



HISTORY

GORLESTON COMMUNITY PROJECT

Gorleston Football Club established the Recreation Ground as its home in November 1889, playing its first recorded match there on 9 November against Yarmouth St Pauls, a 2-0 victory, and the site quickly became a focal point for community football.

Early 20th-century Ordnance Survey maps show the land formalised as a public recreation ground, acquired and laid out by the local authority to meet the sporting and leisure needs of the expanding Gorleston-on-Sea. The ground reached a peak in 1951 when a crowd of 4,473 attended an FA Cup First Round replay between Gorleston FC and Leyton Orient, the largest recorded attendance at the site.

During the Second World War, aerial photographs from May 1944 confirm its use as a barrage balloon mooring station, with concrete tethering blocks and associated wartime structures visible.

Gorleston FC left the Recreation Ground in 1982 for Emerald Park, after which the site continued as a public park and sports area, and in 2024 the club began a phased return following a legal agreement with Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

Today, the Recreation Ground remains an actively managed public open space featuring football pitches, a children's playground, a skate/BMX park and open recreation areas, retaining both sporting and historical importance for the local community.

Gorleston FC - Background

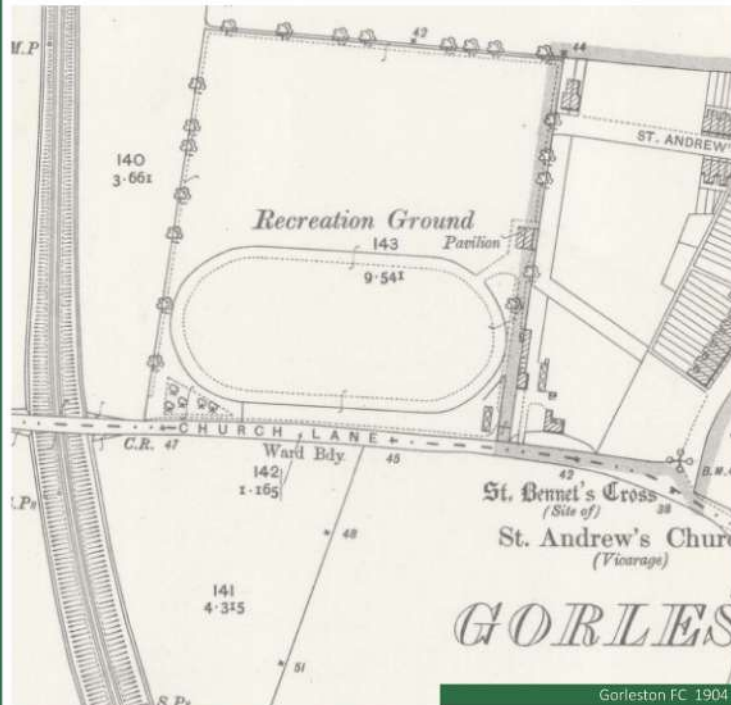
- Gorleston FC formed in 1884 making us the oldest club in Norfolk

- Gorleston Recreation Ground was Home from 1889 to 1982 (93 years)

- Emerald Park was Home from 1982 to 2022 (40 years)

- Lowestoft Town FC was Home for 2023

- Gt Yarmouth Town FC is temporarily Home on rolling 12-month license



Gorleston FC 1904



Gorleston FC 1964



Gorleston FC 1963



Gorleston FC Spectator Stands 1963



Gorleston FC Spectator Stands 2023



Gorleston FC Time Line



INTRODUCTION GORLESTON COMMUNITY PROJECT

Gorleston Football Club proposes the development of a new purpose-built clubhouse, changing facilities, and a 3G artificial grass pitch alongside a series of grass pitches on the existing Gorleston Recreation Ground.

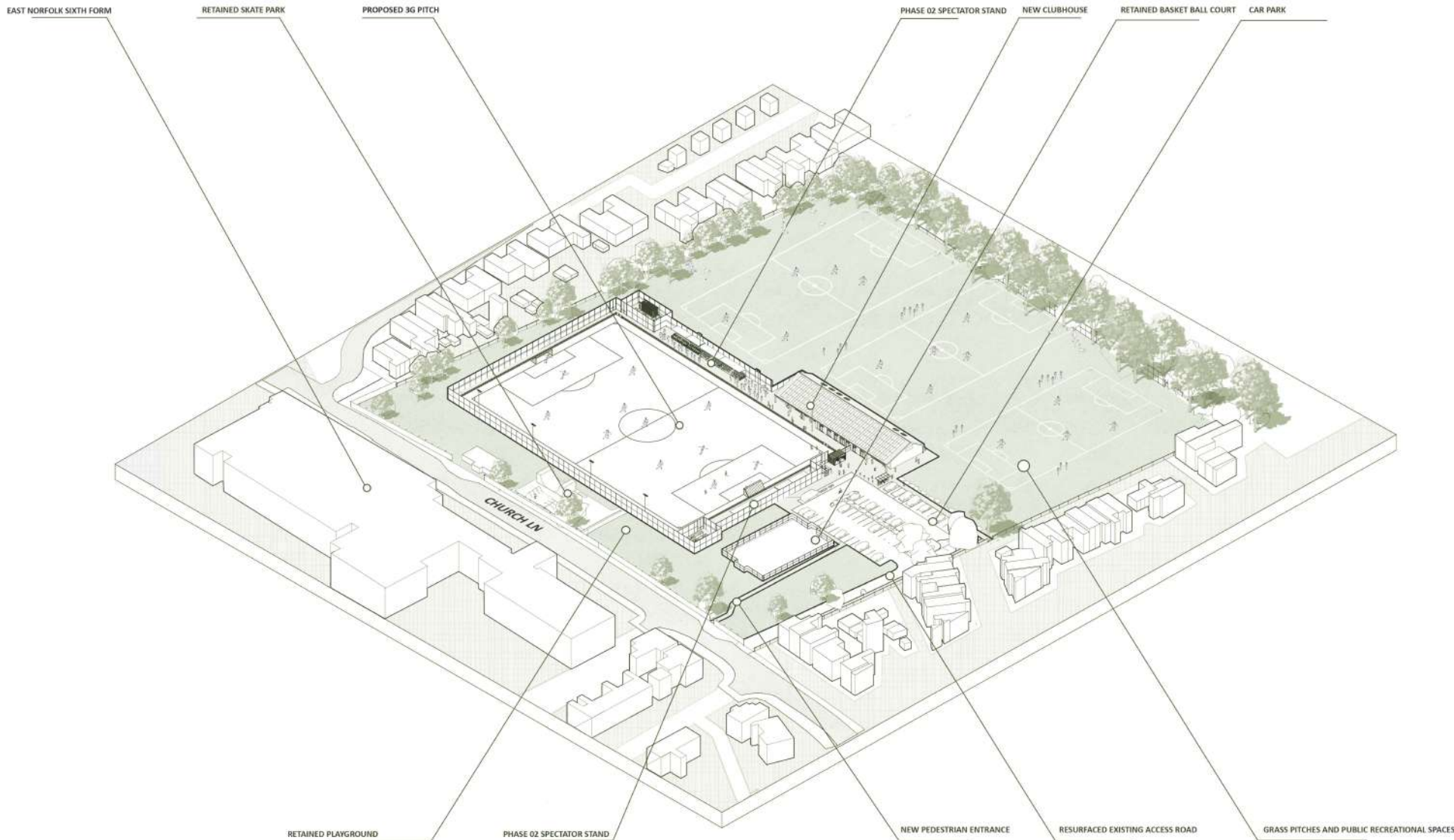
The scheme seeks to enhance the quality of sports provision within the local community by delivering high-quality, inclusive facilities for Gorleston Football Club. The development will support grassroots football, structured training, and wider recreational use, providing a valuable community asset. It has been carefully designed to integrate sensitively with its surroundings, improve accessibility for all users, and create a safe, sustainable, and welcoming environment for players, officials, volunteers, and spectators.

The project will re-home Gorleston Football Club and deliver a new community-focused facility that aims to inspire participation, encourage engagement, and unite the local community. Operated by The Community Sports Foundation (CSF), the facility will offer a broad programme of inclusive activities, with a strong emphasis on equality and access. Key usage commitments include:

- Women and girls' football and activity sessions (20-30%)
- Sessions targeted at deprived and under represented groups (20-30%)

In addition to sporting provision, the development will accommodate a range of charity-led initiatives and wider community programmes, further strengthening its social value.

The clubhouse will go beyond the function of a traditional football facility, providing flexible, multi-use spaces capable of hosting a variety of sports, educational, and community activities. This approach will ensure the creation of a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving hub that meets the needs of the local community both now and in the future.



Site Diagrams





Front Entrance



Aerial view - Phase 01



View From 3G Pitch to Clubhouse



Aerial view - Phase 02