



Ermington
Improvement Committee
(EPIC)

Playing

Field

Ermington Parish Council

25th August 2023

Please find enclosed a business plan proposal for the improvement of both the facility and management provision for Ermington's recreation field and which includes detailed plans and costings.

The scheme aims to provide a basic but high-quality sports/events support building in one corner of the site and meets a need first identified as far back as the year 2000 by the Ermington Millenium Book. It will provide a foundation upon which the full potential of the site can start to be realised, supporting organised sport, school, community, and wider casual recreational use.

The predicted project cost is £120,000. The Ermington Playing Field Improvement Committee (EPIC) undertakes to raise half of this cost through both direct approaches to established and more local funders as well as via traditional fundraising efforts.

It is respectfully requested that the Parish Council give consideration to providing the other 50% of the project cost. Such a commitment would immediately mean match funding is already in place and dramatically improve the projects chances when being considered by other funders as the second half of the project cost is sought.

Members of the committee will be pleased to attend the meeting when this proposal is considered to present the scheme, if required, and to answer any questions that councillors may have.

Peter W Harker

25th August 2023

Ermington Recreation Field – Sports Clubhouse Proposal Business Plan

Current Situation

1. The Recreation Ground is owned by South Hams District Council. Maintenance in the form of regular mowing of the main field is delivered by the resident cricket cooperative, which comprises two teams, Ermington CC and Modbury CC. South Hams District Council contractors deliver all other aspects of the site maintenance.
2. The field is used between late April and late September for organised cricket with at least one match per week on a weekday evening or a Sunday afternoon.
3. Outside of cricket the site is used for casual recreation and play, with a modern and very popular play park in the South-West corner, a small skateboard & BMX area alongside the play park. The site links to adjacent riverside footpaths and is very popular with dog walkers. The field itself is well used for informal sports, family picnics and is an ideal spot for quiet relaxation and reflection. The local Primary School holds their annual summer term sports day on site and over the years the field has proved an ideal location for community events.
4. Facilities to support this site usage are minimal. Courtesy of previous work to establish the site as a designated nighttime landing site for the Devon Air Ambulance means there is access to mains electricity in the North-West corner of the site and the Cricket Club has a small 8' x 10' block work storage shed also in the NW corner of the site. There are no sports changing facilities and the nearest accessible toilet is in the centre of the village. Other than some well established trees, the site offers no other shelter from bad weather.
5. The South Hams & West Devon Playing Pitch Strategy released in March 2022 stated the following aim:

To protect, conserve and enhance playing pitch facilities as active environments in partnership with local stakeholders and communities so that they make a positive impact on the lives of local people. Provision should be sustainable and easily accessible to all, encourage greater participation and sporting excellence and help to improve people's physical and mental wellbeing, by strengthening the links between physical activity, sport and health.

Proposal

6. The Strategy clearly identifies the Ermington Field currently, as a cricket ground with the potential and need for improvement and development as a sport/recreation facility and in response to this strategy the local Cricket Clubs have joined forces with local residents to form a small working committee, Ermington Playing-field Improvement Committee (EPIC), to explore how best to take this forward.
7. In doing so, the committee has kept at the forefront of all thinking the two stated objectives within the Strategy that relate to the Ermington site:
 - i. To protect and improve the current stock of playing fields.
 - ii. To ensure playing pitch facilities contribute to improving the health and well-being of everyone in the community.
8. This proposal aims to set a modest but real foundation upon which sport and recreation opportunities for the Ermington community can be based. It is to erect a modest

12m x 8m single storey, clubhouse building just below the existing footpath in the North-West corner of the site. This building will provide two small but effectively proportioned changing rooms, a kitchen with internal and external servery hatch, a single disabled access toilet and a small social space, sized to support an effective game of table tennis. The building will have full disabled access and be positioned to provide a fantastic headquarters from which to stage activities, events and sports on the field.

9. Positioning is such that the building has absolutely minimal impact on adjacent properties nor should it adversely affect anybody's view. Placed just off the existing path, easy disabled access is achieved via a small path extension linking to a back door to the Clubhouse. The front aspect will provide a focal point for any event taking place on the field with the kitchen and outside servery hatch lending real support to on field activities.

10. The existing memorial park bench will, with appropriate consultation, need to be re-positioned to best compliment the new clubhouse whilst retaining an outstanding outlook for the bench over the ground.

Management & Costs

11. With respect to site management it is proposed that a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) would be created, with Trustees drawn from representatives of all site user groups and other parties with a direct interest in the site, such as the Parish Council. The main field and Clubhouse site would then be taken into the management of this Trust under a long lease agreement with South Hams District Council (SHDC). Under the terms and conditions of any lease established with SHDC it is anticipated the current maintenance arrangements would be maintained, with the long-term savings for SHDC by not having to manage the field inside the perimeter path.

12. Other than a likely growth in organised community usage of the site there would be no changes or restrictions on the current site usage and public access, all of which would be protected within the terms & conditions of any lease agreement.

13. Organised users of the site would be charged a usage fee, be this an annual fee for regular users or a single charge for one-off events. A modest input from the Parish precept would be sought to reflect the wider informal usage of the site by the local community. Income would be aimed solely at covering the annual site maintenance costs plus building a small surplus as a sensible sinking and contingency fund with which to support the site into the future.

Benefits to Ermington

14. The benefits of such a facility and such an arrangement for the community of Ermington are considerable:

15. At present the site is largely dependent on the good will and financial resources of SHDC. Whilst the site was originally acquired for the community as a facility for sport and recreation use, its maintenance and any improvement are subject to ever tauter local authority spending restrictions and as a recreation site is in direct competition for SHDC time and resources with larger sites, serving larger communities. This move would bring control of the main part of the site much closer to home, with locally appointed Trustees having a direct say in its management and evolution as a hugely popular community asset.

16. The opportunities to develop sport, particularly amongst the youth of Ermington, become significant. At present, the complete lack of any support facility to underpin on field sports is a substantial barrier to youth sport and organised activity, with any attempt to

organise quickly frustrated on safeguarding and practicality terms. Indeed, efforts this year to launch England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) All Stars (5-8 years of age) and Dynamos (8-11 years of age) cricket, in conjunction with Devon Cricket Board and aimed directly at children attending Ermington and Modbury primary schools were hampered by the lack of facility on site. The provision of this Clubhouse facility will ensure simple, but proper changing, toilet and shelter facilities are in place and will therefore facilitate the possibility of organised use of the site for a broad range of clubs, offering a significant increase in the provision within the Village for out of school activity and choice.

17. The Clubhouse would offer a real centre for important events such as the community events organised by the Village Fund, as well as significant anniversary parties and all other possible forms of larger outdoor based events that bring the community together across all age groups.

18. The field is a valuable resource available to Ermington School, not just for the annual sports day but for more regular, in-term, sports and outdoor recreation opportunities, such as the athletics club. An onsite clubhouse facility widens these opportunities, providing everything from a venue for small group off-school-site activities through to providing refreshment support to Sports day as a potential income stream for the PTA or school directly.

19. At grassroots sport and recreation, one of the major barriers to the encouragement and success of volunteering, is the lack of basic support facilities. The ability to simply watch an on-field event from a sheltered position, with access to a toilet and a cup of tea cannot be over stressed as an incentive for attracting new groups, opportunities and volunteers from within the community.

20. The existing outdoor recreation space and opportunity presented by the cricket field, riverside, play park area and wider site through to the business park has enormous potential to cater for an incredibly broad range of interests and activities for the residents of Ermington. In almost every case, like youth sport, getting such a broad range of choice up and running would be hugely assisted by the provision of a centrally located base from which to stage. This Clubhouse, positioned effectively in the middle of the whole piece should prove the catalyst for an even more active community with greater choice, greater community engagement, increased community volunteering and even greater community cohesion.

Finance

- a) **Cost of Clubhouse:** The current predicted estimated cost for the project to plan and deliver a timber framed, composite clad Clubhouse (as shown at Appendix 1), erected on site with full mains services connected and available for use is circa £105,000, including a 10% contingency figure on the budget.
- b) **Additional Costs:** With the long lease of the site will come the need to increase the on-site holding of ground maintenance equipment. Accordingly, as the proposal starts to focus on funding, an additional and aspirational £15,000 has been added on top to support this, generating an overall funding target of £120,000.
- c) **Capital Funding:** The project will target capital funding from the National Lottery, Sport England and the England & Wales Cricket Board on a National level whilst searching out the myriad of smaller funding initiatives available locally. It is hoped the project will be supported within the community of Ermington and accordingly the Parish Council will be asked to consider allocating some of their reserve funds towards this Clubhouse scheme.

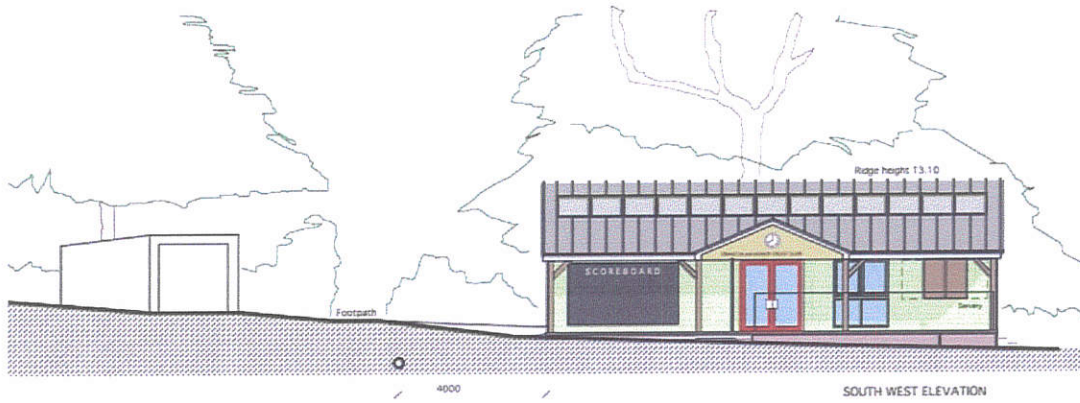
d) Running Costs & Future Maintenance: The scheme aims to produce an environmentally responsible building requiring minimum maintenance. Timbers used will be responsibly sourced from sustainable supplies, whilst the cladding finish will be fully composite, consisting predominantly of recycled plastic. The building will be fully insulated and will be positioned to support the inclusion of solar PV technology. However, together with the field, ongoing running costs and repairs are inevitable, and the aim will be for the venture to levy affordable usage fees for organised activities on site.

Appendices

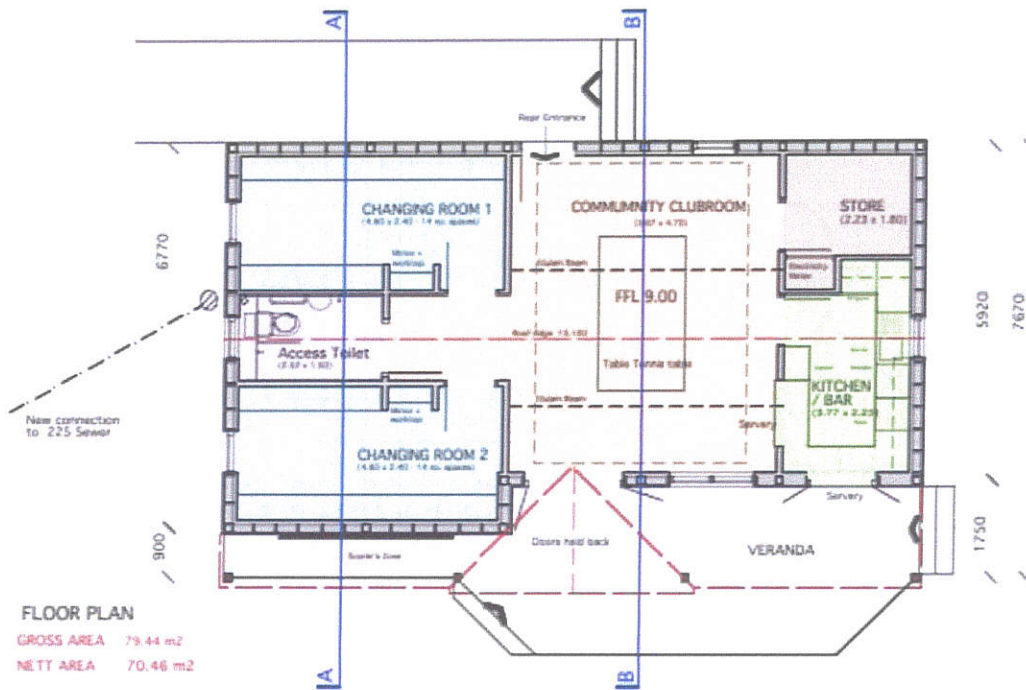
- 1. Supporting Drawings & Plans**
- 2. Summary of Costs**
- 3. Annual budgetary estimate.**

**APPENDIX 1 TO
CLUBHOUSE BUSINESS PLAN
DATED 22 JULY 2023**

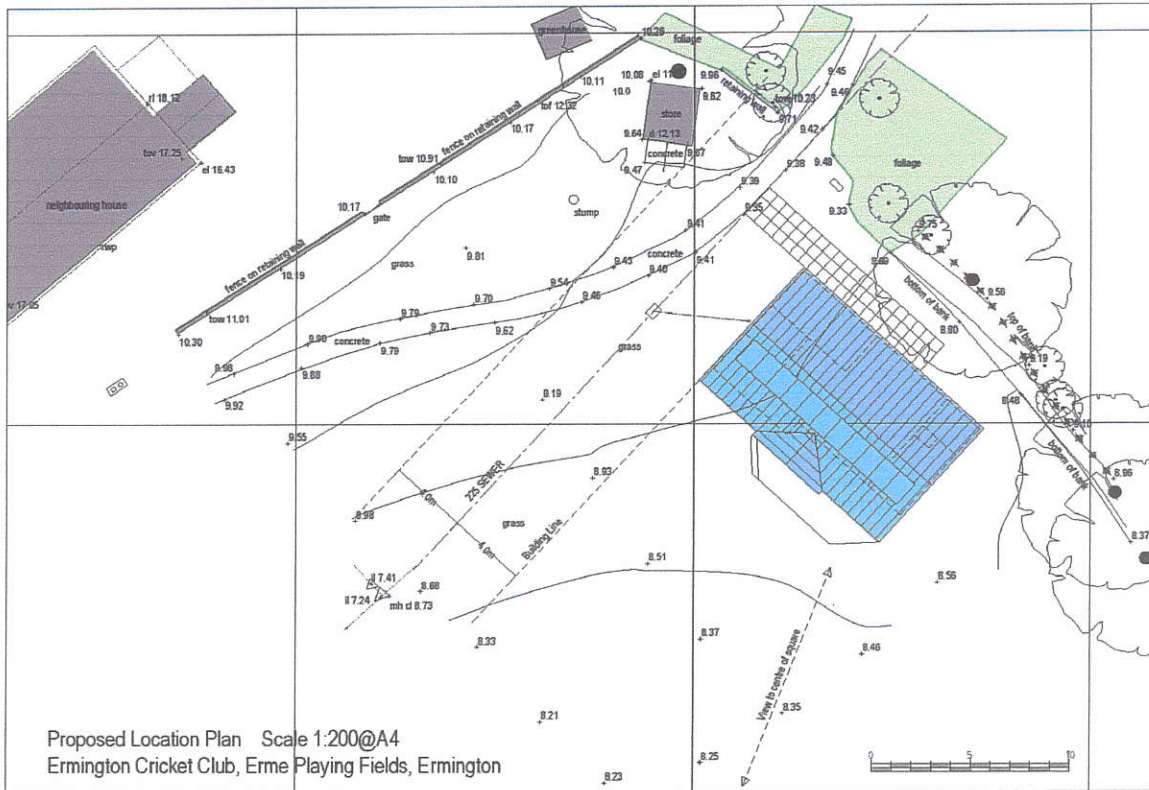
PROPOSED CLUBHOUSE – SOUTHWEST ELEVATION



PROPOSED CLUBHOUSE – LAYOUT



PROPOSED CLUBHOUSE LOCATION



**APPENDIX 3 TO
CLUBHOUSE BUSINESS PLAN
DATED 25 AUGUST 2023**

ANNUAL BUDGET

This budget is a realistic estimate based on Year 1 once all building works and project costs have been met and the building and field are complete and ready for organised and general community use. It uses figures obtained from similar facilities in other local communities.

Income

Cricket Club pitch/clubhouse usage	£1,420
Parish Precept	£700
Community events ¹	£200
Private Clubhouse hire	<u>£200</u>
Total	£2,520

Expenditure

Rent to SHDC ²	£20 (tbc)
Building maintenance & cleaning	£400
Field maintenance	£600
Electricity	£300
Water	£60
Insurance ³	£1000
Sinking Fund/Contingency	<u>£140</u>
Total	£2,520

¹ Organised events will attract a usage fee to cover facility costs.

² Initial meetings indicate this is likely to be on a Peppercorn basis but remains subject to negotiation/agreement.

³ The relatively high indication of the cost of building insurance obtained from specialist brokers is due to the high risk associated with damage by fire to unoccupied timber-frame buildings. This may be significantly reduced should a viable alternative to a timber frame be sourced at similar capital cost.