



To: Executive Councillor for Community, Arts and Recreation: Councillor Richard Johnson
Report by: Ian Ross
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 16/10/2014
Wards affected: Arbury Castle King's Hedges West Chesterton

USE OF DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AT ARU HOWE'S PLACE SPORTS FIELD DEVELOPMENT

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) are proposing to redevelop their Howe's Place sports ground facility off Huntingdon Road. The proposals are to create a new facility on the existing site for two full size floodlit all weather pitches (one football - 3G - one hockey - sand), grass pitches and a new pavilion. The total cost is estimated at £4.5 million, and is a current planning application for consideration at South Cambridgeshire District Council ref S/1372/14/FL.

1.2 The nearby site of Darwin Green is a major growth development area, and part of the development is being built upon Sidney Sussex playing fields. This part of the Darwin Green proposal received objections from Sport England which had to be mitigated to allow the whole site to be approved. These mitigations were adopted into the S106 Agreement for Darwin Green for the loss of sporting facilities and playing pitches and a specific ring fenced sum of £250,000 was agreed for offsite contribution to improve local sports facilities and pitches but were restricted to only being able to be spent in the four neighbouring wards or within 1 mile of the City Boundary.

1.3 It is proposed that the ring fenced £250,000 of developer contributions are invested into the ARU sports pavilion building, which as a direct result of the investment will allow ARU to enhance the first floor facilities providing two community room spaces, additional toilets and a kitchenette facility, along with spectator viewing area across the playing pitches.

1.4 A community use agreement would be drawn up between the City Council and ARU which would secure public access to the artificial and playing pitches, and the pavilion and community spaces within.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

2.1 Approve the release of £250,000 of developer contributions derived from the Darwin Green - 14/0086/REM - Sidney Sussex playing fields development towards the ARU development of sports pitches and ancillary facilities at Howe's Place – (subject to South Cambridgeshire District Council planning approval being granted for the application.)

2.2 Authorise Officers to enter into a Community Use agreement to secure public access to the Howe's Place facilities based on the provisions in 3.11.

3. Background

3.1 ARU is proposing to redevelop their Howe's Place sports ground facility off Huntingdon Road, which is just in South Cambs. The current facility is a very dated pavilion consisting of just two team changing rooms and a reception area. These service several adult football pitches and a rugby pitch, with limited parking on site.

3.2 The proposal is to redevelop the site maintaining it as a sporting facility to provide new high quality changing facilities, two floodlit artificial pitches, senior football pitches, and keeping the rugby pitch to the front of the site. The artificial pitches will be one third generation (3G) rubber crumb pitch suitable for football, with the other a sand based artificial pitch for hockey. Both will be floodlit with modern LED floodlights with minimal light pollution disturbance to residential properties in the area. The total cost for the development is estimated at £4.5 million.

3.3 A major growth site Darwin Green (DG1) borders the top end of Howe's Place and although providing some onsite sports facilities such as Cricket and Tennis, could not provide for the loss of pitches from the Sidney Sussex Sports Ground.

3.4 Sport England originally objected to the loss pitches and opposed the Darwin Green development but eventually withdrew their objection after the following mitigation was agreed and approved at the Joint Development Control Committee (JDCC) in July 2010.

3.5 This mitigation was to have included in the S106 agreement that £250,000 - Former college sports pitch compensation: Is a ring-fenced contribution towards the provision of sports facilities within the ward areas of Castle, West Chesterton, Arbury or Kings Hedges, within 1 mile of the City Council boundary of these wards or within the North West Quadrant being compensation towards the loss of former college sports pitches located in the southern part of the Site.

3.6 The contribution sum is to be paid to the City Council via five £50,000 instalments, triggered for payment over the years through dwelling occupation levels on the site.

3.7 Discussions have been held with ARU about the potential for these ring fenced developer contributions to be used within their sports ground improvement scheme, with the aim of increasing the capacity of pitch provision and community use.

3.8 Creating a good level of community use at the Howe's Close site represents a good way to ensure public use of these facilities for people living in the ward areas who could have been affected by loss of the college pitches.

3.9 Officers are not aware of any alternative projects within the constraints of the specific s106 conditions that could be potentially come forward that would offer the same high levels of strategic benefit.

3.10 If the contributions are not used on the Howe's Place proposal it may be some considerable time before any other schemes come forward that would meet the criteria, or it is likely there would be a call on the money to fund schemes further outside of the City in Milton, or Histon and Impington, where City residents would not benefit as much as the Howe's Place scheme could offer.

3.11 It is proposed that the following arrangements form part of a legal Community Use agreement in return for the £250,000 investment;

- § 32 artificial floodlit pitch hours per week spread out across Monday - Friday in the key time of 6pm and 10pm. This is likely to consist of 1 full evening of 4 hours plus a further 4 hours spread across 2 or 3 other days.
- § Public and community access to the Community rooms and kitchenette facility
- § Public and community access to the grass pitches

- § Public and community access to the facility outside of College term times.
- § Priority given to city based clubs and organisations for use of the community hours
- § Representation on a stakeholder group which looks annually at pricing and performance of the community hours.
- § A sliding scale of repayments based over a 12 year period if ARU were to withdrawn from the Community use agreement

3.12 The development proposals are considered by Officers to represent good value for money, and are inline with similar levels of contributions at other non-Council facilities providing Community access through agreements.

3.13 The proposal also contributes to the 2014-2017 Sports Strategy, and Labour Party manifesto objectives to open up a University sports grounds to the public.

3.14 A city council web page is currently being created which details community all the community use at sports centres and school provision that S106 developer contributions have secured. This is provide better information and to promote the public access to non Council facilities and the ARU hours will be added and promoted through this web page if approved.

3.15 There are currently no other full sized 3G pitches in the City, just smaller training pitches at Netherhall and Chesterton schools which delivers significant positive local sporting infrastructure impact, with the possibility of ARU's use of other facilities in the City declining, therefore freeing up capacity for both hockey and football, on City owned sites.

3.16 Feedback from sports organisations highlights a lack of floodlit all weather training facilities as an ongoing issue and this would help to meet local club needs, and ARU are keen to undertake targeted outreach work at the site to encourage and promote access to local people and communities

3.17 Consultation has been undertaken with Ward Councillors in the four identified wards (Arbury, Castle, Kings Hedges and West Chesterton) and a dedicated briefing on the ARU proposal and community use hours agreement was given by Officers and Martin Beaver the Head of Sport at ARU on the 19th August 2014.

3.18 The briefing was not delivered at North or West Central Area committees following advice from Members Services as the S016 contribution was specific on where it could be spent and only covered some of the Wards in each Area. They advised a consultation with the ward councillors directly affected was required and then a decision at Community Services Scrutiny Committee could be made taking into account the views expressed through the consultation.

3.19 Feedback from Ward Councillors was supportive of the proposal with the following questions asked at the briefing;

Q: Will the loss of cricket and tennis on the former college pitches be replaced?

A: There will be cricket and tennis provision within the Darwin Green site and seasonal floodlit tennis would be able to be played at the new ARU facility.

Q: Is the ARU project solely in South Cambridgeshire?

A: It is, but it will clearly benefit City residents in the north of Cambridge and be a good lever to extend community use.

Q: The location is not easy to get to.

A: Although not ideal, cycling times have been determined and there is good public transport along Huntingdon Road. – See Appendix 1 for cycle times.

Q: Football is predominant in the scheme could other sports not have been given more opportunity?

A: ARU currently have an agreement with Fenner's to use cricket facilities there during term times, the rugby pitch on site will remain unchanged, and there is a partnership with Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre for indoor sports.

A: Mobile artificial cricket pitches can be rolled out on sand dressed artificial surfaces and that will be achievable on the new ARU site.

Q: The development is in the Green Belt, is that problematic?

A: Green Belt development is permissible under best use of land and outdoor sport facilities and its ancillary buildings are currently in place on the site, so essentially no change of use as it will remain a sporting and recreational facility.

3.20 Feedback received via email and 1-2-1 briefings was also supportive of the proposal with the following views or concerns expressed during the consultation period of 19th August to 12th September;

- Distance from West Chesterton – not easily accessible from West Chesterton, too far to walk and cycling times would be longer for children, and therefore likely to encourage greater car usage.
- Safety of Travel - Huntingdon Road isn't cycle friendly to children
- Confirmation of the range and public access to other sporting opportunities on Darwin Green to complement those on the ARU site.

- The Whitehouse Lane Junction – Traffic congestion and unsafe cycling routes are likely to have increased in road traffic due to the Darwin Drive, ARU development and the new NW University Cambridge. How is this being addressed and is it being fully assessed.
- Whitehouse Lane – concerns over road widening for access by coaches and cars.
- How would the proposed secondary school on Darwin Green link to the ARU Howe's Place facilities.
- Is the development of the Pavilion for Community rooms and Training sessions still within the defined "Class use" of the existing site
- Has a noise assessment been incorporated for potential use for club socials and licence applications
- The floodlighting of the pitches is likely to cause disturbance to natural habitats in the Green Belt.

4. Implications

(a) **Financial Implications**

The funding of the money would be paid to ARU from the specific S106 developer contribution derived from the planning application for mitigation to the development of the Sidney Sussex playing fields.

The proposal meets the S106 conditions agreed by JDCC that the money for Formal Open Space provision can only be spent in the four neighbouring wards or within 1 mile of the City boundary.

This would be a capital award and the City Council would have no revenue responsibilities for the site.

ARU are aware of the payment profile highlighted in 3.6 and accept the risk going forward on that basis i.e. the City Council is not obliged to pay the money to ARU until/if it receives it from the developer once the trigger points are reached.

There are no VAT implications.

If not approved the funding may be drawn upon by projects in South Cambridgeshire parishes further afield from Howe's Place giving little benefit to local residents in the City where the mitigation was derived from and meant for.

(b) **Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications as this will be a capital grant to ARU and the facility will be staffed in the future by ARU faculty employees

Officer time will be required to conclude the Community Use Agreement with ARU, and monitor the conditions going forward.

(c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**

An EQIA has been carried out and the main findings which have produced actions points are in the following areas;

- The need for baby changing facilities in the public toilet area
- The ability to monitor and scrutinise access and pricing as not to exclude those on low incomes
- Introduce a concessionary pricing policy
- Improve cycle access from the North of the city to the development
- Improve access from the school site to the pitch facilities.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

As the contribution is a Capital award to the proposed scheme and there are no revenue payments, therefore it is a Nil climate change impact for the City Council.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no procurement implications as the developer contributions are a capital award to ARU and a Community Use Agreement will be drawn up to secure public access.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

Wide ranging consultation has been undertaken by ARU as part of the planning application process, including open evenings on the site, environmental surveys, traffic impact assessment and ecological surveys.

Officers have carried out a briefing session and held 1-2-1 consultations with Ward Councillors from the four identified wards over the following timeline

01/08/14	Email about the proposals and invite to briefing
14/08/14	Reminder for Briefing
19/08/14	Briefing at Guildhall by Officers and ARU
26/08/14	Follow up notes and presentation circulated
04/09/14	Reminder for feedback to be received by 12/09/14
08/09/14	1-2-1 sessions for those not able to attend 19/08/14 briefing
12/09/14	Close of feedback

Summaries of the comments received from these sessions are included in this report at 3.19 and 3.20, and full copies of the comments received can be made available upon request.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no identified Community Safety implications with the proposed grant to ARU, and it will provide publically available facilities for local residents to be able to use.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report: JDCC report July 2010.

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/darwin-green-planning-applications>

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Cycle Route travel times from neighbouring wards

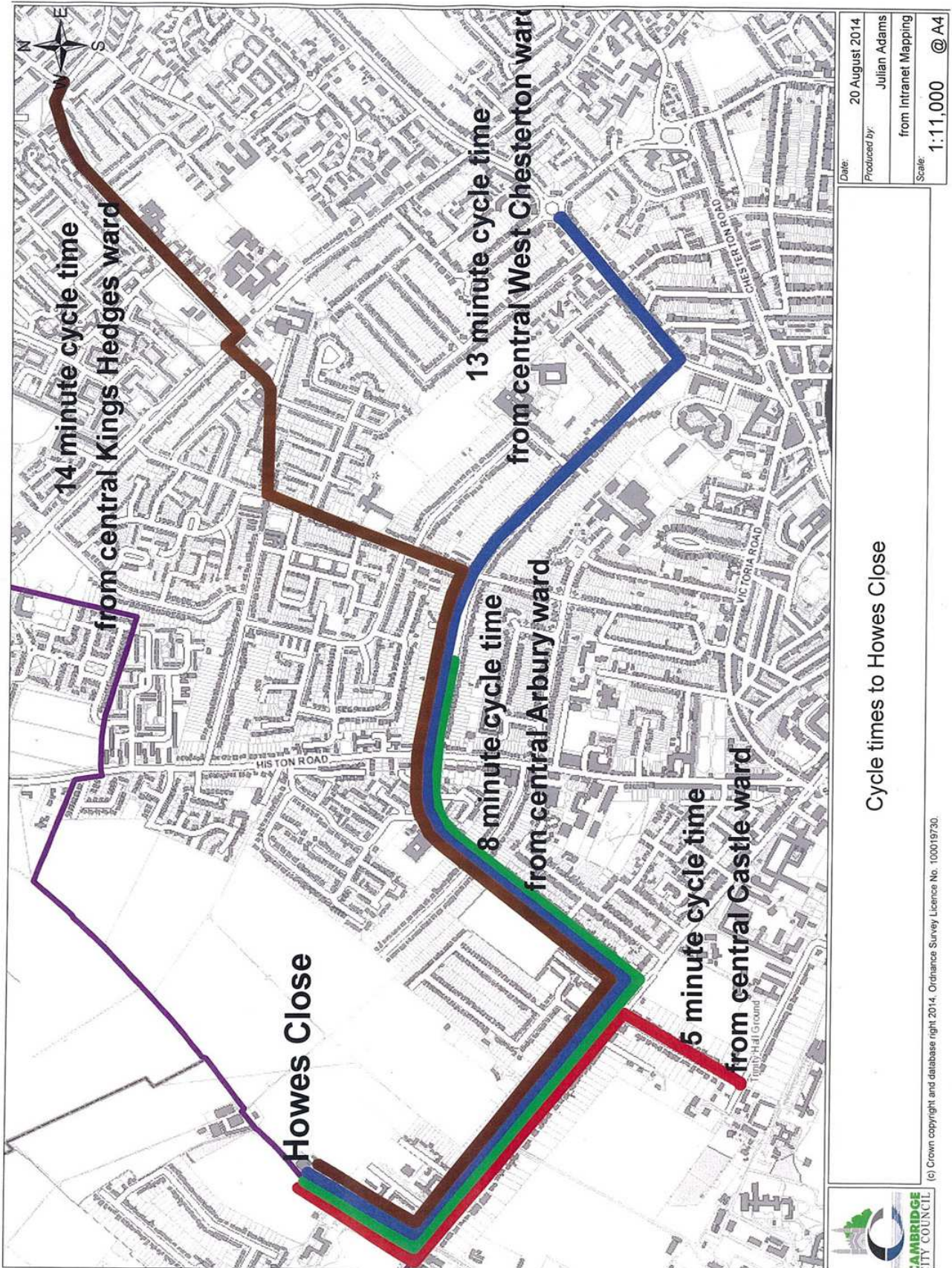
Appendix 2 – Images of proposed site layout and pavilion facility

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Appendix 1 – Cycle Route travel times from neighbouring wards



Appendix 2 – Images of proposed site layout and pavilion facility



scheme aerial view



Preliminary

authorisation: Maber Associates Ltd. project: Anglia Ruskin Sports Facility

drawing title: scheme aerial view

drawing number: 2234-MA-00-XX-DR-A-00003A

scale: 1:500 A3

date: 12/05/2011

img no: 00000001



rev	date	comment

project: **Anglia Ruskin Howes Close** purpose of issue: **Preliminary**

mk job no: 2234 drawing number: 2234-MA-00-XX-DR-A-00003A

drawing name / status / revision: Perspective View 01 scale: nts @A3

architecture / interiors / landscape
Email: info@maber.co.uk
Tel: 0115 8311555
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working office: Nottingham

do not scale from this drawing; dimensions and levels to be checked on site by the contractor; all dimensions in millimetres unless otherwise noted; all levels in metres unless otherwise noted.

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