

# Jubilee Fields – 3G multi-sports pitch

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Updated – March 2024**

### **1. What is the 3G multi-sports project?**

The 3G multi-sports pitch project started about eight years ago when concerns were raised by football clubs that the grass pitches at the Jubilee Field were not fit to play on for large parts of the football season.

Therefore the football clubs and the Parish Council lobbied MBC and Football Foundation to include a 3G multi-sport pitch at the Jubilee Field in their strategic plans and argued the case for funding. This has resulted in a “strategic project” with the best part of £1m of funding being earmarked for the community’s sporting infrastructure in Staplehurst.

We are now at the stage where it could be delivered and public input is vital.

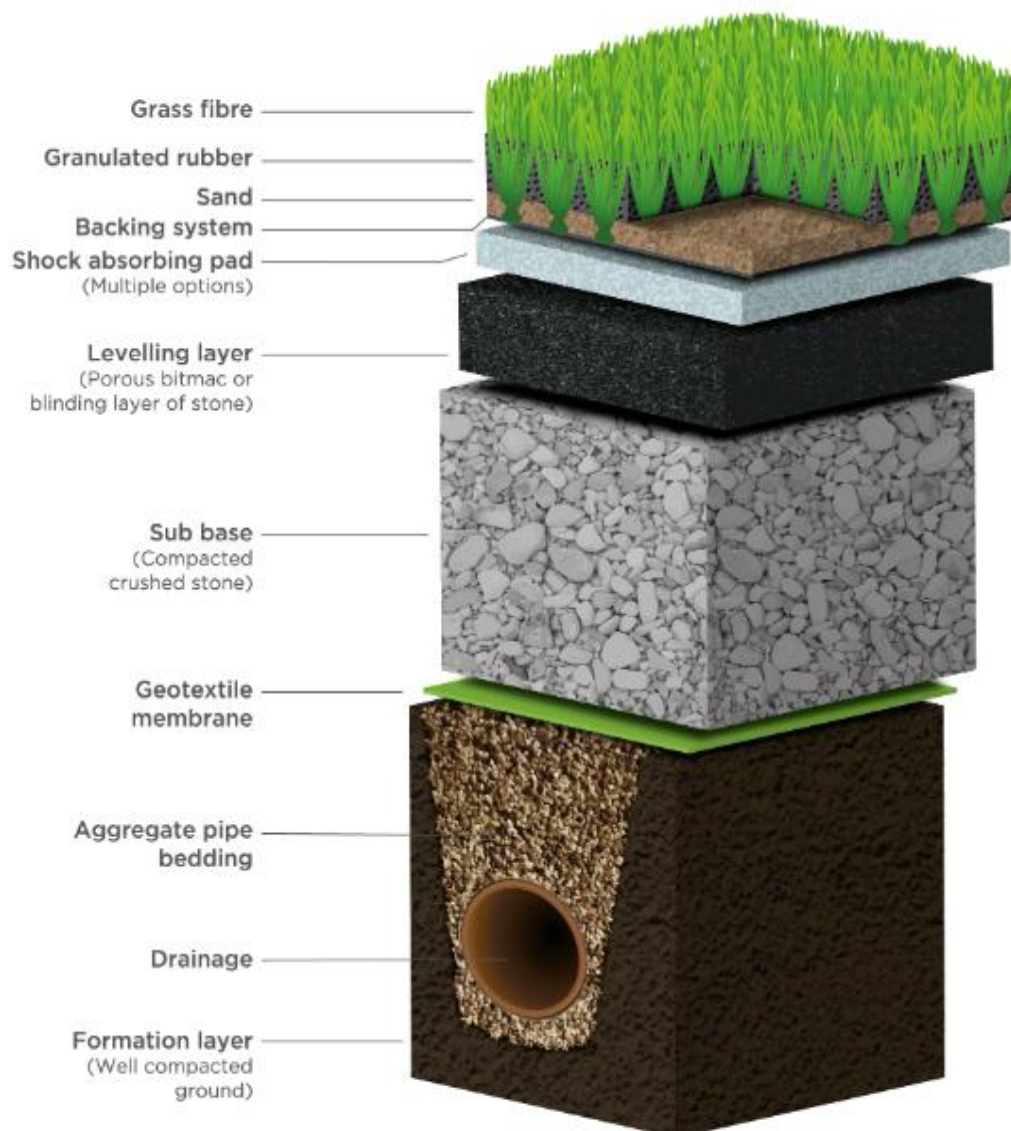
### **2. What does a 3G multi-sports pitch look like?**



### 3. What is a 3G multi-sports pitch?

A 3G multi-sports pitch is a synthetic pitch which sports such as: football, hockey, rugby, aerobics / fitness, disability sports and general activities can be played upon.

It is made up of





#### 4. Why do we need one?

As mentioned the grass pitches at Jubilee Field are often very wet and are unplayable.



Therefore, matches are called off or Staplehurst's teams have to travel long distances to play "home games". For example, in December 2022;



- the percentage of home matches played at Jubilee was 4.65%,
- a total of 62.79% of home matches had to be played “away” at an alternative venue
- and 32.56 % of home matches were postponed altogether

## **5. Why not improve the grass pitch drainage?**

The Jubilee Field is mostly Wealden Clay, which is very challenging to effectively drain. The “Ball Park” cost is approximately £250,000 to install sand based drainage into the pitches plus approximately £50,000 every 5 years to renew the sand slit drains<sup>1</sup>. The usage would typically be only 4 to 5 hours (2 adult matches / 3 junior matches per week per pitch) with no training and in mid-winter reduced usage due to weather.

In simple terms the usage would not generate enough income to fund the general maintenance / ongoing drainage costs. So pitches would get over used and fall into problems.

A 3G pitch costs approximately £1,000,000 to install and can be used up to 80 hours per week. It generates income to cover general maintenance, long term maintenance costs and any surplus will be ring fenced to improve the facilities at the Jubilee Field.

## **6. Where will the 3G multi-sports pitch be built?**

It will be located next to the existing main pitch, see indicative plan, and there will be a second junior grass pitch as well.

## **7. Why not build on the main pitch?**

The main pitch is of a good standard, due to the hard work of the Staplehurst Monarchs and extra funding for the level of football they play at. If the Football Foundation are funding a 3G pitch they consider poorer standard pitches. They do not fund 3G pitches that are of a high enough standard for the level of football the Staplehurst Monarchs play at.

## **8. How much will a 3G multi-sport pitch cost to build?**

Current estimates put it around £1,000,000.

## **9. How will you afford to build it?**

We are working with the Football Foundation who have identified it as a strategic project and they will fund in the region of 75% of the build cost.

We have ringfenced with MBC the following S106 developer contributions;

**Hen and Duckhurst (14/502010) - £129,719.33 towards improvement , refurbishment and maintenance of the existing area of open space, play area and outdoor sports facilities at Surrenden Playing Field and Jubilee Field**

£104,719.33 requested to Jubilee Field 3G multi-sports pitch – confirmed by MBC

**Land North of Headcorn Rd – (14/505432) - £105,897.65 towards improvement and refurbishment of Jubilee Playing Fields and play area**

Funding dedicated to Jubilee Field, requested all funding to 3G multi-sports pitch project when planning permission / quotes – confirmed from MBC

We are seeking a further £100,000 from MBC central Community Infrastructure Fund pot if we obtain planning permission.

We are also looking to do some local fund raising.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on similar projects in the area – would need detailed site surveys and costed designs

The direct cost to the Parish Council should be limited. Currently we have committed £15,000 to the Jubilee Field in Earmarked Reserves and set aside a further £15,000 from General Reserves for consultancy / legal fees.

#### **10. What happens to the funding if it is not built?**

If the 3G multi-sports project is not built we would lose the funding from the Football Foundation, approximately £750,000. We would be able to consider alternative uses for the S106 developer contributions – see point 7. Such as improvements to Jubilee Field skate park and car parking and Surrenden Field.

We would consult residents and seek external funding.

#### **11. Why did not Staplehurst get the developers to pay for everything, as they did in Marden?**

Marden Hockey and Cricket club is a private members club, sold their land for housing near the centre of Marden and used the funding to build their own private members club on the out skirts of Marden.

#### **12. What other projects have you developed?**

In 2022 we extended the footpath from the Children's Play Area on Surrenden Field to the pedestrian entrance at Thatcher Road and replaced the climbing wall & climbing ramp at Surrenden Field play area (£16,377). We have recently installed Outdoor Gym equipment at Surrenden Field £15,909 funded by £9,629.84 from Hen and Duckhurst (14/502010), £5,779.16 from Community Infrastructure Levy and a grant of £500 from Kent County Playing Field Association.

#### **13. What other projects are you looking to develop?**

We are considering improvements to the Youth Club and the Pavilion at Surrenden Field. We have set aside in the Reserves £15,000 for the Youth Club and £26,500 for Surrenden Field. As they evolve we will consult residents and investigate external funding.

#### **14. How much will 3G multi-sports pitch cost to run?**

The draft business plan shows that after a year or so it will cover its own costs and any surplus will be invested back into improving the grass pitches on site and providing more opportunities for local residents to be physically active using the facility. The business plan will be finalised and discussed at the Parish Council at a Council meeting before a formal application to the Football Foundation.

#### **15. How much will the 3G multi-sport pitch cost to hire?**

The hire fees are being finalised and will form part of the business plan; they will be competitive with similar 3G multi-sports pitches in the area. We are also considering "low cost turn up and play" sessions.

#### **16. How big will the 3G multi-sports pitch be?**

The 3G multi-sports pitch area will be 103m x 65m, including storage areas, runoff areas etc The 11 v 11 size adult pitch will be 91m by 55m big enough for adult football matches. See FA guidance.

#### **17. Up to what age can children play matches across the 3G multi-sport pitch?**

The pitch can be spilt into a number of smaller pitches to allow for a range of matches to take place.

4 quarters for 5v5 matches – for U7-U8 age groups.

2 halves 7v7 matches – for U9-U10 age groups.

1 9 v 9 match – for U 11 – U 12 age groups

1 x 11 v11 match – for up to 18 year olds

1 x 11 v 11 match – men's and women's matches

The pitch will also accommodate training sessions and coaching which can be spilt into quarters, thirds or halves as required by the Club or group hiring it.

**18. Up to what age can children play matches along the length of the 3G pitch?**

Using the full length of the pitch 9v9 matches – for U11-U12 age groups and 11v11 matches all ages up to U18.

**19. When will it be built?**

Subject to approvals, The indicative timetable is

- Consultation / Design Phase – Autumn 2023
- Planning – Early 2024
- Football Foundation application submission – July 2024
- Decision – Autumn 2024
- Construction – Winter 2024/25
- Opening Spring 2025

**20. Does it need planning permission?**

Yes, the Parish Council will submit a planning application to Maidstone Borough Council and residents will be able to comment.

The Parish Council, as the applicant, will not comment.

**21. What about car parking?**

Car parking is a significant issue and is part of the design / planning process. We will undertake a Traffic Assessment survey as part of the planning process. We will update you when we know more.

**22. Is there enough space for a successful Staplehurst Monarchs and a 3G multi-sport pitch at the Jubilee Field?**

We are meeting the Staplehurst Monarchs about the long term plans for the future.

**23. What about electric vehicle charging points?**

Yes, good point will include in design

**24. What about traffic?**

This will be considered as part of the planning process. We will undertake a Traffic Assessment survey as part of the planning process. We will update you when we know more.

**25. What about car access into / out of the site?**

This will be considered as part of the design and planning process. We will update you when we know more.

**26. What about footpath links?**

There is currently a footpath with street lights from the crossroads to the Jubilee Field.

**27. What about pedestrian access into / out of the Jubilee Field?**

This will be considered as part of the design planning process. We will update you when we know more.

**28. What about access – lighting / signage along Headcorn Road?**

This will be considered as part of the planning process. We will update you when we know more.

**29. What about security – there have been recent break-ins at the Jubilee Field?**

We are reviewing security on the site as a whole. We will update you when we know more but with more activity on site, this will also act as a deterrent.

**30. Are you using “solar panels” for floodlighting?**

We have investigated solar power traffic lights – and these are not reliable – but will investigate solar powered floodlights

### **31. What is the environmental cost?**

The area proposed for the 3G multi-sport pitch is a muddy grass playing field in winter. This will be assessed and offset with a 20% increase in the Bio-diversity on the site as part of the planning process.

### **32. What about drainage?**

A revised drainage scheme for the Jubilee Field will be part of the project. This includes liaising with the Medway Internal Drainage Board that have recently adopted the culvert that runs from the Jubilee Field into the River Beult.

### **33. What about health concerns of 3G multi-sports pitches?**

This is a national issue – two factors health and environmental. Football Foundation is leading research, if changes are required they would be phased in over a number of years.

*“This question has been the subject of significant investigation since first being raised in the USA in 2015.”*

*The concerns identified relate to the potential risk of exposure to polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) that are contained in ELT granulate.*

*PAHs are a widely occurring group of chemicals that people are most commonly exposed to through breathing air contaminated with motor vehicle exhaust, cigarette smoke or wood smoke.*

*People also ingest PAHs when they eat grilled or charred meats or foods. High or prolonged exposure to PAHs can cause cancers. In 2016 the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) launched a study to assess whether the concerns were justified and if restrictions on the use of ELT infill were required. In 2017 ECHA published their report<sup>1</sup> which concluded:*

*“ECHA has found no reason to advise people against playing sports on synthetic turf containing recycled rubber granules as infill material”. In 2020 the results of a major pan-European scientific study undertaken by internationally respected independent researchers, and published in the scientific journal Science of the Total Environment<sup>2</sup>, concluded:*

- *No health concerns were found for AGPs with ELT-derived infill material.*
- *Cancer risks for exposure to PAHs were below 1 in 1 million.*
- *Risk characterisation ratios (RCRs) for non-carcinogenic substances were below 1 in 1 million.”*

Regarding the proposed 3G multi-sports pitch at Jubilee Field

1. The 3G multi-sports pitch at Staplehurst will have a rubber shock absorber
2. This is a better playing surface and reduces the pile on the “carpet”
3. Therefore there is less rubber crumb
4. In addition there will be boards surrounding the surface to reduce any spreading of rubber crumb

These are important health and environmental issues which are being fed into the design stage.

### **34. Who will operate it?**

At the moment we are looking at a number of options

Jubilee Field Management Committee (Trust), Parish Council, Company Limited by Guarantee, Leisure contractor. We will update you when we know more as this is a fundamental point in the business plan.

### **35. Will it add to my Parish Precept – Council Tax?**

The aim is that the capital cost will be covered by Grants, Section 106 / CIL funding and fund raising.

As mentioned earlier the Parish Council has committed @ £30,000 from Reserves, this has already been budgeted for.

In 2023/24 the Council annual cost to the Jubilee Field Management Committee to manage the pitches and pavilion is £3,880. The aim of the business plan is the ongoing operation costs of the 3G multi-sport pitch should be self-funding.

**36.Can schools use it?**

Yes, at a reduced day time rate available for schools

**37.Can locals' clubs and groups use it?**

Yes, they will be encouraged to use the facilities.

**38.Can residents hire it for say a birthday party?**

Yes, of course, the whole aim is the residents, groups and clubs to have better facilities

**39.What sports / activities can use it?**

It can be used by a range of sports / activities such as;

Football training, recreation and matches

Aerobics

General Fitness

Tag Rugby

Disability Sports

Rugby training only – non contact

Hockey training only – matches played at Marden a specialist Hockey facility

**40. What about informal use of the 3G pitch**

We are considering "Free informal usage" or "low cost informal usage" as part of the business plan.

**41.?Shouldn't it be called multi-sport pitch?**

Some sports such as Tennis cannot be played on it as the surface is not hard enough. Yes, multi-sport would be a better name than all-sports for the same project.

(Note change of name in documents from August 2023)

**42.Where will people be able to watch?**

At pitch side in a designated area or outside the mesh fencing.

**43.What will happen to the Girls Guides?**

The proposal is to continue to support the Girls Guides, allow them to hire out their facility the Katie Lamb Centre, potentially outside space and hopefully use of the 3G multi-sports pitch for multi sports activities and badges.

**44.What about the legal status of the Jubilee Field?**

The original document set aside the land for sport and recreation – the 3G multi-sports pitch is sports and recreation. The Parish Council bought the land in 1989 from Maidstone Borough Council. We have double checked with Maidstone Borough Council and they are in support of the project proceeding.

**45.What about public access to Jubilee Field?**

The public access to the Jubilee Field will continue and the 3G multi-sports pitch will be available for anyone to hire. We are also considering "low cost turn up and play" sessions.

When the 3G -multi-sports pitch is not being used it will be locked. The Jubilee Field is @7.8 acres of grass – the 3G multi-sports pitch is @2 acres, this will be finalised at the design stage.

There will still be the main grass pitch, a grass pitch and kick about space to use.

**46.Isn't the main pitch locked?**

No. The main pitch is used by Staplehurst Monarchs FC for SCEFL League and Cup matches. A fenced off ground is a SECFL ground requirement.

When the main pitch is not in use for the SCEFL matches it is unlocked and accessible for public use.



#### **47.Can the Junior teams use the existing main pitch?**

The FA regulations mean that the main pitch is suitable for under 16 and over. This means the under 16's, under 17's, under 18's and women have all played matches on the main pitch in 2022/23. More matches are being arranged for 2023/24.

Under 15's and below do not play on the main grass pitch.

#### **48.How many footballers play and how many are from Staplehurst?**

Staplehurst Monarchs FC are the senior club they have three squads in 2023/24 season:

Senior Team – total 25 players – 0 from Staplehurst

Under 23 development team – total 25 players – 5 from Staplehurst

Women's football team total of 15 players in squad and 9 from Staplehurst

It is common that players from surrounding areas represent a team rather than just players from that village.

**(When we get the September 2023 figures we will update this report)**

#### **49.How many juniors play and how many are from Staplehurst?**

SMYFC is the junior club they arrange of up to 20 teams from under 5 to under 18 years old, including 6 girls' teams.

In the 2022/23 season they had a total of 305 players and 115 from Staplehurst.

It is common that players from surrounding areas represent a team rather than just players from that village.

#### **50.How many girls / women play football at Staplehurst?**

As mentioned in 2022/23 the juniors had 6 girls' teams and the seniors started a women's team with 15 players – they are training at the moment with occasional friendlies – 9 are from Staplehurst

They are entering a league in 2023/24 football season.

The 3G multi-sports pitch should support the growth of girls and women's football.

**(When we get the September 2023 figures we will update report)**

#### **51.Are the squads full? Are new player's welcome?**

Of course, new players are welcome. SMYFC try to provide training for age groups where the squads are full. At the time of writing there are spaces in U18s, U18 Royals, U18 Girls, U15s, U15 Girls, U13s, U8/U9/U10 Girls and Mini Monarchs (School Years 1 and 2). During the summer we also run girls' training groups for Wildcats (Aged 5 to 11) and Squad Girls (Over 11s).

#### **Contact the football club directly on;**

Email [smufc1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:smufc1@yahoo.co.uk)

Message us via Facebook (facebook.com/staplehurstmonarchs)

or Instagram (instagram.com/staplehurstmonarchs)

#### **52.When will a design come forward?**

It was agreed on the 31st October 2023 that the design will come back to the Council, in a public meeting for comment / approval prior to submission of a planning application. Aiming for spring 2024.

#### **53.When will a business plan come forward?**

It was agreed on the 31st October 2023 that the draft business plan will come back to the Council, in a public meeting for comment / approval prior to submission of a planning application. The first draft business plan was presented to Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 for comments and is being further worked up and will be re-presented to Council prior to a decision on a planning submission.

#### **54. How is the site going to be managed?**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 it was agreed to research further a contractor to manage the site if the 3G multi-sport project proceeds. Initial report for discussion is coming to Council in March 2024.

#### **55. Questions from the public Council meeting on the draft business plan (The Draft business plan on website)**

- a)** Some felt it was over egged income / usage, although some felt there was not enough space left for “selling” at premium level
- b)** Welcomed the viability / business sensitivity – could further work be done – say just Staplehurst users – yes will look into further business sensitivity as business plan develops
- c)** What about lack of daytime usage – typical for a 3G pitch not on a school site or with a school adjacent to the site. But figures show a surplus at 100% and 80% without this use so any use that can be explored is a bonus and it provides opportunities for community activities to be developed over time
- d)** Who will cover costs if income not generated? This would be part of the leisure contract process.
- e)** Is the business plan feeding into the design process - Yes
- f)** What about project management? Following Football Foundation process and will report fully to Council
- g)** What about capital fund raising by the partner clubs – will report back to Council on capital project

#### **56. When will the public have a say?**

The public consultation took place between July 2023 and October 2023. A fully Consultation feedback report is available on the website.

The first draft business plan was presented to the public Council meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024, comments and queries are being feed in to as it evolves.

The aim is to have a draft design for a public council meeting in spring 2024

We are doing further work with Disability organisations plus aiming to link in with the emerging Youth Council.

The Council will organise another public Council meeting updating residents on the design – likely to be spring 2024 –prior to the submission of a planning application.

If the planning application is supported by Staplehurst Parish Council – a planning application will be submitted.

Residents will be able to comment on the planning application on the Maidstone Borough Council planning portal.

**If you have any other questions please  
email – [clerk@staplehurst-pc.uk](mailto:clerk@staplehurst-pc.uk)  
Or phone 01580 891761**

**We will answer your question  
and update the FAQ.  
Thank you.**