

Community Engagement Statement

St. Bernadette's Rugby Football Club,
Fulford Road,
Bristol,

10th December 2019

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Revision	Revision P2, December 2019

Introduction

St. Bernadette's Old Boys Rugby Football Club (St Bernadette's) in conjunction with Bristol City Council are developing a proposal to relocate the existing rugby club facility from Hengrove Park, Bristol BS14 0AX to a new purpose-built facility located on the former Whitehouse Primary School and Fulford Pupil Referral Unit on Fulford Road, Bristol.

Inspire Architects have been commissioned by Kier Construction to prepare the architectural designs and planning application information for the proposed works. This statement has been prepared to capture and record the various community engagement activities that have been undertaken to inform local people of the proposals and gain their input on the design. These were undertaken to ensure that all members of the public had the opportunity to understand and if necessary, question the proposals. All the community engagement activities have been undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application so that any relevant concerns or ideas put forward by the public can where appropriate, be incorporated into the proposals.

The reason for undertaking community engagement

- 1.1. St. Bernadette's Rugby Club and Bristol City council have been keen to engage with as many local residents as possible to open a discussion about the proposed relocation of the existing club to a new location on Fulford Road.
- 1.2. The club has approximately 900 members, all of whom will be affected by the proposed relocation.
- 1.3. The proposed site has a number of existing residential properties to the Northern, Western and Southern boundaries. These properties (depending upon their position) currently overlook either the derelict school building or the un-managed former school playing fields. The new proposals will directly adjoin the existing properties on the Western boundary. The properties to the northern and southern boundaries are separated by Fulford road and Hareclive road respectively.
- 1.4. The proposed facility is designed to be a community asset, helping to provide a sense of place and a focus for the local people to be proud of. The significance of such a facility in a community cannot be underestimated and therefore, it is important that all members of the local community have the opportunity to review and comment upon the proposed development plans.
- 1.5. St. Bernadette's and Bristol City Council are keen to ensure that the new proposal meets the needs of the local community. The community engagement process is about informing and listening to the comments and suggestions made by the community.

2. The community engagement strategy

2.1. The approach to engagement

In order to actively engage with as broad a cross section of the community as possible the following approaches were adopted:

- a) Bristol City Council Press Release
- b) Social media platforms
- c) Direct mail shot to local residents
- d) Local notifications
- e) Public presentation of information
- f) Pride of Place community meeting
- g) Information board displayed at the existing clubhouse and the @Symes community building.

2.2. Bristol City Council Press Release

The Bristol Live website, published the initial news article on 21st May 2019. This article was primarily focused on the new Hengrove housing scheme but referenced St Bernadette's plans to relocate.

Bristol City Council informed local media outlets of the proposed development plans via a press release dated 28th October 2019. This information was carried by the Bristol Post on the same day.

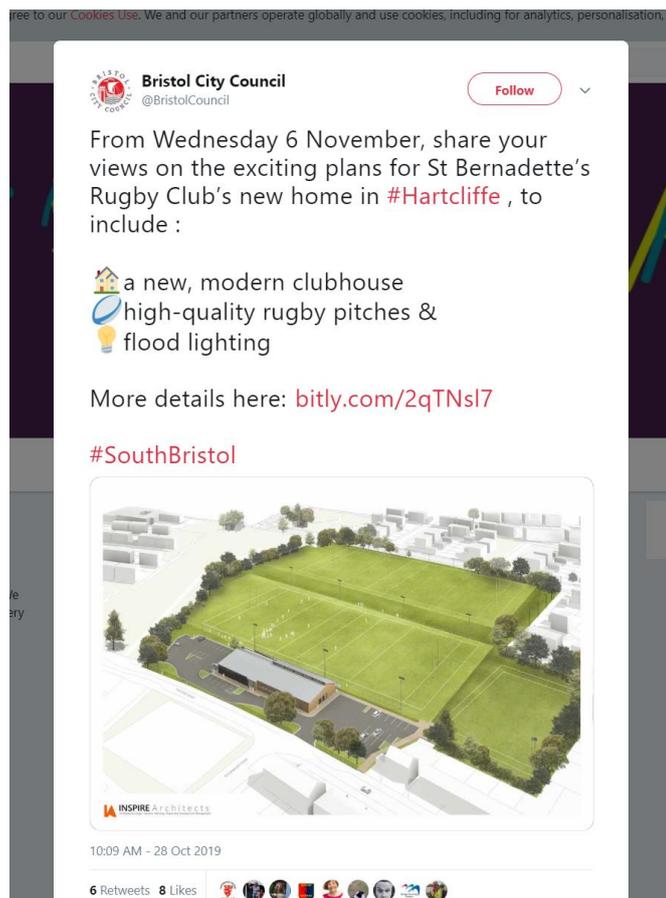
A second article was published on 29th October 2019, this article included the site overview graphic that was prepared.

The Bristol Live website receives over 80 million page reads per month.

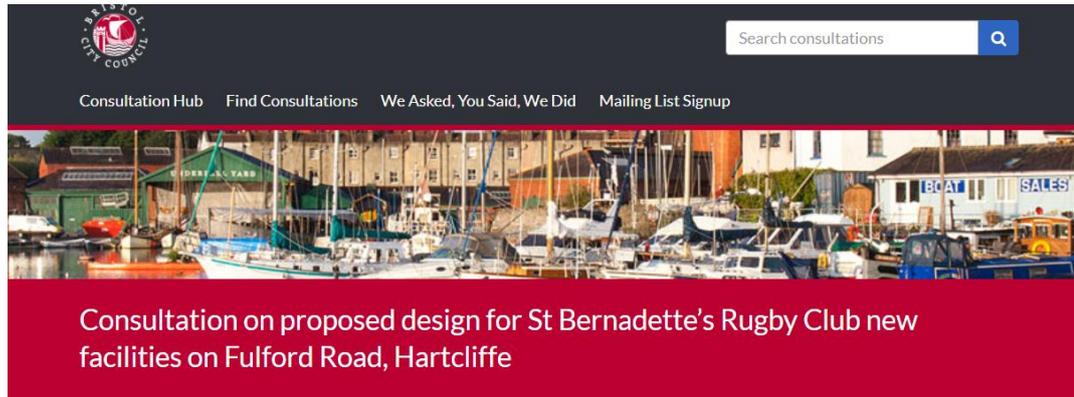
2.3 Social Media Platforms

Twitter:

Notification of the proposals were published by Bristol City Council via their twitter feed on the 28th October 2019. Please see below the extract from the Bristol City Council twitter account.



This notification also linked to the more detailed article published on the Bristol City Councils News room page, <https://news.bristol.gov.uk/news/give-your-views-on-new-rugby-club-plans> where a full description of the proposals are available and where readers were invited to express their views via the councils consultation hub.



Overview

St Bernadette's Old Boys Rugby and Football Club (RFC) is relocating from Hengrove Park to a new home on Fulford Road in Hartcliffe. Bristol City Council is working with the club on the move and in September appointed Kier (Regional) and Inspire Architects to design new rugby facilities, which include a new, modern clubhouse, high-quality rugby pitches and flood lighting. This consultation seeks to inform the design prior to a planning application whilst promoting the Club's relocation to Hartcliffe to potential new members and visitors to the Club.

Why We Are Consulting

Designs showing how a new south Bristol rugby club could look have been unveiled for public consultation. These can be downloaded at the bottom of this webpage, or viewed in the foyer of @Symes community building on Peterson Ave, BS13 0BE.

The Council, Club and design team want to hear views on the proposed design to inform and shape the proposed development prior to submitting a planning application.

Closes 20 Nov 2019

Opened 6 Nov 2019

Feedback expected 4 Dec 2019

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The scheme proposals were also posted on the following social media platforms;

- Hartcliffe Community worker Facebook group: Hartcliffe Community Sports
- Hartcliffe Community Worker Facebook: Community Partnership page
- Morrisons Hartcliffe Community champion Facebook page: Hartcliffe Forever-Change

2.4 Mail shot

To ensure that all residents within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development were informed of the proposals, Bristol City council arranged a direct letter drop to 1440 local residential properties. Of these only 5 were returned, 1435 were delivered. Please see below an image illustrating the mail drop area.

St Bernadette's - area for consultation letter (large)

Document created on Tuesday 2nd July 2019 at 14:05



2.5 Local notifications

In an additional effort to ensure that all local residents are aware of the proposals, posters promoting the public consultation event were posted in the following locations:

- Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre
- Hartcliffe Health Centre (in pharmacy and patients waiting area)
- @Symes Community Building
- St Peter's Hospice Charity Shop Hartcliffe
- Premier Fulford Road Convenience Store

2.6 Public Presentation

On the 6th November 2019 the scheme proposals were presented to the public in the foyer of Morrisons, Hartcliffe. The proposals were displayed on three A1 presentation boards. Representatives from Bristol City Council, the rugby club, the contractor and the architectural team were present to discuss the proposals with members of the public. There was a great deal of interest in the scheme and consultation slips were available for the public to record their comments on the proposals. During the public presentation the team spoke to 174 people, of which 42 were willing to record their comments on the consultation slips provided.



2.7 Pride of Place consultation

BCC's Project Manager attended the Hartcliffe and Worthywood Community Partnership (HWCP) 'Pride of Place' community meeting on 20th May 2019. This followed the Council's Cabinet approving the project budget and other processes to allow BCC to progress with relocating St Bernadette's on 7 May 2019. He presented initial designs from the Feasibility stage of design works (proposed site and clubhouse layouts). There were circa sixteen members of local community there, including the CEO of HWCP facilitating.

Pride of Place attendees appreciated early engagement and the opportunity to review the draft plans. They also suggested:

- Public consultation should be a drop in rather than specific slots, and sending letters to local residents.
- Queried whether trees on site plans and visualisations matched what was existing.
- Asked whether visualisations could include ball-stop netting and flood lights.
- Noted proposed site entrance near existing trees, and wondered whether entrance could shift to existing school entrance.
- Suggested having some form of notice-board, acknowledging site's former use as a school.

2.8 Public display of scheme proposals

Following the public presentation event in Morrisons, the display boards were left on display in the nearby @ Symes building and at the existing rugby club. Consultation slips were also available in both locations. The public consultation closed on the 20th November when the consultation slips were collected. There were 48 responses received from the club, but none were returned at the @ Symes building.

2.9 Analysis of responses

The proposals were well received with the majority of the responses being in support of the proposed development.

The nature of the responses can be grouped into the following categories:

Great for the local children

Great to see a proposed use for the site

This is much needed in the community

Pleased to see the old building being removed

The consultation process engaged a significant number of people with many choosing to formally respond. The table below summarises the number and nature of the responses.

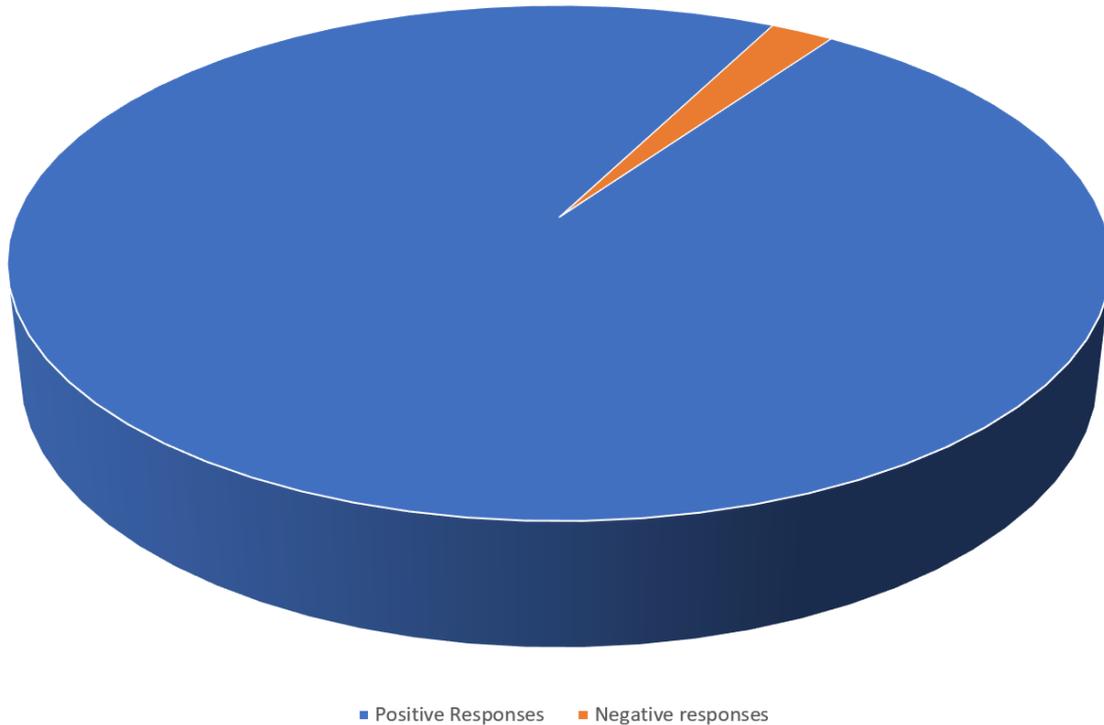
Consultation approach	Positive Response	Negative responses
Public presentation	171	3
Consultation Hub	1	1
Social Media	7	0
Consultation slips	90	2

These responses demonstrate that the proposals were well received. The overriding nature of the responses related to the positive benefits it would provide to the children of Hartcliffe.

The primary concerns in relation to the proposal are as follows:

- Security: Residents are keen to ensure that the facility is not susceptible to vandalism.
- Trees: There were two comments in relation to the need to trim / maintain the existing trees.
- Ecology: The site has been vacant for a considerable period of time and therefore an accurate understanding of what is currently inhabiting the site is essential to establish a suitable plan of action. The existing trees require some management but are seen as a positive attribute to the site and their retention is welcomed. These trees also help to serve the existing wildlife corridor that adjoins the site.
- Parking: Ensure there is sufficient parking.
- Relocation: We received two responses questioning the need to relocate the club.
- Additional uses: There were two comments returned questioning the possibility of other sports / activities being included within the proposals
- Access: Clarity was requested on how the site would be accessed. This was confirmed as being from Fulford Road only. Other access points will not be retained for security reasons.
- Drainage:
- Fencing and Ball stop netting: The provision of security fencing and ball stop netting was highlighted. The proposals retain the existing security fencing and will repair the areas that are currently damaged. Ball stop netting is included to prevent stray balls exiting the site.
- Drainage: Would any pitch drainage influence the current drainage situation in adjoining residential properties? The new pitches will have below ground drainage, but the extent of this is limited to the pitches so therefore it will not change the current off site drainage situation.

These responses have been summarised in the following pie chart.



3. Action following the consultation & information provided to support the planning application
 - 3.1. Security: To ensure the security of the proposals have been considered and well thought out, the proposals are currently being reviewed by the Crime prevention police liaison officer.
 - 3.2. Trees: A full arboricultural study has been undertaken. The design team have been liaising with the Bristol City Council tree officer to ensure that the appropriate tree protection measures are put in place.
 - 3.3. Ecology: An ecological assessment of the site has been undertaken by First Ecology. This records what is currently on the site and what mitigation measures are required to ensure that wildlife is not harmed by the proposals.
 - 3.4. Parking: As part of the overall design the provision of passenger and coach parking has been assessed by highways and transport consultants Vectos, who have provided a full vehicle movement and parking strategy for the site. This demonstrates that appropriate parking provision has been included within the site.
 - 3.5. Relocation: St. Bernadette's need to relocate to ensure the long-term viability of the rugby club. This relocation allows the club to benefit from purpose-built facilities that are immediately adjoining the pitches.

3.6. Additional Uses: The primary purpose of the facility is a rugby-based facility. The plans currently include two skittle lanes which form an intrinsic part of the club's business plan. The club house will be available for functions and other social activities, but this will need to be at the club's discretion to ensure they are well managed and that the rugby club activities are not compromised.

4. Summary

The community engagement activities have proven to be a valuable and worthwhile process. It is clear that there is considerable community support for this proposal and that it will be welcomed within the community.

This proposal looks to provide a much-needed sporting facility that will be of benefit to the community.

The design proposals have been well received with many of the supporting comments requesting that the development be delivered as quickly as possible.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the community engagement activity and are grateful to those who took the time to provide a formal response. The scheme proposals have benefited from the comments received.