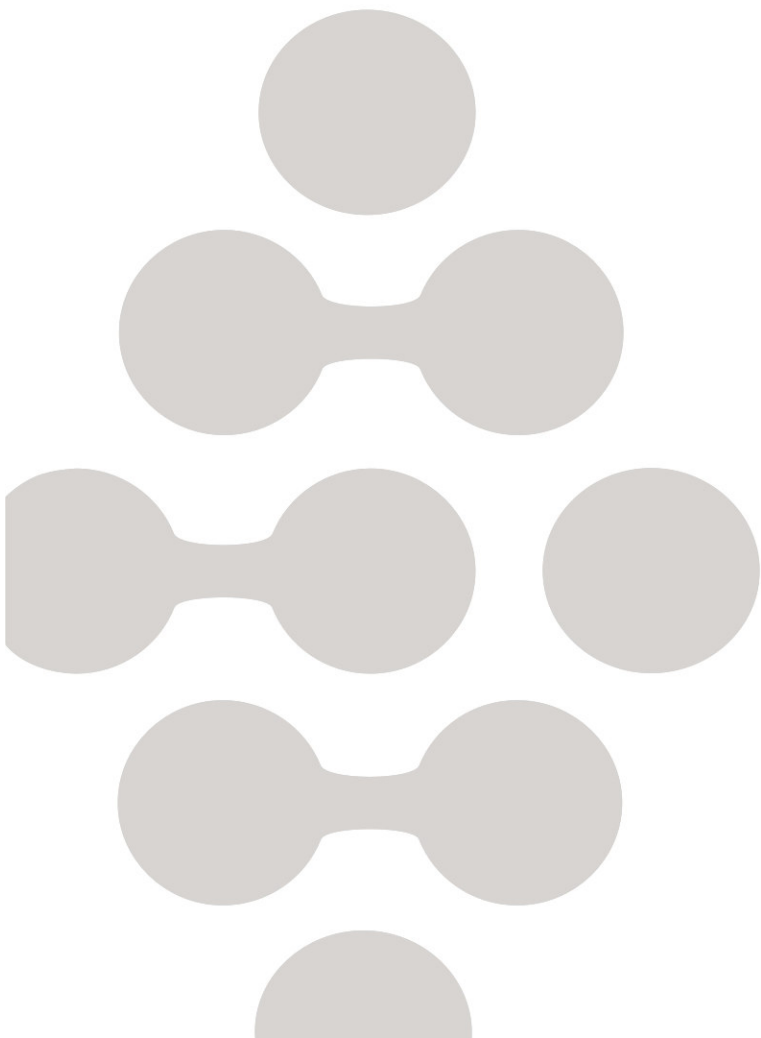


LAVAFLOW LTD

**Boston United Stadium
Development**

Planning Statement

August 2005



Wardell Armstrong
Engineering & Environmental Solutions

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Boston United Stadium Development

Planning Statement

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DOCUMENTS

Document 1	NL06842/J12	Environmental Statement
Document 2	NI06842/J01	Report on Site Investigation (WA)
Document 3	NL06842/J08B	Outline Drainage Strategies and Flood Risk Assessments (Wardell Armstrong)
Document 4	H/3460/2	Travel Framework (MJMC Engineers Ltd)
Document 5	H/3460	Transport Study (MJMC Engineers Ltd)

DRAWINGS

BS-90-101	Proposed Site Plan	BS-10-200	Ground Floor Plan
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This full planning application for a 7,500 seat stadium and 2 training pitches; 300 seats for conferencing, and an outline planning application for a 90 room hotel, a pub and restaurant and construction of a roundabout is being submitted on behalf of Boston United FC. The Application has been prepared by Wardell Armstrong, a multi-disciplinary engineering and environmental consultancy based in Newcastle-under-Lyme.
- 1.2 Boston United are members of the Football League and play in Coca Cola League 2. The Club wants to progress further and to do so requires the development of improved facilities to comply with Football League standards.
- 1.3 A site has been identified approximately three kilometres west of the town centre and the club's existing site. The proposals encompass 10.75 hectares of agricultural land designated as *Countryside* and *Boston Woods Project Area of Search* in the Boston Local Plan. Development will provide, in addition to the facilities described in 1.1.1, training pitches and facilities for informal community use. The stadium and facilities will be set in a landscaped context providing recreational amenity and pedestrian links to the Princess Royal Sports Arena.
- 1.4 By adding playing facilities for Boston United FC alongside the Princess Royal Sports Arena, the development will consolidate provision of Boston's regionally significant spectator and competitive sports into one location. The land at Boardsides is becoming a major sporting destination in its own right and has the potential to become a centre of sporting excellence. By choosing to locate adjacent to an established sporting facility it is intended that the development will:
- support a mix of facilities taking account of strategic, local and specialist needs
 - Provide for the extensive catchment area of Boston and cross-boundary needs.
 - Support and promote community recreational and leisure activities.



2 THE CASE FOR RELOCATION

- 2.1 This section outlines why Boston United should move from its current home at York Street. The report will also look into the viability of retaining the existing site for improvement and other options for redevelopment of the stadium. Options for relocation are limited by the need to keep Boston United within Boston.
- 2.2 It is evident that the space available on the existing York Street site is insufficient to accommodate the proposed stadium including its ancillary facilities and its replacement. The existing stadium would have to be demolished and rebuilt, in which case it would have to be built to the highest standards of the 'Green Guide: Safety at Sports Grounds' (Home Office, 1997). This cannot be done on a small site such as York Street.
- 2.3 An additional suitable site is required to enable the new development to be built and bring updated facilities to the club and community. The existing site is in a tightly constrained mixed-use urban environment with a Matalan store abutting the northern boundary and the Gliderdrome Bingo and Leisure facility to the west, which regularly attracts substantial numbers of participants especially at weekends. Around the remaining boundaries the residential and community developments and roads mean that the existing site has essentially been hemmed in and has no potential to expand without site acquisition. The owners of the site have informed the Club that the existing lease will not be available for renewal when it expires in 2020. Inevitably as a consequence the Club will need a new location to invest in a new ground.
- 2.4 Boston currently reside in the Coca-Cola League 2 having been promoted from the conference at the end of the 2001-02 season. Since Ground criteria were introduced at the Football League AGM in June 1995, all existing league members and conference teams seeking promotion require a minimum capacity of 6,000 with 2,000 seats. In June 2003, The Football League reduced this minimum capacity entry criteria from 6,000 to 4,000, rising to 5,000 after promotion. If the club is to remain in the Football League (i.e. the



top 3 divisions) it is under obligation by League standards and timetable constraints to provide 2,000 of its capacity as seating.

Table 1: Regulations of the Football League: Membership Criteria (Regulation 8)

Part 1 - Ground Capacity and Seating

The ground capacity and number of seats under cover, as recorded in the safety certificate, must meet the following minimum criteria:

	Capacity	Seats
Qualification Criteria	4,000 (with ability to reach 5,000)	500 (with ability to reach 1,000)
Admission Criteria	5,000 by 1 st May of 1 st Season	1,000 (with ability to reach 2,000)
Membership Criteria	5,000	2,000

- 2.5 The introduction of the Taylor Report and Football Ground Criteria in recent years has greatly reduced Boston's stadium capacity, which now stands at 6,853 all covered. The current stadium does not comply with the criteria required by Football League Membership Criteria in that substantial areas of the ground retain standing terraces, while only a quarter (1,826) of this capacity consists of seating. This needs to be expanded to 2,000 seated to adhere to Football League safety requirements.
- 2.6 In 2004, the Conference also adopted the Football League Stadium Criteria. Regardless of whether Boston remain in the League, they are required to fulfil the Conference criteria and remaining in their outdated ground will still not present a sustainable option.
- 2.7 A stadium of this nature cannot physically be accommodated on the York Street site and due to the proximity of surrounding users and to the tightly constrained boundaries formed by public highways, there is limited, if any, opportunity to expand the facilities. For the last three consecutive seasons, the Club has been in the equivalent of the current Coca Cola League Two and bearing in mind the



projected life of the proposed new stadium, it is necessary to take promotion into account when designing the new stadium.

- 2.8 The ground and facilities at York Street are not fully compliant with new legislation in terms of facilities for females and dedicated facilities for the disabled, parking and security for players and officials. All the stands are fully segregated from each other, creating access difficulties for supporters who must find the appropriate turnstile and restricting overall capacity. Likewise, emergency services have difficulty gaining access and egress to the west. In addition, there are numerous structural issues that require urgent attention and continue to burden the club; ranging from the high maintenance cost of old structures to the need for extensive stewarding on match days to maintain the clubs' safety record.
- 2.9 The existing stadium also has exceptionally limited corporate entertainment and sponsorship facilities. In order to make the Club viable in the long term, Boston United must be in a position to generate income throughout the year and not just on match days and it is impossible to provide the facilities that customers now expect and demand at York Street.

3 INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

The Club as an Employer

- 3.1 Boston United FC have one full time professional team playing in the Coca Cola League Two and junior teams. The playing staff at the club currently comprises 20 professionals, and 12 trainees. These professionals are managed and trained by Steve Evans who is assisted by a Head of Youth Development, an Assistant Manager, Coach and Physio. A groundsman who is assisted by a part time assistant, maintains the ground.
- 3.2 In addition 7 full time and 4 part time administrators undertake the day to day running of the club. The Club also has 2 full and 12 part time cleaners. On match days employee numbers rise significantly. This comprises 40 stewards, 2 security officers, 12 gatepersons, 4



bar staff, 2 Paramedics, 2 doctors, a match video operator and 4 staff in the ticket office and club shop.

- 3.3 A significant number of people are also involved through association with local schools for IT training.
- 3.4 The Boston United Supporters Association (BUSA) has been in existence for the best part of five years and is continuing to flourish.

Centre of Excellence

- 3.5 The Centre of Excellence was established in summer 2003, under the guidance of former professional footballers Daral Pugh and Neil Richardson. The Centre has flourished during its first two years in existence and with Pugh departing the club in the summer of 2005, Richardson has taken on the role as Head of Youth Development for the 2005-2006 season. The Centre has 7 part-time coaches and 1 physiotherapist.
- 3.6 The under-18s side compete in the Football League Youth Alliance and despite a difficult first season in 2004-2005, it is hoped that next season will be a successful one. Four other age groups operate at the Centre: under-9s/10s, under-11s/12s, under-13s/14s and under-15s/16s. This area of youth development is progressing well and will contest fixtures against the likes of Lincoln City, Scunthorpe United, Mansfield Town, Notts County, Chesterfield and Rotherham United during 2005-2006.

Football in the Community

- 3.7 The nationally recognised scheme 'Football in the Community' has firm links with Boston United. The Club appointed Brett Whaley as their Football in the Community Officer in September 2004 aiming to promote healthier lifestyles for youth in the area. Brett Whaley has a team of 5 part-time coaches working alongside him.
- 3.8 The scheme at York Street has grown considerably recently and KMB Ltd of Kirton have recently become major sponsors to enable the scheme to expand further by taking on additional staff, running



more coaching sessions and promote the Club to a wider number of youngsters.

3.9 The provision of an on-site crèche will greatly benefit the community particularly commuters and shoppers who use Boston Town Centre, as the crèche will be available on weekdays and other non- match days. In association with the park and ride service a comprehensive child care and transport package can be provided to the non-footballing community of the town and its outlying districts.

3.10 Other stadium facilities will also be available for use by the whole community. Training pitches, function facilities, executive boxes, catering services and so on will be accessible and available both for hire and use outside of weekday team training hours and weekend match days.

4 NEEDS OF FANS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

4.1 The future growth of the club is fundamentally reliant on the continued backing of the loyal supporter base and the wider Boston community. Modern day football supporters expect an overall entertainment package delivered in a safe and clean environment.

As such, the fans can reasonably expect:

- An unobstructed view of the playing pitch in a weather protected environment with a variety of seating options and prices.
- Equality of access to the same facilities for mobility impaired and able bodied supporters alike
- A safe environment free from crime and disorder
- Catering and bar facilities offering a range of hot and cold food and drinks
- Clean and modern toilet facilities with basic facilities of hot and cold running water and hand drying provisions.
- A retail outlet selling club and football merchandise



- 4.2 The modern day football supporter demands an entertainment package to enable an outing with friends or family, and clubs have faced increasing competition from other commercial leisure opportunities for a share of, and to retain this market group. Many smaller clubs, like Boston United have been unable to respond to this due to limited financial resources and fewer supporters. Combined with the effects of the Bosman Ruling and the requirement to secure income from sources other than transfer fees, the need to respond is even more urgent and critical to the future of the Club.
- 4.3 The ground currently satisfies the requirements of the Taylor Report in that the grace period to improve facilities following promotion to the Football League has not yet expired. When this period runs out, Boston United will be expected to have a ground that complies with Football League regulations. Existing facilities are undoubtedly poor such that they do not satisfy fully the standards required of their current league status.
- 4.4 Table 2 overleaf assesses the capacity and basic facilities located within the current ground. From this table it is evident that from the fans perspective, facilities are very poor, especially for female supporters. Many of the toilet areas have no hand washing facilities or only cold water.
- 4.5 Catering facilities at the ground are also extremely limited. The vendors around the ground offer a limited range of goods comprising only tea, coffee, pies, chips, biscuits and other confectionery.
- 4.6 Disabled facilities are practically absent from the ground. There is only limited capacity for away disabled spectators and home supporters. Access is severely restricted because of the unavailability of ramps. which reflects the physical constraints of the ground. Within the York Street ground, there is only 1 (purpose built) disabled toilet facility.



Ground Facilities

Stand	Capacity	Seating	Terracing	Disabled	Toilet			Catering
					M	F	D	
N Staffsmart	1,300	1,300	0	6	1	1	0	1
S Spayne Rd	2,064	0	2,064	0	1	1	0	1
E York Street	1,439	505	934	0	1	1	1	1
W Town End	2,050	0	2,050	4	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	6,853	1,805	5,048	10	4	4	2	4

- 4.7 It is recognised that modern day football clubs have a greater role to play than simply football stadiums and their buildings and facilities should be intensified on non-match days. Aside from their crucial role as a public resource the financial pressures on clubs require the development of alternative sources of income, the most suitable of which is through the promotion of corporate entertainment and community facilities. The York Street ground has little to offer by way of such facilities.
- 4.8 The only room open to the public on a day to day basis is the Learning Centre and this doubles as the Players or Guests Lounge when required. Rooms are not available for private use on match days such as Executive, Directors or Sponsors boxes but a small area is set aside as a Directors Lounge. However, rooms that are available offer poor hospitality facilities in rooms with little natural daylight. Catering facilities are generally inferior and little hot food is offered. Clearly the comprehensive development of new superior accommodation and associated catering and entertainment facilities within a new stadium at Boardsides will allow the growth of this side of the business and provide essential income to the Club. The anticipated expansion in this aspect of the Club's services is reflected in the design of Boardsides.
- 4.9 Corporate entertainment and lettings is the second largest source of income for the modern day football club. Opportunity for meeting this demand within the York Street Ground is extremely limited. It is evident that Boardsides will provide modern, high quality and flexible hospitality suites. This will encourage maximum usage not



only on match days but also at other times for hire by local businesses, day conferences, community groups and other functions. The outcome of this would not only increase revenue to help fund Stadium upkeep and development of football programmes, but also provide a valuable hospitality and meeting facility for the local community.

- 4.10 Table 3 below assesses the facilities available for corporate entertainment at the present ground and those proposed at Boardsides.

Rooms Available	York Street (as existing)	Boardsides (as proposed)
Corporate, Director and Sponsors boxes	None	11 - located on the 2 nd floor of the South Stand offering elevated views of entire pitch. Close proximity to catering and good supply of toilet facilities including disabled. Lift to Ground Floor
Players Lounge	Jointly used with Learning Centre	Dedicated room adjacent to all essential facilities on the Ground Floor. Food and Dining facilities on 1 st floor
Directors Room	Small area including bar	Dedicated room close to a good sized modern kitchen area from which food is available, WCs and Directors box
Pubic Bar/Catering	4	14 (inc. kiosks)



- 4.11 The principal function room comprises a large area that can be subdivided into three separate areas if required. In addition a dedicated players lounge and public bar is provided. All these facilities can be used on match days and at other times with the principal function room able to host large functions, when opened up to its full extent. These areas will be catered for by modern kitchen facilities allowing for hot food preparation and serving.
- 4.12 The provision of a public bar and lounge is important, not only to provide facilities for fans on matchdays but also to provide a comfortable environment on other occasions such as when parents wait for their children who are using the training facilities on offer at the Club.

5 OPERATIONAL NEEDS OF THE CLUB

- 5.1 The Club is a working football club. The York Street ground not only provides poor facilities for the fans but also for the manager, playing staff and backroom staff.

Table 4: Assessment of Staff Facilities at York Street and Boardsides		
Facility	York Street	Boardsides
Gym	None	Princess Royal Sports Arena
Physiotherapy	1 treatment	1 large treatment room (5.5m x 3.5m) allowing provision of more treatment tables.
Match officials room	1 shower/toilet	Much larger and more modern accommodation (5.5m x 3.5m). 2 private showers and good sized changing area, 2 toilet cubicles.
Players changing	6 showers/toilet	8 showers/3 toilets
Press Box	Rear of stand	15 journalists and 3 radio
Press Interview Room	None	Adjacent to Press Box
TV/Video	Standing Area	TV facility area/stand
Police	Corner Main Stand	Central Facility/Incident Room
Club shop	Portacabin	Retail unit
Kit Room	Small area	Washing/drying/storage room
Red Cross/First Aid	Portacabin	Dedicated Room
Club offices	1 no. small rooms	Dedicated Club Suite
Groundsman store	Under stand	Dedicated store room



- 5.2 Room space at the existing ground for playing staff is in a relatively poor state of repair and decoration. Many other rooms are physically restricted for recuperation for injury and match day warming up. For administrative staff, office space is again cramped in a series of small offices.
- 5.3 The media plays a central role in increasing awareness of the Club in the Boston and Lincolnshire community and also nationally. The media is therefore vital to the club not only in charting the progress of the team but also generally raising awareness of the club and what facilities it offers. Media presence is most obvious on match days particularly if a game is televised and reported on radio.
- 5.4 The press box to the rear of the York Street stand is functional but inconveniently located and barely adequate with insufficient capacity for most games. It also does not comply with Football League Regulations which require the press box to be located at the half way line. There is no press interview room within the York Street Ground, which necessitates pre and post-match interviews to be carried out in the corridor or car park. For televised matches, television crews must set up in the seating area which restricts views and access, or on top of the Spayne Road roof, which requires additional temporary scaffolding.
- 5.5 Meeting the needs of television is vital for the Club in order to maximise a potential major source of income and to benefit from a nationwide audience. The potential for TV coverage is even greater if the Club enjoys a good cup run or is involved in the promotion playoffs, such potential will be more difficult to realise at York Street. In all respects, Boardsides will provide better facilities for the media to push forward this potential.
- 5.6 The Boardsides stadium will ensure that Club facilities will be significantly improved in every respect to the benefit of players, club staff, press, TV and the supporters.



6 REQUIREMENTS UPON THE CLUB

The Taylor Report 1990

6.1 The Taylor Report was a direct result of the Hillsborough Tragedy at Sheffield in 1989. The Report went beyond merely improving stadium safety and looked also at hooliganism, ground facilities, the media and who runs the game. The Interim Taylor Report published after the Hillsborough Tragedy, produced 43 recommendations which could be implemented by league clubs, including:

- Restrictions on capacities of self-contained pens
- Review of all terrace capacities with an immediate 15% reduction on all ground capacities
- A review of the safety certificates held by all grounds
- New provision of first aid and emergency services

6.2 The final report was published in January 1990 and imposed a further 76 recommendations, designed to improve the state of British football. Of particular significance to this proposal were the following.

- Replacement of all terraces with seats by the start of the 1999/2000 season for 3rd and 4th division clubs (now Coca Cola Leagues 1 & 2) and by the start of the 1994/95 season for 1st and 2nd division clubs (now Premier League & Championship)
- Establishment of an Advisory Football Design Council to advise on ground safety and construction and to commission research into this area.
- Introducing new laws to deal with a number of offences in football grounds.

6.3 In July 1992, the Heritage Minister announced that lower divisions could retain terraces, as long as they were brought up to the highest standards by August 1999.

6.4 The Taylor Report set in action a range of other social, political, planning, technological and commercial trends and developments. It also presented clubs with the question of whether to redevelop existing grounds or relocate, often to edge of town locations. The York Street ground currently falls short of the Taylor Report requirements with insufficient seating areas and facilities. The



stringent safety checks bring with them high annual maintenance costs associated with an old stadium such as this. The result is a safe but outdated ground which fails to meet the needs of the Club or the supporters' expectations or needs.

The Football Task Force Report

- 6.5 The Boardsides proposals aim to redress the poor provision for disabled spectators at York Street. A central part of the design has considered the findings of the 1998 Football Task Force report, *"Improving Facilities for Disabled Supporters"*. The report stresses that 'disabled access' should pay regard to the whole match experience from collecting tickets to using the club bar after the game, rather than simply the provision of a suitable vantage point. The proposals include new disabled WCs, a dedicated viewing area, accessible bars, kitchens and lifts to be compliant with the Disability & Discrimination Act 1995.

Public Safety

- 6.6 The close proximity of the existing ground to the town centre results in a number of associated problems. Whilst this rarely manifests itself in serious incidents, the local community recognises that the town centre is congested on match days. This perception results in keeping some shoppers out of the town centre at these times, impacting on the vitality of the town centre.
- 6.7 There is a link between football-related disturbances in town centres and the close proximity of several pubs and controlling the small minority of troublemakers committing alcohol-related incidents outside public houses is well documented. The centre of Boston has a network of narrow streets, providing numerous routes to pass through and generating pressures on the limited match day police presence.
- 6.8 The proposed site of the new stadium is outside the town centre shopping areas, although its accessibility at the urban edge will maintain strong links to the town centre. At this location, policing will be easier to manage and the movements of supporters easier to control immediately before and after matches. Boardsides will



provide a managed site environment wherein the Club and Police will be able to monitor usage of the adjacent pub/restaurant and bars within the ground and improve supporters safety.

- 6.9 The town centre location of the Club has a significant impact on policing fan movement to and from the Ground. All visiting supporters enter the ground via turnstiles 7, 8, 9 & 10, which leads to the Town End Terrace, the only designated segregated area for away fans. Parking is limited to the NCP on John Adams Way competing with retail users, while a significant number of vehicles park on nearby residential streets within a mile radius of the ground. Visiting coaches park by agreement with Police Liaison Officer, Secretary and Safety Officer, on John Adams Way, next to Boston Grammar School.
- 6.10 Supporters travelling from the town centre will be able to catch dedicated shuttle buses for home and away supporters to Boardsides to alleviate the sporadic movement of supporters through town on foot. All means of access (bus, car, cycle, foot) to the ground on match days will arrive along (or alongside) the wide A1121. Police will monitor and provide an escort where necessary for away fans to and from the new stadium. This will be incorporated into a management plan required by the Health and Safety Certificate.
- 6.11 Parking for 1000 vehicles will be provided at Boardsides on match days, with additional overspill spaces nearby. Strict stewarding and parking controls on surrounding highways will remove opportunistic, obstructive and on-street parking. Having left the new Stadium site, access to regional trunk roads is immediate, enabling crowd dispersal more rapidly.

Policing Requirements and Resources

- 6.12 Due to rising costs, police presence on match days is strictly limited. Football clubs are increasingly seeking to offset this cost by hiring stewards, but their remit lies solely within and immediately around the ground. Policing is arranged by agreement with the local



Inspector at the start of the season. On occasion the police have agreed it is unnecessary to attend.

- 6.13 The Boardsides stadium is designed to allow more efficient fan management to enable better use of limited police resources. With pedestrian and vehicular access from just one side of the ground and the lower density of surrounding land uses, Boardsides present a much less complex area to police than around York Street.

Emergency Access

- 6.14 Access to the existing site is heavily restricted due to the narrow access leading onto all but one side of the site. In an emergency there would be significant conflict between pedestrians, parked cars and emergency vehicles. The risk of fire incidents is even greater with only one emergency vehicle access and egress point at the south west of the ground and 10 spectator turnstiles. This is the principal reason for capping ground capacity.

- 6.15 The Boardsides Stadium access will be reached via a new roundabout with the A1121 and a second access from the north side of the proposed Southern Link Road. A clear emergency access and egress route has been provided as shown on the drawings to ensure free movement of emergency services independent of the main access.

Conclusions

- 6.16 The proposed Boardsides Stadium will be more efficient to police and remove a number of the existing fan management problems at York Street due to its town centre location. This will provide a far safer environment and significantly reduce opportunities for conflict and disruption. The actual and perceived improvement in safety will contribute to a reduction in fear of crime and encourage more people to use the facilities who would otherwise be deterred from doing so.



7 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 The proposal comprises a full Planning Application for the development of a 7500 seat Football stadium for Boston United, and an outline planning application for a hotel, pub and ancillary related activities including construction of a roundabout at Boardsides, Boston. The stadium will be relocated to the area highlighted in the Boston Woods project as Gateway 4, Sports and Recreation. The relocation of the football stadium will release the centrally located site for residential development.
- 7.2 The main facilities are located in the South Stand, closest to the entrance, and include on the ground floor, player's facilities, public bar, learning centre, club shop and crèche. Stadium Control Room and Spectator access on the 1st floor and on the 2nd floor, 350-seat function room, director's bar and VIP boxes and administration offices. It is proposed to commence construction in Autumn 2006 with completion and certification in time for the 2007/8 season.
- 7.3 The case for relocation has been set out in a separate Chapter 2 but its main points are based upon:
- 7.3.1 the limitations of the York Street ground and the inability to invest.
 - 7.3.2 the case for developing a 'Sports cluster' at Boardsides.
 - 7.3.3 Enabling opportunity to consolidate new football facilities in Boston.
 - 7.3.4 An opportunity to provide community centred leisure facilities to the town.
 - 7.3.5 The owners of the York Street site have served notice that they do not intend to renew the lease on the property when it is due in 2020.
 - 7.3.6 The club cannot raise further revenue at the existing stadium.
- 7.4 The proposals rely on the interrelationship of one to the other and the success of a number of factors that will bring the project to fruition. It is intended that each scheme will only be commenced after contracts have been entered into to ensure that the housing



proposals are not developed in isolation and a replacement stadium is available for Boston United the following season. The redevelopment of the stadium will result in and is correspondingly dependent upon:

1. creation of enabling developments at Tattershall Road & York Street
2. replacement pitches for Boston Town at Cuckoo Land
3. Provision of community benefits from the scheme.

7.5 The proposed stadium is situated to the west of Boston adjacent to the Boston Aerodrome and adjoins the A1121, which links Boston and Sleaford. Boston town centre lies 1.5 km to the east of the proposed site. The site is bordered by the A1121 to the south, agricultural fields and Slate House Farm to the west, a small block of woodland and drainage ditches to the north and Princess Royal Sports Arena, Boston Rugby Club and light industrial buildings to the east. The site is comprised mostly of arable fields. A small improved grassland strip of approximately 4-5m wide which runs east to west is located in the central part of the site and provides a small landing strip for light aircraft.

7.6 Access to the site is from the A1121 to the south via a proposed new roundabout. A public space is created on the southern section of the site comprising parking facilities, a food outlet and a ninety bedroom hotel. The orientation of the pitch proposed by the architect has been determined primarily by the prevailing easterly wind direction during the winter months of the football season. This alignment allows the match to be played into or against the wind rather than experiencing cross winds. Two all-weather AstroTurf-type training pitches for community use, are also proposed to the north of the stadium.

7.7 A car park to service the proposed stadium would be located in the southern part of the site adjacent to the A1121. The main car parking facilities contain a total of 1047 spaces including 44 disabled spaces and are located around the stadium with access proposed from the A1121 via a new roundabout. Parking to the north and east of Boston United stadium provides an additional 136 car parking spaces for players and VIPs. This area is also intended



to be used by away supporters. There is space for twenty four supporter's coaches. 87 parking spaces are provided for the hotel with 87 spaces allowed for the food outlet.

8 SEQUENTIAL TEST ASSESSMENT

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 This site sequential assessment aims to explore alternative locations to developing Boston United's stadium at Boardsides. This necessarily was a sieving exercise based upon availability, size, site survey and location factors. Local Plan (Redeposit Draft) Policy RTC7: 'Large Scale Office or Entertainment or Leisure Developments outside the Town Centre' states:

Planning permission will be granted for office or for entertainment or for leisure development attracting large numbers of people on sites removed from the general business area only where it can be demonstrated that:

- 1. There is a need for the proposed development and a sequential approach has been applied in selecting the location of the site in which all potential town centre and edge of centre sites have been thoroughly assessed and the proposed development cannot be satisfactorily accommodated on any such site;***
- 2. In the case of entertainment or leisure development the proposed development will not adversely affect the evening economy of the general business area;***
- 3. The site is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.***

8.1.2 This policy introduces the need for sequential testing of leisure development sites. There follows an identification of the sites available to support development before breaking the options down into the reasons for their acceptability or otherwise. The area of search for alternative sites has been limited because the football club must remain in Boston: the list of options is restricted to the built up area of Boston and areas immediately adjacent to the built up area to remain within the proximity to the traditional catchment of the users.



- 8.1.3 Key criteria for site selection is Suitability, Viability and Availability. The site must be of sufficient size for both stadium and associated facilities. Being a locally based institution, a site is needed that will enable the club to maintain an important role in the community as well as promoting football history and heritage.
- 8.1.4 Looking at the availability of land in or close to the town centre, Boston Port is the only site of any substantial size to accommodate the proposed scheme in terms of land take.
- 8.1.5 Outside the centre, sites considered to be suitable include the area of the Southern Economic Corridor, land to the West of and adjoining the Peter Paine Sports Centre and land adjacent to the Pilgrim Hospital.
- 8.1.6 It was established in previous applications at Princess Royal Sports Arena and Boston Rugby Club that the range of potential development sites was very limited in site specific, operational and infrastructural implications. The alternatives assessed included sites within the urban area of Boston and were rejected at that time as being unsuitable.

8.2 **Boston Port**

- 8.2.1 As with land to the South West of town, until the construction of the Southern Link road and because of the capacity of existing local roads, Boston Port suffers from access difficulties. Private transport users would encounter and continue to add to town centre traffic congestion. The site also suffers from the legacy of previous industrial uses which would require ground investigation and remediation, increasing land acquisition costs. Choosing the port as the development site runs counter to local strategic objectives to '*enhance the role of the Port as a centre for industry and employment*' (Boston Masterplan Strategy). Providing sufficient parking would be problematic with such limited space. The area also suffers from a drainage flood risk being at the confluence of two rivers/drains.



8.2.2 Development on this site would conflict with Policy E13 of the Boston Local Plan that public views of the dominance of the 'Boston Stump' must not be visually challenged or obstructed. Development at the Port could also be precluded by the historical nature and archaeological interest of the site.

8.2.3 In the interests of coherent future development it is advisable to await publication of the 'Boston Port options appraisal and development plan' currently being undertaken by Boston Borough Council, Lincolnshire County Council and the East Midlands Development Agency.

8.3 **Southern Economic Corridor**

8.3.1 The proposed Southern Economic Corridor will open up large tracts of development land to the South West of Boston (designated in the Local Plan as Mixed-use Development Site - BMU1) and improve the transport infrastructure to key economic sites and is also fundamental to access and development of the Port. Its potential for development of Boston United's stadium would be hindered by the inability to proceed before completion of the relief road and as construction is proposed to take place over several phases in the next 10 years, it is unlikely to become available within the time frame for the Club's relocation.

8.4 **Toot Lane Mixed Use Development Site**

8.4.1 Toot Lane (BMU2 in the Local Plan) is on the eastern extreme of Boston urban area. The Local Plan envisages a large housing development occupying the north of the site and a new public park situated in the southern half of the site, leaving the central section to be considered for relocation of Boston Utd. The remainder land is cramped and inaccessible except via an existing residential district. The Local Plan stipulates that only residential proposals will be suitable for Toot Lane.

8.5 **North East Boston – Pilgrim Hospital**

8.5.1 Various operational and infrastructural implications are involved with this site, including the location within a prime residential area, proximity to an adjoining hospital, traffic generation and highway



network problems, access through a girl's school and the size of the site (10 acres) all of which indicate that the site would be unsatisfactory and cause environmental disbenefits to adjacent users.

8.6 **Peter Paine Sport Centre**

8.6.1 Whilst recognising that the Sport Centre is closer to the town centre and benefits from established pedestrian and cycle linkages, this site would present overuse, access, amenity and cost problems. The high density and proximity of adjoining existing and proposed prime residential development would result in potential impacts upon amenity. Development here could also present the potential loss of existing sports pitches or conversely the over-development of an existing leisure complex which is already intensively used and congested at peak times, leading to additional logistical problems. The adjoining road network would inadequately accommodate such additional traffic generation. The site is only 10 acres in size and couldn't provide additional or better facilities as required by PPG 17.

8.7 **Conclusion**

8.7.1 The proposed site is the only site acceptable and capable of being developed without unacceptable adverse effects on amenity or within the time required by the Club to develop a new stadium. It is hoped that by locating at Boardsides, which already includes the Princess Royal Arena, a cluster of sporting provision can be created which can become the centre for the town's nationally recognised rugby, athletics and football offerings and offer a 'spectator sports quarter' to the Boston community. There is also significant potential for complementary actions and events to take place between the two venues, such as major sporting occasions.

8.7.2 In these respects it is considered that, on the balance of issues to be addressed, when assessed against the aims and objectives of the policy framework, it can be demonstrated that there is a clear rationale behind the suitability of the application site in sequential terms.



9 PLANNING POLICY

9.1 Background

9.1.1 This document will address relevant policy issues at each level of the land use planning framework. Development for sport raises different issues to business and residential development due to the nature and scale of the proposals. It is clear that certain issues will be covered at different levels of the development plan system as each level of the framework performs a different function in providing a context for decisions at the local level. In order to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the proposed development, it is necessary to set the context for the development and to have regard for local planning policies and their requirements for development. The aim of this document is to provide guidance on those issues appropriate in:

- Regional Planning Guidance/Statements
- Lincolnshire Structure Plan
- Boston Local Plan
- Boston Masterplan Strategy

9.2 National Policy

9.2.1 The Government's sporting objectives are set out in PPG17 *Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation* (July 2002) and in the Sport England publication *Game Plan: a Strategy for Delivering the Government's Sport and Physical Activity Objectives*. It will be important to ensure that adequate recreational open space and other facilities are provided, in both urban and rural areas, to serve existing and new populations. The provision should be based on standards derived from assessments carried out by local authorities in line with PPG17 and best practice guidance.

Stadia and Major Developments

Planning permission for stadia and major sports developments which will accommodate large numbers of spectators, or which will also function as a facility for



community based sports and recreation, should only be granted when they are to be located in areas with good access to public transport. Planning permission for additional facilities such as retail and leisure uses should not be granted for any out-of-centre developments unless they comply with the policy set out in PPG6.

PPG17 (Para 22)

- 9.2.2 The greater part of Planning Policy Guidance from the Government on issues to be addressed is outlined in the current PPG17 *Sport and Recreation*. The Lincolnshire County Structure Plan (Deposit Draft) sets out strategic policies and proposals for the development and use of land. In doing this it provides a strategic policy framework for local planning and development. Policies relating to Landscape issues are covered in greater detail in the Environmental Statement.

Urban Fringe Areas

The countryside around towns provides a valuable resource for the provision of sport and recreation, particularly in situations where there is an absence of land in urban areas to meet provision. ...local authorities should encourage the creation of sports and recreational facilities in such areas and the development of areas of managed countryside, such as country parks, community forests, and agricultural showgrounds. Where planning permission is to be granted for such land uses, local planning authorities should ensure that facilities are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport as alternatives to the use of the car.

PPG17 (Para 25)

PPG 13 Transport (2001)

- 9.2.3 The objectives of PPG 13 are to integrate planning and transport issues within new leisure development proposals such as the Boardsides Stadium, which generate large, if infrequent amounts of travel. They must:



- Promote accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, and
- Reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

9.2.4 Paragraph 49 notes the availability of car parking has a major influence on the means of transport people choose for their journeys. PPG 13 guides a national maximum parking standard of 1 space per 15 seats for stadia over 1500 seats (500 spaces in this instance). Sufficient coach parking should also be provided, designed and managed so that it will not be used for car parking. Cycle parking shall be provided at 1 per 100 seats.

9.2.5 Paragraph 89 notes that Travel Plans should be submitted alongside applications that are likely to have significant transport implications, i.e. stadia above 1500 seats. The Travel Framework proposes:

- From discussions with the Local Authority the car park will be made available on non-match days for use as a park & ride location and for a shuttle bus service from the town centre to the stadium on match days.
- Staff and visitors will be encouraged to take up local bus company offers and discounts and assistance in car sharing.
- Peak vehicular arrivals will be restricted by the local highway and eased by public transport improvements.
- Departures from site will be restricted at the end of a fixture to allow pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users to leave the site first and therefore encourage their use.

9.3 Sustainable Development

9.3.1 PPS 1 *'Delivering Sustainable Communities'*, was published in February 2005 as one of the new series of shorter, sharper planning policy statements reaffirming the role of the planning system in meeting the needs of a growing and competitive economy. The PPS provides a strategic commentary on the key policies and principles that should underpin the planning system and also incorporates the Government's general policies in relation to sustainable development.



9.3.2 Paragraph 5 states:

Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- ***making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;***
- ***contributing to sustainable economic development;***
- ***protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;***
- ***ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,***
- ***ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.***

9.3.3 Sport can play a significant role in contributing towards sustainable development objectives. In the past much of the focus on sustainable development has been on environmental issues. Now, however, increasing emphasis is being placed on social policy issues of equity and participation. In *A Better Quality of Life - A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK*, (DETR, 1999) sport is identified as playing an important role in building sustainable communities, particularly in helping to regenerate neighbourhoods. This document set out the four objectives of sustainable development as follows:

- ***Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;***
- ***Effective protection of the environment;***
- ***Prudent use of natural resources;***
- ***Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.***

9.3.4 Sport is an essential component of everyday life, playing a valuable social and economic role, providing enjoyment for millions of people and a livelihood for many others. Sport is also a significant land use



and the land use planning system has a key role in enabling development of new facilities for sport and in protecting existing facilities. It is important that the provision and management of places for sport support the achievement of national and local sustainable development objectives.

- 9.3.5 The substantial land-use requirements of the proposed stadium have demanded a sequential test to assess alternative and more appropriate sites for the relocation of Boston United which demonstrated the chosen location to be the only sizeable and readily available option. PPS 7 advocates the use of such sites subject to LPAs securing public access and recreation benefits.

The Countryside around Urban Areas

While the policies in PPG2 continue to apply in green belts, local planning authorities should ensure that planning policies in LDDs address the particular land use issues and opportunities to be found in the countryside around all urban areas, recognising its importance to those who live or work there, and also in providing the nearest and most accessible countryside to urban residents. Planning authorities should aim to secure environmental improvements and maximise a range of beneficial uses of this land, whilst reducing potential conflicts between neighbouring land uses. This should include improvement of public access (e.g. through support for country parks and community forests) and facilitating the provision of appropriate sport and recreation facilities.

PPS 7 (Para 26) Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

9.4 Regional Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS 8)

- 9.4.1 RSS 8, the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands sets the framework for development plans in the Region. RSS 8 was issued in March 2005 and covers the period until 2026. Policy 7 directs the DPDs, LDFs and economic strategies of development in the Eastern Sub-Area including:



“the maintenance and enhancement of the roles of small and medium sized market towns... through protection of existing community facilities.”

9.4.2 This is reinforced by encouraging:

“consolidation and where appropriate strengthening of the Sub-Regional Centres of Boston, Grantham, Melton Mowbray and Newark;”

RSS 8 (Policy 7)

9.4.3 RSS 8 also promotes setting regional priorities for sports and recreational facilities to ensure sufficient provision:

Local Authorities should work with County based Sport Partnerships, the East Midlands Regional Sports Board, Sport England and other relevant bodies to ensure that there is adequate provision of sports and recreational facilities...

RSS 8 (Policy 32)

9.5 Local Policy

Lincolnshire Structure Plan

9.5.1 Policy T6 of the Lincolnshire Deposit Draft Structure Plan 2004 highlights the need for appropriate scale recreational and sporting facilities in rural and urban locations dependent upon:

- ***The sequential approach where appropriate***
- ***Compatibility in terms of character, design and scale with the area in which it is proposed***
- ***Likely effects of the proposal on local amenity***
- ***Accessibility to main areas of population***
- ***Adequacy of road access, including by public transport, car parking and service infrastructure***
- ***Effects on other activities including farming, forestry and mineral extraction and on the conservation of areas of historic, archaeological, wildlife or landscape value***
- ***Impact upon the landscape***

9.5.2 The Structure Plan advises that a sequential approach to the development of land should be adopted. Policy S2: ‘Location of



Development' aims to gear urban growth towards previously developed sites in the most accessible locations.

Boston Borough Local Plan

- 9.5.3 The Boston Local Plan Deposit Draft was issued for consultation in March 2004 and proposes a broad planning framework for the period up to 2015. It contains a comprehensive set of policies relating to land use, transportation and the environment and provides detailed proposals for site specific development of employment and housing sites. The following Policies are those of most relevance to the proposed development.
- 9.5.4 Policy G2 deals with development on the best and most versatile agricultural land. In considering such applications, the Borough Council requires that:
- 1) *Opportunities have been assessed for accommodating the development on previously developed sites and/or on land within the built-up areas/settlement boundaries shown on the inset maps;***
 - 2) *The amount of land is the minimum required; and***
 - 3) *There is a strong case for the development which overrides the need to protect such land.***
- 9.5.5 Policy G4 seeks to ensure safe and convenient accessibility into buildings and the external environment for disabled people and other members of the community whose mobility is impaired, or require the use of a wheelchair, pram or pushchair.
- 9.5.6 Policy G5 requires proposals incorporating a scheme of external lighting to:
- 1) *be the minimum required to undertake the task;***
 - 2) *not prejudice highway safety;***
 - 3) *not substantially harm the amenities of nearby land-users; and***
 - 4) *not substantially pollute the night sky or harm the character of the area.***



9.5.7 Policy G6 requires that the necessary provision of infrastructure is assured for new development through planning conditions or obligations.

9.5.8 Policy ED8 states that permission for large scale development in the countryside may be granted where 'the proposal includes a satisfactory landscaping scheme, incorporating means of future management'; or 'it has been demonstrated that on sustainability grounds it is the most appropriate site and that there are no more suitable locations for it'.

9.5.9 Policy ED10 cites applications will be granted for developments increasing the attraction of the borough to tourists provided that:

new tourist facilities/attractions or accommodation are of a scale and type which respects the character and appearance of the borough's historic settlements and countryside;

4) any major hotel facilities are well related to transport networks and the provision of retail and other services.

9.5.10 Policy RTC7 relates to large-scale office, entertainment and leisure developments attracting large numbers of people on sites removed from the general business area. It cites the sequential approach recommended by Policies G2 and ED8;

1) there is a need for the proposed development and a sequential approach has been applied in selecting the location of the site in which all potential town centre and edge of centre sites have been thoroughly assessed and the proposed development cannot be satisfactorily accommodated on any such site;



- 2) in the case of entertainment or leisure development the proposed development will not adversely affect the evening economy of the general business area;**
- 3) the site of the proposal is accessible by a choice of means of transport.**

9.5.11 Policy T1 of the Plan provides the framework for the construction of new roads in new developments. Accessibility must be provided to public transport vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and persons of restricted mobility. A significant factor to these proposals states,

“any new junction with existing roads is designed safely, and without causing significant disruption to traffic flows.”

9.5.12 Boardsides will eventually become the western extreme of the Southern Link Road and as such an appropriate junction and distributor roads will be built to comply with Highway Authority standards.

9.5.13 Policy T4 sets out the expected car parking standards which are supposed to be in accordance with the standards indicated in the following table.



Cinema/Theatres/conference Facilities/Bingo Halls/ Other Places of assembly with fixed seating	1 Space per 5 Seats	
Stadia	To be assessed on individual merits, but typically 1 space/15 seats.	A transport Assessment and/or Travel plan is likely to be required in support of any proposal. This will need to include provisions of coach parking.
Hotels	1 space per bedroom	Additional facilities such as bars/dining rooms open to the general public and conference facilities will need to be assessed separately in accordance with the appropriate standard

9.5.14 Policy T5 recommends assessing travel needs and the means proposed to satisfy those needs in the form of travel plans involving planning applications for two categories of development under which these proposals fall:

1. major employment generating development,
2. development attracting large numbers of the public (e.g. sports stadium)

9.5.15 Policy R10 however, supports proposals for outdoor sport, recreation or leisure facilities in the open countryside, subject to their accessibility by all modes and the necessity to locate in a countryside location by virtue of its extensive land use requirements or noise generation.

9.5.16 Policy R2 of the Local Plan indicates that the *built element* of proposals for new recreational space and facilities adjoining Boston, is needed to facilitate the main recreational activity and is in keeping with the scale and character of that use.



9.5.17 Policy R6 states that development must not result in the loss of a public right of way or which does not integrate with or enhance the existing rights of way network.

9.5.18 Policy R7 requires that development within the Boston Woods Project area will establish an outdoor recreational resource and enhance the amenity value of the woodlands. Any buildings constructed are required in association with the development of woodland or to enhance the value of the area for outdoor recreation; Car parking should only be sited in conjunction with specific facilities and attractions and access to woodland shall be provided by footways and cycleways.

9.5.19 Further planning policy relevant to landscape issues (Landscape Enhancement, Boston Stump Views) is covered by the Environmental Statement: Landscape and Visual Impact (Volume 2: Chapter 4).

9.6 **Boston Masterplan Strategy**

9.6.1 As part of Boston's Masterplan, the intention to create a four-star hotel development operated by a nationally or internationally (preferred) recognised group and including conference facilities is cited. The hotel and conference facilities would be expected to include the following: -

- Four-star accommodation
- Approximately 100 standard ensuite rooms of 22m² to 28m² (with some suites)
- Bar/ lounge
- Exhibition space
- Meeting/ seminar rooms
- Banqueting suite/ restaurants
- Entrance/ reception/ foyer
- Car parking

9.6.2 For a sizeable and prosperous market town of sub-regional importance, Boston has remarkably few hotel rooms and it is considered that there is a good market opportunity for a new hotel in Boston. The proposals will complement the existing quality hotel



provision within the town centre rather than competing directly. The 90 bedroom hotel will provide a wider choice of accommodation options for visitors requiring this level (i.e. 3/4 star) and offer improved facilities over the existing provision.

10 STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

Boston Local Plan provides no policy for the development of a football stadium within the Borough. This statement of justification aims to put the case for permitting development at this site on the urban edge.

10.1 Relocation

10.1.1 In line with Policy G2, a statement on the case for relocation submitted with this application (See Chapter 2) outlines the necessity for this development to proceed for the future survival of Boston United FC and for the benefit of its mutually supportive business and community base. There is a need for the proposed development from the perspective of:

- The Football League
- The local community
- The fanbase
- The Boston economy (esp. evening & tourist economy)
- Outward perceptions of Boston.

10.1.2 The relocation of the football stadium will release its existing, centrally located site at York Street for residential development.

10.2 Sequential Assessment

10.2.1 To comply with Policies G2, ED8, R10 & RTC7 of the Boston local Plan and T6 & S2 of the Lincolnshire Structure Plan, this application has been submitted alongside a sequential test Assessment (Chapter 8). The sequential approach has been applied to the selection of alternative sites within the Boston area, and demonstrates which is practical or viable for the club and which can be made available within the timeframe required and to meet planning objectives.



10.2.2 The sequential test discounted all alternative sites within and outside the town, including designated employment sites in the Borough, as unsuitable for relocation, due to factors of accessibility and the traffic impacts of the proposals, size of the development, availability of land, sustainability and the adverse effects on neighbouring dwellings.

10.3 **Case for Location on Agricultural Land – Urban Edge**

10.3.1 With regard to Policy G2 of the Plan, the proposals encompass 10.75 hectares of Grade 2 agricultural land. The Lincolnshire Deposit Draft Structure Plan 2004 makes an exception for permitting development on agricultural land in Boston in its justification for Policy T6: Sport and Recreation.

Although proposals should not normally use the best and most versatile agricultural land, it is accepted that in Boston Borough and South Holland District this may not be possible due to the predominance of such land in this part of the county.

10.3.2 Boardsides, the area in which the proposals fall, is located at the Western end of the proposed Southern Link Road and the location of much recent development including the Princess Royal Arena. It is also within the vicinity of Boston Business Park and Chain Bridge Employment and Retail Area.

10.3.3 The proposed site is on the periphery of an area of substantial growth and part of an approved urban extension to the town. It is considered that Boardsides is at the town's urban fringe and it is hoped the area can become a major recreation, business and visitor destination in its own right, presenting a dynamic image for the town at this important approach road.

10.4 **Recreational Open Space**

10.4.1 The countryside around Boston is easily accessible by public transport, car, cycle and on foot and already meets many of the needs of the community by providing access from the urban areas of the Borough, via a network of footpaths and bridleways to the



wider countryside. In Sport England's 'Planning Policies for Sport' document, their Objective 14 aims:

“To promote the urban fringe as an important resource in providing opportunities for sport, and support proposals for improved access for sport, for the development of extensive facilities such as golf courses and pitches, and for built facilities which can be developed in a way which meets sustainable development objectives and which helps to maintain and improve the identity of this resource.”

10.4.2 PPG 2 also recognises outdoor sport as an appropriate land use on the urban edge and advises that new buildings which provide essential facilities for outdoor sport, including changing rooms and small spectator accommodation, may be developed, where there is an identified need and no suitable site is available elsewhere in the locality.

10.4.3 Policy R2 of the Local Plan requires that the built element of the proposal is fundamental to the viability and necessity of the main recreational activity, and in this case, it is essential for the club to comply with Football League standards to accommodate its supporters in a safe and comfortable environment on match days. The low-rise profile of the stadium reflects the surrounding landscape.

10.5 **Boston Woods - Countryside accessibility**

10.5.1 Under Policy R7 of the Local Plan, the Boston Woods Project has included the site in the area known as Gateway 4 – The Sports and Recreation Gateway. With the Princess Royal Stadium already completed, it is intended that this area becomes the focus of other sporting facilities.

10.5.2 By enabling access to the Boston Woods Project and contributing to the formation of the project, it is hoped to mitigate the effects of the stadium and make a positive contribution to the environment. The policy requires that the development be reinforced by other



local plan policies. The proposals are ably supported by several Local Plan policies.

10.5.3 To integrate with the emerging woodland project, the proposals include new tree planting around the periphery of the site and in car parking areas, reflecting the tree planting within the area as shelter belt trees are often located around settlements and farmsteads. Planting of native species mixes would provide additional habitat and provide some linkage to existing trees and the species chosen would reflect planting within the area.

10.6 **Tourism**

10.6.1 In response to Policy ED10 on tourism, the provision of the on-site facilities and activities are expected to increase the attraction of the Borough to significant numbers of corporate, business and leisure visitors and tourists as well as community users.

10.7 **Traffic and Transport Accessibility**

10.7.1 In compliance with Policy T5 a Travel Plan and traffic statement have been prepared separately (Volume 2: Appendix 8). The new visitor developments are at an accessible location at the junction of the main A1121 and A52, both providing direct links east to the A1 and M1. The district to the west of Boston is also fast establishing a base of spectator sports and with this development, entertainment venues attractive to tourists.

10.7.2 It is expected that the stadium will host approximately 30 home matches per year. At these times, every effort will be implemented to mitigate the congestion effects of several thousand supporters converging on and returning from the site. A 'Green Travel Plan' forms the Framework for travel to and from the ground. Its main proposals include:

- Shuttle Bus between the stadium and town centre. Following approval by Boston Borough Council, pick-up and setting down points close to town centre car parks will be selected.
- Improved signage for safe and approved pedestrian routes
- Improved facilities for cyclists.



10.7.3 The prospect of providing ‘football trains’ to Hubberts Bridge from the town centre does not pose a viable transport option. It is unable to fit with Network Rail’s timetable and we understand that it cannot be accommodated within the capacity constraints of the Boston to Sleaford railway line.

10.7.4 Policy T1 outlines the approach for the provision of internal site roads. New circulation routes within the proposed development will comply with adoptable highway standards and provide sufficient width for use by public transport. A pedestrian access is provided on the eastern boundary of the site into the grounds of the Princess Royal Arena. A route alongside the eastern boundary of the site will allow direct access to the community pitches and associated away-supporter-coach parking at the rear of the site.

10.7.5 Access to the site from the A1121 will be via a newly constructed roundabout, at the southern egress to the site. In the Local Transport Plan, Boardsides is defined as the area that will eventually form the western limit of the proposed Boston Southern bypass. In line with Policy G6, the developer will design and is willing to construct the roundabout to service the development as proposed. The designs of the roundabout and overall traffic assessment have taken account of the potential peak traffic requirements of the hotel and all proposed facilities.

10.7.6 In connection with Policy RTC7, Public transport to Boardsides is covered by a limited level of bus services to the vicinity of the proposed site. The services that run past the site or nearby are:

A4	0.755	Monday to Friday
G49	13.50	Monday to Friday
“Amber Hill”	16.50 – 17.20 ish	Schooldays
44	09.15, 15.25	Friday
59	12.20S, 14.20S, 16.35NS 17.05 Sd, 18.00wd	S= Sat, NS = Not Sat, Sd = Schooldays, Wd = Mon - Fri



10.7.7 Boardsides is 30 minutes walk from the town centre and equally accessible by bicycle alongside the South Forty-Foot Drain.

10.8 **Parking**

10.8.1 Permanent parking provision within the site has had regard to PPG 13 standards. In accordance with Policy T4 on parking standards, the main parking facilities located to the south of the stadium, provide 508 parking spaces. Parking to the north and east of the stadium provides an additional 136 spaces for players and VIPs. An area will be set aside for 4 away-supporter coaches at the rear of the site to enable segregation of home and away supporters. 87 parking spaces are provided for the 90 bedroom hotel, with a further 87 spaces allowed for the small food outlet. In addition to the parking required by the development, a further 225 spaces are provided as a contribution for the Boston Woods Project to the west of the ground.

10.8.2 The design of the proposed site has recognised that it is crucial to remove traffic as quickly as possible from the road network and into the parking area to avoid a traffic backlog on roads surrounding the site. Measures to steward the vehicular traffic will be in place on match days to facilitate this process and to limit unauthorised parking on adjacent roads. Strict parking controls will ensure that alternative modes of transport will be favoured. A Management Plan agreed with Boston Borough Council, Lincolnshire County Council, the Police and the Community will need to be agreed.

10.8.3 The removal of football matches from Boston town centre on Saturday afternoons will make available a significant amount of parking capacity in the central business district at peak shopping periods.

10.8.4 The significant parking facilities proposed for the Boardsides site will not be operating at full capacity for much of the week. It is therefore proposed subject to discussion with Boston Borough Council that the site be used as a base for Park & Ride facilities serving the town.



10.9 **Spectator Management**

10.9.1 A stewarding Management Plan controlling access, policing and away supporters will need to be agreed.

10.10 **Public Rights of Way**

10.10.1 In compliance with Policy R6, no public rights of way cross the site and there will be nil or negligible impacts upon public rights of way in the surrounding area. There would therefore be no impact upon public rights of way.

10.10.2 New and improved pedestrian linkages along the A1121 will be created to connect with the existing footpath network and the neighbouring Princess Royal Arena. New signage will direct pedestrians to the quickest and most convenient routes to the town centre and surrounding residential areas.

10.11 **Disabled Access**

10.11.1 In relation to Policy G4 of the Local Plan, the stadium design will comply with guidance given in SGSG1 Accessible Stadia Guide to ensure all members of the community have equality of access to the sports facilities and opportunities for participation so the particular needs of different groups are incorporated into the design and management of the facilities. Designated wheelchair spectator areas will be accessible by lift at first and second floor levels. The VIP areas to the south stand are also accessible by lift.

10.12 **Noise**

10.12.1 With Regard to Policy R10 of the Plan, match day noise levels will be better suited at this distance from residential districts. A contour plan has been prepared showing the distance of sound impacts. A noise study is provided in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement.

10.13 **Lighting**

10.13.1 Policy G5 and R2 discuss lighting schemes. The seasonal nature of the football league season, taking place over the autumn, winter and spring months necessitates that floodlighting will be



required during home games that continue beyond the hours of daylight.

10.13.2 Floodlighting will be positioned along the perimeter of the stand roofs rather than corner pylons and will comply with the Football Association's guidance on stadium lighting. Evidence regarding the minimisation of light spill will be provided with the Environmental Statement.

10.13.3 Floodlights are in their nature, inward and downward looking and on the minority of occasions they should be used, their impact should not affect the amenity of nearby residents or land users, nor should they cause significant light pollution.

10.14 **Landscaping**

10.14.1 A detailed landscaping scheme is to be prepared and agreed. The site proposals comprise a holding pond for drainage catchment and run-off purposes. The design is subject to final detailing following preparation and agreement of the road and drainage layout. The ponds will be accessible as recreational open space, laid out with benches and sensitive landscaping for the enjoyment of the public.

10.14.2 In line with Policy ED10, the proposed structures sit low in the landscape and their profile deliberately mimics the surrounding fenland setting by not exceeding 3 storeys in height and enclosed by a flat roof.

10.14.3 With regard to Policy ED8, a detailed landscaping scheme proposes tree planting around the edges of the site, with more planting around the northern boundary of the site. Standard trees would be planted within the car parking areas and along access roads through the site. Ditches within the site will be culverted and a retention pond would be incorporated as part of the Sustainable Urban Drainage System. Planting would use native species that are apparent in the locality.



11 DESIGN STATEMENT

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 This design statement has been produced to demonstrate the process followed in designing a new stadium and ancillary facilities for Boston United Football Club at Boardsides on the western edge of Boston and how the proposals will integrate with their surroundings. A three-phase approach has been adopted: analysing the site, indicating the design principles and showing the resulting design solutions that were incorporated into the final scheme.

11.1.2 Objectives of the Development:

- Provide a stadium with new and improved facilities for players and spectators
- To create a visually striking gateway to Boston on a major route into the town.
- To minimise the visual impact of the building
- To meet the criteria in the relevant design guides and planning policies.
- Provide a vertical feature as a new landmark for Gateway 4.
- Give a clear sense of delineation between public and private space
- To provide and implement high standards of design in terms of overall composition of layout, scale and choice of materials in order to create interest, identity and character.

11.1.3 The proposed development is dominated by the 7,500 seat stadium in the centre of the site and 2 training pitches to the north; a 90 room hotel will be located on the central western boundary and a pub and 340m² restaurant in the south west corner. A long wall separates the public/business area to south from the stadium and pitches. The Access will be provided from a new roundabout in the south of the site, with two diagonal roads diverging to the hotel and to parking to the side of the stadium respectively. The bulk of the parking will be placed between the diagonal roads and the stadium. The remainder will fill the gaps between access roads and the other structures. Provision is made along the eastern boundary for facilitating future access to the north of the stadium site.



11.1.4 The proposed orientation of the ground proposed by the architect is determined primarily by the prevailing easterly wind direction during the winter months of the football season. This alignment allows the match to be played into or against the wind rather than experiencing cross winds. From an aesthetic point of view, the placement achieves a satisfying symmetry by aligning the longest elevation and most architecturally interesting aspect of the stadium with the A1121 and maximising the display of the Club's "shop window".

11.1.5 The design intent is to minimise the visual impact on the landscape. This is achieved by keeping the stadium height to a minimum. Where additional facilities are required in the south stand. A reduced bank of seating allows the second floor to be incorporated with a minimal height increase. The stadium will be the equivalent of 4 storeys in height.

11.2 **Site Analysis**

11.2.1 The site is fronted to the south by the A1121, a busy main road linking Boston with Sleaford and the A1(M) to the west via the A17. It is bordered to the east by The Princess Royal Athletics and Rugby Arena, and to the remaining sides by arable fields.

11.2.2 The proposed development site is 10.75 hectares in area and currently functions as farmland. There are no buildings or underground infrastructure. Other than the southern boundary, the site is bordered by drainage ditches.

11.2.3 The large scale surrounding architecture is represented by the hangar and barns in the adjacent field, and the PRS Arena to the north east. The former is of little or no architectural value. The Princess Royal Sports Arena is a recent addition to the landscape and is built entirely with wood. The stadium was built specifically to accommodate use by disabled as well as able-bodied users.

11.2.4 Slate House Farm is located ½ km to the west although it is concealed and visually protected by a line of tall trees. Rectory



Farm is ¼ km to the north. The area to the east has seen much change in recent years. A grouping of garages and low rise industrial units lie ½ km away bringing the urban edge closer to the development site. To the south runs the Boston to Sleaford Railway line, the South Forty Foot Drain and the A1121.

11.2.5 With the consistently flat land in all directions from the site, there are long views usually terminating in distant hedgerows and small stands of trees. The proposed development site is detached from the town centre in visual and landscape terms except for where the Boston Stump is visible on the horizon.

11.2.6 The constraints and benefits of the site proposals are:

- **Provide an eye-catching entrance to this gateway of Boston**
- **Opportunity to bolster the sporting reputation of the town**
- **Improve the image of the Borough to visitors**
- **Well-designed architecture will enhance the setting of nearby units**
- **Improvement of Amenity Space at Boston Woods**
- **Hotel & Conferencing fulfil the requirements of Boston Masterplan**
- **Sustainable urban extension served by park & ride & public transport**
- **Removal of parking problems on match days**
- **Decrease disturbance for residents at existing site**
- **Improved pedestrian links to the town centre**

11.3 **Description of Design Principles**

Materials, Layout and Design

11.3.1 The layering of materials helps to break the building into a series of horizontal elements, reducing its scale and allowing it to sit comfortably in its environment. The externally expressed structure helps to break down the mass of the building and along with the aerodynamic form, reflects the architecture of the adjacent Princess Royal Sports Arena.



11.3.2 The design intent is to continue to reflect the horizontality of the stadium in the use and choice of materials. On approaching the building from the main car park the first element to be considered is the long curved wall. This will be constructed in rendered blockwork and punctuated by a number of ticket booths and entrance turnstiles to allow pedestrians to wander between public and private space. The monolithic wall is intended to delineate and define the boundary between the car park and the entrance to the stadium. At its western end it connects with the hotel to link the buildings. Canopies over the turnstiles and the use of timber boarding to the ticket booths give a human scale to the stadium entrance.

11.3.3 The stands are built up as a series of horizontal layers. At ground floor a plinth of concrete blockwork provides a solid and durable base. To the north, east and west stands the pedestrian concourses are enclosed by a horizontally laid, profiled metal sheet. A strongly profiled sheet is proposed for these elements to accentuate the horizontal. The seating areas are enclosed to three sides by profiled sheet. The roof above the stands is supported by a series of cantilevered steel beams. The structure is expressed externally to break up the building mass. The stand roofs are clad in a combination of profiled steel and profiled, transparent, polycarbonate sheet. The polycarbonate allows daylight to penetrate onto the pitch, reducing the requirement for floodlights and improving growing conditions for the playing surface.

11.3.4 Whilst the north, east and west stands are considered as outdoor spaces the second floor of the south stand is considered as an internal space. The second floor, VIP facilities are expressed as a floating horizontal layer, clad in insulated, composite steel panels with bands of glazing to function room and administration areas.

11.3.5 A single vertical element, "The Spike", punctuates the landscape, providing a counterpoint for the Boston Stump in the distance. It is constructed in painted steelwork and restrained by steel tensile wires. It is intended to light 'The Spike' at night and on matchdays to highlight it as a landmark for the recreation gateway.



Landscaping

11.3.6 A detailed landscaping scheme proposes tree planting around three edges of the site other than the road frontage. Standard trees would be planted within the car parking areas and along access roads through the site. Planting would use local native species. Ditches within the site will be culverted and a holding pond/s would be incorporated as part of the drainage system. Approximately 20% of the site would be devoted to recreational open space provision in the form of pitches and the ponds, which will be accessible for the enjoyment of the public with landscaping and benches.

Disabled Facilities

11.3.7 The stadium will be fully compliant with the Disability & Discrimination Act 1995 and SGSG1 Accessible Stadia Guide. Designated wheelchair spectator areas will be accessible by lift at first and second floor levels. The VIP areas in the south stand are also accessible by lift.

Security and Access

11.3.8 The east stand is allocated for away supporters and will be fully separated from the home supporter stands. A separate area of parking for away supporters' coaches is located adjacent the east stand. Access to each stand is via full height turnstiles located in the perimeter walls. The number of turnstiles is in accordance with FA guidelines. Emergency exit gates are located around the perimeter walls.

11.3.9 The players and VIP entrance is located in the south east corner of the south stand. Players VIP parking is close by, with lift access to the second floor facilities from this entrance.



Stadium Dimensions

	Ground Floor minus seating	2nd Floor	Seating Numbers
South stand	2060m ²	1545m ²	South stand 1942
North stand	1810m ²		North stand 3064
East stand	970m ²		East stand 1756
West stand	970m ²		West stand 896
TOTAL	5810m²		7658

11.4 Hotel

11.4.1 The hotel is proposed to have 3 storeys although final detailed proposals for the appearance and dimensions of the hotel facility and restaurant will be reserved/subject to conditions until a suitable tenant/hotel chain is found to occupy the complex and built to that organisation's corporate specifications.

12 IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHEME

12.1 The proposal for the stadium is reliant in terms of securing funding by the release of the proposed residential land at Tattershall Road and York Street. The enabling development will provide resources, which together with other funding from the Football Foundation and the Club's Directors, will allow Boston United to relocate to the proposed stadium. All four of the applications submitted in relation to the proposal are inter-related. It is anticipated that in recognition of this dependency, an Agreement will be entered into to provide certainty to both the Local Planning Authority and the Football Foundation and Football League.

12.2 The proposed stadium is expected to take some 12 months to construct and, with procurement and fit out be added on, gives a development programme of some 18 months. On the assumption that the Council can issue planning permission in June 2006, following consideration of the proposals and an indication from Government office that the scheme will not be "called in", the



construction start date is likely to be August 2006. The stadium is therefore likely to be completed and ready for the 2007/8 season.

- 12.3 In order to give the certainty necessary, together with the provision of contributions to road construction, drainage, pedestrian links, travel plan objectives and improvements to the Country Park, a Section 106 Agreement will be required. Whereby these Heads of Terms will be linked to the issuing of planning permission for the schemes provided that BUFC is contractually committed to the development of the new stadium. Detailed discussions will be required to secure this agreement to enable development to proceed.

13 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Application Submission

- 13.1.1 The proposal relates to the development of a 10.75 hectare site to the west of Boston town centre. The development proposes the construction of the Boardsides stadium, a hotel, pub, and associated landscaping and engineering works including construction of a roundabout. The primary aim of the proposal is to provide a new and modern home for Boston United Football Club with associated training facilities for the benefit of the club, its supporters, the community more generally and to comply with Football League standards.
- 13.2 The proposed stadium requires to be constructed as part of an exceptional series of proposals linked together to secure the development. The Applicant will enter into an agreement with the Council to ensure the benefits of the enabling development are targeted to the construction of the new stadium.
- 13.3 The proposals for a new Stadium for Boston United at Boardsides will integrate with the other leisure and recreation developments at Boardsides. With the Princess Royal Sports Arena offering Rugby and Athletics and other recreational and leisure events, a critical mass of sport and recreation will be available, enabling the area to



become a centre of sporting excellence for the town and sub-region.

- 13.4 Alongside the stadium, increased community benefits will also be felt with a Park & Ride scheme, training pitches and provision of access to the Southern Economic Corridor route. The development will also provide wider economic benefits for the business community of Boston in the hotel, pub and conferencing facilities.

Brief History of Boston United Football Club

- 13.5 Boston United has a long and established history, its origins dating back to 1933, although the team from which it grew has existed in the town in one form or another since the late 1800's. Since this time it has provided an important source of entertainment and sporting opportunity for the Boston and Lincolnshire community and gives the town national prominence.

- 13.6 Since the thirties, the club's fortunes have fluctuated with a series of high points (promotions and cup success) and low points (relegations). At all times however, the club has received solid support, with the highest average home attendances for 25 years over the past three seasons. This reflects the great strides made by the club in recent years and the level of improvement now required by the Club to advance it further.

Requirements of the Modern Day Football Stadium

- 13.7 The modern day football supporter demands an entertainment package suitable for enjoyment with friends or family in a safe clean environment especially with increased competition from other leisure choices. The Club must respond to this and provide a greatly improved range of facilities to compete.

- 13.8 It is a necessity for the long-term future growth of Boston United Football Club that the stadium is relocated to a more spacious and sustainable location. Relocation is also required as a result of technical reasons and to comply with Football League safety standards. By reaching these targets, the Club will be in a position to secure Football Foundation funding to ensure the replacement of



its stadium and community activities. Evidently, the Club's involvement goes well beyond the first team into youth development and community outreach programmes. This is in addition to the large numbers of fans who support and attend the Club's matches.

- 13.9 From a financial perspective, Boston United needs to demonstrate long term economic stability before funders will be prepared to invest in the Club and as such has no other option but to relocate. The investment potential brought by the provision of conference and community facilities will put the club in a advantageous position to market itself to investors. Legal issues associated with the limited remaining lease on the York Street Ground also demand that the Club finds a new site within a suitable time scale to guarantee it has accommodation to continue playing League football.

Design

- 13.10 The design of the stadium will provide an eye-catching entrance to this gateway of Boston and improve the image of the Borough to visitors. The innovative design of the architecture will enhance the setting of nearby development and add to the enjoyment of community users and supporters alike.

Traffic

- 13.11 The Transport Study submitted with this application shows there is no existing safety issue on the local highway network and there is no associated concerns linked to the level of traffic generation expected for this proposal. Being outside the town centre the proposals will help to reduce town centre traffic congestion.
- 13.12 The impact of the stadium is primarily limited to match days, which are generally limited to August – April. It is considered that the proposed development is entirely appropriate for this site and that the proposed access/egress junction will wholly cater for the expected traffic levels. On this basis it is considered there are no traffic related reasons for objecting to the proposal.

Environmental Statement



13.13 There is also a need to consider the proposals in the context of the comprehensive Environmental Statement. The ES included with this submission has assessed the site proposals for:

- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ecology and Nature Conservation
- Cultural Heritage
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Sustainability and Other Issues
- Geological Site Investigation
- Drainage Strategies and Flood Risk Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment.

13.14 The Environmental Statement has influenced the design of the proposals and shows no significant disbenefits or constraints arising from the proposals. The development will result in the loss of some agricultural land and there will inevitably be some visual impact on the landscape, although every effort has been made to keep the stadium height to a minimum.

Need for Relocation

13.15 Boston United Football Club has endeavoured to respond to the needs of a modern day football club within the constraints of the outdated York Street Ground but relocation is now a real and urgent requirement. The current and draft deposit Structure Plan and Local Plan give support to and set the policy context against which the relocation of the Club must be considered. The need to relocate the football Club is overriding in terms of the operational requirements of the Club, its supporters and the wider benefits that will be enjoyed by the community, in terms of park and ride, community football pitches and new and improved leisure facilities.

13.16 A thorough search of alternative stadium sites has been undertaken and it is considered that the proposed site is the only suitable site for development in the Boston urban area without significant weaknesses and available within sufficient time to fulfil the Club's need to relocate. The proposal to locate at Boardsides will provide a critical mass of sporting provision alongside the Princess Royal



Sports Arena and will create a 'sports and leisure quarter' for the Boston community, providing facilities for athletics, football, rugby and other sports.

- 13.17 The PRSA is being promoted by the Council for use as a high quality athletics training facility and will be available to provide a location for facilities at the time of the 2012 Olympics. With the associated provision of a hotel and catering outlets at the proposed football stadium site, together with other supporting facilities, the Borough would be able to contribute all the necessary facilities to enable an Olympic-training base to host one of the competing teams in 2012. There is also the potential for a major event centre for Disabled sports for the Paralympics which will follow.

