

An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta
Mánnystrie o Fowkgates, Airts and Aisedom

Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure

Interpoint, 20-24 York Street, Belfast BT15 1AQ

Tel: +44 (0)28 9025 8825 Fax: +44 (0)28 9025 8883

Ken Good
Hunsbury Consulting
23 Hunsbury Close
West Hunsbury
Northampton
NN4 9UE

Your ref:

Our ref: SB105/2/04
TOF/5/2004

24th March 2004

Dear Mr Good

RE: NEW NATIONAL STADIUM – BELFAST

Thank you for your letter of 27th February to Angela Smith MP, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, regarding the current feasibility study into a new multi-sport stadium for Northern Ireland and the possible introduction of a new professional Association Football club to Belfast which would play in the English Leagues or the Scottish Premier League and be based at a new National Stadium. I have been asked to reply.

I think I should first make clear that the study commissioned on the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's (DCAL) behalf by the Northern Ireland Strategic Investment Board is an initial feasibility study only. Its sole purpose is to help inform a judgment as to whether or not there is potential for developing a new multi-sport stadium in Northern Ireland that would meet the differing requirements of Soccer, Rugby and Gaelic Games and be economically viable. The actual location of such a facility – whether it be Belfast or elsewhere – is not being considered as part of that study. Rather, these issues would be addressed subsequently should a decision to proceed to the next stage be taken.

We note your proposals for the possible introduction of a new professional Soccer club to Belfast based at a state of the art 48,000-50,000 capacity community stadium within the city. We also understand that you have been in correspondence with the

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Sports Council for Northern Ireland on both this subject and a possible National Stadium and that they have offered to meet with you to discuss these matters. I would encourage you to take up the offer from the Sports Council. DCAL would also certainly be prepared to send a representative to that meeting if that would be useful.

I trust you find this helpful.

I am copying this letter to the Sports Council

Yours sincerely



JACK PALMER
Head of Sport

Yours sincerely

Paul Scott
Facilities Manager

3 March 2004

ps js

Mr K Good
23 Hunsbury Close
West Hunsbury
NORTHAMPTON
NN4 9UE

Dear Sir

re: NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE/NEW NATIONAL STADIUM

I have been forwarded your letter of 19 February 2004, which was sent to Mr Mervyn Elder at Belfast City Council and am replying on behalf of the Sports Council for NI.

I note with interest your comments regarding a 'National Stadium' and aspiration to have a 'local team' playing in cross channel competition.

At present our parent Department, DCAL (Department Culture, Arts and Leisure) have commissioned the Strategic Investment Board to undertake an appraisal as to the viability of a Stadium suitable for hosting larger rugby, soccer and gaelic fixtures with the findings expected by early summer.

I also note that you are expecting to reside in Northern Ireland in the near future and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the matters contained in your letter, perhaps we can arrange a suitable time and date.

Should you require any clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Paul Scott
Facilities Manager

SME/GN

19 February 2004

Mr K Good
23 Hunsbury Close
West Hunsbury
Northampton
NN4 9UE

Dear Ken

**NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE/
NEW NATIONAL STADIUM**

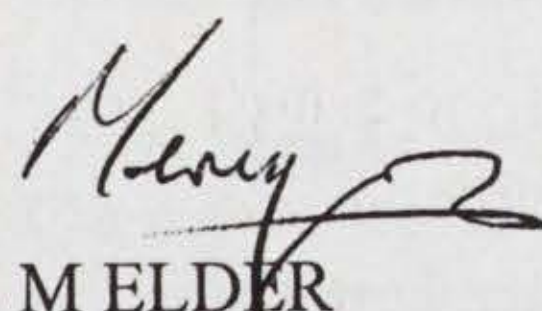
Thank you for your letter of 12 February. I thought it would be useful if I could point you in the right direction, since progressing this potential initiative through Belfast City Council at present is not really a starter. Belfast City Council is currently focused on a strategic review of its existing indoor leisure stock and does not have on its agenda, or within its remit, any proposals or initiatives to delivering a new National Stadium.

I have taken the opportunity of forwarding your letter to me and this reply, to the Chief Executive of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and the Minister's Office at the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure.

I have also copied the correspondence to one of our own Councillors, Councillor Jim Rodgers - a former Lord Mayor of Belfast, who I know has an interest in this particular area.

I assume that the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and/or the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (addresses below), will take the appropriate follow-up action.

Yours sincerely



S M ELDER
DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES

Cc Mr Eamonn McCartan, Chief Executive, Sports Council for NI,
House of Sport, Upper Malone Road, BELFAST BT9 5LA

Mr Jack Palmer, Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure, 2nd Floor –
Interpoint, York Street, BELFAST

Councillor J Rodgers

Hunsbury Consulting

Sport Recreation and Urban Development Consultancy

Ms A Smith MP
Minister for Sport
The Northern Ireland Office
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SG
Strictly Private and Confidential

Date: 27th February 2004

Dear Ms Smith
Re: New National Stadium – Belfast

I write regarding the much current feasibility study as to the viability of a new national stadium for Northern Ireland, and to advise you of my interest in the matter.

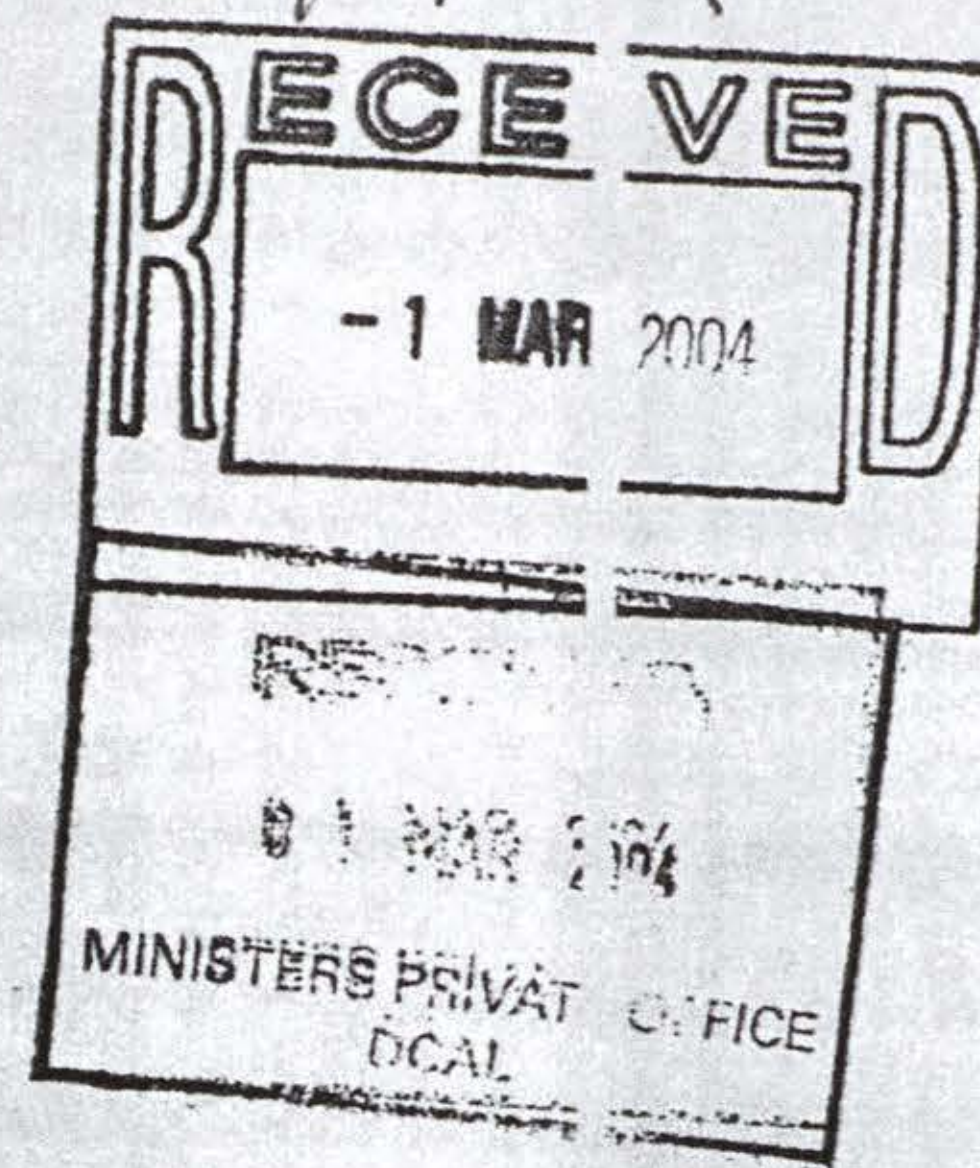
I am a former director of a professional football club and I was involved in an executive capacity with the recent moves to relocate **Wimbledon Football Club** to **Milton Keynes**. This included setting out a strategy for identifying a suitable 60 acre site and thereafter negotiating the acquisition and the subsequent development of a new multi purpose 45,000 seat stadium and arena complex for the City. Planning has now been approved and completion is expected in time for the start of the 2006/2007 season. It is apparent to me that the social inclusion and regeneration benefits of professional football for the conurbation of Milton Keynes would apply in even greater measure to the community of Belfast and hence the purpose of this letter.

I have been in correspondence for the past 18 months with the Director of Client Services at Belfast City Council (Mervyn Elder) regarding the possible introduction of a **new professional football club** to Belfast playing either in the English Leagues or the Scottish Premier League. Any such development would require a large new **multi use** sports stadium in the City, which would undoubtedly become the **New National Stadium**. We will look to benefit from significant enabling contributions to help meet land acquisition and construction costs and the new club (**Belfast City!**) would become the **anchor tenant** for the stadium.

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Tel: 01604 766924
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The **social and economic benefits** of bringing full time professional football to Belfast cannot be underestimated. This would be a **non-sectarian** institution and as in all the other major cities in the UK would give the whole community of Belfast a new sense of identify with its own Club. New football **Academy** facilities for both boys and girls and **Training and Education** opportunities would also follow.

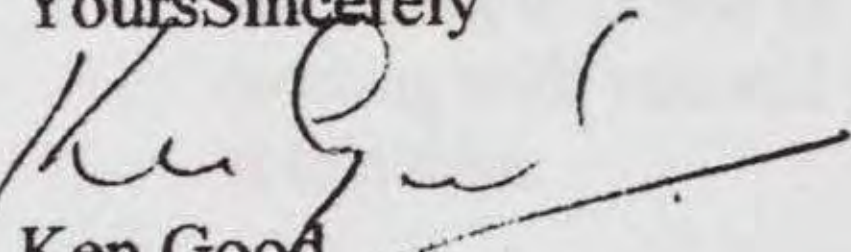
A new state of the art **48,000 - 50,000 seat capacity community stadium** will be required. I would anticipate that the stadium complex would include a 200 bed 4* hotel and conference centre, leisure and office facilities within a **mixed use** development. **Capital receipts** from adjoining **commercial development** will make significant contributions towards development and construction costs.

We have considerable expertise in putting together such projects. Another member of our team is a former Chief Executive of both **Glasgow Rangers and Newcastle United** Football Clubs and has overseen the considerable redevelopment of both those clubs. I have also worked with some of the biggest names in stadia development in the world including **HOK Sport, DLE and Deloitte's** and with **English Partnerships** on several developments.

I remain most excited at the way in which **sporting provision** and **urban regeneration** go hand in hand. Thousands of new jobs would be created on a permanent basis and new facilities of sporting excellence for the whole province. By combining the construction of a **New National Stadium** with a new professional football club the project becomes very viable indeed.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course and I would welcome any assistance from the Northern Ireland Office in bringing this exciting project to fruition and any comments or thoughts upon these proposals would be most gratefully received.

Yours Sincerely


Ken Good
Hunsbury Consulting

Hunsbury Consulting
Sport and Recreational Development Consultancy

Mr S M Elder
Director of Client Services
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP

Date: 12th February 2004

Dear Mervyn
Nationwide Football League / New National Stadium

I write further regarding the possibility of progressing my thoughts on a new national stadium and ultimately invitation for a Northern Irish football club to play in the English Leagues.

I have recently been developing my own contacts in Northern Ireland and I am sure that with the recent engagement of Lawrie Sanchez as Manager of Northern Ireland will raise the profile of Northern Irish Football still further. There is of course also the pairing of England and Northern Ireland with Wales in the world cup qualifiers to look forward to.

These developments persuade me even more that it is time that the Government gave its support to a new national stadium in Belfast as they have done already for Wembley, the Millenium Stadium in Cardiff and Hampden Park in Scotland.

I would like to explore the possibility of a consultancy arrangement to undertake feasibility studies with the Council and/or DCAL to take matters further. I would expect that after an initial exploratory period for feasibility studies that a consortium could then be established to realise these ambitions. I will be happy to make a presentation of my proposals should you require it.

I enclose my resume for your consideration in this regard. I am already proposing to reside in Belfast very shortly and I would welcome an early meeting with you and your contacts to see how we may progress matters at this time.

Address : 23 Hunsbury Close West Hunsbury Northampton NN4 9UE

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Mob No: [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

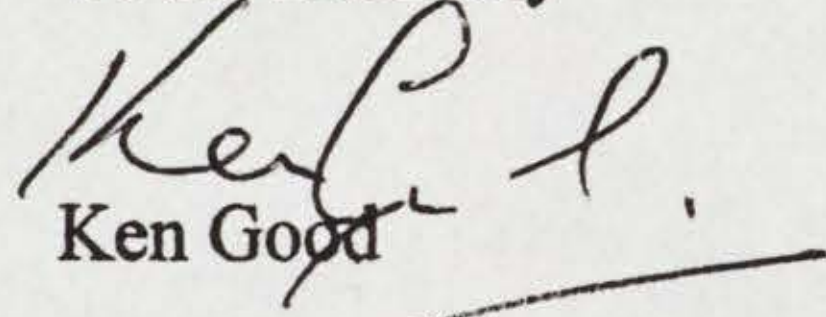
I remain excited at how this project could come together and I would welcome your thoughts on where a new stadium could be located. I confess I am not sufficiently aware of the likely traffic or environmental impact to identify the most suitable site (near the Odyssey obviously comes to mind at this stage) but I would anticipate that you have your own thoughts on the matter.

I firmly believe that top flight football should be brought to the Province and provide the same social benefits to the community including a sense of identification as that enjoyed by mainland cities. I was over recently for the Ulster v Dragons match and I believe that the achievements of Ulster in the Heineken Cup and Giants in Ice Hockey show how much sport is valued in the community. A football club playing in the top flight would add so much both to community development and social inclusion.

I would very much welcome your thoughts on whether or not the Council or DCAL may assist me at this time and in any event I would like to meet up to see if there is a meeting of minds at this juncture before progressing talks with the Football League.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely


Ken Good