

REPORT TITLE: GARRISON GROUND – DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS TO SPORTS PITCHES AND PROVISION OF AN OUTDOOR GYM

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PURPOSE

The Garrison Ground has a long standing issue with drainage and in periods of heavy rainfall can become waterlogged in the south western corner. This makes use of this area for sports pitches fairly limited during such times. The construction of the Leisure Centre has not exacerbated this issue, however prior to the opening of the new Sport and Leisure Park there is an opportunity to try to alleviate the situation.

In conjunction with this, the intention has always been to include an outdoor gym in the Sport and Leisure Park in partnership with a local charity called Allegra's Ambition. The area which is subject to localised flooding is the preferred location of the charity to locate the outdoor gym. Discussions with the charity are ongoing, and authority is needed to enter into a partnership agreement with the charity for the construction of the gym, so long as the drainage issues can be resolved to the satisfaction of the charity.

In June 2018, the Council approved a Design Framework for the Sport & Leisure Park area. This report also includes an update on the progress of delivering the Design Framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That a capital budget and expenditure of up to £150,000, financed by prudential borrowing, be approved to implement measures to improve land drainage in the Garrison Ground.

2. That the Strategic Director - Place be authorised to undertake a procurement exercise using the GEN 4-2 Civil Engineering, Highways and Transportation Infrastructure Framework, or other suitable framework, and to subsequently instruct a suitable contractor to implement measures to improve land drainage in the Garrison Ground. The procurement exercise will be based on measures identified in the appended consultant reports but further discussion will be undertaken with the contractor appointed to undertake the works to ensure the most effective solution, both in terms of performance and cost, will be implemented.
3. That the Strategic Director - Place be authorised to negotiate and agree heads of terms and the Service Lead - Legal be authorised to enter into a funding agreement with Allegra's Ambition where the funds are for the purpose of construction and maintenance of an outdoor gym in the South Western corner of the Garrison Ground.
4. That the updates set out in the report in relation to the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park Design Framework are noted.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1 Living Well

The 'Living Well' outcome of the Council Plan identifies the need to reduce health inequalities in the district, increase the amount of physical and cultural activities, increase the amount of 'active travel,' and to provide attractive green spaces for relaxation and play. In order to achieve these aims the Council Plan sets out five actions, two of which relate directly to the scheme put forward in this application.

1.2 Firstly, the plan highlights the opening of the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Park as a key way of enabling people to live well, appreciating that it will provide 'sustainable, accessible facilities for all to enjoy.' In addition, the plan lays down the Council's aim to 'maintain and enhance the open spaces and parks that support good mental and physical health for residents of all ages.' This scheme will therefore help to support the objectives set out in the Council Plan in multiple ways; by contributing to the delivery of the new Sport and Leisure Park and ensuring that the open spaces and parks are not impacted, and therefore accessible for residents of all ages to use and enjoy.

1.3 As well as contributing to the delivery of the Council Plan, this scheme will also help to support Winchester's Local Plan. Council planning policies, notably CP6 and CP7, seek local sports and recreational improvements where deficiencies have been identified, with new facilities being provided to meet the needs of larger-scale development or the cumulative needs of smaller-scale development. This will be achieved by new and improved provision, such as that to be accommodated at the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 The land drainage measures require a capital budget of up to £150,000 in 2020/21 which will be funded by prudential borrowing.

2.2 For the full amount of £150,000, this will result in an estimated ongoing revenue cost of just under £8,000 per annum for 30 years from 2021/22. Further detail is provided in the financial appraisal in appendix 3.

2.3 In respect of the Allegra's Ambition project, it is anticipated that there may be some legal costs which can be met from within existing resources. It is proposed that Allegra's Ambition will fund the construction of the gym. There will also be ongoing inspection and maintenance costs for which the Council will be responsible but these will be minimal and will be accommodated within existing budgets.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The GEN 4-2 Civil Engineering, Highways and Transportation Infrastructure Framework is used by the Council for civil engineering works and is considered the most appropriate route to identify a contractor to undertake these drainage works. The terms and conditions of the framework, Council Procedure Rules, Financial Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations will be adhered to throughout the tender and subsequent award of any contract.
- 3.2 A legal agreement will be required with Allegra's Ambition to provide the terms of the grant funding from the Charity. The Council will then procure the works required to install the outdoor gym in accordance with the agreement and will provide ongoing maintenance and inspection of the equipment.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The required work can be delivered from within existing resources. The outdoor gym will have implications and associated costs for ongoing maintenance.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The drainage works will make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable, and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather.
- 5.2 The outdoor gym will be a valuable facility. It will need to be inspected and maintained by the Council.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Winchester City Council has hosted three 'WS&LP Open Forums' in the last 9 months; in September 2019, January 2020 and June 2020. Open Forums are a new and innovative style of meeting designed to give residents and others the opportunity to become more involved with the work of the Council.
- 6.2 These Open Forums meetings enabled discussion to occur between residents and Members, as well as other interested parties, about the WS&LP. During these the meetings the issue of drainage improvements to the Garrison Ground has been raised by residents. Residents wanted to know what improvements to the Garrison Ground were due to be made to alleviate flooding in the future. Following these events, it is therefore clear that the issue of flooding is a matter which concerns residents and provision of suitable drainage systems is something which they would like to see undertaken.

6.3 The outdoor gym was also considered as part of the recent consultation undertaken in respect of King George V playing fields, and was generally supported.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The new land drains will connect into the existing watercourse running along the edge of the Garrison Ground. The water already connects into this system and therefore there is an existing right to discharge the water into it.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

8.1 This will be considered in the design of the outdoor gym to ensure accessibility for a range of users...

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Not required.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 The table below details the relevant risks.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<p><i>Property</i> If an agreement is made with Allegra's Ambition for the construction of an outdoor gym and no prior drainage works have been undertaken, then future flooding of the Garrison Ground could damage the outdoor gym equipment. This would require WCC to carry out more frequent maintenance works to take care of its asset.</p>	<p>To mitigate this risk, drainage works should be undertaken at the Garrison Ground.</p>	<p>The drainage works will make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather.</p>
<p><i>Community Support</i> The flooding of the Garrison Ground currently prevents the playing fields from being used by the community during periods of wet weather. This means that a valuable community service is unusable for certain</p>	<p>To mitigate this risk, drainage works should be undertaken at the Garrison Ground.</p>	<p>The drainage works will make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather.</p>

periods of the year.		
<p><i>Timescales</i></p> <p>It is highly likely that Allegra's Ambition will not enter into a formal agreement with the Council unless drainage works are undertaken beforehand. Therefore, the construction of the outdoor gym will likely not proceed until the issue of drainage works at the Garrison Ground have been resolved. If the issue of drainage is not resolved soon, then the charity may decide not to invest in the outdoor gym.</p>	To mitigate this risk, drainage works should be undertaken at the Garrison Ground.	The drainage works will make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather.
<p><i>Project capacity</i></p> <p>There are no risks to the project's capacity relating to this report.</p>		
<p><i>Financial / VfM</i></p> <p>If an agreement cannot be negotiated with Allegra's Ambition for the allocation of funding towards the construction of an outdoor gym, then the Council will have to cease work on this element of the project, find alternative third party funding, or identify a budget to pay for the construction of an outdoor gym. By not taking action now to resolve this issue, it is therefore possible that WCC will have to pay a significantly larger sum for the construction of an outdoor gym or it may not be delivered at all.</p>	To mitigate this risk, drainage works should be undertaken at the Garrison Ground.	The drainage works will make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather.
Extent of proposed works do not fully address the waterlogging issues.	Works can be extended at a later date	
<i>Reputation</i>	To mitigate this risk,	The drainage works will

The flooding of the Garrison Ground could pose a risk to WCC's reputation over time.	drainage works should be undertaken at the Garrison Ground.	make the Garrison Ground and the sports pitches more resilient, usable and less susceptible to periods of inclement weather. The proposed drainage is capable of being extended to adjoining areas if required.
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11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Garrison Ground Land Drainage

- 11.1 The Garrison Ground has a history of waterlogging and localised flooding issues in some parts during sustained periods of heavy rainfall, with the most recent episode of this taking place in December 2019. The south western corner is where this is a particular problem; hence it has been identified by the Environment Agency as a designated flood risk area. Land drains are in place; however these became ineffective many years ago and need to be replaced. The construction of the Leisure Centre has not exacerbated the issue. However, it would be sensible to seek to improve land drainage before the new Sport and Leisure Park opens and to therefore provide better use and flexibility of this part of the Garrison Ground.
- 11.1 Following the completion of the construction of the Leisure Centre, there will be two football pitches provided in this area. Without any sort of improvement to land drainage, periods of inclement weather could render at least one of the football pitches unusable for a sustained period of time.
- 11.2 The Council also intends to work with a local charity called Allegra's Ambition to construct an outdoor gym facility and their preferred location for this is in the area of the Garrison Ground which can be affected by localised flooding. The project team has explored potential alternative sites for the outdoor gym within the Sport & Leisure Park site but in order for it to have the necessary prominence and the maximum footfall the location in the south western corner of the Garrison Ground has been deemed the most suitable location for the facility.
- 11.3 The Council have instructed a firm of civil and structural engineers to examine the issues and identify measures that can be implemented to resolve the flooding issues. These measures include:
- a) The construction of a series of land drains connecting to the existing drainage system which outfalls to the River Itchen via a large underground pipe. Further details are provided in Appendix 1.
- 11.4 The estimated cost of the proposed works is up to £150,000. The proposed work will initially include constructing land drains and connector drains in the

area in the South West Corner adjacent to the football pitches in this location. This will drain the area directly into the main outfall pipe to the River Itchen which is located nearby. There is no guarantee that the extent of the proposed works will make the pitches playable in all conditions. The works, however, are capable of being extended in the future if they are not as effective as envisaged.

ALLEGRA'S AMBITION OUTDOOR GYM

- 11.5 The Council has been in discussion with a charity called Allegra's Ambition for some time regarding entering into a partnership with them to provide an outdoor gym in the Leisure Park area. More information about the charity and the work they do can be found on their website:
<https://www.allegrasambition.org.uk/>
- 11.6 Meetings were held with the charity in the early part of 2019 to start to discuss what was possible in the area. It took some time to ascertain the preferred area for the gym to be situated, due to the design of the Leisure Centre and associated works, such as football pitch relocations.
- 11.7 There is now more certainty about the area available for the outdoor gym (see plan at Appendix 2).
- 11.8 This report therefore seeks to implement measures to try to resolve the land drainage issues at the Garrison Ground as this is also the preferred location for the outdoor gym.
- 11.9 Should Members agree to the improvements to land drainage then this report also seeks authority for the Strategic Director – Place along with the Service Lead - Legal to negotiate and potentially enter into a formal agreement with Allegra's Ambition for the construction of an outdoor gym. Such an agreement would need to include details about costs, maintenance liabilities and future renewal. It should be noted that outdoor gym can only be taken forward if the drainage improvements are undertaken.

UPDATES TO DESIGN FRAMEWORK

- 11.10 In June 2018, a Design Framework for the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park area was adopted by Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee. The current document can be viewed on the Council's website here:
https://www.winchester.gov.uk/assets/attach/16307/151111_Design%20Framework%202018_Adopted%206%20June_lores.pdf
- 11.11 Updates and corresponding amendments to the framework are set out below:
- The Council had previously sought to enter into a partnership with the Allotment Society to construct a path that linked the Sport & Leisure Park area with the South Downs Way. However, following discussions and negotiations the Allotment Society were not minded to proceed with the agreement.

- The Design Framework currently states that a review of the car parking permit scheme to the northern boundary will be conducted. That review has now taken place and a resident parking scheme has been approved and implemented in Highcliffe.
- A planning brief for the Council's Bar End Depot site will be considered at a future Cabinet. The proposals within that report do not affect this brief.
- The pedestrian and cycle route improvement works between Domum Road and the Sport and Leisure Park have been completed.
- The Main Entrance roundabout design into the Sport and Leisure Park has been agreed with Hampshire County Council and incorporates a Tiger crossing across Bar End Road for cyclists and pedestrians. Works have now started and will be completed by Autumn of 2020.
- A pedestrian access route from Barfield Park and Ride site to Domum Road is currently being considered.
- The Council had previously approved a new pedestrian route into and around the WS&LP complex, east-west, which linked the Leisure Centre and Garrison Grounds to the King George V playing fields. This path has been completed.
- Since the initial Design Framework some minor highway crossing improvements have been made. A temporary pedestrian crossing over Bar End Road has been installed to assist pedestrians in accessing the Sports Stadium and the playing pitches.
- A landscaping scheme has been agreed with residents of Chilcomb Lane, which needs to be included in the Design Framework.
- The existing pavilions, which are located in the North Western corner of King George V Playing Fields, are due to be replaced. A Town Forum Informal Members Group has been set up to consider the KGV site as a whole. As part of this work the replacement of the pavilions is being discussed and proposals will be brought to Town Forum later in the year.
- As part of the Winchester Movement Strategy the Vaultex site is being developed into a 300 space park and ride site following award of a LEP Grant and subject to planning approval.
- As part of the Winchester Movement Strategy a Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan has been developed. This includes a route from the railway station to the Sport and Leisure Park via the City Centre. A CIL application has been submitted for funding to help provide parts of this route.

- The City Centre wayfinding information is being updated to reflect the new location of the Leisure Centre.
- The remaining section of the Garrison Ground is now registered with Fields in Trust.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 All options for land drainage were assessed in conjunction with the specialist consultant and the most effective and affordable option has been put forward.
- 12.2 The outdoor gym would be a valuable addition to the Sport and Leisure Park and as the charity is offering to pay for the gym (subject to the drainage issue being resolved) it would be prudent to progress this scheme in their favoured location. Other locations were not favoured by the charity.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3035(LC) – 23 May 2018 – Approval of Design Framework

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Detailed Drainage Design

Appendix 2 – General Arrangement Plan of the Leisure Centre site

Appendix 3 – Financial Appraisal