

Scrutiny Briefing Note

The **Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel** have asked for an update on the Council's playing pitch strategy. This briefing contains the latest position as of 18th November 2021

Subject: Playing Pitch Strategy: Clee Fields/KGV project

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The provision of high-quality sport, leisure, and recreation facilities within the borough of North East Lincolnshire is crucial to enabling some residents to live more active lives and improve their health and wellbeing.
- 1.2 North East Lincolnshire Council Cabinet formally adopted the Playing Pitch Strategy and its action plan (PPS) 2018 -2032. The PPS has been developed as a partnership between a range of agencies including the Council, Sport England, national governing bodies of sport including football, cricket, rugby union and hockey and local football, hockey, rugby union, and cricket clubs. The PPS is for the whole Borough not just the Council, however the Council has a lead role
- 1.3 The PPS also directly affects the Council's ability to deliver on its published Local Plan for Housing development. As part of the development of the PPS, sites of previous playing pitches have been agreed with Sport England and NGBs to be released and their official use changed so that houses can then be built on them. Where implementation of the PPS encounters difficulties this then causes problems for Housing as previously agreed ex-playing pitch sites released for housing development, cannot then be released. The PPS must then be reviewed, and an alternative pitch re-provision plan must then be agreed with Sport England and NGBs and implemented.
- 1.4 The PPS seeks to develop sufficient, fit for purpose, quality Community Sports Hub sites, whereby existing multi-pitch sites (which are easier to manage and operate) are maintained and where possible new Community Sports Hubs sites are developed. The PPS focusses on developing any new replacement playing fields as playing pitch hubs providing replacement facilities for some existing smaller pitch sites and any pitch sports required from new population. The PPS states that exact provision on these new sites should be agreed with the NGBs and Sport England as and when these replacement facilities become available.
- 1.5 The first main action on the PPS action plan is to develop a hub site on the Clee Fields and KGV sites.
- 1.6 Permission to proceed with the project was received from Cabinet in November 2020 decision notice DN.52 to proceed with all necessary actions to implement the scheme up to Planning Approval.



- 1.7 The project proceeded with appointment of the Council's partner EQUANS in December 2020 to carry out all elements of the project, (subject to the requisite governance approvals) including design, planning, procurement, and construction processes other than exploration of, and application for external funding options.
- 1.8 The project proceeded with appointment of the Council's partner LiL in December 2020 to explore all external funding options and proceed with funding bid application processes subject to Cabinet approval.
- 1.9 The project seeks to deliver the scheme by November 2022.
- 1.10 In December 2021 a Cabinet Report to request a phasing of the project as well as permission to procure the necessary works will be submitted to 1st December 2021 Cabinet.

2. Scope of the Project

The existing site

- 2.1 Currently there is a mix of approaches to management of facilities across the two sites, with long term leases for various elements of the site to 3 different organisations. The facilities across the Clee Fields and KGV sites currently comprise:

Clee Fields

- Natural turf playing fields
- Disused hockey artificial grass pitch (AGP)
- Sports hall
- Former youth centre
- Changing rooms
- Car parking.

KGV Stadium

- 400m floodlit athletics track and infield
- Grandstand with changing rooms, small gym, and studio space
- 2 Third Generation (3G) 5v5 AGPs
- Car parking.

Original Scheme of works

- 2.2 The development originally proposed was to deliver the following scheme of works:

- One (1) floodlit 3G AGP (106 x70m) suitable for Football
- One (1) floodlit 3G AGP (106 x70m) suitable for Football and Rugby including in the specification a World Rugby Rule 22 compliant shock pad.
- A new changing room to serve the AGPs (Clee Fields)
- Car Park Resurfacing (Clee Fields)
- Car Park Extension – Grasscrete, x-grid or similar (KGV Stadium)
- Athletics Track Refurbishment (Track Mark)
- Athletics Track Grandstand and Changing Rooms investment
- Grass Pitch Improvements



New Proposal – phased works

- 2.3 In September 2021 following the necessary surveys and preparatory detailed design work, (which was undertaken with LiL and all stakeholders including, site users, potential funders, and the Sporting NGBs), EQUANS ran an exercise to establish updated costings prior to the project requesting permission from Cabinet to procure works. This identified increased cost estimates for the project.
- 2.4 The increased estimates identified were due to inflationary pressures exacerbated with the advent of COVID and Brexit over the period of the project since the original feasibility was conducted in 2018/9. It was additionally discovered that further works may be needed to improve drainage of the Clee Fields site.
- 2.5 The following phasing of the Project is now proposed. This can be met from the existing approved wider PPS budget and would still fulfil PPS playing pitch commitments:
- **Phase One – Clee Fields** [this will take up the whole of the original capital allocation for the project, and require a capital allocation uplift, but allow the Council to fulfil the playing pitch investment commitment made in the PPS and prevent any issues with the local plan and Housing]
 - **Phase Two – KGV Running Track** [on hold until satisfactory business case is put forward and funding becomes available]
 - **Phase Three – KGV Refurbishment** [on hold until satisfactory business case is put forward and funding becomes available]
- 2.6 Full details of the proposed Phasing can be seen in Appendix 1 – Project Phasing Proposals

Budget

- 2.7 Appendix 2 – Updated Phasing Proposal Costings shows the costs of the proposed phasing of the scheme of works.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Discussions with finance and the Section 151 officer have confirmed that although Phase One remains within the PPS wider budget, a request to increase the budget allocation against this scheme will be made to Business Development Group, to proceed with this phase.
- 3.2 Timetable for the next steps of project:
- Request for increased Budget Allocation to Business Development Group November 2021.
 - Permission to proceed with the budget allocation, phasing and procure the necessary works for Phase One Clee Fields will be requested from Cabinet 1st December 2021.
 - Planning application submission for Phase One will be submitted in December 2021.
 - Planning permission is sought in March 2022.



- Funding applications to the Football Foundation will be made in April 2022 with approval panels being held in August 2022.
- Procurement of Phase One Clee Fields works will take place once planning permission is received.
- Commencement of works Summer 2022.
- Completion of scheme November 2022.

Contact Officer:

Drew Hughes, Head of Transformation, Tel: 32 3434

If you require any further information, please contact the named officer. Or, if you would like to find out more about scrutiny you can contact us:

by email democracy@nelincs.gov.uk

on our website www.nelc.gov.uk/council/councillors-democracy-elections-scrutiny/

or by post NELC Scrutiny Team,

Municipal Offices,
Town Hall Square,
GRIMSBY
DN31 1HU.

