



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q1 Why is a new stadium needed?**

Investment in a new, modern and better-equipped stadium would deliver direct benefits to the District as a whole and to the Clubs. Adams Park has a number of constraints which mean that it limits the Clubs' potential for on and off the field success. Transport and accessibility is just one of these. A new stadium would create a significant opportunity and an important asset for both Clubs and for the town.

**Q2 Who is going to pay for it?**

The project to find a potential new site is at an early stage and details for financing any new stadium development have yet to be agreed. Wycombe District Council (WDC) and the Clubs have agreed to work in partnership to assess the viability of potential new sites and any financing agreement for a new stadium would also involve partnership working.

**Q3 Where is it going to be?**

A number of potential sites will be considered. The important criteria include that a site must be within the District, be of the appropriate size to support the range of facilities that are required for successful modern day sports stadia, and that it should be accessible.

**Q4 How does the planning process work?**

A new stadium would require planning permission in the same way as any other major development. As such, it would be the subject of a planning application to be made to WDC. Before a planning application can be brought forward, a suitable site must be found and, depending on the location and designated planning status of that site, there may be a need to adjust that planning status within the District's planning policy framework. To this end, WDC has agreed to begin work on a 'Core Strategy Alteration'. Bound into this process is full public consultation on options and independent review by a Planning Inspector.

**Q5 What type of facilities would this new stadium have?**

A new Community Stadium is being proposed as the centrepiece of a potential larger Sports Village. The Sports Village would also include training and academy facilities, health & fitness facilities and a wide range of publicly accessible sports, leisure and lifestyle uses. A key objective is to enable the development to be a commercially successful and attractive location throughout the year and not just on match days.

**Q6 Who is going to operate it if / when it opens?**

The operation of the new stadium would be the responsibility of the two Clubs, via a new holding company and, if WDC owned land is involved, the Company would become its tenant – through an appropriate commercial leasing structure.

**Q7 Who would own the new stadium and the businesses that operate there?**

That would depend on the site. If it is on council-owned land, it is expected that WDC would own the freehold for the land and that the Clubs would occupy the facilities on a long lease arrangement. These are details that would be agreed once a site has been selected.

**Q8 What sites are being considered?**

A number of sites within the District will be looked at. These include the existing site, the Abbey Barn area and Wycombe Air Park amongst others.

**Q9 How can people have their say?**

WDC and the Clubs have signed an agreement to work together to take this vision forward. The project is at a very early stage and there will be comprehensive public consultation in line with the statutory planning process as the proposals for a new site and stadium are progressed. This will be advertised locally and also via a project website (due to launch shortly) which will provide information and regular progress updates. The partners are keen that the proposals should be developed with strong input from the local community because the facilities would be in and for the community.

**Q10 What is the timetable for taking these proposals forward?**

It is expected that the initial process of identifying and assessing potential sites will take in the region of 12 months. Updates on progress are timetabled to go before the WDC Cabinet in July 2011 which will be a key milestone date. Further decisions will be made on the basis of the conclusions from these site and suitability assessments.

**Q11 What is the agreement that WDC and Wycombe Wanderers/Wasps have signed?**

The agreement is to work in partnership to take forward the vision for a new stadium and potential Sports Village in the District. It is called a Collaboration Agreement and sets out the scope and parameters for joint working. It also allocates costs to this process and period of work which will be shared between the Council and the Clubs.

**Q12 What will happen if a new site can't be found?**

The partners have signed the agreement to work together and to assess the viability of sites because they believe that it is important to find a suitable new site – and they are confident that one can be found and agreed. If, following the assessment work, the conclusions show that a deliverable new site cannot be found, the partners will re-examine their position before agreeing a way forward.

**Q13 Who is responsible for deciding if this project progresses to final stages?**

This will be undertaken by WDC working in partnership with Wycombe Sports Developments Limited (WSDL – a special purpose vehicle representing the interests of Wycombe Wanderers and London Wasps). Whether the Council's planning policies are altered will be a decision, at least initially, for the Council as Planning Authority.

**Q14 Is this going to mean Wycombe council tax payers contributing to financing the project?**

The Collaboration Agreement has agreed costs. Funding for this next phase of the project is being contributed 50/50 by WDC and WSDL. Both WDC and WSDL have committed to investing up to £250,000 in site assessment work through the Collaboration Agreement. Steve Hayes is financially backing WSDL.

**Q15 What about the funding of the Core Strategy planning review?**

This is a matter for the Council and £500,000 has been allocated for the full 'Core Strategy Alteration' process. Whether this process runs its full course will be dependent upon the result of the site assessment work/consultation and will be subject to review by the Council, most particularly in July 2011.

**Q16 Where is this 'up to £750,000' of WDC money going to come from?**

The allocation comes from WDC capital programme and will be used to cover the cost of the planning process (£500,000) and feasibility work up costs of £250,000. This funding has been generated through a mixture of property activities and investment income. There is no direct impact on the council tax.

**Q17 How much money is Steve Hayes going to be putting into this project?**

Steve Hayes is backing this project and, through WSDL, he is investing up to £250,000 in the site assessment work. The project to find a new stadium is being undertaken because both WDC and Steve Hayes believe in the benefits that such a facility would have for the community and for the town as a whole, and also for the Clubs.

**Q18 If the Community Stadium and potential Sports Village is built, there has been mention of 'cross financing'. What is cross-financing and how would it work?**

Assuming that the site identified for development is a WDC-owned site, cross-financing is a proven development and financing structure which realises value from land with development potential and uses the receipts from that development to fund associated development. For example, a portion of a site may be used for housing or commercial development to 'realise' value which, in this case, would be used to help finance the Community Stadium and Sports Village. However, this can only happen if it can be proven to be justified financially and then

such 'realised' value has to be invested in the development that it specifically enables.

It is important to note that this 'enabling development' would be unacceptable unless planning policy was altered to 'create' the cross-financing value or it was accepted as a special case because of the over-riding benefits of the proposal to the wider community. Without this, the enabling development would not arise (the enabling development land involved being left with no development value).

It is also important to note that cross-financing cannot be used without such special circumstances.

**Q19 Why can't Wycombe Wanderers just stay at Adams Park?**

Adams Park has serious constraints in terms of access and of the overall quality of the visitor experience. At the same time, it does not enable the Clubs to develop additional revenues from broader commercial activities on non match days (as has become a pre-requisite for any successful football or rugby club in the modern day). Commercially, it is not viable for Wycombe Wanderers to stay at Adams Park based on the Club's current trading and profitability. Options for the Adams Park site will, however, be investigated.

**Q20 What are going to be the bigger benefits for Wycombe – the District, the people and the council tax payers?**

Wycombe Wanderers and Wasps are assets to Wycombe. The Clubs deliver economic, sporting and reputation/brand benefits for the town plus much, much more for the community as a whole through their sports and outreach programmes and through the leadership they give to getting people involved in sport. Financially, the Clubs create jobs and bring revenue into the District but, looking more widely, they help to deliver important education, community, health & fitness and status benefits for the District.

Every year, the Clubs invest thousands of hours working with thousands of young people to help them engage in, enjoy and benefit from sport. The Clubs have Community and Youth programmes across the District and further afield giving structure and opportunities for young people to learn about and benefit from sport. For example, Wycombe Wanderers has programmes in approximately 180 schools and Wasps expects to work with 100,000 young people during the season 2009/10.

**Q21 How are you going to deal with traffic when you do find a new site? Wherever you look in the District, there will be the same type of constraints.**

Accessibility is one of the most important aspects for a new site. People need to be able to get there on match days but, equally important, the new stadium should be accessible for people wanting to use the range of community facilities that are planned. Detailed consideration will

be given to transport and accessibility within the site assessment work.

**Q22 Is the Air Park site in Booker your preferred location?**

The Air Park is one of the sites that is being looked at within the sites assessment. There is no preferred site at this stage.

**Q23 Is there going to be a referendum or opinion poll so that people can express their views?**

Proposals for redeveloping any new site for the Community Stadium and potential Sports Village will need to be developed with strong input from the community and the Clubs. These are community Clubs working extensively in the community and it is important that people contribute their ideas, opinions and views to the process. In addition, the planning policy and the statutory planning process require consultation and engagement ahead of a site being confirmed and a planning application being submitted. Subject to the outcome of the site assessment work, there will be detailed consultation and opportunities for people to have their say. This FAQ document is also part of the process for explaining the project and what is involved.

**Q24 What's the planned timetable for taking the project forward? When will the new stadium open?**

It is too early to say at this stage when the new stadium might open. There are lots of things to work through and there is comprehensive public consultation planned. However, there is an indicative timetable as follows:

The timetable for key stages in the project is:

- March 2010 – sign Collaboration Agreement
- April 2010 – commence formulation of strategic options and evidence gathering
- Oct-November 2010 – public and stakeholder consultation on high level options
- January 2011 – WDC Cabinet timetabled to agree preferred options consultation document
- Feb-March 2011 – public and stakeholder consultation on preferred option
- May-July 2011 – finalise Core Strategy Alternations document
- July 2011 – further Cabinet and WDC review

The timetable for subsequent phases will be determined by the outcome of the July 2011 review and decisions.

*March 2010*