

Funding enhancements to the sports and recreational facilities under construction at Ganger Farm, Romsey.

Report of the Planning Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

That in order to secure enhancements to sports and recreational facilities at Ganger Farm:

- 1. £207,705 of capital spend be included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21.**
- 2. That recommendation 1 be funded as follows:**
 - a. £82,426 from unallocated section 106 Developer contributions**
 - b. £125,279 from the Capital Receipts Reserve pending receipt of and recoupment from further Section 106 Developer contributions and external funding.**

Recommendation to Council

SUMMARY:

- Authority is sought to add a further £207,705 towards the sports and recreational facilities at Ganger Farm project within the Councils Capital Programme for the purpose of providing enhancements to the existing scheme.
- It is proposed that this sum is met by:
- (a) £82,426 from unallocated section 106 Developer contributions
- (b) £125,279 to be funded initially from the Capital Receipts Reserve, pending receipt of committed £120,054 Developer Contributions and £5,225 external funding, upon receipt of which the Capital Receipts Reserve will be replenished.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for certain enhancements to the sports and recreational facilities under construction at Ganger Farm, Romsey.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council seeks the provision of sport, play, and other public open space infrastructure in association with new residential developments. In some cases, this can be provided on site, but where this is not appropriate, an off-site financial contribution is sought towards improving local facilities in the vicinity.

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- 2.2 The securing of contributions is based on an assessment of existing under or over-provision within each ward of the Borough, and the demand for public open space and provisions likely to be generated by the new development. Where it is not feasible to locate 'usable' open space within or on the new development, contributions have been secured for providing or improving the capacity of existing or alternative spaces. Contributions secured for public open space provision must be spent on that provision, and cannot be used for any other purpose.
- 2.3 A range of sports and recreational public open space provisions is currently under construction, at Ganger Farm in Romsey. Full planning permission was granted in 2016 for the development of 275 dwellings with access, parking, landscaping, open space, allotments and associated works, provision of sports facilities comprising sports pitches (including artificial surfaced pitches with floodlighting and fencing, and grass surfaced pitches), pavilion and car parking (14/01090/FULLS). The development will provide 9 hectares of floodlit grass and 3G football and rugby pitches (adult and junior) with a two storey pavilion, car parking, overflow car park, 4 play areas, ecology trail and landscaped open space. The pavilion is a substantial building incorporating changing rooms, shower and WC facilities, locker rooms, function rooms, multi-use room with sprung floor, equipment storage rooms, 2 bar areas, kitchens, 2 staircases, a lift and large first floor balconies overlooking the pitches.
- 2.4 A longstanding need for sports pitches and associated infrastructure had previously been identified and articulated in the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016, and associated supporting evidence (the Playing Pitch Strategy, Open Space Audit and Sports and Recreation Strategy) prior to the determination of the planning application for the development of Ganger Farm. The new sports provisions will serve a wider area and their delivery is identified as a key element of the Borough's sports infrastructure within the recently adopted Test Valley Borough Playing Pitch Strategy 2020 to 2036.
- 2.5 Under the terms of the original s106 legal agreement associated with the planning permission, the Council committed to make a contribution of £640,000 (using developer public open space contributions from the wider area) to enable the delivery of a full range of high quality sports and recreational infrastructure within the development whilst also ensuring that 20% affordable housing could be delivered within the development, together with other on and off site provisions and mitigation. Other infrastructure and mitigation secured within the s106 agreement includes contributions towards off site primary and secondary school places, off site ecological mitigation, travel planning, highway works on site and wider highway improvements, New Forest SPA mitigation and on-site community allotments. The sports pavilion is a large and accessible building with good internal spaces and facilities, to serve a range of sports, users and activities. The s106 agreement secured a building with only basic enhancements or operational additions.

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- 2.6 The development of the recreational and sports provisions is nearing completion at Ganger Farm. The opportunity arose to improve the specification of the facility beyond that which was originally agreed with the developer. Authority is sought to provide further funding, derived from developer public open space (sports ground and formal recreation) contributions, from Romsey Wards, towards specified additional works and enhancements to the sports and recreational infrastructure under construction. This would ensure that the pavilion and sports hub has the capacity to better serve multiple user groups and sports activities. The funding is sought from developer contributions and external funding. Details of the contributions identified for this additional spend are set out at Appendix 1 to the report.
- 2.7 Appendix 2 summarises the additional enhancement works and project costs to the Council. These include enhancements to the basic specification for the pavilion kitchens (to increase kitchen capacity, enabling catering for larger/multiple functions, sports events, or hire), first fix CCTV to the pavilion, and permanent line markings to the 3G pitches.
- 2.8 Use of external Consultancy forms a necessary part of the additional enhancements. Two specialist consultants have been engaged to protect the interests of the Council, as future owner of the pavilion. Construction of the pavilion is a large and relatively complicated project, particularly in terms of its mechanical and electrical elements. Various improvements to build specifications and technical designs have been secured by the Consultants during the project in order to exceed industry and sports standards/guidance (e.g. upgrading the two internal staircases, achieving a higher specification for the ventilation system). The additional items/spend identified in Appendix B will enhance the provisions for the wider community, support efficient building management and help to ensure the facilities can generate a future income.
- 2.9 In addition to the various identified enhancements to the build, there are further items of capital spend that are required to facilitate the future public and sports use of the provisions. These additional items include second fix CCTV, bar / cellar cooling, signage, litter bins, bar security shutters, café equipment, cashless till system, cleaning equipment, internal wifi routing, outdoor furniture, etc. to support the operation and maintenance of the provisions. A capital fund of £250,000 was identified at an early stage as part of the s106 maintenance contribution to be paid by the developer on release of the public open space provisions to the Council. It is proposed that the £120,054 identified in Appendix 2 is ultimately met from this contribution.

3 Update on progress on site

- 3.1 The Ganger Farm development is approximately 75% complete. The two storey pavilion is scheduled to be finished in November 2020 (subject to inspections and snagging) and the associated 5 adult grass and 3G pitches (excluding the 3 grassed junior pitches) are already complete and scheduled to be released to the Council in January 2021. The landscaping to the adjoining areas, car parks and access are nearing completion. The allotments are already delivered to the community and the four play areas are under construction (two are already complete at the time of writing, as is the ecology boardwalk and trail). Progress in the preparation and seeding of the final three junior football pitches was delayed this year and these provisions are now scheduled to be released to the Council in September 2021. Within the wider development, approximately 183 dwellings are occupied (at November 2020) and the developer (BDW) estimates that 200 dwellings will be occupied in December and that the development will be fully occupied by December 2021.
- 3.2 Unfortunately there has been some delay with delivering aspects of the on-site infrastructure, particularly in respect of the three junior pitches. A Deed of Variation has been drafted by BDW to establish a revised delivery schedule. This represents a variation against the triggers set out in the original s 106 agreement. An application is currently with the Council to determine.
- 3.3 Management arrangements and maintenance plans for the pavilion and sports provisions at Ganger Farm, are currently being prepared. In view of the Covid 19 pandemic, and uncertainties around future restrictions and usage of the sports hub and facilities, particularly early into 2021, it is likely that the Council will make arrangements to manage the facilities in-house for at least the first year of operation.

4 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 4.1 The proposal supports the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan (2019-2023), in particular:
- 4.1.1 Growing the potential of *the local environment* for current and future generations:
- Enhancing the quality of our public realm to improve the local environment, so that these are attractive spaces and places that people can enjoy and spend time.
- 4.1.2 Growing the potential of *people* to be able to live well and fulfil their aspirations:
- Creating communities that have the infrastructure and accessibility to meet the needs of a changing and growing population.

5 Consultations/Communications

- 5.1 The delivery of a range of high quality sports and recreational facilities at Ganger Farm in connection with residential development on the site has been subject to public consultation, including a stakeholder exercise to explore and develop the appropriate mix of facilities and pitches, in accordance with local need.
- 5.2 The specific issue of the additional funds identified in the recommendation has not been the subject of separate public consultation. A future sub tenant has advised the Council of its requirements for the pavilion and grounds and will fund some of the specific enhancements requested to the extent of £5,225 (this sum is included in the £125,279 at 2b of the recommendation). The additional works have been agreed in consultation with officers in the Communities and Leisure and Property and Asset Management Teams, the project team and the Council's external consultants.

6 Options

- 6.1 **Option 1** To agree the – additional enhancement works to the Ganger Farm facilities as set out in this report totalling £207,705.
- 6.2 **Option 2.** Not to proceed with the recommended proposal save that those works which have already been undertaken (primarily Consultant fees of £44,550.00 and works of £5,225) are funded by the unallocated Developer contributions but no further additional work is undertaken.

7 Option Appraisal

- 7.1 **Option 1.** The developer contributions of £82,426 have been secured to improve formal sports grounds and formal recreation public open space infrastructure across all Romsey Wards. Annex F to the Local Plan clarifies that this category of open space will include pitches or specialised areas and associated facilities, such as changing rooms, pavilions or car parking. It is considered that the proposed contribution will help to achieve this.
- 7.2 The need for the sports facilities/open space provision is well articulated in a number of evidence led strategies, including the Local Plan, Sport and Recreation Strategy, Open Space Audit and Playing Pitch Strategy. The delivery of the sports provisions is identified as a key part of the Borough's sports infrastructure, in the Test Valley Borough Playing Pitch Strategy 2020 to 2036.
- 7.3 Allocation of further S106 contributions (initially funded as necessary as set out in this report) to ensure the delivery of enhanced facilities and continued works to properly equip the facilities for public use following their release to the Council, is therefore the recommended option.

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7.4 **Option 2.** The Council may choose not to continue providing s106 funds to support for the delivery of the enhanced provisions or to enable the facilities to be brought into use. The s106 contributions previously secured must be used to provide sports, recreation and open space facilities, or improvements to existing facilities for Romsey. If this additional funding is not provided to support the final stages of the project and the delivery of the various enhancements, alternative funding would need to be secured via Council budgets and/or the additional provisions identified may not be completed (to the detriment of the security, future operation, future viability and completion of the project). This is clearly undesirable.

7.5 It is considered that the additional capital contribution of £82,426 is necessary to fund the enhanced sport and open space infrastructure required and that the £125,279 expenditure is appropriate and necessary in order to bring the provisions into use and to secure their operation and maintenance. Option 1 is therefore strongly recommended.

8 Risk Management

8.1 A risk assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's Risk management process and the existing risk controls in place mean that no significant risks (Red or Amber) have been identified. Whilst identified as a 'Green' risk, the risk, remote as it is, exists that the full Developer payments and/or external funding may not fall in and the sum referred to at point 2b of the Recommendation will not be recouped and the Capital Receipts Reserve not replenished.

9 Resource Implications

9.1 Capital funds of £82,426 will be drawn from collected contributions held for improving the provision of sport, recreation and open space infrastructure across Romsey.

9.2 The sum of £125,279 will also ultimately be met from Developer contributions (£120,054) and external funding (£5,225) however pending receipt of those sums, payment will be made from the Capital Receipts Reserve.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 The contributions can only be used for the purpose for which they were secured. The proposals set out in this report meet those purposes and authority is sought to allocate the sums as outlined in the report.

11 Equality Issues

11.1 The EQIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

12 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

12.1 To secure enhancements to sports and recreational facilities at Ganger Farm, Romsey, it is recommended to Council that:

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- a) £207,705 of capital spend is included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21.
- b) That this is funded as follows:
- c) £82,426 from unallocated section 106 Developer contributions
- d) £125,279 from the capital receipts reserve pending receipt of and recoupment from further s 106 Developer contributions/external funding.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1. Test Valley Revised Local Plan 2011 - 2029
2. Growing Our Potential - the Corporate Plan 2019-23
3. Test Valley Borough Council – Playing Pitch Strategy 2020 – 36
4. Test Valley Borough Council – Sports Facility Strategy 2020 – 36

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexe:	1. Summary of developer contributions	File Ref:	Annex 1
	2. Summary of additional works and costs to enhance and complete POS works	File Ref:	Annex 2
(Portfolio: Planning and Building) Councillor N Adams King			
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	2 December 2020