



EST. 2010

15 July 2020
by email

Dear Ms White (on behalf of the W.E. Knight Trust)

I am writing to update you on the current progress of Newark R&M Cricket Club's Ground Development Project, which the W.E. Knight Trust has kindly committed to support financially.

I know you are aware of the details of the Project, which I outlined in my last letter, dated September 2019. Since then, we have made significant progress with the second phase of the Project (construction of the changing rooms) and have now completed the associated ground investigation and engineering works. This information has been used to inform our architect's preparation of the design plans for the building. This was an especially complex exercise due to the unique features of the land, including the high flood-risk, but appropriate mitigation measures were identified in order to address these issues and provide an affordable and fit-for-purpose building design.

We made a planning application based upon this design in February 2020, *Ref. 20/00302/FUL*. Unfortunately, following extensive correspondence between our agent and the Planning Officer, that application was refused. A decision letter confirmed the only ground of refusal was that:

"given the required flood mitigation measures, the height of the proposed floor level would be approximately 1.2 metres above the ground level. The design of the building does not employ methods for a step free inclusive access and would therefore fail to provide safe and inclusive access to all."

Throughout the application process, our agent made representations that step-free access, in accordance with Building Regulations was unnecessary due to the nature and use of the building, and financially prohibitive due to the excessive cost and size of providing fixed access of the requisite gradient,

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to a small structure, elevated over 1m above the ground. Nevertheless, the application was refused for the above reasons.

While obviously disappointing, it is accepted by the Club that inclusive step-free access must be included in order to be successful with our application. To that extent, we have identified an option involving the installation of a lift upon the front external stairs and a minor spatial reconfiguration to permit internal access to both sides.

There remains a cost to this, which was not accounted for in our initial estimations and therefore exceeds our current budget. The lift unit itself is £13,134 including VAT. There may be a slight further cost for the minor internal reconfiguration.

Having spoken to Andy Hardy from Newark & Sherwood District Council, he suggested there may be some further money available from the Trust to cover this cost. Is this something the Trustees could consider please?

The Club is incredibly grateful for the already very generous support of the W.E. Knight Trust in delivering this Project. Although the result of the recent application was unfortunate, we are confident in our ability to address the only hurdle identified, by incorporating the above measures.

I understand that, in the current situation, there may be some delay in having the matter put to the Trustees. Of course, I suspect this is entirely unavoidable, but given the risks that we potentially incur by making a revised planning application without established funding in place, I would appreciate it if this could be considered at your earliest convenience. Could you possibly advise me of the likely timescale, so the Club can plan accordingly, in any event?

Thank you again for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Luc Chignell