



PROPOSALS FOR A HOYLAKE ECO-GOLF RESORT, WILDFOWL AND WETLAND CENTRE

Dear Friend of Hoylake Village

This proposal was originally developed by Hoylake Village Life in 2011 as an alternative to the Council's Golf Resort proposals. We presented it to council officers, Councillors and successive MPs, but it has not until now appeared to gain traction or public support.

We have invested a great deal of time researching and testing these ideas in more detail; speaking to independent environmental consultants and academics as well as senior representatives of the RSPB, the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, the Golf Environment Organisation and more.

All of those organisations have endorsed our proposal as being sound and achievable.

We therefore think now is the right time to bring it to the attention of the general public for wider conversation and scrutiny.

Incorporating a Wildfowl and Wetland Centre, such as that run by WWT at Martin Mere, and ensuring the council's proposed 'Five star luxury' Golf Resort is re-imagined as an eco-resort similar to that at Machrihanish Dunes, in consultation with WWT Consulting, the RSPB, the Golf Environment Organisation and the Environment Agency, will have many benefits when measured against the council's current proposals, including:

1. **More economically sustainable over the long term**
2. **More environmentally sustainable over the long term**
3. **No facilitating residential development on greenbelt or elsewhere required**
4. **Much stronger case against future residential development proposals should the golf resort fail**
5. **An opportunity to increase the presence and diversity of wildlife**
6. **An opportunity to view the site in the context of the wider coastline, including Hoylake beach, recognising it as part of a complex ecosystem, and planning accordingly**
7. **An opportunity to improve flood defences and reduce flood risk in the area**
8. **Greater job creation opportunities**
9. **Greater educational and research opportunities**
10. **Greater leisure, health and fitness opportunities**
11. **Encouraging eco-tourism more generally in the area**
12. **Greater opportunities to encourage visitors to venture into Hoylake centre and the promenade**



The following organisations have expressed broad support for our proposals:

Wildfowl and Wetland Trust

WWT sites enjoy 1,000,000 visitors per annum; 200,000 of these at Martin Mere alone. We have been in contact on numerous occasions since 2011 with senior WWT Consultant **Gareth Bradbury** who supports our outline proposal and WWT are willing to speak to WMBC about the project.

He believes incorporating a Wildfowl and Wetland Centre with an eco-Golf course is an achievable goal. We have twice put WWT in contact with WMBC but they have not yet responded.

RSPB

RSPB and the R&A published a book: *Birds and Golf Courses: a Guide to Habitat management*, written by RSPB Business Advice Unit Leader **Nigel Symes** and now retired Chief Scientist of English Nature (Natural England) **Keith Duff**.

This affirms the view that golf courses can be havens for bird life. RSPB have not been consulted by WMBC or the developer about the current council's proposals, but are aware of the emerging plans and have concerns about its impact on Black-tailed Godwit. Both Nigel and Keith believe our proposals are achievable and would enhance the ecosystem of the entire area, including the beach. RSPB support our outline proposal and are willing to speak to WMBC about the project.

The Golf Environment Organisation (GEO) Foundation

GEO is a non-profit organisation dedicated to environmental sustainability and best practise in the Golf industry. It operates a 'BREAM' based certification scheme backed by the R&A. They were one of the organisations who tendered for the scheme.

We have spoken at length to GEO Programme Director **Sam Thomas** who supports our outline proposal and is willing to speak to WMBC about the Hoylake project. He believes incorporating a Wildfowl and Wetland Centre with an eco-Golf course is an achievable goal.

We have of course spoken to a number of other professionals, consultants and academics; all considered our proposals to be sensible, realistic and achievable.

We hope you will find this document of interest.

Hoylake Village Life CIC

December 2017

HVL is an entirely volunteer-led, non profit Community Interest Company (no. 07246081) which aims to create and support positive regeneration initiatives Hoylake in consultation with the community.

These initiatives included establishing the Beacon Steering Group, which is planning to develop a two screen cinema and arts centre at the Old Town Hall, Hoylake; the national award winning Hoylake Community Cinema; the Hoylake Vision Neighbourhood Development Plan which was formally adopted by referendum in December 2016; and the Hoylake Christmas Lights Group.

HVL have no financial or pecuniary interest in the council's proposed Golf Resort, nor in any of the the proposals in this document.