has been exacerbated over that time by the Club not owning Elland Road. This has meant the Club have been unable to invest in the stadium asset or the immediate surrounding area. The Club feel that the state of the ground is not fitting of a Premier League stadium and the surrounding area is under developed, not landscaped and has little active use or sense of place on non-matchdays.
4. The First Team training Ground and Academy is based at Thorp Arch, over 40 minutes away from the heart of the City. The Club does not own the training facility at Thorp Arch making it challenging for the Club to bring forward their own improvement proposals that would meet the required Category 1 status.
5. In June 2017 Andrea Radrizzani secured full ownership of Leeds United. The new board's first significant step was to secure the ownership of Elland Road to demonstrate their long term commitment to the Club and City. The move represents the first step in the Club's vision to revitalise Elland Road and the surrounding area make it a thriving community asset 365 days a year. Significantly the Board have announced plans to rebuild the Club's infrastructure with the intention of securing Premier League status within five years.
6. The first steps in demonstrating their commitment to the Club and presenting itself as a 'community club' the new owner brought back Leeds Ladies in to Leeds United ownership to reform Leeds United Ladies (the women's football club of LUFC), after it had previously become its own entity following the termination of Club funding in 2014. In addition further commitment has been made to Leeds United Foundation (LUF) with the development of the proposals contained within this report, which include facility provision for LUF at Elland Road.
7. Implicit in the proposal outlined in the report is LUFC's current training facilities at Thorp Arch and their potential vacation subject to the delivery of the facilities outlined. The Thorp Arch training facilities are leased from a private landowner under a historic arrangement. This is at a significant and ongoing annual cost to the Club, which means the Club are unable to deliver new training facilities to Category 1 status. The majority of the Thorp Arch Academy site is currently designated under the Unitary Development Plan as Rural Land which is locally safeguarded from inappropriate development. In addition the majority of the site comprises open playing fields which are designated as formal greenspace and this designation is proposed to remain in the emerging Site Allocations Plan.
8. The Submitted Site Allocations Plan (SAP) has put forward the re-designation of all Rural Land not allocated for housing as Green Belt. The Thorp Arch Academy site is therefore proposed to be allocated as Green Belt in the SAP.
9. Leeds United Football Club would like in the first instance, to enter into one-to-one discussions with The Council regarding the potential to bring forward their development proposals for the Elland Road site at Fullerton Park and the former Matthew Murray high school site for the development of Category 1 First team and

Academy training facilities alongside a Leeds United Foundation sporting and education offer and community sport facilities.

Recommendations

10. Executive Board is requested to:-
 - (i) Agree the principle of the Council formally entering into one-to-one negotiations with Leeds United Football Club for the development of new football training facilities at Elland Road and Matthew Murray for use by Leeds United Football Club and Leeds United Foundation.
 - (ii) Note that the Director of City Development is responsible for progressing the recommendation above.

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Executive Board of Leeds United Football Club's proposals to relocate their training, Leeds United Foundation and Academy facilities closer to Elland Road, at both Fullerton Park and the former Matthew Murray High School site.
- 1.2 LUFC has an ambition to locate their training and matchday offer in the heart of the community in which they are based, instead of 40 minutes away at Thorp Arch and has approached the Council with a view to securing use of land at Fullerton Park and Matthew Murray. The report seeks approval for the Council to enter into one-to-one negotiations with LUFC to assist them with the development of these proposals whilst ensuring that the Council's position and land holder is protected.
- 1.3 In addition the report highlights the benefits that these proposals could deliver in this area of the city, with its associated facility offer but also the challenges associated with them.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 Leeds United Football Club has their home ground at Elland Road, where they have played competitive football matches since their foundation in 1919. An all-seater football stadium situated in Beeston, Leeds, it is the 12th largest football stadium in England, and the fourth-largest ground outside the Premier League as of the 2016–17 season. Elland Road was previously occupied by LUFC's predecessors, Leeds City before their disbanding. After their formation, The Council entered into a lease agreement with the Club until they could afford to buy it.
- 2.2 Leeds United Football Club plays an important role in the City. The Club currently plays its football in the Championship and is regularly attracting attendances of over 30,000 supporters for home matches. For the 2016/17 season it attracted the highest average number of supporters to home matches in the Championship, 30,400 which was higher than any of the previous seasons relegated premier league clubs and higher than several Premiership Club attendances for the same

season. This season has started in a similar vein with average home attendances of over 32,000.

- 2.3 Elland Road has four stands – the Revie Stand, the East Stand, the South Stand and the John Charles Stand – and a capacity of 37,890. The record attendance of 57,892 was set on 15 March 1967 in an FA Cup 5th round replay against Sunderland before the stadium became an all-seater venue as stipulated by the Taylor Report. The modern record attendance is 40,287 for a Premiership match against Newcastle United. It has hosted FA Cup matches as a neutral venue on more than one occasion and was selected as one of eight venues for Euro 96. It was also the home of the Hunslet Rugby League Club in the mid 1980s.
- 2.4 The Club also runs and hosts the Leeds United Foundation (LUF), a registered charity that runs a wide range of education and sport development programmes across the city in schools, local youth projects and sports clubs. LUF organise a large number of fund raising events and activities to support other charities and partners every year. Their National Citizens Service Programme sees young people fundraise for charities close to their hearts including Candlelighters, Leeds Children’s Heart Foundation, Leeds Mind and Children’s Eye Cancer Trust.
- 2.5 LUF has recently announced the addition of 12 brand new schools on to their successful education programme. The new schools will be added to the Foundation’s comprehensive schools programme already in place which work with schools to deliver first class coaching and educational offering. Leeds schools added to the programme include: Lady Elizabeth Hastings, Thorner Primary, St Mary’s C of E, Fieldhead Carr, Seven Hills, Park Spring and Whitkirk Primary, will now be able to deliver quality educational programmes including Premier League Primary Stars, to help alleviate pressures on teachers and after school activity. As well as football, fully qualified Leeds United Foundation staff also deliver sessions that focus on the fundamentals of movement, agility, balance and co-ordination with a strong emphasis on personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).
- 2.6 LUFC and the facilities at Elland Road have regularly been used for sporting events other than football. In 2013, LUFC put Elland Road forward as a potential venue for the 2013 Rugby League World Cup (although Headingley Stadium was used as the preferred venue by the RFL), it hosted two Rugby Union World Cup matches in 2015 and has been used on more than one occasion as the venue for the Rugby League World Cup Challenge.
- 2.7 Elland Road has not exclusively been used for sporting events. It has also hosted major music events with the likes of Queen, U2 the Happy Mondays and The Kaiser Chiefs all performing at the Stadium.
- 2.8 On 23 May 2017, Andrea Radrizzani announced the 100% buyout of Leeds United, buying the remaining 50% shares from previous Co-Owner Massimo Cellino, with Mr Radrizzani taking full ownership of the club. The buyout of the Club and the subsequent purchase of the ground by Andrea Radrizzani has signalled a new approach by the Club and provided a new sense of direction. This is emphasised by the strengthening of links with the women’s team when on 26 June 2017, the new owner acquired Leeds Ladies in to Leeds United ownership to reform Leeds United Ladies after the club had previously become its own entity following the termination

of Club funding in 2014. In addition further commitment has been made to Leeds Community Foundation with the development of the proposals contained within this report, which include facility provision for LUF at Elland Road.

- 2.9 Representatives from LUFC with the new owner Andrea Radrizzani have recently met with the Council to set out their vision for the Club longer term alongside their ambition for the redevelopment of Elland Road to provide new, high quality Leeds United training facilities, a new Leeds United Academy match day pitch and a base for the Leeds United Foundation within the City to support their community development programmes. The Club feel that the current state of the ground is not fitting of a Premier League stadium and the surrounding area is under developed, not landscaped and has little active use or sense of place on non-matchdays.
- 2.10 The Club's current training facilities are located at Thorp Arch, a site they do not own and is over 40 minutes away from the city centre. This position makes it challenging from three perspectives: firstly, it is challenging for the Academy to recruit and develop the best of Leeds' inner city young talent as the travel times and reliance on parental transport are significant barriers; significantly the distance means the sports and learning facilities of the training ground cannot be utilised by the local community Leeds United should be serving; secondly, the location of the training ground creates a disconnect between the first team squad and the community they represent and thirdly as the Club do not own the facilities at Thorp Arch and occupy it on a lease, they are not able to invest in them directly to bring the facilities up to Premier League Standard.
- 2.11 As part of this new approach, LUFC discussed with Council representatives their ambition to relocate from their established training base at Thorp Arch and provide new and improved facilities close to their football ground base at Elland Road, in the heart of their local community. To develop and deliver these facilities, the Club has identified the Fullerton Park site at Elland Road and the former Matthew Murray High School site in Holbeck due to its proximity and potential connectivity to the stadium.
- 2.12 Elland Road has recently been listed as an Asset of Community Value. Nominated by the Leeds United Supporters Club, the bid was approved by Leeds City Council and fully supported by the Club.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 The Council has significant land holdings at Elland Road and there are also third party interests alongside the new ice rink development and the requirement for match day parking to be taken into consideration. The land ownerships and interests are set out below and at Plan 1.
- Sites A, D, I are owned by Leeds City Council;
 - Sites B and Q are owned by Leeds City Council. This was subject to an option agreement to sell to LUFC but this has now expired;
 - Site C is owned by West Yorkshire Police
 - Sites E and F are owned by Leeds City Council and occupied by Leeds United FC. Site E is leased to LUFC directly and is used for car parking. Site

F is leased to a third party who has subsequently sub-let to LUFC. This is used as a banqueting / conference suite.

- Site G is owned by Leeds City Council and leased by way of a long lease and this operates as 4 industrial units.
- Site P has been purchased by an independent ice rink operator who is currently constructing an Ice Rink;
- Site J is owned by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority – the passenger transport authority

3.2 On match days, sites A, B, D and I are exclusively used for match day car parking and away fans coach parking.

3.3 Match Day and Future Parking Provision

3.3.1 The Informal Planning Statement identified that parking provision for the activities set out within it (which included the stadium, leisure facilities including a hotel/s, casino, health club etc.) should be based on current maximum parking standards which calculated provision required at a maximum of 2,750 spaces.

3.3.2 Any proposal to be brought forward which has an impact on the current car parking provision will need to set out a comprehensive match day parking strategy. This would need to be agreed with key stakeholders to include the Police, local residents and businesses.

3.4 Park and Ride

3.4.1 Elland Road Park and Ride facilities opened in June 2014 and have now been extended to provide 800 spaces (phases 1&2). The level of demand for Park and Ride has exceeded expectations and as a result, the Council is considering the potential to extend the Park and Ride scheme on the northern side of the site by in the region of an additional 400 spaces (phase 3) subject to the positive outcome of a business case. This would give a site wide total in the order of 1200 Park and Ride spaces.

3.4.2 Bringing together all of the allocated match day parking on sites A, B, D and I, there is currently over 3000 car parking spaces at Elland Road which is in excess of the 2750 required for matchday parking as set out in the informal planning statement which is detailed below.

3.5 Elland Road Informal Planning Statement

3.5.1 The Elland Road Informal Planning Statement was adopted by the Council in September 2007. The main objectives of the document were:

- to provide guidance on the future development of the brownfield sites within this area;
- to formulate a vision to transform the area into a vibrant leisure destination;
- to create a sense of place and bring about change that has a physical, economic and social regenerative impact within the local area.

3.5.2 At the time of its adoption several options for the site were under consideration. Many of the proposals have now either been discounted, delivered, are under development or being considered. As it stands at the moment the current position is as per the attached plan (Plan 1):-

- the new Divisional Police Headquarters on the site of the former greyhound stadium has been completed (site C);
- the Council have acquired the freehold interest in site I;
- Park and Ride phases 1 & 2 have been completed (part of site D);
- the creation of an indoor ice rink which will be available for use by the general public is now on site (site P);
- Phase 3 of park and ride is currently in design development for implementation potentially later this year.

3.6 Leeds United Proposals

3.6.1 Leeds United FC has presented the following proposals to the Council as follows:-

- Explore the potential to use the redevelopment of Elland Road and the surrounding areas as a catalyst to project Leeds United into the Premier League and become the foundation to build a brand and business model that can sustain top eight Premier League finishes for the long-term.
- Relocate the Training Ground and Academy from Thorp Arch to the land previously occupied by the former Matthew Murray High school with the intention of linking Elland Road with the Training Ground/Academy as one site.
- Create Leeds United Foundation facilities on the Fullerton Road car park, with the potential facility provision to be determined; The proposed 'Community Sports Village' as it is being defined would be used by the Academy for week night training (to meet FA and Premier League regulations) but would become the hub of the Leeds United Foundation delivering sporting and educational programmes.
- The proposed 'Matthew Murray Training Ground and Community Sports Village' would be delivered simultaneously in Phase One (by 2020).
- The facilities would be designed and delivered to Category 1 status – a requirement of the Premier League for training and academy facilities.

3.6.2 Leeds United Football Club has identified wider benefits to their proposals as follows:-

- The plan is core to increasing the chances of ensuring Leeds United can maintain a sustained Premier League presence delivering for the city global awareness, inward international investment and civic pride;
- The Academy being located at Mathew Murray will allow Leeds United to create elite development pathways for the youth of our inner city with a world class, state of the art Category 1 facility;
- The training ground being based at Matthew Murray will reconnect the first team squad with the City and the local community;
- The Community Sports Village will be a world class community asset for south Leeds and the county. It is aligned to seven of the twelve key pillars of Leeds

City Council's inclusive growth strategy; (i) Putting Children at the heart of the growth strategy, (ii) Employers at the centre of education, (iii) Institutions embedded in and working for the local community, (iv) Doubling the size of the City Centre, (v) Leeds as a digital city, (vi) Promoting Leeds and Yorkshire, (vii) Backing innovators and entrepreneurs;

- Phase 1 will create a foundation for a broader redevelopment scheme deliver amenities, employment opportunities and homes to the local community.

3.6.3 As part of the facility offer the potential to develop indoor as well as outdoor facilities which potentially will add significantly to the sporting offer in the area could be explored. This has the potential to reach across other sporting codes including rugby as well as providing facilities for local basketball and netball teams.

3.7 Council Commercial Opportunity on the Elland Road site

3.7.1 As part of the Council's wider ambition for Elland Road, it had always been identified that there is the potential for commercial development, with a hotel and/or another complementary use to provide an active frontage to Elland Road. Plan 2 identifies the proposed location of this development.

3.7.2 Should Leeds United consider bringing a proposal forward to include this site as part of their wider masterplan, Leeds City Council would give some consideration to this on a commercial basis in line with an overall agreed Masterplan and Visioning Document which would be developed by both parties, and the value of any community benefit that arises.

3.8 Matthew Murray

3.8.1 Matthew Murray has been a disused site since the school was closed and the buildings demolished in 2005/06. It extends to 8 hectares (19.84 acres) in size and has a planning designation of N6 protected playing fields for over almost half of the site. (UDP Review 2006). Currently the site in the draft Site Allocations Plan is split between green space use G719, Outdoor Sport, 3.47ha and 4.53ha brown field land. The site identified by LUFC also includes the playing fields to the north of Matthew Murray. These are the playing fields for Ingram Road Primary School. In between the two areas is Brown Lane East, an adopted highway which forms a connection through the underpass to the west to Holbeck. A plan of the site is attached at Plan 3.

3.8.2 There are several issues that will require consideration/resolution if the site is to be brought forward for the facility development being proposed by LUFC. These include:

- Consideration would need to be given to access/egress through the adjacent housing areas and how the impact of this could be minimised;
- The location of any buildings within the site needs to be carefully planned to minimise the impact on local residents;
- Floodlighting could potentially be required and this would need to be carefully designed to ensure there is no disturbance to the residents.

- Community access for local schools/colleges/universities to the facilities should be considered as part of the community access requirement
- The land to the north of Brown Lane East is currently part of Ingram Road Primary School and subject to the outcome of discussions with the school, if proposals are brought forward for this part of the site, the school would require access to any new facilities on site.

3.8.3 As part of any negotiation between the Council and LUFC, there is the potential to consider wider regeneration opportunities around Matthew Murray and the Elland Road site itself and the direct role these could have in providing more direct benefits to the local communities of Beeston and Holbeck.

3.9 Thorp Arch Academy Site

3.9.1 Thorp Arch is the current location of the Club training facilities. The site is not within the Council's ownership and the Club are currently locked into a lease with the site's owner. This is a matter between the Club and their landlord however the current lease is at a significant and ongoing annual cost to the Club, which has confirmed that it would be unable to deliver new training facilities as set out above whilst this arrangement continues. The Thorp Arch Academy site is currently designated in the Unitary Development Plan as Rural Land which is locally protected from development but does not have the same national policy status as Green Belt. In addition the majority of the site comprises open playing fields which are designated as formal greenspace, however these have additional status as protected playing fields which Sport England have a statutory role in protecting in planning terms.

3.9.2 The Submission drafted Site Allocations Plan proposes the re-designation of all Rural Land in this area which has not expressly been proposed for allocation for housing in the Plan period as Green Belt; this is to ensure that open land across the District is treated consistently against national Green Belt policy and thus to avoid a significant part of outer North East Leeds having a lower level of protection which might lead to it being more vulnerable to unplanned development. The Thorp Arch Academy site is therefore proposed to be allocated as Green Belt in the SAP which is to be tested by the Inspectors during the Examination in Public.

3.9.3 In addition the Thorp Arch Academy site is also proposed to remain designated as Greenspace given the continuing use of the site as formal playing pitches, although there is currently no public or community use of the LUFC facilities.

3.10 Land Agreements

3.10.1 The landholdings at Elland Road and Matthew Murray and the approval to formally enter into one-to-one discussions with LUFC are subject to member approval at this Board. However, should member approval be forthcoming, it is proposed to enter into a lease agreement with LUFC for both sites, which would be co-terminus for a period of 99 years.

3.10.2 The lease agreement would be subject to restrictions for use for football training and ancillary facilities alongside education associated with sport development. Values of this lease would be subject to consideration of a less than best agreement for the

community element, with any other provision at open market value but still subject to restrictive uses.

- 3.11 LUFC has indicated that they may be considering the potential to bring forward further development proposals, using Elland Road as part of their wider business plan. This would need to be considered at an appropriate point in the future.
- 3.12 Should Executive Board be minded to support the recommendations contained within the report, it is expected that a further report be brought back to Executive Board, outlining the position with regards to LUFC's proposals, which would require the Council at that time, to consider taking a substantive decision with regards to those proposals.

4.0 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning has been consulted and is supportive of the recommendation contained in the report.
- 4.1.2 Representatives from LUFC have also discussed the proposals with local Ward Members, who raised issues around matchday parking and the impact on local residents. Further discussions with Ward Members are proposed as part of the ongoing discussions relating to these proposals.
- 4.1.3 Officers have briefed Beeston and Holbeck Members on the proposals contained within this report. Ward Members recognised the benefits that a successful club brings to the City, however were clear in their view that they would prefer to see Matthew Murray brought forward for private housing for sale.
- 4.1.4 In addition Ward Members would also be concerned by the loss of any car parking at Elland Road and also want to be assured that facilities provided at both Matthew Murray and Elland Road would be provided with a high level of access and benefits to the local community.
- 4.1.5 Officers have met recently with the Head-teacher at Ingram Road Primary School to discuss the training ground proposals. The school is supportive and believe there to be benefits to them. However, they want to ensure through dialogue with the Club, the level of access they require to deliver the curriculum for sport and outdoor activities and ensure the site is kept secure for safeguarding purposes.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An equality and diversity impact screening, attached as an appendix, has been carried out for this proposal and no specific issues were identified.

4.3 Council Policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Our vision is for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist. We want Leeds to be a city that is fair and sustainable, ambitious, fun and creative for all with a council that its residents can be proud of: the best council in the country.

4.3.2 The re-emergence of LUFC as a willing partner in the City adds significant benefit to our Vision. Through the consideration of the emerging training Academy and Leeds United Foundation proposals, LUFC has the potential to play a positive role across all sectors of the Best Council Plan. This includes, through the relocation of the training ground to Beeston and Holbeck and the additional schools the LUF are engaging with, the potential to support the following 2017/18 priorities:

- Good Growth
- Health and Wellbeing
- Resilient Communities
- Child Friendly City
- Better Lives

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The principle for one-to-one negotiations currently has no resource of value for money impact for the Council at this time. If Executive Board are minded to agree to the recommendations for the Council entering into one-to-one negotiations with LUFC, this position will be considered further when the potential effect of the use of Council landholdings for LUFC training and academy facilities is clearer.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The decisions taken in this report are eligible for call-in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The risks associated with this proposal at this time are considered to be low.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Leeds United Football Club are an important part of the city of Leeds's regional, national and international profile attracting the highest attendances in the Championship and higher than some Premier League Clubs. Whilst the Club for some time have been in a period of flux, the buyout of the Club by the new owner Andrea Radrizzani and the purchase of the ground in June 2017 has signalled the start of a new era.

5.2 The Club recognises that in an inner city location they have the potential to reposition the Club at the heart of a dynamic and growing city, as well as a community focused club that engages directly in and around the community in which it sits.

5.3 The proposal to redevelop the club's training, Academy and Foundation facilities in the heart of this community is to be encouraged, whilst observing the challenges that will need to be addressed as these proposals are developed. In entering into one-to-one discussions with LUFC, the Council will be in a positive position to

encourage and support the Club with their vision alongside ensuring that the impact of any proposals are minimised on the Council's assets and the wider community.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Executive Board is requested to:

- (i) Agree the principle of the Council formally entering into one-to-one negotiations with Leeds United Football Club for the development of new football training facilities at Elland Road and Matthew Murray for use by Leeds United Football Club and Leeds United Foundation;
- (ii) Note that the Director of City Development is responsible for progressing the recommendation above.

7 Background documents ¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.