



Cliff Hill Training Ground – Home of Exeter City Football Club

“The thing about football - the important thing about football - is that it is not just about football.” - Terry Pratchett

A quote that rings true for Exeter City Football Club. Performance and results are of course important and a driving factor in the club's recent promotion to League One, but what goes on behind the scenes is just as important.

A supporter-owned club, Exeter City FC is a family. Its stakeholders, players, staff, volunteers, and supporters are all integral to the running of the club and its success.

The new Cliff Hill Training Ground development which has been unveiled this summer, has been a long journey in the making and a plan that has been developed in conjunction and agreement with its supporters.

Over the past 10 years significant investment has been put into the training ground; A 3G pitch has enabled Academy through to first team players to train and develop, no doubt a reason behind the club's continuing success on the pitch.

The club building that was originally installed as a temporary building in the early 1970s was well overdue to be replaced. Full credit went to the grounds team and volunteers who had bravely kept the building operational for so long but as always, the time comes where ongoing maintenance costs are just not financially viable anymore.



A state of the art gym was vital for player performance and rehabilitation.

Wintertime brought challenges to the players and staff as work areas were cold and draughty and the roof of the building required a substantial investment to keep it watertight.

Julian Tagg, Club President, referred to the training ground as 'home' to its staff and players. Conscious that the building was not fit for purpose, talks began as far back as 2014 to find solutions to replace the temporary building with a new building that matched the club's ambitions on and off the pitch and would be the envy of other clubs.

Nick Hawker, Interim Executive Chair of Exeter City FC, said: "This

development was a huge and positive step for Exeter City Football Club. As a supporter-owned club, we felt it was a decision of such magnitude, that we asked members of our supporters' trust to vote on whether it should go ahead. They voted overwhelmingly in favour of the development."

Comprehensive talks with members of the Supporters' Trust and stakeholders began and identified what the club required. It was put to the vote and agreed that a new building was long overdue and would have huge benefits to all who trained and worked at Exeter City FC.

The objective of the new building was



The two-storey building has the much-needed space and sits proudly within the training site.



Improved working spaces for club management and staff.

The new modular building, delivered, installed and finished in weeks by Modulek

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to provide a high-quality training facility for the football club. Lack of space and facilities were the key drivers behind the project. For the club to improve and build on its results, investment into facilities for the players and the working environment for the staff was a priority. To have a training facility that would attract new players to the club was vital so that it could continue the quest for promotion.

A state-of-the-art gym for the players to focus on strength and conditioning, as well as equipment for rehabilitation and treatment were required. In addition, a working kitchen and dedicated canteen area so that the staff could provide better and more suited nutritional meals to players, and so staff could have an area to sit, mix with colleagues and eat was also necessary.

Washing and kit rooms so that the staff could finally be able to provide better operational services to players as well as improved office working conditions for staff and areas for match and training analysis.

It was a tall order for a club who by their own admissions were not rich but were adamant to address the lack of facilities that some clubs would take for granted.

Having successfully delivered similar priorities for AFC Bournemouth, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Leigh Sports Village, Modulek visited Cliff Hill Training Ground and worked through feasibility studies and concept design in conjunction with the club's project staff.

In the spring of 2022, Modulek received an urgent call for help from the club, with the news that the build project was in jeopardy as their original chosen supplier had pulled out. There was no other construction firm that could deliver the project within the time frame that had been allocated.

With speed of delivery being the essence behind Modulek, a project delivery team was quickly put in place and within a few weeks a revised cost and build schedule was approved by the club which would rescue the project, put it back within an affordable budget and be delivered and operational by the date required.

Modulek's Sales Director said: "We stepped in where other construction companies had failed, and our skilled team were able to mobilise extremely quickly to ensure that this project was delivered on time for the club. Our expertise in modular building and experience of working with football clubs enabled us to deliver within the tight construction deadlines as our method can accommodate the small windows of building opportunity that are available to operational sites."

Nick Hawker, added: "We were very appreciative of Modulek picking up the project at short notice and bringing it to a conclusion. We're delighted to now be able to offer our players and staff a high-quality facility and accommodation."

The major groundworks were scheduled for the close season to minimise disruption

to the club and the building was put into off site production so that it could be delivered in the autumn.

Delivery and installation of the building was exactly as per the build schedule and the modules were craned into position in the autumn sunshine at Cliff Hill Training Ground. The external cladding and landscaping were completed through the winter and the building was complete in early 2023.

As part of the build contract the remaining piece of the jigsaw was to demolish the old temporary building which had served well for the club but had now been replaced. In the early spring of this year the whole project and site was complete and ready for the club to take occupancy.

Exeter City FC now has the building that it deserves. The hard work and determination of all involved at the club is evident and Modulek are proud to have been able to step in at the last hour and deliver the final piece to this extraordinary club that has invested so much; not only for player facilities, but for the hardworking staff and volunteers and the community that holds it so dear to their hearts.

"We now have a high-quality facility which is suitable for an ambitious league one club. We are delighted with the finished result, which is already reaping dividends for our club and, particularly, our players and staff," Nick Hawker, concluded.