

BIRCHWOOD LEISURE CENTRE, HATFIELD, HERTS. AL10 0AN

Proposed Stand by Sports Field

This proposal is to be sited entirely on Land owned and maintained by Hatfield Town Council.

It will not impact on Trust land, and it will not be removing any playing surface from the facilities enjoyed by Hatfield Town Council at present.

Siting for the Stand

There are three drawings associated with this submission, numbered 1, 2 and 3.

These are attached.

The design comprises two stands annotated "A" and "B" for the purposes of description in this submission.

They will both be sited on the bank which leads from the playing surface towards the main Leisure centre buildings.

A metal fence has been erected on the flat surface at the top of the bank, and my assumption is that this represents the boundary between the Trust land and the land owned by Hatfield Town Council. The flat land is Trust responsibility, and the bank is Town Council responsibility.

A set of steps has been set up to negotiate the bank (and the steps might incidentally contravene the Health and Safety Regulations), but they do provide an opportunity for the two stands shown on my drawings with one of each of "A" and "B" being erected either side of the steps.

Objective of the Stands

The objective of these two Stands is to provide a Community facility for the Council to offer to the public being sporting organisations or, perhaps, private firms or schools to hire in a pleasant and safe arena which will provide cover against inclement weather as well as protection from the sun, depending on the prevailing weather conditions.

The siting of the Stands will be such that they face North so the people using the Stands will be free from direct sunlight in their faces.

The offer to potential Clients will be to be used as sporting facilities or an open area for gymnastic displays, boxing/wrestling contests, used as a temporary running track which private firms might be attracted by for adults as well as children to participate in.

A principle objective is for the Council to be able to offer facilities with options to play football, rugby, hockey, and any other sport that can be set up temporarily by the Council's in-house staff and dismantled at the end of the day.

By offering facilities to Local businesses who might want to use them as an annual event within their firm, and could be attractive for firms that do not have such facilities, the word could pass on and other firms, schools and the like might want to consider hiring the Stands (or perhaps one Stand) for a day or a weekend for example.

Members of the public and others are likely to make suggestions for other options to use the facilities. Provided satisfactory arrangements for insurance and Planning Permissions can be approved, serious opportunities for raising income could be achieved.

The use of the Stands, whether used directly by the Town Council or the hirer can have temporary stall facilities with arts, crafts, and gifts for sale, somewhat similar to a market or car boot sale. Subject to Insurance cover being obtained.

For such times as those that we are passing through now due to the pandemic, when the Council's income has been depleted due to restrictions, facilities that I propose would provide additional options for the Council to raise funds instead of relying too much on a narrowly focussed sporting activity.

Design and Concept of the Stands

The design and concept of the Stands has been based specifically on keeping them low key.

Each Stand is shown on the drawing as being 20 meters long, and to sit either side of the new steps. Because the proposal has only four rows of seats in each Stand, the overall height is kept low, and will not dominate the Leisure Centre building behind. This is likely to be attractive to the Planning Department rather than there being a large over dominant structure in place.

Each Stand could seat 32 people, but they could easily be designed up to 10 meters longer increasing the seating capacity to about 48 people in each Stand.

The steps already installed means that only one of the Stands would need to be erected, initially, in order to conserve funds, and the other one could be erected at a later date when the time is right to accommodate larger numbers of people using the facility.

The designs shown on the drawings allows for extended columns to project down in to the supporting soil leaving the face of the bank to be concealed to prevent unauthorised people gaining entry to the space underneath the Stand.

At a greater cost, the lower part of the structure could be supported on a reinforced concrete structure enclosed with access doors to provide dry storage space.

It would be an acceptable design to incorporate solar panels on the roofs.

The pitch will not have an artificial surface because these are impermeable, and run-off after rainfall could run down the bank and cause flooding at the base of the wall to the Leisure Centre where damage could be caused,

Car Parking

Because the intention of the Stands is to be able to offer low key facilities, and there will not be any more than 130 to 150 people using both Stands as a maximum, and more than one person will be visiting in their cars, and not everyone will visit by car, there will not be greater pressure on car parking facilities than exist with present use of Birchwood.

However, it is one of the items to negotiate with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's Parking Manager if further developments are to proceed with this proposal.

Security

Each Stand would have fixed panels at the lower part of the backs with lockable access doors, to protect against opportunist intruders.

The upper parts facing the field of play and the sides would be protected by roller shutter doors which would be raised when needed.

As an added precaution, security cameras can be installed so that any anti-social behaviour can be captured, and used to identify and apprehend any would be anti-social behaviour villains.

These cameras will not need to be monitored 24 hours a day, but just needed to identify villains.

Costings and Income

Costings

Each stand will contain 80 square meters.

For the construction costs I have assessed that this will cost in the region of £40,000.00 for each Stand excluding VAT to include for the basic structure, solar panels, lighting and power inside the units, CCTV, lights attached to the fascia to be used for activity close to the Stands, such as for training sessions.

I have used a figure of £500.00 per square meter to arrive at £40,000.00, which means £80,000.00 for the two Stands.

On-going costs.

The costs for maintaining the playing surface will be the same as at present because it will be grass.

General maintenance will be required with re-decorating the steelwork every five years being the biggest potential cost.

Because the Stands will be on Town Council land, any increase in Business Rates is likely to be charged in the with the present charging system, but this will need to be checked.

However, I recognise that increases in Business Rates, insurance, and on-going maintenance will need to be charged to the hirers of the pitch and the Stand/s. The impact of this would be that fewer organisations might want to hire the facilities creating lower income, and it is an element of the finances for a new Stand/s that will need to be taken into account when deciding on whether or not development proposals should proceed. There are too many imponderables at present to be able to make a judgement with this, but cannot be ignored when making a Decision about proceeding with the proposals.

Income

Charging hirers of the Stands is a question of finding a position which is comfortable with the Town Council and hirers alike. Perhaps, for each Stand, £100.00 for a half day, or £200.00? Whatever fee is agreed, the hirers can then charge £5.00 a seat, perhaps, for their own visitors to sit in them.

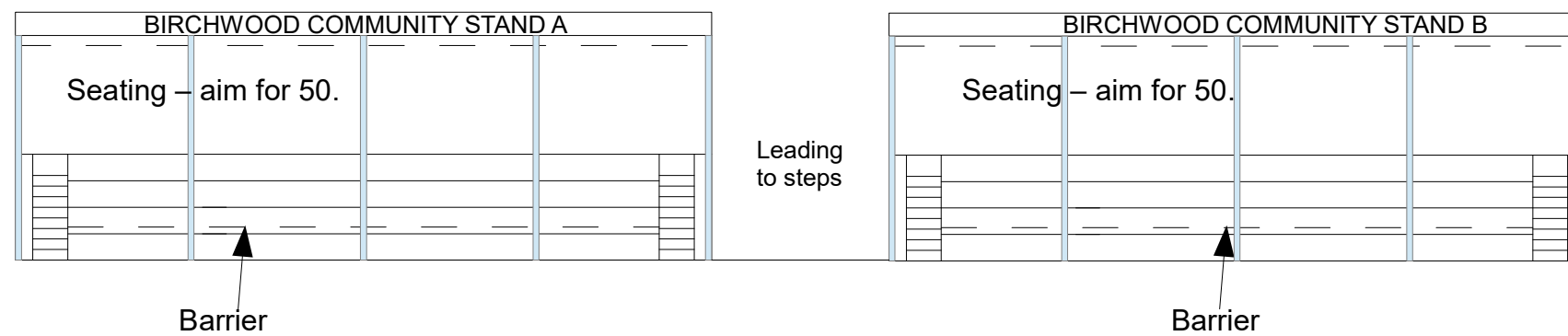
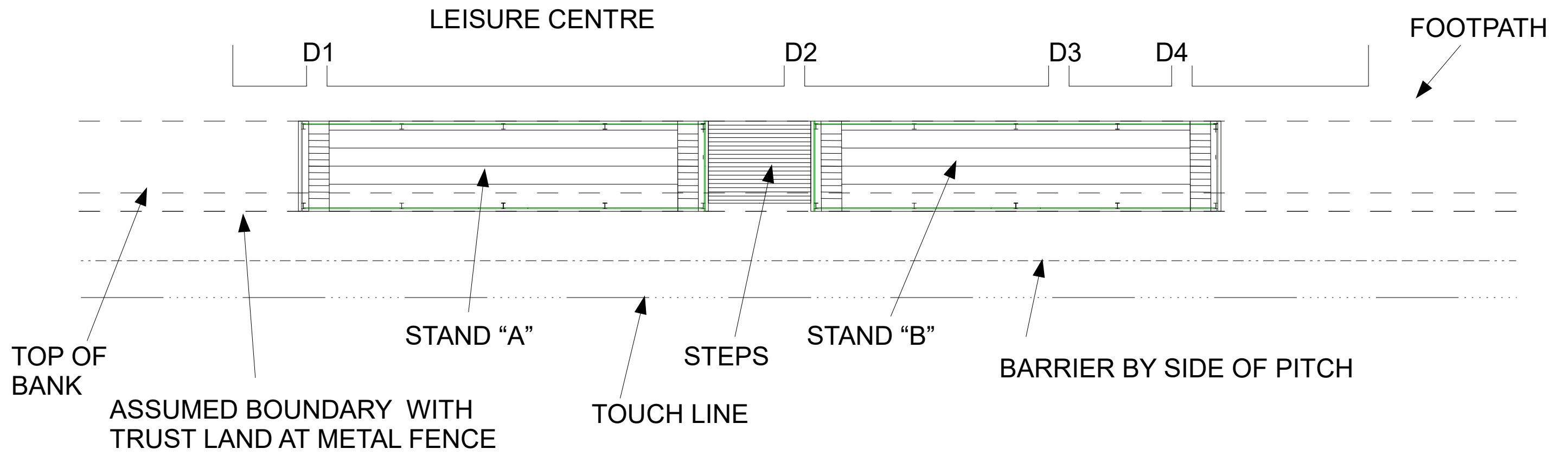
Assuming there is only half a take up in a year at £100.00 a time, say 26 at £100.00 amounts to £2,600.00 a year, which may cover increased rates, maintenance, etc.

However, if a Grant is obtained for this project the financial calculation will have to be re-assessed.

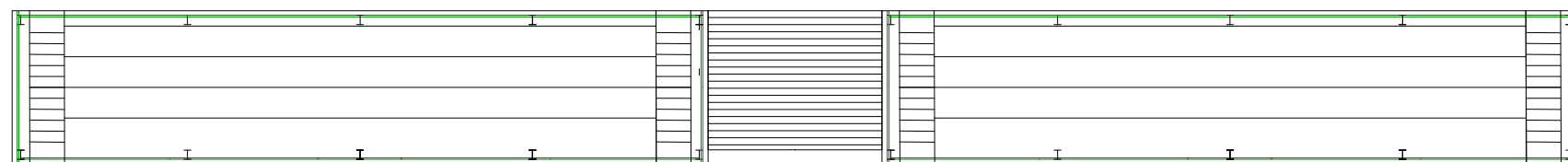
Cllr Richard Griffiths

Richard Griffiths

Date:- 20 July 2021



FACING PLAYING AREA

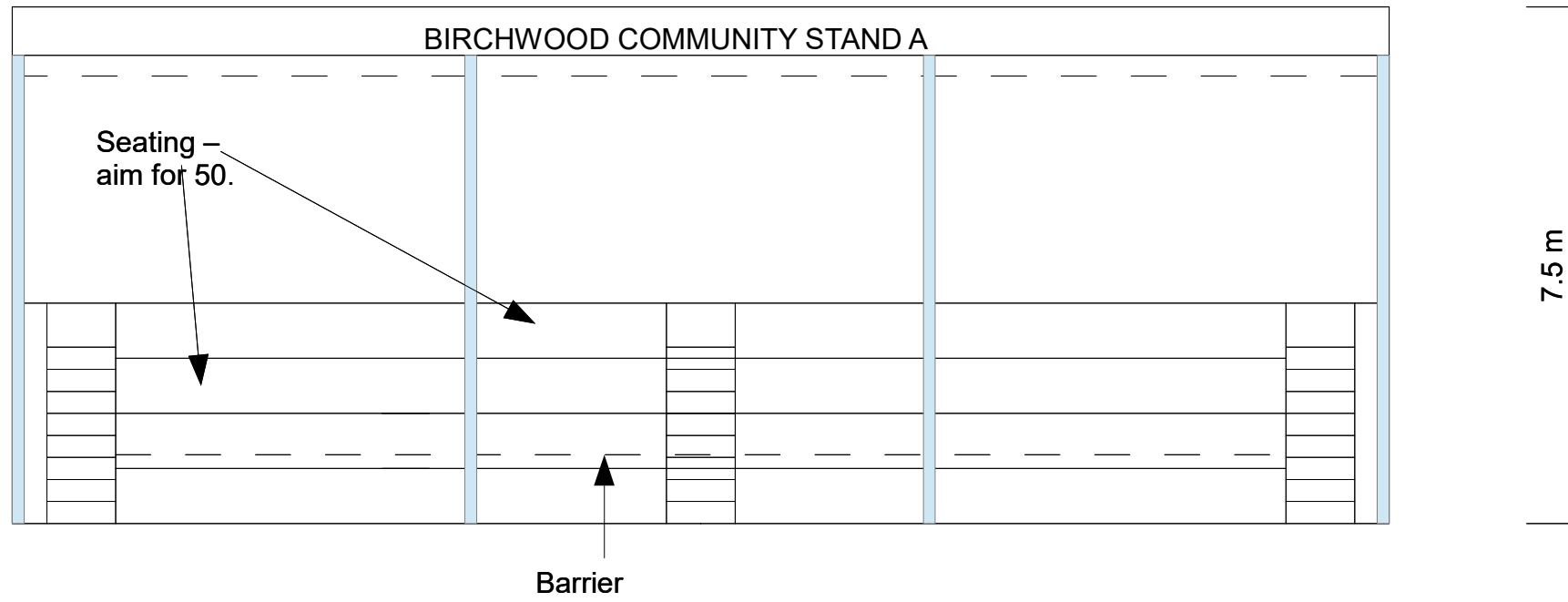


PLANS

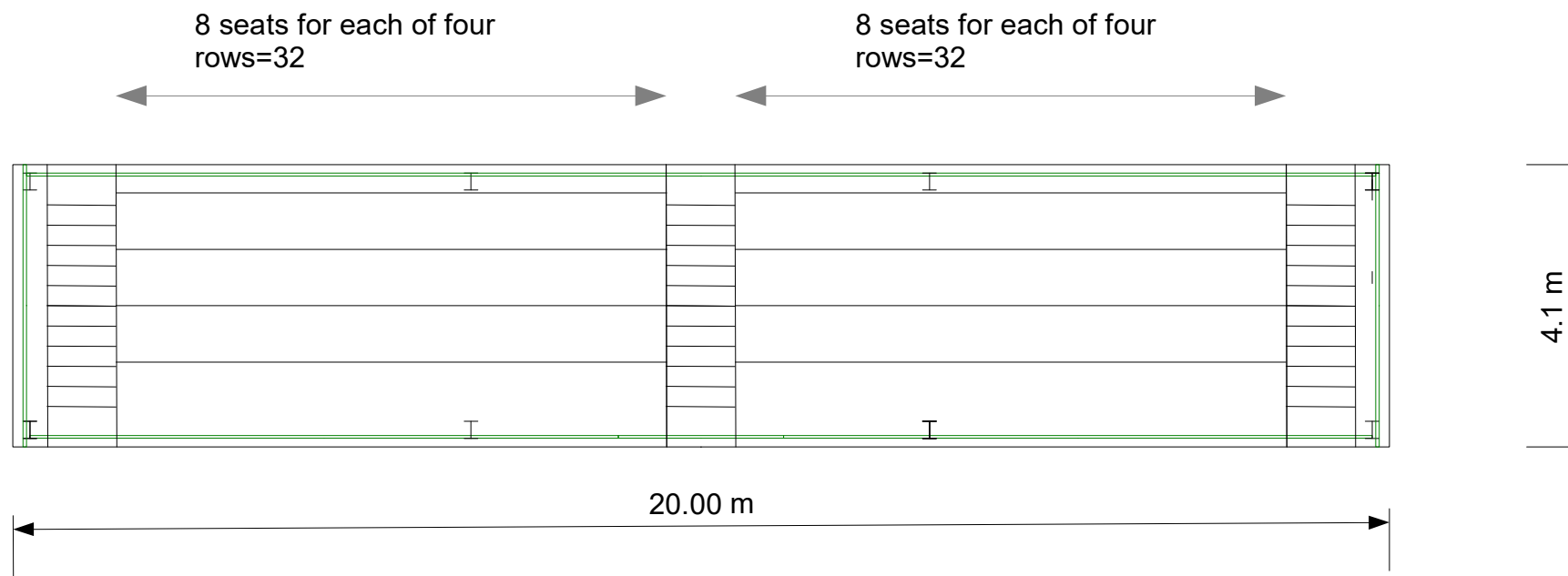
SUBMISSION BY CLLR RICHARD GRIFFITHS SCALE 1:200

DRAWING NO. 1

BIRCHWOOD LEISURE CENTRE - POSSIBLE SPECTATOR STANDS



Elevation Facing Field of Play



PLAN

SUBMISSION BY CLLR RICHARD GRIFFITHS SCALE 1:100 DRAWING NO. 2

BIRCHWOOD LEISURE CENTRE – POSSIBLE SPECTATOR STANDS “A” and “B”

BIRCHWOOD LEISURE CENTRE – POSSIBLE SPECTATOR STANDS
Diagrammatic Details

