

TGAS 3G PITCH PROPOSAL - FAQs

During the COVID-19 breakout, the presentation that would have been shared at a public information meeting was shared on the Academy website and letters were sent to the local community, parents and staff. Questions were invited by email and, in the interests of transparency, are answered in this document which will also be available on the Academy website.

Are there any buildings included in these proposals e.g. changing rooms? Is there any changing room provision?

There are no plans for any additional buildings in association with the pitch. There is sufficient changing room provision on the Academy site.

Do the proposals for parking mean that the access gates will be left open during evenings and weekends?

As lettings currently already take place in the evenings and at weekends, the access gates are open during letting hours. There are no plans to change this for the 3G pitch.

Would it be possible to expand this pitch to a full size one in the future?

There is not the physical space to put a full sized adult pitch and, once built, it would not be possible to 'expand'. The pitch we are proposing is not suitable for a full sized, adult game of football (therefore it could not be used for adult fixtures). TGAS are not interested in building a facility for adults as this is primarily a facility for use by our students.

What 'powers' do the TGAS 3G steering group have? What is its constitution & terms of reference? How will the local residents be selected?

The steering group is a consultative group. It will be established to ensure that the facility is running smoothly, meeting the community football needs and listening to the feedback from the local residents.

The terms of reference for this group will be determined once planning is approved.

Residents can contact the Academy if they have an interest in being involved in the steering group. If there are a number of interested residents, then a process will be determined to select representatives.

Is the pitch bookable by people/organisations other than "club night" teams? For example could I book a one off game? Could an evening be let to an organisation like Leisure Leagues?

Such is the demand for football facilities and need for this 3G, that this 3G is already provisionally booked by partner clubs for 48 weeks a year. These partner clubs will focus on training for their club members and will provide through their "club nights" opportunities such as walking football for over 50's and mini kickers for children that our community can access should they not be members of a club.

There will be no casual or recreational use other than that which our partner clubs may wish to organise and supervise for non-club members, for example through the FA "Just Play" initiative.

There will be no 5 a side league nor will the pitch be let for leisure leagues. 5 a side leagues are catered for elsewhere, for example at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.

If this is not a commercial venture, what is meant by 'Club Nights'?

An evening where one local partner football club uses the 3G entirely, ensuring accountability for standards. By having only their players, coaches and families present during a "Club Night" it guarantees a positive environment for our community.

Who are the “representatives from the local community” who have been consulted?

One of the local councillors put us in touch with the Whitefields Action Group and we have been consulting with representatives from this group. They have not been speaking on behalf of residents nor have they a mandate to speak for the community but they have provided useful feedback to us and we have adjusted plans accordingly.

Has there been any estimate of changes to traffic volumes in Dingle Lane/ Whitefields Road especially at peak commuting times e.g. 17:00 – 18:00?

Yes this is included in the Design and Access statement. Furthermore, partner clubs will be encouraged to car share, use public transport and cycle.

What does the phrase “This is not a commercial venture” mean? SLS typically charge for the use of sporting facilities by the hour. What is this if not commercial?

The motivation for this 3G is not to make a profit. The 3G is needed for all weather training, games and lessons by the Academy and our community. TGAS use SLS (a schools letting agency) to manage our lettings, including current ones (such as the users of the sports hall). They are paid by us to process bookings and supervise the use of the facilities during out of school hours. SLS will be reporting monthly to the Principal and the steering group termly to ensure the highest standards of facility management.

As these are school premises can I be assured that there is a no alcohol policy within the SLS arrangements?

There will be no alcohol associated with this facility or planning application.

In light of the Covid-19 virus why are you going ahead without having a proper presentation evening with parents and the residents; as this is the best way to listen to what you have to say, ask questions and voice any concerns one may have in person.

As part of the process we had planned a presentation evening at the Civic suite to enable the presentation to be shared with the local community. This has not been possible due to the COVID-19 outbreak. We are working with the FA and the Football Foundation to meet deadlines within funding windows and therefore wanted to submit the planning application to keep to these deadlines. Sharing the presentation on the website, writing to residents and inviting questions was the most appropriate way to proceed, although clearly a meeting would have been preferable.

The meetings with the representatives of the Whitefields Action Group have proved to be useful in terms of raising concerns of local residents. Adjustments were made to planning as a direct result of these meetings.

How much is the pitch going to cost and who is going to pay for it?

The pitch is likely to cost £650 000 and will be paid for by The Football Foundation who represent The FA, Premier League and government (via Sport England) and Tudor Grange Academies Trust.

Who are the key partners?

TGA Solihull, The Football Foundation and The FA.

How much funds can Tudor Grange expect to receive from this yearly?

The pricing structure has been developed to ensure sufficient income is generated to pay for a "sink fund" to resurface the 3G when needed (approx. 10 years) to ensure our community have an optimal surface.

What guarantees can the school and its partners give that the times set now, the size of the pitch, will not change further down the line e.g. through the "Termly review"?

The proposal is for a junior size pitch that is ideal for our school and community. It would not be feasible to expand the size and there is no need. The termly review is to check that the project is running well and to fine tune provision to best meet the needs of our community.

If the project is successfully funded by the Football Foundation, the school will sign up to terms and conditions for 21 years which will include regular monitoring and evaluation of the Development Plan and ensuring the needs of our partner clubs are catered for.

You have said it is not a commercial venture, so what are the FA and School Lettings Solutions getting out of this?

The FA want to increase football participation and the social, physical and mental wellbeing benefits participation brings. SLS are lettings specialists contracted by us to manage bookings and provide supervision on site. Any surplus funds generated are reinvested by the school into the education of our children.

From my understanding School Lettings Solutions appear to be a middle man that facilitates school pitch hire. Are they an active partner i.e. they have invested funds and so will have a say in who will hire the pitch?

SLS have not invested any money and have no say in who hires the pitch at TGA Solihull. SLS are contracted to manage on our behalf and facilitate usage by the partners we have. They will be given the usage plan outlining our partner clubs.

Have these conditions (who can use the pitch and hours of use) been written into any agreements which the residents can refer to in case they are changed in the future.

Hours of use are indicated in the FA project plan under FTP (Football Turf Pitch) programme of use. Each club will also sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which will capture hours of use and pricing policy.

Is there a guarantee that the pitch will not be used for a commercial league such as a 5 a side power league and will only be used for coaching or youth football?

Absolutely, there will be no commercial 5 a side league. Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and other centres already facilitate 5 a side leagues. We are focused largely on junior football (hence we have planned for a junior sized 3G and not a full sized adult pitch) and football provision that meets our community needs, such as Ladies football, Just Play and walking football.

What is meant by an affiliated / partner club?

Affiliated / partner club are those that will offer the best quality football provision to our school and local community. We have partnerships in place with key FA affiliated partner clubs to ensure the project will be a success rather than rely on casual bookings.

Affiliated clubs

Once a club has a constitution and structure in place, they will need to affiliate with County FA to become an FA affiliated club. As part of the process, they need to demonstrate that the club satisfies the FA's stringent rules on quality.

Partner clubs

TGAS has developed partnerships with local affiliated clubs that will become our partner clubs. These high quality partners will cater for the football needs of our community and link with the school to support our children's education and offer routes for boys and girls to play football outside of school. They will be accountable for delivering high quality provision and will meet the Principal and County FA termly at TGAS 3G Steering group meetings to ensure everything is working smoothly.

What is the case for replacing the current pitch?

The intended site for the 3G pitch is on an existing football pitch at the back of the Academy buildings. This pitch is unusable for much of the year due to poor drainage. The surface is waterlogged in winter and often dangerously uneven in the summer. On a typical year, PE lessons and fixtures do not take place on this field for 2 terms out of 3. This means that PE lessons and fixtures are disrupted and provision is limited. Furthermore, our students and their families struggle to find affiliated football clubs that train in our locality. This 3G will enable them to continue playing sport beyond the school day. The school has been identified by the Football Foundation as a priority. Solihull have a deficit of six 3G pitches as reflected in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The business case is based on local need. The aim is to provide a self-sufficient facility to meet a local need and not to provide a highly profitable business.

Can we view the Local Governing Body minutes covering the period of planning for the 3G pitch?

Minutes of LGB meetings are public documents and are a permanent record of school governance. Minutes can be requested by contacting the Academy office.

Are there any contracts involved with this planning application?

The basis under which the pitch would be used is set out in the planning application. There are no other contracts in place which might override the usage set out in the planning application.