

PLANNING STATEMENT – ERECTION OF OFFICES – LEICESTER ROAD FC

1. Leicester Road Stadium is a 22 acre sports stadium complex located north-east of Hinckley on the B4468, with the capacity to accommodate 6,250 spectators in the main stadium (of which 732 are seated). Planning permission for the Change of use to football ground and erection of stadia and ancillary buildings including car parking (LPA Ref: 02/00863/FUL) was granted on 01 October 2003, and the permission was implemented on 18 February 2004. Leicester Road Stadium is capable of hosting elite level Football, Rugby League, Field Hockey, American Football, Rugby Union and Gaelic Field Sports events.
2. Upon opening, the stadium was known as Marston's Stadium due to a sponsorship deal between then-tenants Hinckley United and Marston's Brewery, which ran from 2004 to 2008. The stadium was then renamed to the Greene King Stadium due to a stadium sponsorship deal with the Greene King Brewery for the period 2009 to 2013. The stadium has been known as Leicester Road Stadium since 2013.
3. Since opening, the stadium has been tenanted by several local sports teams, predominantly football teams. Hinckley United tenanted the stadium from 2005 to 2013, whereupon the team was relegated from the (then) Conference North league at the end of the 2012-13 season and the club dissolved on 07 October 2013. The Leicester Road Stadium site was then divided up and sold to several new owners during 2014.
4. Leicester City Reserves tenanted the stadium for the period 2006 to 2008, and Aston Villa Reserves tenanted the stadium between 2009 to 2012. The local American Football Team Leicester Falcons tenanted the stadium between 2015 to 2018, before relocating to Leicester Forest East Rugby Club for the 2018 season and are now looking to return to Leicester Road Stadium for this forthcoming 2023 season.
5. Hinckley LRFC have tenanted the stadium since 04 November 2013 and are currently the sole club using the stadium for home matches. Within the club the senior men, ladies and youth teams use the stadium pitch. Since their formation in November 2013, the senior team has gained several promotions to their current league, the Northern Premier League Midlands Division, the 8th level of the English football league system (step 4). The club has ultimate future aspirations to be promoted to at least the English Football League Division 2, the 4th level of English football, but this aspiration has been

severely hampered by on-going ownership issues at the Leicester Road Stadium site and the restricted clubhouse accommodation.

6. The stadium complex is also used by the Leicestershire FA for finals of their regional competitions and was used by the England U19s as a training facility during 2006 ahead of a match against Czech Republic U19s. . The stadium has hosted 4 UEFA Women's U17 European Cup Final Group fixtures and the semi-final during December 2013 and in September 2019 hosted England U18 v Australia U18.

i. Current Operations of Leicester Road Football Club

7. In recent years the site owners have explored different commercial operations to ensure that football operations remain financially viable. Football operations are currently focused upon senior men and women's teams, U18 boys and girl's teams and an U13-U16 development team's programme. Current commercial operations are focussed on selling match day hospitality and sponsorship packages, alongside the hosting of events in the Crossbar function suite ranging from conferences to private hire functions. The combined income from match receipts, player subscriptions, sponsorship sales and event hire are also a source of income for the football club.
8. The football club are currently focusing upon 3 projects to assist in achieving their long term ambitions, and to assist in ensuring that the surrounding communities of the Borough are able to lead healthy, socially sustainable lifestyles. These projects are the BTEC Academy, Football in the Community and Healthy Living for Non Players.
9. The BTEC Academy will combine full-time technical development with formal BTEC education to form an integrated accredited programme that prepares its scholars for life in the football industry. Both the technical development (football) and education elements will be hosted and operated from Leicester Road Stadium.
10. The scholarship programme will dominate Leicester Road Stadium during the core hours of 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday's. As such the scholarship programme will need to absorb the total cost of operation for Leicester Road Stadium during the academic year which will be approximately 1st September through to 30th June each year. LRFC will provide the football coaching staff whilst the Educational Partner will provide and cover the cost of the educational staff. The Educational Partner will reward LRFC from the funding obtained from their education contract to cover the cost of operating the programme. The Educational Partner will also pay LRFC a success fee

for every scholar that completes and passes the year and progresses to the next. The Educational Partner will manage the recruitment of the scholars and the overall quality of the programme to satisfy any OFSTED compliance. LRFC will manage the final selection and confirm who will receive offers to join the programme.

11. The Football in the Community initiative offers services back to schools, colleges and youth organisations to fill the curriculum void created by the reduced modern day teaching contract. The aim is to provide a football experience for all and a pathway into the football club for those that wish to pursue their interest further.
12. Finally, the Healthy Living for Non Players initiative will encourage all spectators and anyone not participating in sport into healthy living and moderate exercise to embrace healthy living. Core to this initiative will be walk-in football which will allow those normally overlooked by coaches for field sport team selection to become actively involved in team sport participation.
13. In order to achieve the delivery of all three objectives outlined above, the football club will require additional office space that is entirely within their ownership as detailed within this planning application.