# Fir Park Corner FC

Community Asset Transfer

Application Submitted 12/06/24



# **Contents**

The below is a summary of the criteria required to be fulfilled in order to complete a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). We hope to have satisfied these requirements within this presentation and accompanying documents.



### **Community Proposal**

This should explain the objectives of the project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes we plan to make to the site and any activities that will take place there.



### **Benefits of the proposal**

This should explain how the project will benefit our community and others.



#### **Current Condition of Asset**

A description of the current state of the site, including photos and a list of the work urgently required to be completed.



### **Negative Consequences**

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if our request is adhered to? And how would we minimise these?



#### **Capacity to deliver**

This should show how we will be able to manage the project and achieve our objectives.



### **Level and nature of support**

Details of support for the request from community and others outside of club membership.



#### **Funding**

Costs associated with the transfer of the site and future use of it, including renovation and regeneration, and how it would be financed.



### **Checklist of accompanying documents**





FIR PARK CORNER FC were born out of a Motherwell Supporters Club back in 2001 to get a group of 'Well fans who met online into kicking a football around while following their team.

However, the club has developed into much more than that in the years since. We have competed in various competitions all over the UK, winning everything there is to be won at this level, including most recently winning the Scottish league this season with the Scottish Cup Final still to come.

More importantly, we have developed an infrastructure that has allowed us to grow as a club and make some ambitious plans to support the community around us.

Our over 35s side has been established for several seasons now and were promoted as champions last term, now in the top-flight playing against some very well-established clubs packed with former professionals.

We also now have four children's teams with plans for a further two to be introduced next season. This shows a very clear pathway through the club from a very young age, allowing people to experience all the physical and mental benefits of being involved in organised sport throughout every stage of life, regardless of their background.

We have previously had it written into our constitution that any surplus funds are donated to a nominated charity which has allowed us to make many healthy contributions over the years - last year we donated a total of £3,283 to various causes including Chris' House, CHAS and Ocumel UK to name but a few - but now we are turning our attention to offering help and support more directly.

We have become a registered charity which means that our surplus funds should be invested into local sport and community causes, which we have done with great effect in getting the children's teams off the ground and becoming self-sustainable.

A site of our own based in the local community for us to play matches, carry out training sessions and host other public events would fulfil a long-held ambition for us to make a positive impact on those around us over a long period of time and we believe we have everything that is required to make the dream a reality.

Please view our application for a Community Asset Transfer positively and allow us to start the next stage in our journey.

#### **David Fraser**

Club chairman



# **Community Proposal**

There has been a shortage of adequate football pitches in North Lanarkshire for a considerable length of time, and the recent closure announcements, albeit subsequently reversed, suggest that this situation is likely to get worse over the coming years. This is threatening the future of our club (and others) and we have felt for a significant period that we are well-equipped to take over a site to help grow our club and engage the local community.

The strength of our financial position will enable us to renovate and regenerate the site as well as manage it on an ongoing basis, starting with an extensive four-stage project to almost rebuild the existing structure fully, repair the perimeters and groundwork and regenerate the surrounding greenspace.

The project will include, but not be limited to, the replacement of the roof and guttering, full new plumbing system (7 showers, 3 toilets, 3 sinks, 1 boiler and extensive pipework), all internal and external doors replaced, internal joinery work, ground excavation and rebuilding perimeter walls. We have already engaged several local businesses and obtained quotes for all four stages of our project. These are available on request if required.

As the project is completed, it will become a base for our football teams to train and play matches and host events for the wider local community. We have already had discussions with OneWishaw Development Trust and the Overtown & Waterloo Community Council about how we can collaborate to host free events for a diverse group of people across the local area and all parties are keen to progress this as soon as possible.

At present, we have an amateur team, an over 35s team, and four children's teams. Acquiring this site will not only benefit all members of these teams but will also allow us to add further teams to our club and further increase the number of local people of all ages to become involved in sport. At present, each of these teams must book various pitches individually for training and matches so all the costs involved with that would be immediately saved and transferred to the account specifically opened for the maintenance and upkeep of the site.



# **Benefits of the Proposal**

It will benefit not only our club but other clubs who are also currently suffering with the shortage of available pitches as we will no longer have to postpone games & would allow some other clubs to use it when we have away matches. Wishaw Wycombe Wanderers expressed an interest in one of their girls' teams using it regularly on a Sunday during our consultation with them and we would be happy to support this as they are currently feeling the same frustration as us at the lack of suitable pitches available nearby. Further to this, it will also benefit local children as it will facilitate us to fulfil our ambitions of adding further age group teams to our club. The IFA League, the Scottish Amateur Football Association and the Scottish Youth Football Association have all expressed their support to our project as it would offer them additional assurances that their member clubs will be able to honour scheduled fixtures as planned.

The local area currently has no football teams for any age group nearby and approximately 12,000 people live in the area partially due to recent housing regeneration. There are also roughly 600 pupils at the school on the same road who currently must travel out-with Overtown if they want to become involved in organised sport. We would offer them a convenient route into a healthy, low-cost activity with endless physical, social, and mental health benefits. When we met with the Community Council, several members commented on how they have missed having a local team to follow in the area and would enjoy the opportunity to do so again. We would relish the opportunity to meet this gap in demand. The expansion of our club that the CAT would enable us to deliver would directly result in more members (existing and new) obtaining professional qualifications including coaching badges specific to children and first aid certifications which would not only benefit the individuals but also allow them to support others with their newly-acquired skills.

Businesses in the area will also see a rise in footfall with regular visitors to the site. We have been in touch with a number of these during our preparation and they would welcome the increase in visitors, as well as some care finally being taken over a site that has become derelict over the past decade.

Furthermore, we would like to turn the current eyesore into a welcoming space for all members of the community to visit and spend time, and we have already been in touch with a local gardening club who are delighted that we suggested investing in them to do some work bringing some natural beauty to a central space in their community that has been neglected for too long. As a show of faith, we have already sponsored them to place some planters with flowers around the village to back up our commitment to being a healthy contributor to the local area.



# **Current Condition of Asset**

Over the past decade, the site has been allowed to fall into a state that can only be described as derelict. The immediate issues include, but are not limited to:

- Extensive drainage work needed as pitch flooded due to lack of maintenance over a long period.
- All plumbing, including internal and underground pipework, needs to be replaced.
- Full new roof and ceiling to be installed due to rot and water damage.
- External walls to be rebuilt to re-establish boundaries as these have fallen and have been left as rubble.
- Car park to be resurfaced and possibly extended as current surface is dangerous to motorists and pedestrians due to cracks and potholes
- Significant groundwork to be carried out as much of site overgrown and full of litter through years of neglect.

This work is expected to cost a total of approximately £60,000 which clearly represents a figure significantly out-with the NLC budget for restoration as the site has been overlooked in two internal NLC strategic reviews since it was last maintained and has been classified as 'surplus' since at least 2018.

There are currently no known restrictions on the use or development of the land, but it would be retained only for Community and Sports purposes and will not be repurposed or sold for commercial activity.



# **Negative Consequences**

There are literally no negative consequences to our proposal. We have met with residents' groups, local businesses, MSPs, councillors and other football clubs who have offered us their support, as well as having received an overwhelmingly positive response from local people via our survey.

The only reservation we had raised to us was around car parking and how this could impact the adjoining café, but we have reassured the owner that we plan to invest in the carpark at the back to have it resurfaced and that signs will be erected to indicate that visitors to our site should only park there and not in front of her shop as it may deter customers. We have also given her our contact details and encouraged ongoing dialogue on how we can work together moving forward. We have also spoken directly to the homeowner from the adjoining property at the opposite side who was very positive about our plans to improve the area.

In the short term, the surface in the access road and car park can be repaired relatively cheaply (circa £400) but in the longer term it can be milled out to a 50mm depth and resurfaced completely for £30 per square metre. This is work we will look to undertake when the rest of the project is complete and may coincide with the existing car park being slightly extended.

From a total of 350 people who answered our Community Engagement survey, we received five 'unsure' and one 'no' response to our question of "Would you be supportive of Fir Park Corner FC taking ownership of the (Castlehill Road) site?". We proactively reached out to these six people to offer further dialogue to allay any doubts they may have. Two of those people responded to our offer and we have provided them with more details of what we are trying to achieve. One of the initial objections was that the person didn't realise we were a local club, so we made them aware that we were the last team to hold a block booking on the pitch over a decade ago and explained some of the work we have already done to support Overtown and its inhabitants.



# Capacity to deliver

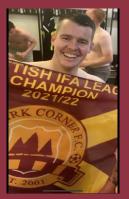
We have a seven-person club committee that boasts a long and distinguished history with the club, as well as many personal and professional qualities that will transfer directly to this project.





David Fraser
Chairman

A founding member of the club, David is responsible for oversight of all teams and will be co-ordinating this project.



**Craig Mitchell** 

1<sup>st</sup> Team Manager

Five years at the club and professional contacts in the building trade, Craig will arrange contractors access to the site and ensure health & safety standards are being adhered to throughout.



**Gavin Hepworth** 

Over 35s Manager

Over 20 years with the club with a background in Project Management and people leadership, Gavin will be organising ground maintenance and general site upkeep.



**Scott Mullen** 

Head of Youth

Back at the club for the past three years after playing almost two decades ago, Scott has a strong media background and will ensure residents and stakeholders are kept up-to-date with the project and future plans.



**Malcolm Boyd** 

Facilities Coordinator

Retired as a longserving playing member in 2022, Malcolm now arranges lets and bookings on facilities and will manage the gradual transition to the new



**Craig Keatings** 

<u>Treasurer</u>

Just finished his 7<sup>th</sup> season as a player, Craig compiles the 1<sup>st</sup> team accounts and will be managing the budget of this project with support from the Chairman.



Ross Elliot
Secretary

As club captain, Ross already has several admin duties already and will extend this to managing insurance and utilities at the site.

# Level & Nature of support

As mentioned previously, we have engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders while preparing our project, and all have given us their support. To date, we have had overwhelming backing from an extensive collection of individuals, businesses and community groups.

Former Provost Agnes Magowan & Gillian Mackay MSP have an in-depth knowledge of our club and our plans, so have been very supportive in communicating with the local council on our behalf to progress our application. Further to this, we have spoken to the most prominent multi-age group football clubs in the surrounding area who have all offered to assist where required. Craigneuk Amateurs and Motherwell Phoenix both offered to share resources during both the renovation and ongoing upkeep as they have successfully used the skills and expertise of several local people and businesses while undertaking similar projects in the past. Furthermore, Wishaw Fat 2 Fit are a charity football club who support mental and physical wellbeing and we have provisionally agreed to enter a partnership which allows them to use the site for their members throughout the year in exchange for some support with the upkeep and maintenance.

More locally to the site, we have engaged with businesses such as Tom, Dick & Harrys Café, The Clydesdale Bar and G4 Claims who have all welcomed our plans and are looking to support our involvement in their neighbourhood going forward, and we have met with the Overtown & Waterloo Community Council and Cllr Fiona Fotheringham who are keen to work with us going forward, both for consultation on the redevelopment of the site and for ongoing community events.

Finally, we met with the OneWishaw Development Trust steering group recently which included a wide variety of clubs and community groups from the ML2 post code area and all attendees were enthusiastic about our plans so we can state with confidence that we have universal support for what we are trying to achieve.

On a more individual basis, we conducted an online survey which was promoted in the local press and received 350 responses, the detail of which are detailed on the next slide. The leaflet used to promote this to local residents is also attached, as well as the raw survey data.



### **CASTLEHILL ROAD SURVEY RESPONSE**

Thank you very much to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey. We will use the responses to further strengthen our Community Asset Transfer application to North Lanarkshire Council and hopefully this will help us fulfil our ultimate goal of developing and managing our own space within the local community.

350 people responded to the survey, the equivalent of almost 20% of the population of Overtown, and 98% said they are in favour of FPC taking over the site. Below are just a small sample of some of the comments of support left by local people.



"Without the attention and care that Fir Park Corner would provide, I would be concerned that the site would soon fall into a state of disrepair."

"...amazing watching the club doing what they are doing with the local kids."

"Investing in a local community can provide a platform to engage in a wide variety of activities that can help support not only health, but mental wellbeing and community spirit."

"A great club with great values."

"I support the scoping work already undertaken by the club to outline their vision for this site. I would wholeheartedly support their change of ownership application."

"This is a great community football club, committed to providing and expanding football opportunities for children and adults alike which is greatly needed. They always go about their business in a very professional and responsible manner. Very impressive."

"The club has community at heart and the folk running it give everything to make it a success."

"I would love to be able to help out in anyway I can. Such an admirable initiative and would be good for the village as a whole."

# Level & Nature of support

We have mentioned throughout this pack, the vast amount of backing we have received during the process, and we have detailed some of the specific communication here for proof, including some testimonials from our <u>website</u>

- Motherwell Phoenix met through OneWishaw Development Trust and was given a tour of their site by chairman Andy Love on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 who offered to share resources and advice
- Craigneuk Amateurs chairman Ryan Duddy contacted us on June 25<sup>th</sup> 2023 to offer help where required. Visited the Humph on August 18<sup>th</sup> to see the work completed there.
- Wishaw Wycombe Wanderers under 15s girls team manager Barry Jones offered to assist with some manual work on the site and expressed an interest in using it when complete on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2022
- Clydesdale Bar ongoing dialogue over the past six months or so. Most recent meeting at club AGM hosted there on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- Tom, Dick and Harrys Café ongoing dialogue since July 1st 2023.
- National Lottery advised we would be likely to be in a favourable position for funding once ownership is transferred on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2022.
- Cllr Agnes Magowan emailed NLC on our behalf many times from 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021 until 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and met with us twice between those dates.
- Overtown & Waterloo Community Council open dialogue since November 30th 2021. Met in person and received unanimous support of members present on November 21st 2023
- Cllr Fiona Fotheringham met at above meeting on November 21st 2023 where she offered to support in any way possible.
- SYFA Board member Stephen Cumming expressed his support on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024 as member clubs in North Lanarkshire are often struggling for adequate pitches.
- VirginMoney PLC obtained Bankers Opinion on December 13<sup>th</sup> 2023 which stated a long banking history with continuous growth suggested we would not enter an arrangement we could not fulfil.
- Wishaw FC Fat 2 Fit met at the site on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024 and agreed to an ongoing partnership.



As well as fun and enjoyment, sports clubs bring great benefits to people and society.

Good quality, accessible, well-staffed and well-maintained health and leisure centres should be available to all, and outdoor playing fields shoul be protected. Spaces for physical activity should be accessible to those who don't want to participate in competitive sport.

The fantastic work Fir Park Corner have been doing in their local community for several years should not be underestimated. They have increased participation across a number of age groups and with the right support will continue for many years to come.

Gillian Mackay MSP, Green Party Spokesperson for Health & Social Care



As a local business owner, I wholeheartedly endorse the efforts of Fir Park

Corner to revitalise the Castlehill Road site in Overtown.

Investing in community spaces like this not only improves the quality of life for residents but also fosters economic growth. By creating a hub for sports and community events, Fir Park Corner will attract more visitors to the area, benefiting local businesses and provide providing opportunities for people of all ages to engage in physical within the community. I fully support their vision and encourage others to do the same.

Nicole Rudder, G4 Claims and Garrion Tower Owner



Fir Park Corner have our full support in taking over the renovation and ongoing running of the Overtown site. They are a long-standing and valued member of our organisation and we applaud the community work they have done up until this point. We have no doubt acquiring this site will allow them to carry out more activities to enhance the local community.

We are also encouraged by the impact this will have on other members of our league who have previously been inconvenienced and let down when attempting to play matches in North Lanarkshire. Good luck to everyone involved

The Committee, IFA Supporters League



Playing football, or Indeed any sport, is a great way to relieve stress and the grind of daily life. Fir Park Corner FC have made a huge difference to peoples lives over the years, from young budding footballers to the older approximation looking to keen themselves fit and to socialise.

Physical activity, for all ages, has been proven to aid a person's physical and mental health, and the work Fir Park Corner are carrying out should be praised. Outdoor playing fields should be encouraged in every town and city

Fir Park Corner have done some fantastic work over the years, growing from a few Motherwell fans having a game of football to where they are today.

Fir Park Corner have my full support in acquiring this site in Overtown and look forward to them going from strength to strength and continuing to serve the cammunity for many more years.

Marion Fellows SNP, MP for Motherwell and Wishaw, Spokesperson for Disabilities

# **Funding**

The site is currently derelict, unsafe, and unsanitary so we would hope that the council would be agreeable to transferring the ownership to us for a reasonable fee to allow us to put a more significant portion of funds raised for the project into improving it for their residents.

As of today's date, (12/06/2024) we have over £30k across our various bank accounts, with over £19k of that ring-fenced for this project, plus significant fund-raising efforts confirmed before the end of the calendar year which should take us to at least £25k for the project. Phase 1 is expected to cost approximately £15k, and upon completion of phase 1 we can start earning a small internal revenue from the site which will help fund future phases. We have also had positive funding discussions with the National Lottery with a view to obtaining a grant for the second phase of work, but this could not proceed before we had the Asset Transfer completed. We have already presented to North Lanarkshire Council our audited accounts and detailed project plan including current and future revenue streams but would be happy to do so again if required.

North Lanarkshire Council provided us with an estimate of £1200 per annum to maintain a site such as this, and with our current financial model we will save more than that figure on pitch hire alone so will comfortably be able to meet the ongoing costs once the renovation is complete.



# **Current Sources of Income**

We have several revenue streams currently. These include:

# **Adult Member Subscriptions**

We currently have 37 subscribed adult members who pay an average of £300 per annum. Going forward, we anticipate this number to increase as having a home pitch with guaranteed fixtures should attract additional members.

# **Sportsman's Dinner**

We have a standing booking for a Sportsman's Dinner at Dalziel Park every November, with a guaranteed profit of a minimum of £4000.

### **Junior Subscriptions**

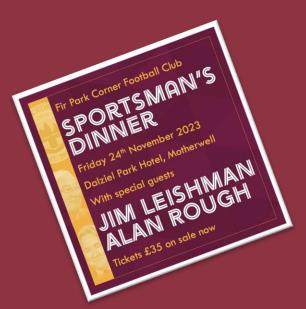
We currently have 46 subscribed junior members, each paying £270 per annum. We intend to establish at least one new team for next season so this should also increase significantly.

### **Additional Events**

Each individual team will organise their own additional events including Quiz Nights, Discos, Player of the Year Dances, etc with a percentage of the profits gong to the Project Fund.



We have run these throughout the past 18 months and have raised over £3000 to date, with over 80 people taking part. These will continue and we expect this to grow in parallel with the club.



### Kiltwalk

We have at least twelve adult members completing this in September, with each member raising sponsorship individually. Conservative target set at £2500.

### **Football Festivals**

We ran our first football festival in January which raised almost £3000. We already have a second one booked in for January 2025. The first one was a one-day event with 32 teams and the second one will be a two-day event with 64 teams already signed up, which guarantees a significantly higher profit. Going forward, we are looking to book additional festivals for a variety of age groups which will again increase profit.



# Ongoing financing of site

Upon completion of the Project, we believe we will be able to very comfortably meet ongoing running costs associated with the site. Following on from the previous slide, each of the figures used below are very conservative estimates of what level of funds from each of our revenue streams will be allocated to the site maintenance fund.



Our first team are guaranteed to play 13 home league matches per year and our Over 35s are guaranteed 11. Both sides also enter multiple cup competitions and organise several friendly matches each year, all with a possibility of including home fixtures. Each time a home match is played, £70 will be transferred into the account opened specifically for site upkeep.

Minimum annual income £1680.

### **Kiltwalk**

All funds raised will go directly to the site maintenance fund, and we currently have 12 adult members signed up, each tasked with raising at least £200. We expect both those numbers to be comfortably exceeded before the event. Minimum annual income £2400.

### **Training**

We will host 1<sup>st</sup> team training at the site from April to September inclusive, with a six-week gap for pitch maintenance and recovery. This will be twice per week during the season and three times per week during pre-season. £40 will be transferred for each session. Two of our children's teams will also train there once per week during the same period at a cost of £25 per session. Minimum annual income £2860.

# **Site Advertising**

We already have four businesses who have pledged to pay £500 each plus costs to have their signage displayed at the site for one year, and this option hasn't even been advertised yet. Minimum annual income £1000.

# **Sportsman's Dinner**

This is an annual event, and it has been agreed that ticket proceeds will go to the individual teams and funds raised on the night will go to the site maintenance fund. To date, the lowest amount raised on the night has been £3300. Minimum annual income £3000.

### **Additional Events**

The additional events mentioned previously, including Bonus Balls/Last Man Standing and Football Festivals will continue to go ahead as planned, with the allocation of funds decided at the time based on club requirements. Potential additional income £10k+ annually.

The above indicates that we will very comfortably be able to contribute a five-figure sum into the upkeep of the site annually, with a very healthy club surplus that we could also utilise if required. This is based on revenue streams that are already in place and does not take into accounts any fund-raising events that we could hold at the site or any grants that we will become eligible for once we own the site.

# **Site Running Costs**

There will be a number of ongoing costs associated with the site, which we will comfortably pay as per the previous slide. It is obviously difficult to know the exact cost of the work in advance, but we have provided fair estimates below. These include, but are not limited to:

### **Pitch maintenance**

We estimate that the pitch will need cut approximately 20 times in a calendar year and lined every second time it is cut. We will also have a 6-week period each summer where any specific areas are re-seeded or re-turfed as appropriate.

Approximate annual cost £1100.

# **Building Maintenance**

Very difficult to predict but a joinery firm, a plumbing company and an electrician have all pledged to carry out ongoing maintenance with no labour costs in lieu of sponsorship so only materials would have to be paid for by the club.

Budget of £1500.

### **Utilities**

Various bills including Electricity, Public Liability Insurance and Buildings Insurance. Approximate annual cost £1800.

# Cleaning

There will be a firm onus on each of our teams to look after the site when used so should be kept clean and tidy on an ongoing basis. We will also be doing quarterly litter-picks on the outdoor space. However, we have arranged with a local cleaner to carry out a deep-clean inside the pavilion each month, with the exception of June and July.

Approximate annual cost £600.

# Gardening

This is not an essential cost, but we plan to provide the Overtown Brighter Village Association with an annual budget to plant flowers in spring, prune trees and generally uphold the welcoming green space that we plan to create within the initial project. Budget of £500.



There will be unforeseen costs in the addition to these, but we feel that we have adequately explained that we will have the funds to cover these as they arise. Within our annual budget, we will ensure that a minimum of £6050 remains in the account to cover the above (plus 10%).

# **Financial Offer**

As per the attached survey carried out by DM Hall, the value of the land has been rounded up to £35,000 (thirty-five thousand pounds).

With the community benefit already outlined in this application, combined with the overwhelming support received from all parties and the continual decline in the condition of the site, we feel that an appropriate figure for the transfer of ownership of the site would be 50% of the value. We have arrived at this figure based on advice from Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) and by reviewing similar cases in other council areas in the past.

To confirm, our proposal for a transfer of ownership of the site at 56 Castlehill Road is a one-off payment of £17,500 (Seventeen thousand, five hundred pounds only).

We hope this meets with your approval, because a higher figure would significantly detract from our ability to deliver the valuable regenerated community space that is so badly needed by so many people in your local area.

If there are any aspects of this application that you would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact us.







# **Accompanying Documents**

Sent alongside this proposal is the following:



#### **Community Asset Transfer Application**

Details of this application presented within the template provided by North Lanarkshire Council.



#### **Bank Statements**

Last twelve months Bank Statements to overlap with period between audited accounts and present date.



#### **Bankers Opinion**

Letter from our bankers, VirginMoney PLC, stating that we are long-standing customers, and our account conduct assures them we would not enter into an agreement we could not fulfil.



#### **Land Survey**

Copy of survey and valuation carried out independently by DM Hall at the request of NLC



#### **Audited Accounts**

Last years audited accounts as requested



#### **Club Constitution**

Most recent copy of Club Constitution per CAT guidelines. This has already been reviewed by NLC and amended per their request.



#### **Contact Details**

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information on our proposal or any aspect of our application.

