VERSION DATED 7 JULY 2021

**FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF FOOTBALL FACILITIES FOR CLARBESTON ROAD AFC**

**1. Background**

This proposal sets out a reviewed and updated vision for the further development of improved facilities for Clarbeston Road AFC. The first version of a “development master plan” was produced in 2014 and this review builds on and updates that version. Considerable progress has been made since 2014 and experience has been gained about what may now be achievable in the foreseeable funding climate. Also some objectives have changed, requiring the vision to be reviewed and refreshed and for the plan to be re-set to support the direction of future changes.

One significant change that has occurred is the changed governance of the club from May 2016, when all assets were transferred from the former Community Amateur Sport Club (CASC) to a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation that had been set up in September 2015. This change led to strengthening of governance and re-positioning of the club for new funding opportunities.

The club continues to aspire, as part of its core purpose, to provide access to football for all members of the local community irrespective of age, gender or ability. It also wishes to continue to support wider community work and development across its catchment area, including making facilities available for community activities beyond football. This broader role needs to be recognised in any long-term plan for facilities development.

The specific requirements for facilities development are driven by the club Strategy and Development Action Plan, last reviewed by trustees in August 2020 and through monthly meetings of trustees for which ”Ground Development” is a standing agenda item. This strategy and plan includes actions to improve facilities for delivery of the club’s core football activities but also recognises the need for improvements to support the club’s outreach to the community.

The need for improved facilities was also identified by the community in the Clarbeston Road and Wiston Wellbeing Plan produced following a community visioning workshop in 2019. Members of the community recognised that the club is active and organises community events but also identified that the development of greater use of football facilities and land for community use could help contribute to the improvement of quality of life for local people. The participants in the workshop suggested greater collaboration between community groups, including Clarbeston Road AFC, to organise community events. In summary, there is support from the community for further improvement to the club’s facilities to enable their greater use by the community for non-football activities.

**2. Progress against 2014 plan targets**

The 2014 plan proposed 3 components:

**The first component** of the proposed development provided for the conversion of the existing junior/mini pitch surface to a 3G artificial grass surface. This would reduce the frequency of postponement of junior/mini games due to the combination of overplaying on surfaces and inclement weather. It would also provide the club with training facilities. These were currently unavailable and training either took place on the pitches, contributing to deterioration of playing surfaces, or, during the playing season, on the council operated astro-turf pitch at STP School in Haverfordwest. This is remote from the community and involves a lot of additional commuting. A local all weather facility would take pressure off the council operated facilities, which were over-subscribed, and potentially enable the club to offer the facilities for other local uses.

This requirement is unchanged. Whereas local authority astro-turf (3G) provision has improved with the redevelopment of local secondary schools, the issues identified in 2014 remain.

**The second component** of the plan was for the replacement of existing temporary changing rooms with a new permanently constructed facility. This would include changing rooms, showers, kit/grounds maintenance equipment storage and a clubroom sufficient to hold meetings, host events and tournaments and provide basic catering/tuck shop facilities on match days. It was also proposed to incorporate sheltered viewing areas for spectators, particularly with families and disabled participants in mind. The club has a small changing room in the village, remote from all of the pitches, that caters for only one match (2 teams) at a time. Given that there could be 6 or 7 home fixtures on a typical Saturday this is inadequate for current demand.

This requirement remains, although the planned construction of a Tractor Garage and Store in 2021 reduces the requirement for kit storage. The specification for the building originally proposed in the outline design produced in 2014 is unlikely to be affordable in the current funding climate and this is discussed later.

**The third component** of the project was to utilise the site of the former temporary changing rooms for additional car parking. This has been delivered.

The acquisition of a replacement Portakabin, in March 2020, now located at the lower end of the car park, enabled the removal of the old changing rooms in June 2020, the clearance of the site and the creation of a much enlarged parking area. This work was completed in November 2020.

**3. Facilities development achievements since 2014**

Despite the remaining requirements to re-purpose the existing mini/junior pitch as an all weather facility and to develop a new changing room building, considerable progress has been made since 2014 to facilitate these developments, supported by grants and fundraising. Some unplanned opportunities have also been delivered or are currently planned. In total, excluding work undertaken directly by club volunteers, £229,140 has been invested to date in facilities improvements, £38,878 of which has come directly from club fundraising.

The following progress has been made:

**Knock Field boundary tree removal**

Prior to planned Stage 1 site works involving an extension to Pitch 1, the trees along the western boundary were removed to enable the boundary width to be reduced to accommodate the required extension. This work cost £800.

**Knock Field Stage 1 infrastructure improvement**

This project was funded by the Rural Community Development Fund, through the EU and Welsh Government, with 20% match funding from the Landfill Community Fund. It was completed in 2018 and consisted of a package of work including the following:

* extensions to both Pitch 1 and the Mini/Junior pitch (in the case of the mini/junior pitch to create the footprint for a future 7v7 artificial training pitch)
* installation of pitch side coach shelters for Pitch 1
* provision of benched terrace seating for spectators overlooking Pitch 1
* installation of a Klargester sewage treatment and disposal facility
* provision of 3 phase power and a power cabinet to the site
* construction of a wider entrance gateway and visibility splay
* ,installation of a bunded fuel store
* culverting of a deep drainage ditch around the site
* reconfiguration of the car parking area
* construction of fencing around the mini/junior playing area.

Much of this work was considered as necessary preparatory and enabling work for any subsequent phases of development, although some elements were to improve the safety and welfare of the site users. The total cost of this work was £146,318.

**Knock Field senior pitch ball stop nets**

Alongside the Stage 1 improvements, a separate contract was delivered to install high specification ball stop nets across each end of the senior pitch to prevent loss of footballs to neighbouring properties. This work was funded by the Landfill Community Fund and cost £13,090.

**Knock Field further fencing work.**

Further fencing work was completed in 2019 to fully contain the junior/mini playing area and to provide an access gate for players and mowing equipment. Fencing was also installed around the embankments at the lower end of the car park as a safety measure. The total cost of this work was £2000, funded from club project funds.

**Knock Field Portakabin**

In March 2020 a 3 room Portakabin office was donated to the club by a GP Practice at Cardigan Health Centre. This opportunistic acquisition did not feature in the 2014 master plan but enabled the old portable changing room building at the site to be removed, as it was in very poor condition. This in turn facilitated delivery of car parking improvements. The replacement Portakabin now provides a temporary changing area for mini and junior footballers, a kit storeroom and a small club room for match day activities and meetings. This was removed from Cardigan and relocated at Knock Field at a cost of £4,198, including the cost of the planning fees and consent, crane hire, transport and electrical installation work. This cost was met from club project funds. Full commissioning of this new facility has been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

**Knock Field spectator seating safety railings**

Improved safety railings were installed in May 2020 for the bench seating overlooking Pitch 1. This work cost £804 and was met from club project funds..

**Knock Field changing room building removal**

In June 2020 the old portable changing room building was removed from the site by a demolition contractor, freeing up that part of the site for future redevelopment. The cost (£1080) was met from club project funds.

**Knock Field further site infrastructure and car park works**

In October/November 2020 a contract was delivered to clear the undeveloped north section of the site to create additional car parking, culvert the remaining section of drainage ditch and extend utility services to the development site for future changing rooms and a tractor garage and to the location of a portable toilet facility. This contract cost £49,372, inclusive of professional fees. The work was part funded by the FAW Trust, Club and Community Facilities Fund (£15,000) and the Pembrokeshire County Council Enhancing Pembrokeshire Fund (£7,211) with the remainder (£27,161) being met from club project funds.

**Knock Field Toilet Block**

In November 2020 a further opportunistic acquisition took place in the form of a second hand toilet block, inclusive of disability facilities. This was located near to the site entrance and connected to services installed as part of the further site infrastructure works. The cost of the unit was £960, met from club project funds. Further work is planned to install hot water hand washing facilities at a cost of £498, to be funded from a Localgiving “Magic Little Grant” awarded in May 2021.

**Knock Field Tractor Garage**

A specification for a Tractor Garage and Storeroom building has sent to potential contractors for quotations with a view to construction in July 2021. External funding support has been obtained from a further application to the Pembrokeshire County Council Enhancing Pembrokeshire fund for a sum of £7,250.

**Pitch 3 Car Park**

Work was undertaken at Pitch 3 in October 2018 to provide an off-road car park and safe access for pedestrians to both Pitches 2 and 3, with associated fencing and gateways. This addressed a safety concern about parking on the highway. The total cost of the work was £10,020, funded by the Landfill Community Trust (£5893), Lamboro Farm Ltd. (£2000), Wiston Community Council (£250), Welsh Water Community Scheme (£500) and club project funds (£1377)

**4. Drivers for further change**

Despite the substantial expenditure incurred and the progress that has been made to date, many of the original drivers for improved facilities still remain. The drivers identified in 2014 were summarised as follows and updates are provided in brackets on whether these still apply;

* Insufficient playing areas to reliably support matches throughout the playing season (still applies)
* No provision of training facilities, leading to excessive use of playing areas and costs of using remote facilities (still applies)
* insufficient capacity for the number of players needing to use changing facilities on match days (still applies)
* inadequate facilities for separate changing and showering areas for males and females; the club’s existing changing rooms are far too small and remote from the pitches (still applies)
* inability to offer equality of opportunity for both boys and girls at all age groups (still applies)
* insufficient storage facilities for kit and grounds maintenance equipment (will be addressed by Tractor Garage and Store currently being progressed)
* inadequate car parking provision, leading to cars parking on the road outside the ground entrance and the creation of traffic hazards (addressed by infrastructure contracts delivered in 2018 and 2020)
* inadequate facilities for serving of refreshments such as hot drinks and snacks on match days (still applies)
* no meeting room for managing club business, for match days or for events such as football festivals and tournaments (partly addressed on a temporary basis but further capacity is needed)
* inadequate welfare facilities for hosting family groups while family members are involved in games (some progress but further improvements still required).
* no undercover facilities for spectators during inclement weather (some very limited capacity for shelter in the Portakabin but otherwise still applies)
* inadequate facilities for disabled participants (still applies; a temporary disability toilet provision is in place but this is not a long term solution).

**5. Current membership and demand**

Further growth in club membership has taken place since the last review of the club facilities development plan.

For the 2019-2020 season the club had 263 playing members, an increase of 26% compared to the 2016-17 season, three years earlier, along with 47 coaches and helpers and total membership of 334. The figures for 2020-21 were disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic but were only slightly lower than for 2019-20 when it is taken into account that many disability players were unable to register due to shielding.

Mixed mini and junior teams are in place at most age groups from Under 7s to Under 16 years. The club also had 3 girls squads in 2020 (Under 12s, Under 14s and Under 16s) and incorporated the Cleddau Warriors Disability Football Club into Clarbeston Road AFC in January 2020, now re-named the Clarby Warriors. The club continues to field 2 senior men football teams.

Current demand for use of the club facilities by the community includes the following;

- Annual Village Sports Day (Memorial Hall Committee)

- Village Carnival (Memorial Hall Committee)

- Christmas tractor procession and sports events (Llys-y-Fran Young Farmers)

- Inter-force football matches (Dyfed Powys Police)

The Clarbeston Road and Wiston visioning exercise also identified the potential to use the club’s facilities as a base for walking and cycling groups. Interest has also been expressed in the development of a community café and informal meeting place, should the club further develop its facilities. It has further been suggested that any new changing facilities could include provisions for visiting health professionals to deliver services such as physiotherapy and chiropody.

**6. Future facilities development**

The following key developments (all at Knock Field) should feature as part of the club’s Development Strategy going forward from May 2021:

**Construction of a new Tractor Garage and Store**

The club is committed to progressing this development during 2021. Planning consent has been obtained and quotations have been obtained from contractors. Award of the contract is pending.

Once the garage facility is constructed, further expenditure and work will be required to install lighting, power, CCTV, smoke alarms, water standpipe and for constructing storerooms within the building. Detailed specifications and costs have yet to be finalised.

**Removal of the existing Tractor/mower garage**

The construction of the new tractor garage will allow removal of the existing garage adjoining the Portakabin. This will facilitate re-profiling of ground levels in the cleared area and construction of disability access ramps to the Portakabin and railings. This area could be a fenced to provide a safe play area for young children and an area where members and visitors to take refreshments. The area can be provided with portable outside picnic bench seating that may be stored in the adjoining container, along with existing benches. Consideration could also be given to purchase of a heavy-duty gazebo for functions and for a barbeque unit for festivals and other club and community functions.

**Development of the Portakabin and adjoining area**

The restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic have prevented the intended use of the Portakabin, apart from storage of equipment. When restrictions are withdrawn, access will be available to a small changing area for mini/junior footballers and to a small meeting room/welfare facility. Once the tractor garage and store is completed, some equipment can be relocated to the new storerooms, allowing some improvements to be carried out.

The flooring within the Portakabin requires replacement with a durable alternative that may be easily maintained. The building also requires some minor repairs and cosmetic improvements.

**Provision of new changing rooms and a club room (Stage 2 of original plan)**

The provision of a new changing room/club room building remains the main longer-term priority for the club. Analysis of current funding sources has shown that the specification developed in 2014 is now unlikely to be affordable. In 2019 the club was encouraged by the FAW to develop a lower cost option for possible funding by the Sport Wales “A Place for Sport” funding scheme. This led to consideration of modular prefabricated buildings and a scaled down specification. The quotation process for the unsuccessful funding application that followed identified a supplier who could provide a bespoke building incorporating 2 changing rooms, 2 officials rooms, a club room and kitchen and disability accessible toilet facilities. The cost quoted for the building at that time (2019) was £147,144. Further costs of a planning consent, preparation of the foundations for the building and service connections are estimated as £15,000. Construction costs have increased since 2019 and it is likely that approximately £175,000 would now be required to deliver this proposal. It is recommended that this alternative approach is adopted instead of the specification originally developed in 2014.

**Conversion of Junior/Training pitch to an all weather facility (Stage 3 of original plan)**

Conversion of the mini/junior playing area to a floodlit and caged 3G facility remains an ambition for the club. This would enable more training to be hosted at the site, saving costs of hiring local authority facilities, and result in fewer cancellations of games due to inclement weather. It would also give scope for hosting of other sports and community events.

When cost estimates were produced in 2014, it was estimated that such a facility would cost approximately £160,000. A revised costing exercise will be necessary prior to pursuing any funding applications for this

**Investigation/improvement of drainage for Pitch 1**

Despite considerable investment in annual maintenance programmes, the drainage of parts of Pitch 1 and the mini/junior pitch still gives cause for concern. Investigative work through soil sampling and drainage investigation, together with commissioning of specialist advice, would assist in identifying if any remedial actions are necessary and provide guidance on the most cost effective long-term maintenance regime.

**Contingency arrangements for the potential loss of Pitches 2 and 3**

Pitch 2 is on an annual rental agreement with no longer-term security and could be lost at short notice. The pitch owner is unwilling to negotiate any form of long-term agreement. Pitch 3 is covered by a 10 year lease that expires in September 2027 and provides a longer period of security. However, the club should consider contingency arrangements and further development opportunities, should loss of access to one, or both of these facilities, take place at some point in the future.

**4. Benefits of future developments to the community**

Clarbeston Road AFC has already established close links with the local community and is a key part of community life. The proposed development will help improve the quality and availability of the facilities and open up new opportunities to involve more local people in football, volunteering and in wider community activities.

The club has 6 main feeder schools within its local catchment. We wish to continue to strengthen our links with these schools to help promote involvement in sport at an early age and break down some of the barriers that deter involvement, particularly for girls. Provision of an artificial playing surface could enable the club to open up the club facilities to local primary schools.

Availability of adequate facilities will remove a major barrier and enable the club to more confidently engage with the community on other activities and uses of its facilities. This will contribute to efforts to engage local people in healthier lifestyles in their communities. Rural poverty is a major issue in Wales and for those families on lower incomes, the cost and practicalities of travel to more distant facilities in the local towns may be sufficient to exclude their children from involvement.

The club already makes its facilities available to local Young Farmers Clubs, the Village Hall Committee (annual sports day) and to regularly host fun days, festivals and tournaments. Experience has shown that the limitations of the current facilities present a variety of logistical problems such as some players changing in cars, unable to shower after games etc. Improved facilities would help us provide a much better experience and enable more events to be hosted.

The club is a major part of the social fabric of the village and the surrounding area and makes a significant contribution to community cohesion and the quality of rural life. Besides the opportunities provided to engage in sport, many residents of the village follow the teams as supporters and it is important that better facilities are provided for them, especially for families and those with disabilities.

The club has more than 50 volunteers from the local community. Young players are encouraged to become coaches once they reach the age of 16 and support is also provided to local young people with schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh award and the Welsh Baccalaureate. In providing such volunteering opportunities and vocational experience, the club is contributing to their social development, building the self-confidence of young people and helping equip them to apply for university or work opportunities. Improved facilities would help deliver better quality development and training to these volunteers and club members and greater opportunities for socialising for those attending training and matches.

The benefits for disabled participants and their families from the proposed development will be county-wide. The Clarby Warriors Disability Team serves the whole of Pembrokeshire and hosts disability groups from across South Wales.

In development of the sites, the club needs to apply the principles of its Environmental Policy and seek to avoid damage and provide betterment where possible. This will include consideration of environmental consequences of construction and maintenance activities and taking opportunities to enhance the site through measures such as replacement tree planting and provision of bird and bat boxes.

**5. Outcomes**

The primary outcomes expected from successful completion of the planned developments include;

* more people involved in playing football and thereby healthier lifestyles
* more girls and ladies actively involved in sport with teams in place across all age groups
* Clarbeston Road AFC becomes the primary club of choice for children and parents within the catchments of the 6 local schools
* More local people are involved in volunteering (as coaches, club officials and helpers)
* More village, community events and football festivals are hosted
* More local people are involved as spectators and supporters, particularly family groups
* More spending takes place in the remaining public house, helping to sustain this key part of the village infrastructure
* Fully accessible and dedicated facilities for families and disabled participants are in place

**6. Potential funding sources to be explored**

* Sport Wales
* Football Association Of Wales
* Postcode Community Trust
* Welsh Government Community Facilities Programme
* Landfill Disposals Tax Community Scheme
* Waterloo Foundation
* Moondance Foundation
* Wolfson Fondation
* Bernard Sunley Foundation
* Garfield Weston Foundation
* The Lindley Foundation
* NFU Mutual Charitable Trust
* National Lottery Awards for All
* Local businesses; Valero, South Hook LNG, Milford Haven Port Authority, Bluestone
* Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust
* Enhancing Pembrokeshire Fund

**7. Potential partners and supporters**

* Clarbeston Road Community Council
* Local schools (Spittal, Wiston, Maenclochog, Caer Elen, Haverfordwest High and Preseli)
* Llys y Fran Young Farmers
* Clarbeston Road Hall Committee
* St Mary’s Wiston Church Restoration Committee
* DPJ Foundation
* McMillan Cancer Support

**8. Project governance**

It is intended to continue involve the wider community in the scoping of the proposals and to ensure the optimum arrangements to support the wider community wishes. A Project Management Steering Group was established for earlier stages of the programme involving key Clarbeston Road AFC club officials with successful project management experience, supplemented by a representative from the Community Council, the local County Councillor and the Disability Sport Development Officer for Pembrokeshire.

Advice will be sought from a range of organisations and individuals including the Football Association of Wales, PLANED, PAVS and Pembrokeshire County Council to help prepare a detailed proposal and funding bids.