

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q Why have we published this now?

A Merton Council issue a ‘Call for Sites’ some time ago. As explained in the press release, this required a response from anyone with an interest in developing a site in Merton.

The deadline for submissions was 31 July. As a result, we decided to submit our plans, even though there are many steps still to be completed before we can realise our vision. In an ideal world we would have completed any discussions with the site owners before ‘going public’ with this statement.

Q How realistic is this vision?

A This is a step in a long term process; it’s a big step, but there is a long way to go.

In a feature we published on our site some time ago <http://www.afcwimbledon.co.uk/-/features/4905/a-stadium-fit-for-the-dons> we explained that there are many stages to our quest. Here’s a reminder of what they are and a brief summary of where we’ve got to for each of them. They may not happen in the following order, but they all need to happen:

Stage	Status
1. Define what we want and where we want it	We propose a starting stadium of 12,000 capable of increasing to 22,000, to be built in Wimbledon. We’ve already made good progress on defining our initial brief for a stadium
2. Find a site	The existing Greyhound stadium is our preferred site. To make progress, we need to acquire it. This is the key issue and we will make no progress without this
3. Assess the planning issues	This has been done. They are complex and there are many significant hurdles to overcome but we think they are manageable
4. Get the council’s support	We have cross party support within Merton. The Borough’s policy is for the club to return home
5. Carry out masterplanning	This is the next stage, if we can acquire the site. High level planning and site evaluation has been carried out and this shows that our plans are viable – masterplanning would put flesh on the plans
6. Find the finances	We believe that sufficient funds can be generated from enabling development to provide an initial stadium
7. Identify a developer	We have worked with Newridge Group, a local-based developer, in the preparation of our submission. This was to ensure that we addressed the key issues for Merton and tested the viability of our aspirations
8. Seek planning permissions	This needs steps 2, 3 and 5 to be completed before we can start this process
9. Start building	A typical time scale for delivering a new stadium is around ten years. We are in the middle of that process but there are a number of key elements which are outside our control which could affect the construction start date

Q Why this site?

A We evaluated three sites in detail. This one offers the most realistic opportunity and it is already earmarked by the Council for 'Sporting Intensification'. Oh yes, and it's called Plough Lane...

Q What will the stadium look like?

A It's too early to say in detail, but we will concentrate on creating a central core of permanent facilities. We will also use expertise to create initial facilities which can be transformed over time so that we can reach our ultimate objective of 22,000 capacity

Q Will there be a terrace?

A That isn't decided. We expect that there will be a terrace at least as an initial measure. We will have to adhere to a number of regulations but we will consult fans

Q Who will pay for the stadium?

A A large chunk of the development cost will come from enabling development. Basically the developer will make profits from other building on the site and some of those profits will be dedicated to building our stadium

Q Who will pay for the expansion?

A The proposal is that we will pay

Q Who will own the stadium?

A The proposal is that we will own it

Q What will happen to Kingsmeadow?

A We are exploring the options and will seek DT members' views before making a recommendation

Q What does 'multi purpose' mean re our stadium?

A We need to assess this but as part of 'sporting intensification' it may make sense to share with another sport

Q If we did share with another sport, who would have priority?

A The Football League has rules which, in summary, say we must have priority

Q What happens next?

A We will seek to acquire the site

Q What happens if we can't acquire the site?

A We have been encouraged by the council's support in making our submission and in particular its policy to bring us home to the Borough. However, if it transpires that we can't reacquire the site we will reassess our options and come back to the DT members

Q Why do we need such a large stadium?

A We propose to start with a 12,000 capacity but we don't want our growth to be choked by an inability to expand the stadium. Statistics for when we were in the Premier League and the Championship (even when the club was being boycotted by many fans) show that the fan base is there – and on top of that, new stadia attract up to 50% more fans when clubs move

Q How can I get involved?

A More than ever, if you want a say in our future, you should join the Dons Trust!