

TITLE	Ryeish Green and Grays Fruit Farm Sports Hub Projects
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 30 July 2015
WARD	Shinfield South and Wokingham Without
DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
LEAD MEMBER	Angus Ross, Executive Member for Environment

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

A much improved outdoor sports offer for both the existing and new residents of Wokingham and Shinfield.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Executive resolve to:

- 1) agree, to the release of S106 funding to progress a planning application for the co-located Wokingham Sports Hub facility at Grays Fruit Farm in South Wokingham to serve the North and South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL).
- 2) agree to the release of S106 funding to progress a planning application for the Sports Hub to serve the South of the M4 SDL and implement any proposals which may be authorised within the budget identified in the “Financial Implications” table below.
- 3) delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Resources to forward fund the Ryeish Green Sports Hub scheme through short term borrowing where needed.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Grays Fruit Farm - In order to be ready to commence delivery of this facility in September 2017 it will be necessary to commence on the initial internal and external/public consultation exercise towards the end of the 2015. The consultation exercise will be guided by the Sports and Leisure Working Group and will engage with Sport England/ individual sports governing bodies, Town/Parish Councils, Wokingham Sports Council, local Sports Clubs and the general public. The results of this consultation exercise will inform the development of a detailed masterplan for the site in summer 2016 which will be followed by a detailed planning application in late 2016/early 2017. It has been estimated that these two stages will cost in the region of £65,000.

Ryeish Green Sports Hub - During the last couple of years the Council has secured around £1.95million in contributions towards the Ryeish Green Sports Hub project from the SDL developments. The borough and parish council have identified a preferred option for this money, which is to upgrade the existing grass pitches through improved drainage, construct a new full size Multi-Sport Artificial Turf Pitch (with floodlights) and a 4 team changing room facility with car parking. The results of the recent public

consultation exercise will be used to inform the development of a detailed masterplan for the site in summer 2015, which will be followed by a detailed planning application in late 2015/early 2016. It has been estimated that these two stages will cost in the region of £60,000.

Improvements to the grass pitch drainage, and the construction of a new full size Multi-Sport Artificial Turf Pitch (with floodlights) and a 4 team changing room facility with car parking could then commence in the summer of 2016. It has been estimated that these two stages will cost in the region of £2,000,000.

The Council is exploring potential sustainable uses for the former Ryeish Green Leisure centre building.

Background

Grays Fruit Farm

During 2013 it became clear to the Council that the South Wokingham SDL consortium were unlikely to be able to deliver both the required area of playing pitches and the allocated housing numbers on land in their control. As a consequence the Council commissioned a feasibility Study to look at two possible locations for a sports hub to serve the South Wokingham SDL (Priors Farm and Grays Fruit Farm) in March 2014. Quite by chance at the beginning of May 2014 Grays Fruit Farm was advertised for sale on the open market at an estimated value of £1.5million (based on existing use), with a deadline for bids set for Friday 30th May. The Council's Executive took the decision to purchase the Grays Farm fruit Farm on 31st July 2014 to enable the delivery of a comprehensive outdoor sports hub to serve the South Wokingham SDL. One of the conditions of the sale was that the site would be leased back to the current operator until 29th September 2017 in order to give the Council Time to prepare plans for the development of the site.

Ryeish Green Sports Hub

The former Ryeish Green School site lies in the heart of the South of the M4 Strategic Development Location (SDL). Having been closed by the Council in 2010 because of falling student numbers, part of the site reopened in September 2012 as Oakbank Free School. The Free School lease includes only part of the built area of the site (excluding the former Ryeish Green Sports Hall and the School Music block) and access to the playing pitches. Consequently the Council has retained ownership of 1.5ha of the built area of the site (including the former Ryeish Green Sports Hall and the School Music block) and 4.83ha of grass playing pitches.

Initially the Council Executive took the decision to use the remaining area of the former Ryeish Green School site for residential development (25th November 2010) although this development would have been restricted to the previously developed part of the site and would have left space to accommodate public access to the playing pitches and even pavilion facilities. However with the emergence of the Oakbank free school in 2012 the Council began to explore the location as a possible site for expanded leisure provision to serve the SDL.

Through the Shinfield Parish and Community Forum the issue of the use of the former Ryeish Green school site to provide sport and leisure facilities for the SDL was raised and subsequently Shinfield Parish Council wrote to enquire about progress on this as a favoured community option.

On 26th September 2013 the Council's Executive took the decision to approve the use of the former Ryeish Green School site as a sports hub to serve the south of the M4 SDL to enable the delivery of a comprehensive outdoor sports hub to serve the South Wokingham SDL.

Subsequently officer have worked to secure contributions to this project from the SDL developments and undertaken a comprehensive public consultation exercise in partnership with the Parish Council.

Analysis of Issues

Grays Fruit Farm

In order to be ready to commence delivery of this facility in September 2017 it will be

necessary to commence on the initial internal and external/public consultation exercise towards the end of the 2015. The consultation exercise will be guided by the Sports and Leisure Working Group and will engage with Sport England/ individual sports governing bodies, Town/Parish Councils, Wokingham Sports Council, local Sports Clubs and the general public. The results of this consultation exercise will inform the development of a detailed masterplan for the site in summer 2016.

The draft project programme is as follows

Project task	Schedule
Pre application consultation	Autumn 2015 - Winter 2016
Develop detailed masterplan for site based upon results of public consultation	Spring-Summer 2016
Submission of detailed planning application	Summer to Winter 2016
Procure contractor to construct sports hub	Spring –Summer 2017
Construct Sports Hub	Autumn 2017 onwards

The Council's Property Team has estimated that it will cost around £44,500 to progress the project through to detailed planning permission.

The Feasibility Study for South Wokingham Sports Hub (Site 4 Priors Farm and Site 7 Gray's Fruit Farm) indicates that the overall cost of the construction of the Grays Fruit Farm Sports Hub would be around £4,579,550. The Council Property Team have reviewed these costs and have suggested that a precautionary estimate of £6,795,548 would be more robust at this stage.

The Council has secured developer contributions totalling £3,699,727 from the Buckhurst Farm, Kentwood Farm (Phases 1 and 2), Matthewsgreen Farm and Keephatch Beech developments. The remaining funding will need to come from the CIL receipts from the South of the railway line parts of the south Wokingham SDL. Were this development to contribute at the same level as the most recent parts of the North Wokingham SDL then we would expect to receive an additional £4,342,709.

Around 3ha of the Grays Fruit Farm site falls within the floodplain and would not be suitable for sports pitches, although it would be suitable as SANG (providing it can tie in with the wider SDL SANG suite). It should be possible to secure a significant contribution from the SDL consortium towards land value element of the SANG (in addition to layout costs and in perpetuity maintenance). On other SDLs we have secured £123,500/ha for the use of Council owned land as SANG and this would potentially give an additional contribution of nearly £400,000 which could be used to fund the sports hub.

A future Executive report will be brought forward in due course to approve expenditure required to cover the actual delivery of the sports hub.

Ryeish Green Sports Hub

During the last couple of years the Council has secured around £1.95million in contributions towards the Ryeish Green Sports Hub project from the SDL developments. In addition to these contributions the Council has established an overarching strategy for sports pitch provision based upon the Ryeish Green Sports Hub plus 2 new pitches (immediately to the East of the Ryeish Green Sports Hub) and

3.184ha of playing pitches at High Copse Farm (including a new cricket pitch and pavilion) (see South of the M4 SDL Sports Provision slide).

The borough and parish council have identified a preferred option for this money, which is to upgrade the existing grass pitches through improved drainage, construct a new full size Multi-Sport Artificial Turf Pitch (with floodlights) and a 4 team changing room facility with car parking. In May 2015 The Council undertook a comprehensive public engagement exercise in order to establish that there was community support for the Council's preferred option for this Sports Hub.

The public consultation, open from Monday May 18 to Friday June 26 has shown strong support from respondents for the Council's preferred option of upgrading the existing grass pitches through improved drainage, constructing a new full size Multi-Sport Artificial Turf Pitch with floodlights and a 4 team changing room facility with car parking. This public support reflects the views of key local sports clubs engaged before and during the consultation and is supported by Shinfield Parish Council.

The main issues relating to the outdoor provision raised during the consultation were:

- Concern from Oakbank School and its parents that any work to the pitches be planned and phased to take into account the school's current usage of the site
- Some comment that there could be a wider focus for outdoor sports and that the plans concentrate too much on football. This feedback needs to be considered in the light of previous research that has indicated a very significant general demand for football in the borough that outstrips demand for other sporting facilities and also the specific local need identified in Shinfield by all stakeholders.

The results of this consultation exercise will be used to inform the development of a detailed masterplan for the site in summer 2015. There is a clear community aspiration to see the Ryeish Green Sports Hub delivered as soon as is practically possible.

Project task	Schedule
Pre application consultation	Spring-Summer 2015
Develop detailed masterplan for site based upon results of public consultation	Summer to Autumn 2015
Submission of detailed planning application	Autumn to Winter 2015
Procure contractor to construct sports hub	Spring 2016
Construct Sports Hub	Summer 2016 onwards

The Council's Property Team has estimated that it will cost around £37,945 to progress the project through to detailed planning permission.

Early cost estimates are that the construction works required to deliver the preferred option are as follows.

Project task	Cost estimate
Improved field drainage of existing grass pitches	£478,445
Construction of new Artificial Turf Pitch with floodlights	£600,000
Construction of 4 team pavilion with clubroom	£685,000
Construction of access and car parking	£200,000
Total	£1,963,445

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£80,000*	£0	Capital – Funded from HCA Large Sites Grant
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£2,045,000*	£0	Capital – Funded from HCA Large Sites Grant £45k and S106 Developer Contributions £2m
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

* Excludes forward funding costs (see note below)

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Year 1 expenditure will be made up of the following items

Develop detailed masterplan for Ryeish Green Sports Hub	- £20,000
Submission of detailed planning application for Ryeish Green Sports Hub	- £40,000
Develop detailed masterplan for Grays Fruit Farm Sports Hub (although this may fall in year 2)	- £20,000

Year 2 expenditure will be made up of the following items

Submission of detailed planning application for Grays Fruit Farm Sports Hub	- £45,000
Construction of Ryeish Green Sports Hub	- £2,000,000

Forward Funding – Due to the timing of developer contributions being received, there may be a need to forward fund this scheme. The costs of short term borrowing will be managed through the current Treasury Management Debt/Interest budget. Current estimate is that forward funding costs in total would be approx. £69k.

Cross-Council Implications

None

List of Background Papers

Feasibility Study for South Wokingham Sports Hub (Site 4 Priors Farm and Site 7 Gray's Fruit Farm)
South of the M4 SDL Sports Provision slide

Contact Andy Glencross	Service Community Services
Telephone No 0118 9746199	Email andy.glencross@wokingham.gov.uk
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