

Part A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: Monday, 16 January 2023

Report author: Project Manager

Title: Woodside Master Plan Update

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 In 2015, Woodside was defined as a Strategic Sports Site within the Council's 10 year Sports Facilities Strategy which highlighted the potential to improve the site with a number of enhanced sports facilities facilitated by the renovation and modernisation of heritage buildings situated on the western part of the site.
- 1.2 Following extensive consultation with key stakeholders such as Watford Town Cricket Club and Watford Amateur Boxing Club, who are based in the current depot/historic stable block complex, a masterplan was created for the site. On-going consultation with wider stakeholder groups indicated widespread support for the planned improvements, although the clubs wished to retain their individual status and management function. Key to the masterplan was the improved infrastructure for the cricket club, including their pavilion, the modernisation of the multi-sport changing rooms and improvements to the boxing gym and facilities.
- 1.3 A condition survey in 2020 highlighted a number of concerns in relation to the historic buildings, including; structural movement of the west wall of the Stable Block building, electrical and mechanical services installations that are outdated and do not meet current regulations. A key imperative of this project is to address the dilapidated condition of the locally listed stable block building, housing the changing facilities and boxing club, and the cricket pavilion building to ensure they provided fit for purpose community sports facilities. The RIBA Stage 3 design was completed in November 2021, following extensive engagement with the clubs and sports governing bodies.
- 1.4 The council was mindful that the ongoing cost of the facilities needed to be affordable to the clubs and the council and so various optional schemes and costs had to be evaluated.
- 1.5 Following a review of these options with stakeholders, an evaluation was completed in September 2022 and this report presents the outcomes from the development and appraisal of options.

1.6 Approval is now sought to proceed with detailed design of selected schemes, firm up cost estimates, prepare and submit a planning application and prepare for procuring the construction works.

2.0 Risks

2.1 A detailed project risk register has been developed specifying the risks likely to be encountered, throughout the design and construction phases of the project. The register and mitigation measures are reviewed and updated routinely as the project proceeds.

2.2 The main risks perceived at the current stage of the project are described below:

| Nature of risk | Consequence | Suggested Control Measures | Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer) | Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood) |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Projected outturn cost is in excess of approved funds | Need for supplementary capital requisition, project delay. Negative reputational impact if unable to deliver advertised benefits. | Manage design process. Carry out regular cost reviews and VE practices. Provision for adequate contingency and inflation allowances. | Treat | 8 |
| Public, stakeholders and members are not fully engaged. | Poor publicity, opposition leading to loss of connection and ownership and negative reputational impact | Active engagement of stakeholders and interested parties. Timely release of notices and media comms. via press releases and project portal. Periodic stakeholder forum meetings. | Treat | 6 |
| WTCC and WABC business plans fail to demonstrate long-term financial viability or benefit to the community | One or both clubs are unable to meet their financial obligations in relation to the lease leading to revenue expenditure implications for the Council | Ensure that WTCC and WABC develop detailed robust business plans setting out development goals and opportunities for income generation. | Treat | 9 |

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|--|--|--|----------|---|
| | | Engage with both clubs in relation to delivery of community benefits and agreed metrics to measure these. | | |
| Design changes/scope creep | Potential delay and project budget not adequate to meet the brief | Manage the design process and limit changes. Ensure VE is applied throughout design stages. | Treat | 8 |
| Planning not approved | Not able to commence site works. Delay to program with associated escalation of cost. | Design team consult with Planning and Conservation ahead of application submission and also ahead of application for discharge of conditions. | Treat | 8 |
| Inadequate utilities capacity to meet needs | Project is de-scoped leading to inability to deliver the intended project concept. Provision of new services leads to cost escalation and/or programme delay | Timely review of expected utilities demand as part of the on-going design process | Treat | 8 |
| Discovery of unforeseen defects/structural issues on opening up historic buildings | Cost escalation and programme delay | Building fabric condition and structural surveys have been completed. The score reflects the inherent risk when the buildings are opened up during construction. | Tolerate | 9 |
| Discovery of unforeseen below ground issues such as contamination, load bearing capacity, unknown services, etc. | Cost escalation and programme delay | Early detailed surveys and robust contingency provision | Treat | 9 |
| Disruption to Cricket and/or | Loss of members leading to loss of | Coordinate the decant of the clubs | Treat | 9 |

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|--|--|---|-------|---|
| Boxing club operations during the construction phase. | revenue. Clubs unable to deliver their operational commitments to their members and participants | into temporary accommodation to ensure minimal impact and continuity of club operation. | | |
| Delays resulting from difficulty in securing the main contractor | Programme slippage | Early engagement needed with potential contractors to ensure there is an interest in undertaking the work | Treat | 9 |

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 To proceed to the next stage of design development of the selected schemes, including the replacement of the cricket pavilion event hall with a slightly larger hall, and to progress with detailed spatial and technical design, firming up the cost estimates, applying for planning consent and to undertake a competitive tendering exercise to procure construction works.
- 3.2 For the Director of Partnerships to be granted delegated authority to award the construction contract in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (Neighbourhood Services) on the proviso that the overall cost to deliver the project remains within the approved budget.

Further information:

Abid Khalil, Senior Project Manager

Abid.khalil@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Alan Gough, Director of Partnerships (Approved: 23/12/2022)

alan.gough@watford.gov.uk

4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 Background

4.1.1 The Woodside site currently provides a wide range of sport and leisure facilities including:

- a) Woodside Leisure Centre and swimming pool;
- b) Athletics stadium, with stand and changing facilities;
- c) Indoor bowls centre and outdoor bowls green and pavilion (currently vacant);
- d) Artificial turf pitches;
- e) Adult and junior grass football pitches;
- f) Cricket pavilion, training nets, an enclosed main cricket pitch and two outer cricket pitches;
- g) Complex of historic buildings, formerly part of Woodside Lodge, a Victorian manor house and now used as changing rooms, a gymnasium for boxing and as a depot for Veolia (Watford BC maintenance contractors);
- h) Outdoor children's play area and outdoor gym.

4.1.2 Early engagement and consultation highlighted a number of issues at the Site, including;

- a) Perceived loss of identity for some clubs;
- b) Poor quality of changing rooms. The site was identified as a key site for improvement in the FA Local Football Facilities Plan;
- c) Inadequate car parking capacity during busy periods e.g. weekends and events;
- d) The use of the all-weather turf pitches in winter;
- e) Future use of the depot in the Stable Block. This is a building of historic interest and locally listed and is currently occupied by the Veolia grounds maintenance team;

4.1.3 The original master planning process sought to address these issues and develop a detailed master plan through a feasibility study which looked at the wider leisure offer at Woodside. This work included a more detailed site analysis, an analysis of needs, facility mix development, parking proposals, budget cost plan, financial appraisal and management options. This gave rise to the proposals now under consideration.

4.1.4 A workshop in March 2022 established the approach to delivering the project within budget. A phased approach was agreed with the project divided into the following two phases:

Phase 1 to broadly include:

- a) Cricket Club pavilion, changing rooms and event hall;
- b) Multi-sport changing and showering facilities;
- c) Boxing Club gym and changing rooms;
- d) Public toilets and Changing Places facility;
- e) Harriers toilet block;
- f) Improved parking surface to the overflow car park;
- g) Enhanced security provision;
- h) External services such as; drinking fountains, Beryl bike hardstanding, CCTV and lighting etc.

Phase 2 to broadly include:

- a) The small heritage building which is presently occupied by Veolia as part of their depot facility;
- b) Veolia compound yard and machinery storage building;
- c) Outdoor Bowls Club (OWLS) clubhouse and bowling green;
- d) Enhancement to children's play provision;
- e) Increase to car parking capacity if required.

4.2 Detailed Proposals

4.2.1 A small design team and cost consultant were appointed in May 2022 to develop optional schemes and associated costs to deliver Phase 1. The team have made good progress to date with completion of RIBA Stage 1 level of detail. The process has included engaging the resident sports clubs: Watford Town Cricket Club, Watford Amateur Boxing Club and the Veolia team as well as consultation with the relevant sports governing bodies.

4.2.2 WBC Planning, Conservation and Building Regulations Officers have also been consulted in relation to the proposals developed.

4.2.3 Key features of the selected schemes are described in the following sections:

Architectural Schemes

Refer to **Appendix 1** for layout drawings showing the schemes described below.

- a) Pavilion and new build function hall

- i. The existing pavilion building structure is retained and internally reconfigured;
- ii. The existing event hall will be demolished and replaced with a new low cost building that extends the area of the hall by ~20m². It is estimated that the hall will have capacity to accommodate up to 120 persons;
- iii. The bar is positioned in a central location to serve the members lounge and hall;
- iv. Incorporating a new hall attached to the pavilion will allow an integral main entrance and lobby to be created from the car park;
- v. The members lounge is enlarged and has an entrance and windows directly on to the outfield;
- vi. First floor cricket changing rooms remain largely unchanged other than light touch refurbishment;
- vii. The building WC's are modernised and an accessible WC added;
- viii. Externally, options will be explored to re-vision the façade using materials that incorporate wall insulation.

b) Multi-Sport Changing Rooms and Boxing Gym

- i. Two ground floor multi-sport changing rooms;
- ii. Two first floor multi-sport changing rooms;
- iii. Provision of ground floor accessible showering and WC facilities;
- iv. Officials changing and showering provision on the ground and first floor;
- v. Main entrance for boxing created through the historic arch;
- vi. Provision of a Boxing Club reception area and office/welfare room;
- vii. Boxing changing rooms are refurbished and modernised;
- viii. First floor storages spaces will be retained for Boxing use and will be subject to 'light touch' redecoration;
- ix. Externally a light touch approach is envisage to smarten up the appearance of the facades through cleaning and repointing the brickwork, window refurbishment, and a new insulated roof to the gym with built in ventilation and roof lights.

4.2.4 Overall the proposals will deliver 6 multi-sport changing rooms to provide modern changing and showering facilities for cricket and football and 2 changing rooms for the boxing gym. The changing rooms will also cater for fully accessible showering and WC facilities at ground floor level. Note that the Cricket Club have agreed to the flexible and shared use of the pavilion changing rooms with the football clubs. We consulted with the clubs that make use of the showering and changing at the site as well as governing organisations such as Sport England, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and Herts Cricket to confirm that 6 good sized multi-sport changing rooms with integral showers and WC's are adequate for the site.

4.2.5 The project also includes for refurbishing and modernising the public toilet block and the Harriers toilet block and installing a Changing Places Toilet (funded by a DLUCH CPT grant), security improvements, drinking fountains, improving the parking surface to the overflow car park.

- 4.2.6 An assessment will be made of parking capacity in the upper car park and, if considered necessary, parking bays will be provisioned to compensate for loss of parking as a result of the development.

Energy and Services Strategy

In order to meet current regulations for fabric performance, sustainability, operational energy etc., the following provisions are proposed

- 4.2.7 Pavilion Building and Hall
- i. Sub metered gas, electrical and water supplies
 - ii. Pavilion heating and hot water provided by gas fired boiler installation
 - iii. Function hall building will have reversible air source heat pump system for heating and cooling and a central ventilation system with heat recovery
 - iv. LED lighting with PIR controls throughout to suit the revised spatial layout
 - v. Provision of emergency lighting
 - vi. Photovoltaic panels mounted on the flat roof portion of the hall
 - vii. IT (data and voice) infrastructure.
 - viii. Fire and smoke detection system
 - ix. Intruder detection system
 - x. Internal and external CCTV with external being linked to the Watford central monitoring station
- 4.2.8 Changing Rooms and Boxing Gym
- i. Sub metered gas, electrical and water supplies
 - ii. Heating and hot water provided by gas fired boiler installation
 - iii. Provision of emergency lighting
 - iv. Fire and smoke detection system
 - v. Intruder detection system
 - vi. External CCTV in common with the Pavilion.
- 4.2.9 The rationale for the above selection is that application of air source heat pumps and solar PV together with building fabric improvements through insulation and underfloor heating will enable the new build element to be close to carbon neutral and will, additionally, benefit from future decarbonisation of the supply grid.

The pavilion building, the stable block changing rooms and boxing gym do not lend themselves to the application of heat pump technology and are better served by utilising the existing gas supply to provide efficient on demand hot water supply and controlled heating suited to the intermittent needs of the sports users of these facilities.

Gas combined with electricity will also potentially overcome a shortfall in electrical capacity at the site.

4.2.10 Expected lifespan

It is anticipated that a lifespan of 60+ years would be achievable for the refurbished and newly constructed elements and structures created by the project. The lifespan for thermal envelope fittings, such as windows and doors is typically 30+ years, and 25+ years for the main elements of mechanical and electrical plant in accordance with manufacturer's specification.

4.2.11 The proposed schemes described above are compliant with cost and functionality criteria and were shared with the Cricket and Boxing Clubs who have concurred that the schemes met their needs. The preferred schemes were also shared with the governing organisations including Sport England, ECB, Herts Cricket and the Football Foundation as well as WBC Planning and Conservation. Notwithstanding minor refinements the schemes were accepted in principle.

5.0 Financial Update

5.1 The current approved capital programme budget for the Woodside project is £7.72M.

5.2 Project costs have been estimated at a high level for the selected schemes and with the detail available the construction content has been based on bench mark rates which have been adjusted to included inflation.

5.3 Indicative Capital Expenditure Estimate

| | Estimated Project Cost (£K) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Prior Spend (2018-2022) | 1,339 |
| Construction Works | 4,303 |
| Professional Fees, Legal etc. | 582 |
| Internal Resource Costs | 206 |
| Contingency (10%) | 419 |
| Inflation Allowance to 3Q24 (6.1%) | 275 |
| Total | 7,124 |

5.4 External Funding Opportunities

5.4.1 External Funds Secured

- a) A Sport England grant award of £144,129 was secured in 2021 to part fund the construction of a Learn to Ride facility in KGV Playing Field, and a storage building in Oxhey Activity Park. The 'Learn to Ride' facility was completed in 2022 as part of this project and the portion of the award allocated to it amounted to approximately £80,000.
- b) The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has awarded the project £94,702 as part of the Changing Places Funding Programme to construct a Changing Places facility within the proposed Sports Village complex.

5.4.2 Other external funding opportunities that are being explored currently include:

- a) Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding to enable the proposed gas fired boiler installations for the cricket pavilion to be substituted with renewable low carbon energy technologies such as air source heat pumps along with energy efficiency measures such as wall and roof insulation.

5.5 Revenue Cost Implications

5.5.1 There will be ongoing revenue costs for the Council, associated with the operation and upkeep of the multi-sport changing rooms and public toilets.

5.5.2 Estimated revenue costs and 5-year projection are summarised below:

| Revenue Items | 2024/ 2025 | 2025/ 2026 | 2026/ 2027 | 2027/ 2028 | 2028/ 2029 |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Water) Sewer Charges Compliance Plant Service and Maintenance Rates Insurance Cleaning | £7,500 ¹ | £13,300 ² | £14,000 | £15,000 | £15,800 |

Note 1: Revenue costs for FY 2024/2025 are calculated for 6 months occupancy only and based on occupancy starting in October 2024.

Note 2: Assumed inflation rate of 6% is applied in the above projection

5.5.3 It should be noted that the above does not represent new revenue commitments, since the sports changing rooms and public toilets at the site are facilities that are currently in use and are operated by the Council.

6.0 Programme Update

6.1 Indicative programme timelines for the proposed Phase 1 scheme are summarised below:

- Approval to proceed to RIBA 2-4 Jan 2023
- Design Team mobilisation Feb 2023
- Detail design (RIBA 2 – 4) Feb 2023 – Oct 2023
(Including planning and building regs. approvals)
- Procuring construction contract Nov 2023 – Jan 2024
- Award contract Feb 2024
- Decant WTCC and WABC Feb 2024
- Construction (RIBA 5 – 6) Mar 2024 – Feb 2025
- Snagging & completion Mar 2025
- Reinstate WABC Oct 2024
- Reinstate WTCC Mar 2025
- Opening event Apr 2025

7.0 Leases and Tenancy Management Update

7.1 Short Term Operational Proposal

7.1.1 Start of the construction in March 2024 is contingent on the relocation of Watford Town Cricket Club and Watford Amateur Boxing Clubs from their present accommodation and their establishment in temporary accommodation for the duration of the construction works. The clubs have been consulted on the following proposals for temporary accommodation:

- (a) WTCC would relocate into the Outdoor Bowls (OWLS) Clubhouse. The OWLS building and adjacent bowling lawn are currently unoccupied and the building will be need to be prepared for occupation by WTCC. The preparation work may include redecoration and setting up a working bar and will be predominantly arranged by the Cricket Club. The short term occupation is to be based on a form of regulated tenancy to be determined.
- (b) Accommodation for temporary training facilities has not yet been agreed with the Boxing Club. However various options, including the hire of two squash courts in the Everyone Active leisure centre were discussed with the Club. We will engage with the club to establish a suitable local temporary facility where they can carry on their training sessions for the 5-6 month duration of construction works in 2024.

7.2 Long Term Leases

- 7.2.1 Working with the WBC Corporate Asset Service we will engaged with the incumbent occupants to establish the terms for long term tenancy agreements for the buildings and facilities that are being developed by this project.

8.0 Implications

8.1 Financial

- 8.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the reported project expenditure is within the agreed capital programme budget provisioned for Woodside.

8.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 8.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the procurement of a contractor will be in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules. A lease will need to be agreed and entered into by the cricket club prior to occupation of the vacant bowls club premises.

8.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

- 8.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that equality issues in relation to groups with disabilities are being addressed as part of the design development process for the facilities being provided. An accessibility specialist has been commissioned to assist in designing out negative impact on this group and provide enhancements that will have a significant positive impact.

An EIA will be developed as part of the on-going design process during RIBA Stage 3, when the spatial schemes are deemed to be sufficiently fixed.

- 8.3.2 The project is not expected to impact human rights.
- 8.3.3 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

8.4 Staffing

- 8.4.1 Not applicable

8.5 Accommodation

- 8.5.1 The project will impact a number of properties and tenancies at Woodside as described in Section 7.2 of this report. New and improved facilities will be developed for sports clubs at Woodside, including Watford Town Cricket Club, Watford Amateur Boxing Club, Sunday and Youth League Football Clubs and Watford Harriers Athletic Club.

8.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

- 8.6.1 Community safety, crime and anti-social behaviours are being addressed as part of the design development of the facilities. The Hertfordshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Officer and the Council's specialist CCTV services provider have been consulted to inform design.

8.7 Sustainability

- 8.7.1 The project is intending to restore poorly maintained and generally low grade facilities to ensure the long term sustainability of council facilities involving several stakeholders.
- 8.7.2 The latest renewable energy technology has been selected where appropriate with evaluation based on the need to comply with building regulations and the Watford Planning Policy requirements. The evaluation process was also mindful of Watford's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019 and the guidance outlined in Watford Borough Council local plan. This includes reusing existing buildings retaining embodied carbon rather than new build.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Selected Schemes

Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

1. 11/11/2019 Cabinet Report - Woodside Sports Village – Masterplan Update
2. 11/11/2019 Cabinet – Printed Minutes
3. 12/11/2018 Cabinet Report – Woodside Masterplan Summary of Consultation and Engagement
4. 12/11/2018 Cabinet – Printed Minutes