

# Morden Leisure Centre

Welcome to the seventh Morden Leisure Centre newsletter, keeping you fully informed about the exciting new leisure project being delivered by Merton Council.

Further updates can be found at: [www.merton.gov.uk/leisureformorden](http://www.merton.gov.uk/leisureformorden)

## CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT SIGNED

On Thursday 22 June, directors Gert-Jan Peeters and Richard van Emmerik from sports and leisure buildings specialist contractor Pellikaan, met with Merton Council's Director of Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee, to sign the contract to build the Morden Leisure Centre.

Leader of Merton Council Councillor Stephen Alambritis and cabinet member for community and culture Councillor Nick Draper met with them at the civic centre in Morden for the signing and to welcome the company to the borough.

Councillor Stephen Alambritis said: "These are exciting times for Morden. We've worked hard to secure a good deal for our residents. This new leisure centre will serve families and swimming clubs for generations to come. It is a pleasure to welcome Pellikaan to Merton today for the contract signing and I am looking forward to seeing the work begin on site shortly. The new centre will cost us less to maintain in the long-term than the current old building so this development is also good news for council tax payers as well as all those who want to keep fit and healthy."

Richard van Emmerik, Director of Pellikaan, said: "We are looking forward to starting work in Merton. Morden Leisure Centre will be a great project to work on as we deliver a modern family friendly leisure facility for the people of the borough."

In recent weeks visitors to Morden Park will have seen further site surveys and investigations taking place. More of these will be happening over the coming weeks and site set up will start in earnest the week beginning 3 July.

Throughout the rest of July site preparation will continue with a construction commencement set for the beginning of August. Construction work will then progress at a pace, as Pellikaan work to deliver as much of the ground works as possible through the summer months.

There will inevitably be some disruption due to the construction activity, but this will be daytime Monday to Friday and possibly some Saturday mornings. We thank you in advance for your patience and considerations during the construction time and assure you that the outcome will be worth it.



## DESIGN

Since Pellikaan's appointment, work has been ongoing to develop the design for the building, appoint sub-contractors and deliver a contract price that is affordable for Merton Council.

Changes to the design include:

- Raising the ground level underneath the building and adjusting the height and shape of the roof so that the height of the overall building remains the same
- Introducing a mezzanine floor over the café and switching the fitness gym to the front of the building and studio to the back, creating indoor space for plant and machinery that was previously on the roof
- Reducing the number of roof windows from 5 to 4, as the roof shape opens a greater glazed area on the north elevation removing the requirement for a roof window in this location

## PLANNING

A number of planning conditions are now in the process of being discharged with the local Planning Authority. At the same time, a Non-Material Change Application has been made to cover the key design changes including those listed above and a Temporary Enabling Works Application is being made to allow the project to store some of the soil from the new build to be used as in-fill on the old building, following its demolition scheduled for Autumn 2018.

The landscaping and sustainable drainage (SuDS) conditions have been developed jointly by Merton Council's professional advisors and the contractors. Earlier landscaping designs were discussed with the Friends of Morden Park Playing Fields and following their advice and guidance, along with the SuDS requirements, this has resulted in an alternative landscaping solution which has now been submitted for approval.

Further conditions will be discharged in the months to come, especially those linked to the demolition of the existing leisure centre, and to the opening of the new centre.



Artist Impression

## COSTS

On 12 April 2017 Merton Council agreed to £2.708m of strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funding being used for this project, making a total budget of £13.708m. The reasons for the increased costs include:

- Increased survey costs and the addition of furniture, fixtures & equipment, previously not included
- Increased cost of materials, increase in size of building & changes to economic climate
- Increased scope of works e.g. drainage & car charging points

## MORDEN PARK PLAYING FIELDS COMMUNITY TRUST (MPPFCT)

**VISION:** To promote community cohesion and mutual respect among the different communities living in and around Morden through an inclusive outdoor sports facility.

**AIMS:** To bring 65 acres of land given for playing fields back into use for a range of sports through a community led enterprise which is sustainable and economically viable for the long term.

The original proposal comprised the creation of 3 cricket wickets, 4 new grass football pitches, 2 grass rugby pitches and 2 floodlit 3G artificial turf pitches, but we have recently ascertained that the removal of one football and one rugby pitch, and adjusting the location of one cricket pitch nearest to the pond, should not adversely affect our projected cash-flow, as well as enable the newts to travel towards a larger pond safely.

A new pavilion is sited to co-ordinate with the new swimming pool to give convenient access to, and fine views over the pitches. It comprises a simple form clad in untreated timber with a ramp and stairs leading to a planted roof terrace and amenity spaces. The upper floor is a glazed lightweight structure, housing team rooms, kitchen and toilets (to provide hospitality to visiting teams).

The lower floor accommodates reception, changing rooms, first aid and support spaces. Environmental factors are a key concern in the design. Green technologies have been adopted in many areas in order to reduce energy demand. For example, solar panels will provide hot water for showers, and passive means of environmental design will help maintain comfort levels.

MPPFCT Trustees have set a fund-raising target of £25,000 to push ahead with their planning application and are currently working to raise those funds. If you wish to support their project please get in touch directly with the via the MPPFCT's secretary Ray Skinner - [skinhicks@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:skinhicks@tiscali.co.uk)



Pond 2 – Dawn May 2017

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Project team representatives continue to meet with local people through open forums and organised meetings answering questions and informing the community of progress being made. Newsletters will continue to be issued bi-monthly as the project now gains pace and construction begins in earnest.

## LEISURE CENTRE OPERATORS – GREENWICH LEISURE LIMITED (BRANDED AS ‘BETTER’)

Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) is Merton’s operator for the borough’s three leisure centres in Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden. GLL management have been working with the council in the planning and design of the Morden Leisure Centre and in preparation for the demolition of the existing Morden Park Pools.

Mark Sesnan, Managing Director of GLL said:

“The signing of the construction contract with Pellikaan is an exciting step forward for the Morden Leisure Centre project. We are looking forward to operating the new centre where we will continue to offer first class, affordable leisure and sporting facilities to the local community”

## ECOLOGY MATTERS – GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

The presence of Great Crested Newts (GCNs) in one of the ponds in Morden Park has resulted in considerable work within the park linked to this project to make sure these creatures are properly protected. Gareth Matthes, is the Council’s appointed expert consultant ecologist on Great Crested Newts. Gareth provides this update:

'In Autumn 2016 enhancement works for Great Crested Newts took place at two ponds within the Park. In addition, some new security fencing was installed around the main and possibly only, Great Crested Newt breeding pond in Merton. This was required to minimise public access to this pond to help conserve these newts and for reasons of public health and safety. Surveys in spring 2017 confirmed Great Crested Newts bred at the main pond, but they remain absent from the other pond (last recorded here in 2012). Ongoing newt surveys are due in 2018 and 2019.'

## NEXT STEPS

- Discharging pre-construction planning conditions
- Commencing site set-up
- Commencing work on site



Pond 1 – Fence Works