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Ron: Deal struck on Prospects College

SOUTHEND United have confirmed a deal has been struck to buy the Prospects College site, a key sticking point in the club's plans for the development of Roots Hall.

The club needed to buy the college site, in Fairfax Drive, as well as a row of shops in Victoria Avenue and St Mary's Court flats, to allow access to the whole of the Roots Hall site, which will become a Sainsbury's store.

The development will provide a huge part of the funding needed for the new, 22,000-seat stadium at Fossetts Farm.

Chairman Ron Martin says, in his regular website blog, he believes the agreement of the terms with Prospects College means a major piece of the jigsaw is now in place.

No one could be contacted at Prospects College to comment on the latest development.

Mr Martin said: "I can tell you we, Roots Hall Limited, have agreed terms to purchase Prospects College and I would hope to exchange that contract within the next ten to 14 working days.

"The remaining properties and shops we wish to purchase are all potentially subject to a compulsory pur-

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chase order. We hope that will not be necessary, but are now stepping up our efforts to agree terms.

"As soon as that is achieved, we will immediately be on site with construction.

"I am sure for many fans that time cannot come soon enough and how exciting it will be to see our new stadium begin to rise, knowing its completion will elevate your club to a new level.

"I absolutely know this will enable Southend United to fulfil its considerable, hitherto untapped potential."

An initial agreement had been reached, but then college chief executive Neil Bates told the Echo in September talks had stalled.

Prospects College is moving to Futures College, Southchurch Boulevard, Southend.

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