

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN PHASE TWO: STOWMARKET HEALTH, EDUCATION AND LEISURE

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Date: 8 December 2022



Overview of communications activity June – December 2022

In June 2022, external communications activity began with the announcement of the SHELF project and the first set of funding for the development of the masterplan.

Working closely with all key partners, proactive engagement activity started at Stowmarket High School – showcasing the project with students and parents who are set to benefit from the project. This including pop up events at the school to discuss the plans and to gather their views, presenting the scheme at a school and providing students with access to the online survey to ensure we got their views. The primary schools were sent information about the scheme and the plans including a QR code linking to online plans that was shared with families.

We put up posters in the predominant locations showcasing the plans with the QR code to access more information and the online survey. These were located on Chilton field, the leisure centre, and the school.

In conjunction with this face-to-face engagement, an online survey was launched to gather feedback on how the site is currently used and what new facilities the community would like to see. The survey remained open until October 2022. Key partners and stakeholders (including existing sport clubs) were encouraged to share the survey with their members.

In September 2022, the project was showcased at a three-day public event “What’s Next for Stowmarket”. The masterplan for the development was displayed alongside the supporting information and partner details. Visitors to the engagement event were encouraged to complete the survey.

That What’s Next event was also attended by journalists from both the East Anglian Daily Times and the Bury Free Press who were briefed on the SHELF project.



Visitors to the
What’s Next for
Stowmarket event
in September 2022

Online and social media promotion of the SHELF project continued throughout the autumn. This was supported by targeted social media advertising to families in the region who may use and benefit from new facilities at the site.


Mid Suffolk District Council
21 September Published by Jake Jonathan · ·

👉 Do your children play a sport in #Stowmarket? Or do they want to get involved in a new activity?

👉 You can shape the future of health, leisure, wellbeing, education and sports facilities in the town.

👉 Take a look and tell us what you and your children want included at the site.

👉 Submit your feedback online by visiting: <https://crowd.in/JHLxFN>



MIDSUFFOLK.GOV.UK

Stowmarket Health, Education and Leisure Facilities Scheme » Babergh Mid Suffolk

Learn more

The social media campaign aimed at parents in and around Stowmarket ran between 22/09 – 21/10 and reached 9,868 people. Approximately 450 clicked on the link to find out more information.

The results of the online survey and feedback were shared in a press release in December 2022.

Throughout December and running into early 2023, a short video presenting an overview of the SHELF project was shared online along with supporting posts highlight the benefits across each of the sports.



Overview of communications activity January 2023 onwards

The masterplan for the SHELF project will be presented to Mid Suffolk's cabinet in January – with an accompanying press release to update external audiences on the project. Should the masterplan be approved by cabinet, the communications activity will support the project in the run up to the planning application be submitted.

At this stage, a phase three communications plan will be produced outlining next steps following the planning process and opportunities should application be approved.

Stakeholder engagement will remain a priority throughout all stages of the SHELF project. There are a significant number of partners and stakeholders involved in different levels of activity, however, it is essential that their input is timely to ensure that the needs of all users will form part of the final masterplan.

Key milestones for communications activity 2023

January – Cabinet papers live

February – Cabinet decision

June – Planning decision

June/ July onwards – Should planning permission for SHELF be successful, this significant milestone would be marked with a stakeholder/community sports celebration event.

Communications objectives

Objectives	Key message
To ensure that the partners and stakeholders and the community are aware of the project, understand its importance for the community and what benefits it will deliver	Providing sport and wellbeing facilities for Stowmarket and the surrounding region
To develop a scheme everyone impacted or affected are involved with the development and contribute to the process to ensure the successful implementation of the change for one location for a range of services	MSDC is working in partnership to deliver this project (Suffolk County Council, ICB, Everyone Active and Stowmarket High School) to provide a unique community asset for health and wellbeing.
To manage expectations among our stakeholders. The project team aims to build a reputation as a trusted, quality, and innovative scheme that provides a wide range opportunity for the community.	Details about what the project is delivering and when.
To provide timely and accurate information to the identified partners and stakeholders about the steps to be taken. This will both support and smooth the change process, thereby enabling the delivery of project benefits.	For each partner and stakeholder – what to do, when to do it, and how much time it should take.
To ensure that partners and stakeholders can input to and feedback on the design of the change, raise issues, and use their expertise to contribute to the success of the project	All input is valuable. The partners and stakeholders as a collative has the responsibility for the success or failure of the project.
To ensure that all the service providers on the scheme are involved in the change have the knowledge and understanding of the scheme so that it can be used effectively and efficiently.	How and when to communicate with applicants using the portal and why it is beneficial to do it this way.
To ensure that new scheme is delivered, and new partnerships and pathways are embedded in the process so that the benefit of the changes introduced are sustained long term.	The benefits that have been achieved for the scheme and improved facilities for the community

APPENDIX A – Press releases

Stowmarket wellbeing and leisure hub to be taken to the next stage

For immediate release: 24 June 2022

Plans to improve leisure and wellbeing facilities in Stowmarket are set to move forward following agreement from Mid Suffolk District Council to fund the next stage of development.

The draft masterplan outlines how new and improved facilities for a wide range of sports, leisure and health organisations can be brought together across a single site in Stowmarket. The proposals include a multi-agency wellbeing hub, a 4g football pitch and a multi-use 2g pitch, a mini athletics track, new multi-sports pavilion, a multi-use games area, four new indoor sports courts and new cricket square and nets.

With the funding now agreed, Mid Suffolk District Council can develop detailed designs for the project, hold public engagement events to share plans with the community and prepare and submit a planning application for the scheme.

Cllr Harry Richardson, Mid Suffolk District Council cabinet member for health and wellbeing commented:

“I am delighted that we can move to the next phase of this project and start developing the details for this new and holistic approach to health, wellbeing, sport, and leisure in Stowmarket. By working closely with our partners, we can deliver our ambitious plans to provide the right mix of facilities and maximise the opportunities for our communities.”

The proposed masterplan has been developed in partnership with key stakeholders including Suffolk County Council, Stowmarket Town Council, Stowmarket High School and other local primary schools, Stowmarket leisure centre, local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Active Suffolk, local sports clubs and Sport England, alongside ward councillors.

Dave Lee-Allan, headteacher, Stowmarket High School commented:

“It is very exciting that we will now be able to share the plans for the new sport, leisure and health facilities which will benefit not only the school community but also the wider residents of Stowmarket and the surrounding areas. The proposals have the potential to create a real boost to the area and make accessing a range of sports and wellbeing services so much easier, particularly for our students.”

The proposals will look to improve and replace the current sports facilities across two parcels of land in the northwest of Stowmarket, including land surrounding Stowmarket High School and Chilton Fields. Currently these sites offer sport provision for rugby, cricket, football, and tennis. The scheme and developing partnerships will create the opportunity to support the development of these clubs and enable them to be more inclusive whilst encouraging more people to get active.

Local residents and community groups will be able to access plans and provide feedback both at public events and online this summer.

Have your say on the Stowmarket wellbeing and leisure hub

3 August 2022

Residents, community groups and sports clubs are being invited to have their say on the development of plans for new leisure, health and wellbeing facilities in Stowmarket.

Outline plans that could see new and improved facilities for a wide range of sports, leisure, education and health organisations in Stowmarket can be viewed online with a feedback form to gather information on how the site is currently used as well as how it could be used in the future.

The proposals, which focus on land surrounding Stowmarket High School and Chilton Fields, include a multi-agency wellbeing hub, a 4g sports pitch and a multi-use 2g pitch, a mini athletics track, new multi-sports pavilion, a multi-use games area, four new indoor sports courts and new cricket square and nets. In addition, the plans include improvements to walking and cycling routes to and from the site.

Cllr Harry Richardson, Mid Suffolk District Council cabinet member for economic growth commented:

“We believe our plans to develop a range of health, sport, leisure, and wellbeing facilities across one site will provide an enormous benefit the community in Stowmarket, however, it is crucial that we hear directly from those people who may want to access the new facilities. This will ensure we can create a masterplan that meets the needs of those who will use it now and in the future.”

Funding for this stage of the project was agreed by Mid Suffolk District Council earlier this month and will allow the Council, in conjunction with a range of partners, to develop detailed designs for the project, seek public feedback on the plans and prepare and submit a planning application for the scheme.

The masterplan is being developed in partnership with key stakeholders including Stowmarket High School, Suffolk County Council, Stowmarket Town Council, and other local primary schools, Stowmarket leisure centre, local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Active Suffolk, local sports clubs and Sport England, alongside ward councillors.

Jo Churchill, MP for Bury St Edmunds commented:

“When I started the project for better health, education and leisure facilities for Stowmarket, I realised we had a long way to go, but people had been telling me for years that they needed more facilities. So, I am delighted to see this project is moving forward as a result of fantastic partnership working from key players in Stowmarket and the wider county. I encourage residents to view the proposals and share their thoughts to help shape the plans for sport, leisure, health and wellbeing for the future in the town. I look forward to continuing to work with all stakeholders to ensure we get the right result so future generations have access to high-quality facilities.”

The proposals outline how current sports facilities across two parcels of land in the northwest of Stowmarket could be improved or replaced to meet the needs of local clubs and groups, enabling them to be more inclusive whilst encouraging more people to get active.

Plans for the proposed sport and wellbeing hub will also go on display at a public exhibition to be held in the John Peel Centre between 22 – 24 September.

Stowmarket residents help shape masterplan for new health, leisure, sport, education, and wellbeing hub

22 December 2022

Plans for the development of new health, education and leisure facilities in Stowmarket are progressing following the feedback gathered from recent community and stakeholder engagement.

Launched in the summer, the engagement programme involved a series of pop-up events as well as an online survey to understand the needs and wishes of current and potential users of sports, leisure, and health facilities in Stowmarket.

The survey revealed that increasing sport hall provision for indoor sports such as netball and badminton, was the voted as most important element of the outline masterplan, closely followed by improving public spaces and a new sports pavilion.

The inclusion of a community track, a 3G football pitch and the introduction of health and wellbeing hub were also rated as important by the local community.

When asked about the health and wellbeing Hub, the feedback included a space for community activities as the most important element, followed by a family hub and space for specialist services for mental and physical health.

The Stowmarket health, education, leisure, wellbeing, and sports hub will bring together a range of facilities together in one place for use by the local community, sports groups and clubs as well as local schools. The hub is set to benefit not only the local area but also the wider Mid Suffolk region and supports the District Council's ambition to create places that offer a healthy future.

Cllr Harry Richardson, deputy leader and cabinet member for economic growth said:

The response at our engagement events and to the survey have been really positive. We are working with a large number of partners to deliver new health, leisure, sport, education and wellbeing facilities for Stowmarket and having input from people who will use and benefit from the new development will be crucial. As the masterplan takes shape, I look forward to sharing further plans in the new year."

The site incorporates two parcels of land in the northwest of Stowmarket, including land surrounding Stowmarket High School and Chilton Fields.

The health and wellbeing hub could offer space for health services, meeting rooms and space for community and family activity.

Following on the feedback the revised proposal includes a 3G football pitch, a mini athletics track, new sports pavilion, a multi-use games areas, four indoor sports courts (for multiple sports such as netball and badminton), additional grass pitches new cricket square and nets and a multi-agency wellbeing hub.

Tony Bush, head of operations, Active Suffolk commented:

The feedback we received through the engagement activity will impact on the development of the masterplan to widen sports & physical activity provision across the site to ultimately increase participation and appeal to a wider audience in and around Stowmarket.”

In addition to the sport, leisure, health and wellbeing facilities, the masterplan will include proposals for how the site could improve opportunities for active travel. Over 50% of people who responded to the survey wanted to see safer routes for walking and cycling, with 30% wanting more bus routes to the site.

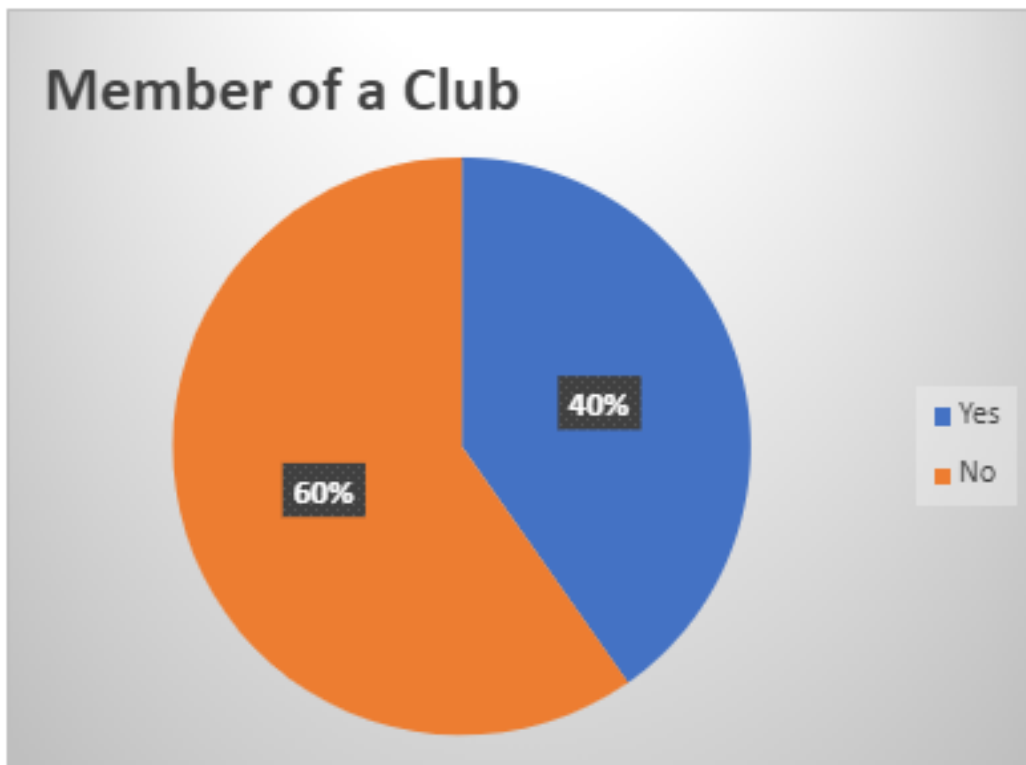
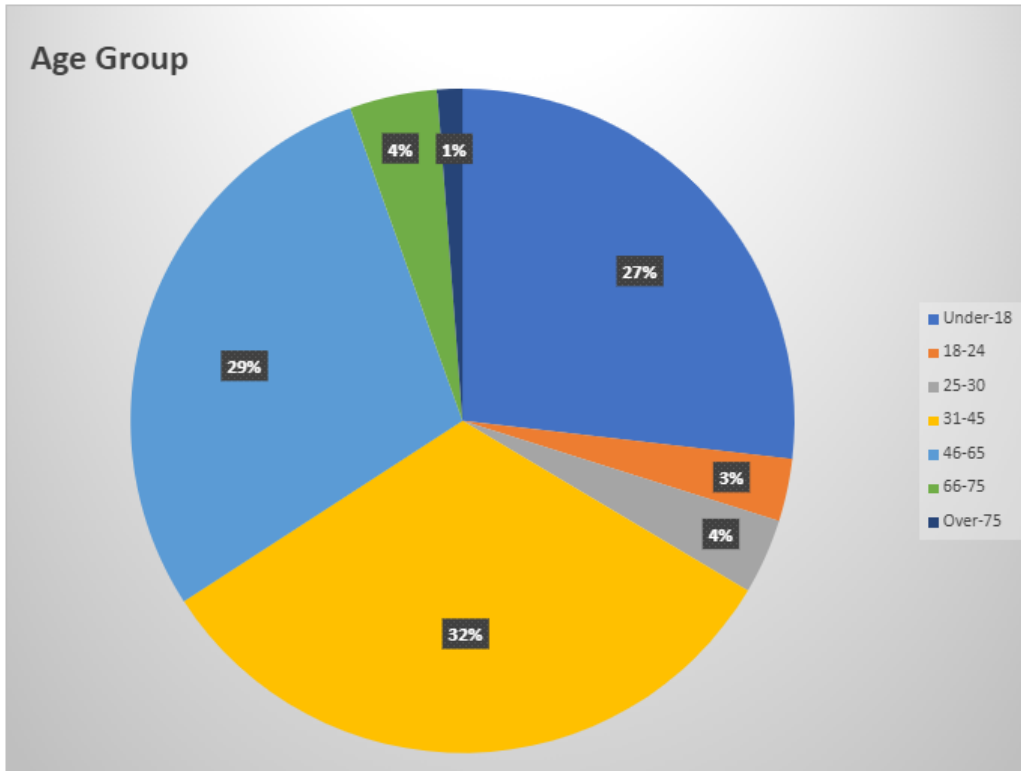
Almost 200 people responded to the survey in addition to those who attended face-to-face events at Stowmarket High School and the What’s Next for Stowmarket event. Of those, 70% were Stowmarket residents with only 4% living more than 10 miles from the town. More than a quarter of those responding were under 18, telling us they were excited for a greater range of activities to be available in their town.

Jo Churchill, MP for Bury St Edmunds, said:

When I started the talking about the Stowmarket health, education and leisure facility it was totally driven by what local people had spoken to me about, what they wanted in Stowmarket. The results of the survey show that the great work, now being driven by the council, sports associations and others has the potential to deliver something we’re all truly proud of and need. This will enable us to live longer, healthier, and happier lives.”

The masterplan is being developed in partnership with key local stakeholders including Stowmarket High School, Suffolk County Council, Stowmarket Town Council, and other local primary schools, Stowmarket leisure centre, Integrated Care Board, Active Suffolk, local sports clubs, alongside local councillors. National governing bodies like England Rugby, England Athletics, England Netball, Badminton England, Volleyball England, British Gymnastics, and Sport England have all engaged with the consultation.

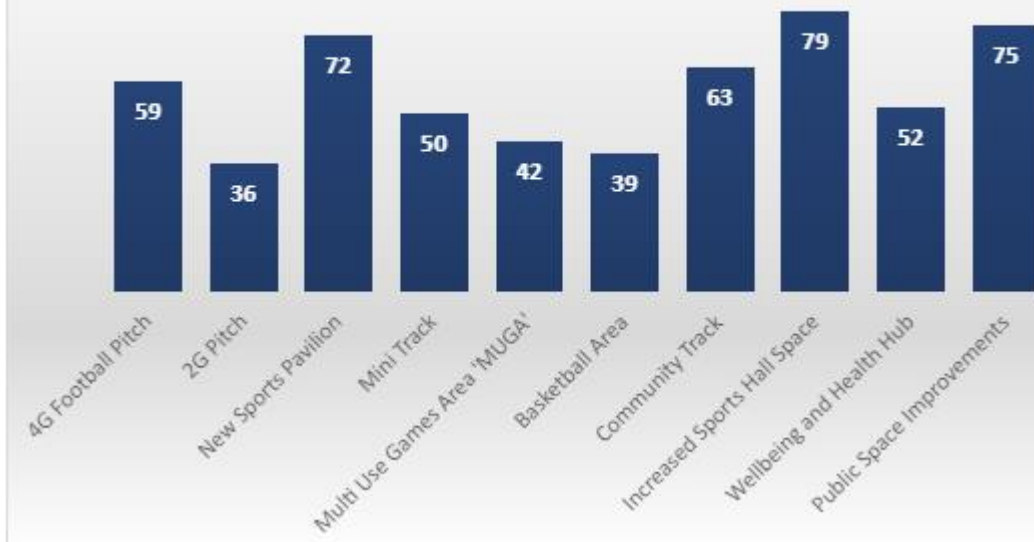
APPENDIX B – Engagement results



Distance from the site



Elements most liked from the Masterplan



APPENDIX C – Information boards presented at engagement events



What is the Stowmarket, Health, Education and Leisure Facilities project?

Stowmarket is the largest town in the district and has had recent housing growth. An exciting opportunity has become available to collaborate with several key partners to develop an exemplar sports, education, health, and wellbeing project on 2 adjacent sites in Stowmarket. Providing new and enhanced facilities will allow partnerships to thrive and expand and provide a base for new collaborations between sports, education, health, and wellbeing. This scheme has two main elements;



Facilities that are fit for purpose and support the growth of the area as well as providing spaces for collaborative working and a shared area for a range of users.

Creating the conditions for strong partnerships to ensure the right opportunities are maximised for the whole community.

- **Outcome 1** - Facilities that provide a range of activities and provision for sport at grassroots level through to elite sport as well as individual and team opportunities
- **Outcome 2** - Maximize partnerships across the site between education, health, local authorities, the community and sports clubs.
- **Outcome 3** - A new high quality sporting pavilion that meets the needs of all users
- **Outcome 4** - A Health and Well-being hub for delivery of public services plus shared workspace area and meetings rooms
- **Outcome 5** - Buildings that are environmentally sustainable
- **Outcome 6** - Places and spaces that create opportunities to get more people active and support their Well-being



Stowmarket, Health, Education and Leisure Facilities proposed project



A masterplan has been developed working with a significant number of partners and stakeholders which will see comprehensive redevelopment of the sites. In 2021 following extensive engagement the Council published the refreshed Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy. The strategy helped to identify key sport and leisure needs across the whole district and led to the creation of the project.

Proposed new facilities are:

- 4g football pitch
- 2g pitch (a range of sports and activities can be played on the pitch)
- Mini track athletics facility
- New Sport pavilion to replace existing on Chilton fields
- Multi-agency wellbeing hub for use by a range of partners and the local community
- Surfaced Multi Use Games area
- 4 new indoor sport courts
- Additional parking at the Wellbeing hub and pavilion
- Reshaping of the current car parking on the Chilton Fields site
- New cricket square and new nets
- Multi surface perimeter track to encourage informal walking and cycling



Engagement

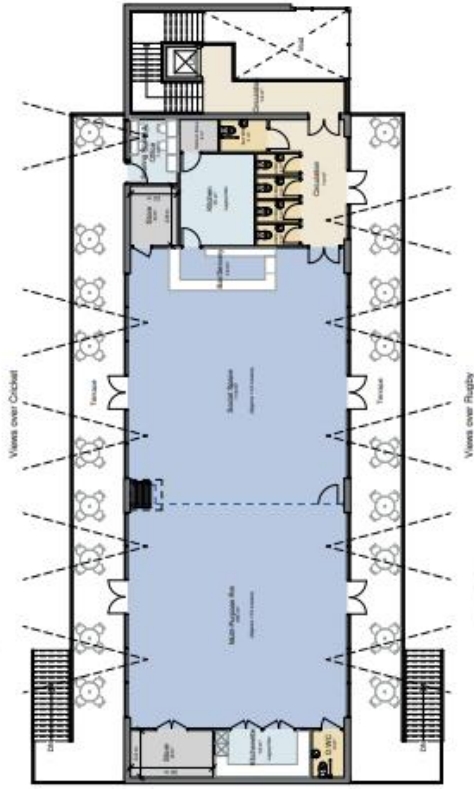


The proposed project has been designed with key stakeholders, site owners and partners through a range of workshops, project groups and stakeholder forums. The project has been positively received and we will continue to work with the stakeholders, partners and sport clubs to finalise the design and to shape the project scheme and its delivery. We are now actively seeking views from local people to ensure the project becomes a valuable asset for the community and more widely within the district.

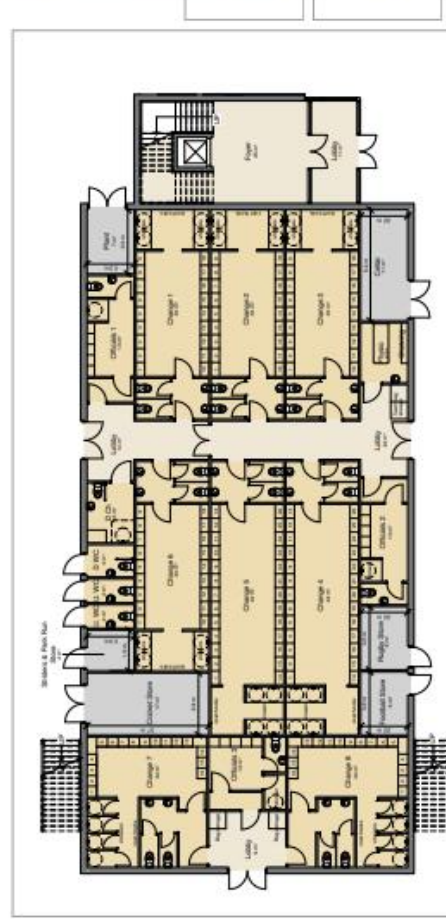
Stowmarket Town Council	Onehouse Parish Council	Jo Churchill MP	Stowmarket High School	Wood Ley Primary School	Grace Cook Primary School	Suffolk County Council	Leisure Centre (Everyone Active)
NHS Primary Care	Community Health	Family Hub	Nursery - Foxglove Montessori	National Governing Bodies for Rugby, Cricket, Tennis, Hockey, Athletics, Netball, Football	Active Suffolk	Sport England	Councillor's - County, Ward and Town
Local Community	West Suffolk and Ipswich Alliance	Integrated Care Board	Chilton Fields Parkrun	Great Finborough Netball Club	Stow Ability (Disability Football)	Stowmarket & District Cycling Club	Stowmarket Walking Football Club
Stowmarket Badminton Club	Stowmarket Cricket Club	Stowmarket Gymnastics Club	Stowmarket Lawn Tennis Club	Stowmarket Rugby Union Club	Stowmarket Salvation Army Football Club	Stowmarket Volleyball Club	Stowmarket Sniders Club
					Mid Suffolk Disability Forum	Wildcats (Girl Football)	Stowmarket Football Club



Stowmarket Sports Pavilion



First Floor Plan



3D Visualisation - view of main entrance

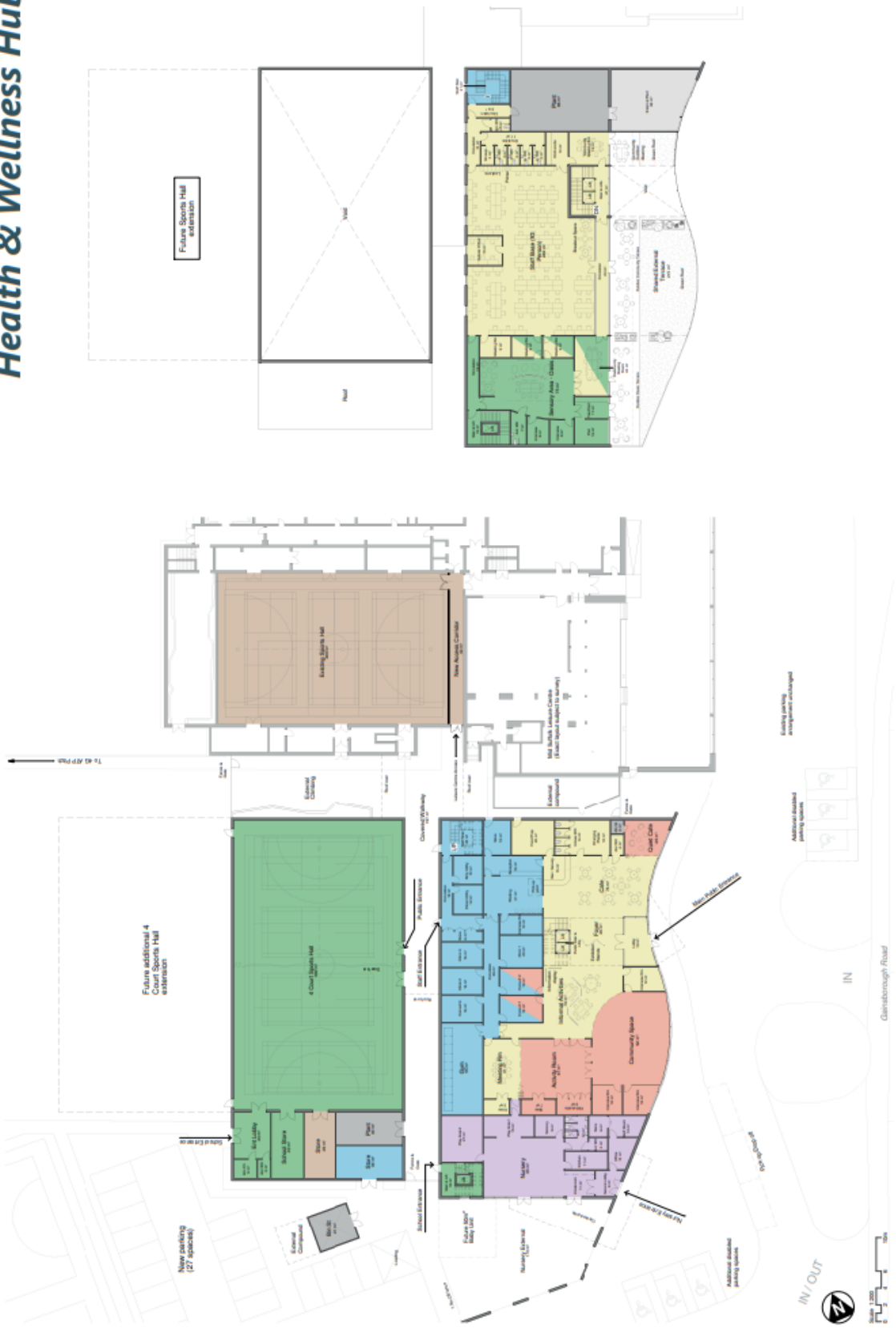


3D Visualisation - view from rugby pitch



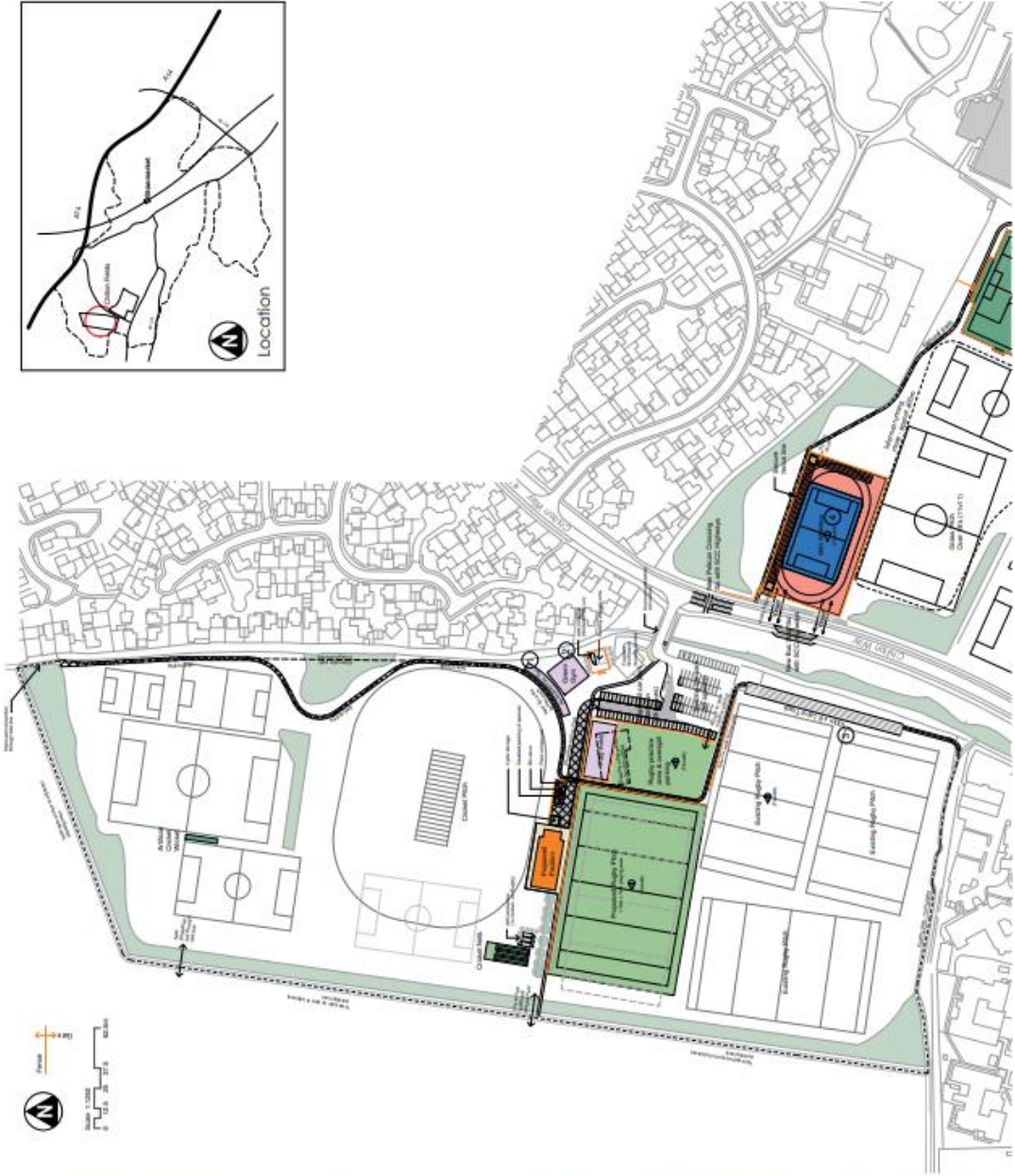
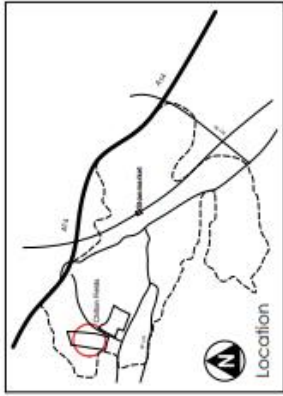
3D Visualisation - first floor social spaces

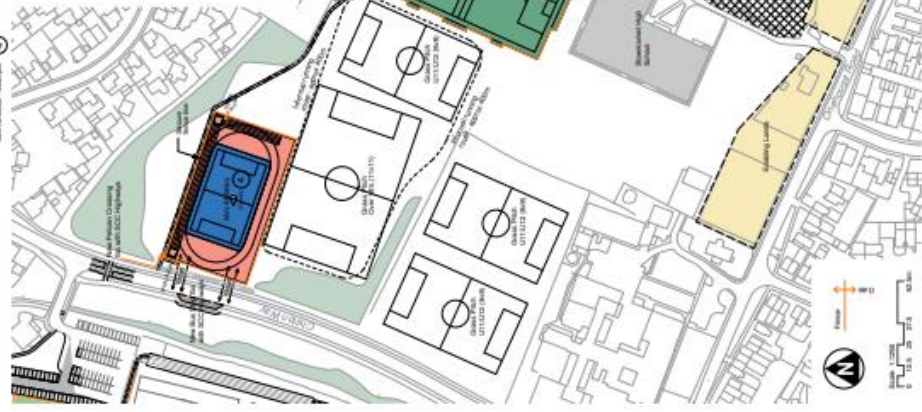
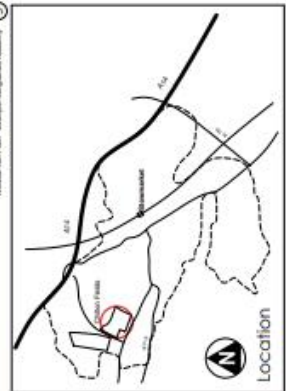
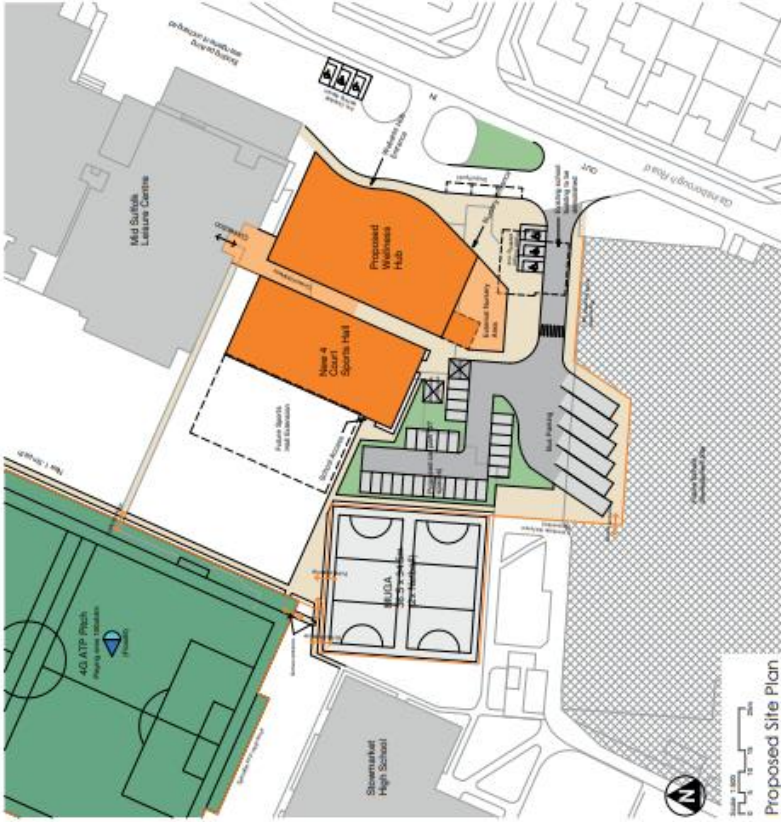
Health & Wellness Hub



First Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan





Proposed Location Plan