

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

4 June 2015

Report by Director of Environment

PROPOSED LEASE OF GRASS FOOTBALL PITCHES AT WOODFARM

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to the proposed lease of the Council owned pitches at Woodfarm to East Renfrewshire Cricket Club.

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Cabinet is asked to:

- (a) Approve the terms and conditions proposed in relation to the lease of the Woodfarm pitches and;
- (b) Delegate to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement, to make the necessary arrangements

BACKGROUND

3. The Cabinet in October 2013 agreed to lease the pitches at Woodfarm to Giffnock Soccer Centre. GSC however subsequently decided not to pursue this lease. The site referred to is shown on the location plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4. The Cabinet in June 2014 agreed to lease an area of ground within Cowan Park to East Renfrewshire Cricket Club (ERCC) for a period of 31 years at a rent of £1 per annum. This was in recognition of ERCC's development plan and commitment to expanding the delivery of cricket within our schools and more generally across East Renfrewshire.

5. ERCC have been delivering curricular time coaching sessions to the schools in the Barrhead, St Lukes and Eastwood clusters and are due to expand this to the Mearns Castle cluster later this term. The club delivers curricular and non curricular cricket training and teacher development. They have also been running their own training nights at the Barrhead Foundry over the winter (Monday nights for 4 hours) and are due to start their summer training at Cowan Park. They have been working in partnership with Sports Development and Active Schools over the last 2 years and have a 5 year development plan within the area to cover all clusters. The club has over 50 junior members and 70 senior members and play a vital role within the Community Sports Hub arrangements. They have also been supported by Sports Scotland's Direct Club Investment and have a target of having 200 junior members within 3 years.

6. In December 2014 the Council agreed to relocate the proposed replacement Barrhead High School to the site of the Johnny Kelly pavilion. As a result, the site previously identified for ERCC was needed to facilitate the new school infrastructure and accordingly was no longer available to lease to them. In view of this, steps have been taken to find an alternative site for ERCC to lease to help them fulfil their future ambitions.

REPORT

7. It was initially anticipated that an alternative site could be found for ERCC elsewhere within Cowan Park. However, this has not proven possible for technical, financial and legal reasons.

8. Having considered the limited alternative options available, the Woodfarm site was identified as being suitable to lease to the club and ERCC are happy to agree a lease on similar terms to those previously agreed by the Cabinet for the Cowan Park site. This was that the site would be leased to ERCC for a period of 31 years at a rent of £1 per annum. In return, ERCC will offer East Renfrewshire schools an agreed number of free coaching hours and use of the pitch.

9. Prior to this proposal coming forward, the Parks Service had hoped to utilise this site to create additional football pitches capacity. In view of this proposal steps are now being taken to provide alternative football pitch capacity within Cowan Park.

10. ERCC intends to take forward cricket development on the site at Woodfarm and will be seeking to access external funding to improve drainage. Negotiations have been progressed with a view to agreeing provisional heads of terms.

11. The main terms proposed for the lease of the ground are as shown in Appendix 2.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

12. The proposals contained within this report will allow better use of the existing pitches at Woodfarm. The proposal to lease the pitches removes the liability for the management and maintenance of the pitches from the Council, and also presents an opportunity for ERCC to secure external funding to improve the drainage within the site.

13. In the event of the loss of pitch income to the Parks Service as a result of this proposal this will be managed within existing financial resources.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14. This proposal has been discussed with Officers from across various Council Services, representatives from ERCC and with Sportscotland.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

15. There are no IT, staffing, sustainability, equalities or other implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

16. The proposed lease of the grassed pitches at Woodfarm should allow external funding to be secured to improve drainage and will facilitate the increased use of the pitches at this location.

RECOMMENDATION

17. The Cabinet is asked to:

- (a) Approve the terms and conditions proposed in relation to the lease of the Woodfarm pitches and;
- (b) Delegate to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement, to make the necessary arrangements

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from Iain MacLean, Head of Environment on 0141 577 3720 or iain.maclea@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Cabinet Contact Details

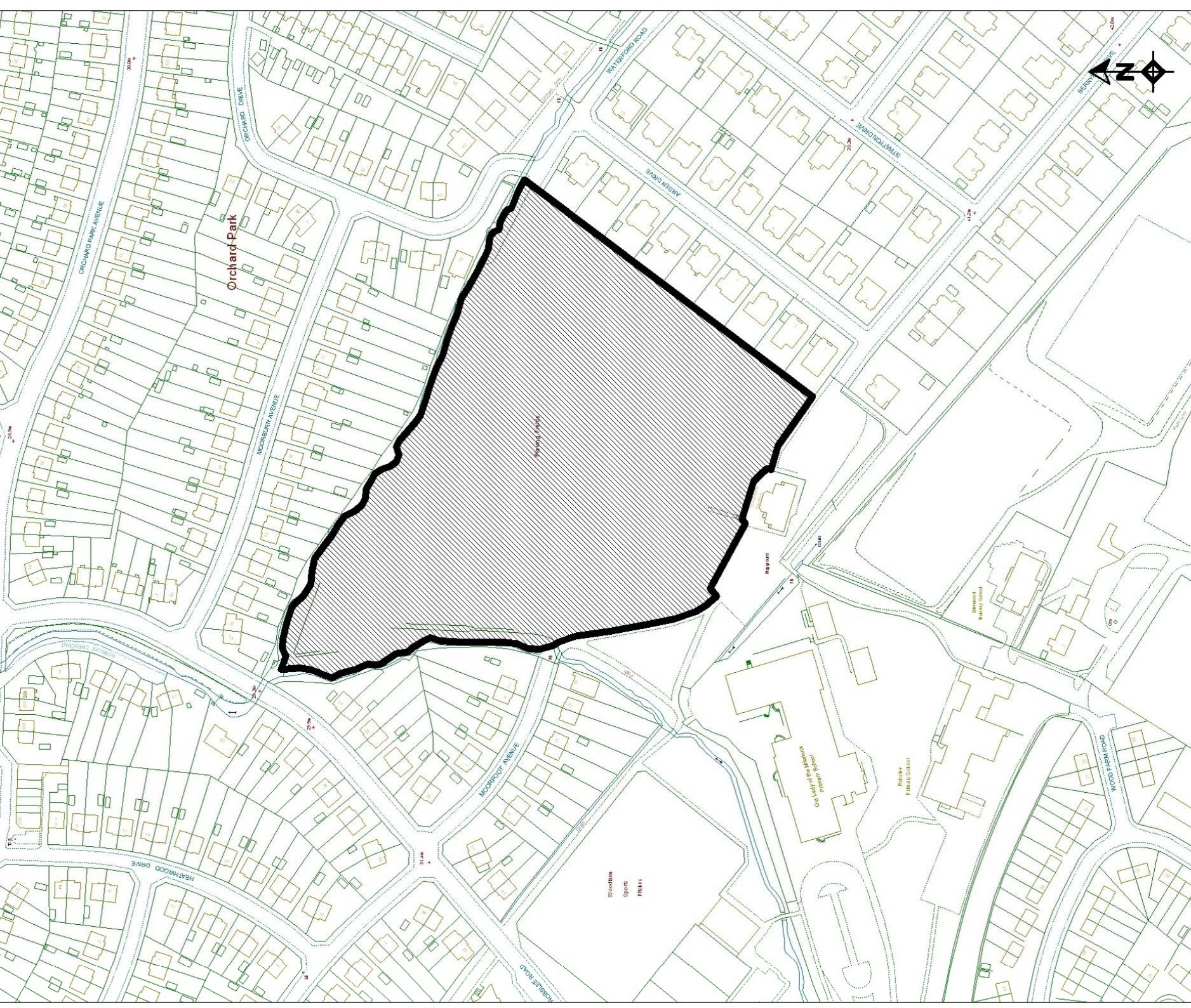
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June 2015

KEY WORDS

East Renfrewshire Cricket Club, Woodfarm, Pitches, Ground, Lease, drainage



Indicative Location Plan

Grass Pitches Woodfarm



Proposed Lease of Grass Football Pitches at Woodfarm

Main terms proposed for the lease of the ground

- That the ground shall be leased for a period of 31 years
- The tenant shall be East Renfrewshire Cricket Club
- The rent shall be £1 per annum (if asked)
- The ground and associated pitches shall not be permitted to be sub leased or assigned to any other party or be used for commercial purposes of any sort. The assignation of the lease to the proposed Giffnock community sports hub would however be allowed
- In accordance with the established practice at these pitches, Sunday matches will not be allowed unless subsequently agreed
- The cost of maintaining the grass pitches shall be the sole responsibility of ERCC
- The specification of any pitch improvement works shall be agreed with the Council
- East Renfrewshire Cricket Club shall be responsible for having appropriate public liability insurance, and for obtaining any necessary Planning Permission, Building Warrants together with any other necessary consents
- The leased ground is to be used solely as cricket facilities for the playing of cricket and associated training and that no commercial use of the pitches is permitted
- East Renfrewshire Cricket Club shall be responsible for any utility services, drainage, rates or any other charges
- East Renfrewshire Cricket Club shall allow the Council reasonable access without charge to the pitches for occasional use such as school sports days. The dates of such use shall be arranged in advance with the Club
- Each party shall be responsible for meeting their own surveyor's, legal fees and any other associated costs
- The date of entry together with all other terms and conditions required shall be a matter of negotiation between the Council and the Club.