

Bullock Park Expansion Project

Background

In the past Shipdham has had a number of halls that have sadly been lost owing to changing circumstances over the years. The village currently does not have a hall building which is fit for the future of our growing village.

The vision of this project is to build a new large community building with facilities fit for the village into the future. This would include areas such as large meeting rooms (e.g. for events, groups and families as well as meetings), indoor sports facility, kitchen facilities, changing rooms and associated facilities for all sports and other groups and an outdoor bowls green along with an expanded park.

Back in 2022 all interested parties met together; Shipdham Parish Council, Shipdham Bowls Club, Shipdham Community Centre Trust and Bullock Park Management committee, with the idea of combining assets across the village to support building a new community building and bowls green at Bullock Park. In addition the bowls club were looking to improve their existing facilities, which could be achieved through this new building. In February 2023, the first major milestone of the project was achieved through all the interested parties formally agreeing to a proposed new community building and combining assets.

More information is available on the Shipdham Parish website:

[Bullock Park Further Development Plan](#)

Current Status

The updates on the website above provide detail on the milestones of the project so far. In addition to these updates this letter aims to provide factual information to the Parish Councillor's and Bowls club members as there are many pieces of false information circulating currently.

The original planning permission was withdrawn pending further work. This was because Sport England (who are a statutory consultee) objected to the plans, despite the re-location of the bowls green so that was not lost, they claimed that the overall project lost existing sports area as the re-sited bowls green was on existing recreational land and therefore there was an overall loss in sports facilities. The 2 applications were submitted together so they could be considered jointly. Whilst Sport England understood the wider long term project, they had to act on the information available at the time of the planning submission. The intention has always been to expand the park but this was always intended to be part of the works with the new building, however due to the Sports England objection we had to pull this stage of the plan forward.

Subsequent negotiations with Mr Ian Leonard have secured an extension to the park. Sport England are suggesting they will now support the planning application and the planning permission will be re-submitted.

The intention right from the start of the project is that the bowls green will be built at Bullock Park as soon as possible and this was included in the planning submission so that the bowls club would always have a green to play on. This will enable the sale of the land to raise the funds for the new building. As soon as the new bowls green is ready for use, we have agreed with the bowls club that an interim building could be used if necessary at Bullock Park so that in the interim period whilst the new building is in progress they continue to have use of their own facilities separate from the existing Bullock Park building so they will not need to share anything until the new building is complete, this was agreed from the outset of the project.

At any point of this project any of the interested parties could ask for meetings, which has happened and all interested parties have been kept informed to where the project is at, with any changes discussed between all parties or individuals if requested. In addition the parish council organised a meeting showing full plans and documents to date for any members of the public.

Next Steps

The working group have purposely not investigated any detail relating to the new building at this time, so any commentary around this is purely speculative from outside parties. This is because without the planning permission and land sale and further funding the project cannot happen, so no resources have been put on this phase to date. However we realise that all parties and the village will have and already have differing ideas for this project we will therefore engage with interested parties and the village to help shape requirements of the new building if planning permission is successful.