

Proposal: Creation of playing fields and other sports facilities

Applicant: Trinity School, Weald of Kent Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar school for Boys.

Ward(s): Seal and Weald

RECOMMENDATION: That the **£1,500,000** applied for, as set out in the report, for scheme “Creation of playing fields and other sports facilities” be approved on the following grounds:

Principal Criteria met

- Strong social and environmental benefits to the community
- There is evidence to show partnership working
- The project is identified in an adopted strategy/plan
- Strong link between new development and the scheme
- Clear public benefit
- Strong community benefits
- There is community support for the project.

Principal Criteria not met:

- Insufficient evidence has been submitted to show that there is a strong economic benefit to the community.
- Insufficient evidence has been provided to show that funding has been maximised as not all the project funding is secure.
- Insufficient information has been submitted to show that the scheme will be delivered as planning permission has not been granted.

Introduction

- 1 CIL money is sought to fund a scheme, which aims to provide new playing fields and other sports facilities for the three schools on the Wilderness school site. When these facilities are not in use by the schools, it is proposed that they will be open to the local community. This proposal will include modernising and improving the existing facilities at the schools as well as providing a range of outside facilities.

- 2 The scheme will also see the retention of existing natural habitats of a variety of flora and fauna, providing educational opportunities on campus.
- 3 The sports facilities will also be offered at a non-profit or no-cost to blind children through the previous owners of the site (Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC)). It will also allow the three education provisions to provide a wider range of sports for nonselective and grammar school age students who are residents of Sevenoaks District.
- 4 The application was received before the application deadline closed on 31st December 2020. This proposal has not been previously considered by the CIL Spending Board.

Description of Proposal

- 5 The proposal will provide the following:
 - Two 4-court indoor sports halls.
 - Seven MUGA (Multi-Use Games Areas) marked for tennis, netball, basketball, five a side football and other sports.
 - Three all-weather pitches football/hockey/rugby (artificial 3G surface).
 - Levelled grassed areas for use with summer and winter markings, to facilitate:
 - Two grassed football / rugby pitches.
 - Cricket wicket and field
 - 200m athletics track
 - 100m straight sprint track.
 - Two rounders squares.
 - Training squares.
 - Cricket nets
 - Cross country circuit approx. 1.5km
 - Long jump and field athletics areas for javelin, discus & shot.
 - Potential to install new changing facilities for community use
- 6 The proposal has been designed with the community in mind. A joint user agreement will be offered to local sports clubs as well as groups of individuals to hire the sports facilities when they are not in use by the schools.
- 7 The proposal has come around as KCC were alerted to the potential to purchase nine acres of land adjacent to the existing campus boundary. It was determined that the land was suitable to provide the additional sports facilities. It would also enable KCC to consider a full redesign and expansion of their existing facilities. There are no plans to build structures and site will be used for unlit grass playing fields only.

Funding

- 8 Kent County Council has estimated that the total cost of the project to improve the sports hall and make it available to the public is £3,728,144.09.
- 9 They have identified the following additional funding sources and grants to support their application to the Board:
 - KCC Capital Budget (£700,000) - for the purchase of the land on Seal Drive.
 - KCC Capital Budget (£1,528,144.09) - whole project funding for the Grammar school provision.
- 10 It should be noted that they have also sought funding from the following groups and are awaiting the outcome
 - The Football Association in Kent have confirmed that their bid could fit in with the criteria for funding and they have requested a meeting to finalise the grant.
 - Sports England
 - Rugby Football Union
 - The Football Association
 - Kent Cricket Club
 - Kent County Athletics Association.
- 11 Therefore, currently, to meet the funding gap for the full cost of the project, the academy has applied to the Board for £1, 500, 000 of CIL funding. This equates to 40% of the total project cost.

Representations and Support

- 12 The application submitted states that the applicant is working in partnership with Trinity School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys, Wilmot Dixon Construction (Kent Based) and Bond Bryan (Westerham based Architects)
- 13 The application is supported by the following local representatives and organisations:
 - Cllr Claire Shea - Sevenoaks Town Council, Sevenoaks - welcomes the proposal for high quality pitches to underpin the school's sports strategies and to allow local clubs to use them.
 - David Brazier - County Member, Sevenoaks - who is in favour of the proposed development and CIL bid.

- Cllr Clayton - Local Member for Sevenoaks Eastern Ward - supports the scheme as it will provide a welcome increase in facilities for the schools and will help meet the objectives of Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy.

14 The following clubs have given their support:

- Sevenoaks Hockey Club
- Hockey Club Knole Park
- Dunton Green Football Club
- Charlton Athletic Community Trust

15 One hundred letters of support have also been sent in from individuals in the community.

Lead Officers Appraisal of Bid

Principal Criteria met

- Strong social and environmental benefits to the community
- There is evidence to show partnership working
- The project is identified in an adopted strategy/plan
- Strong link between new development and the scheme
- Clear public benefit
- Strong community benefits
- There is community support for the project.

Principal Criteria not met:

- Insufficient evidence has been submitted to show that there is a strong economic benefit to the community.
- Insufficient evidence has been provided to show that funding has been maximised as not all the project funding is secure.
- Insufficient information has been submitted to show that the scheme will be delivered as planning permission has not been granted.

Appraisal

Strong social and environmental benefits to the community

16 When considering an application for CIL funding from the Board, it must be demonstrated that there are clear economic, social and environmental benefits to the scheme proposed. This enhances the case as to whether the scheme should receive CIL funding.

- 17 This bid puts forward shows a strong social benefit, as the project will benefit pupils of all three schools and also the local community and clubs, provided it remains available for the community to use. The Department for Education (DFE) Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) co-authored the '[School Sport and Activity Action Plan](#)'. This explained the importance that the Government sets on the participation of young people in sports and physical activity both in school and outside. The provision of these facilities will therefore provide an important benefit to the students and also the community.
- 18 Data from Sport England's '[Active Lives Children and Young People survey](#)' show that only 17.5% of children meet the Chief Medical Officers' guidance for how much activity children should be doing (at least 60 minutes every day). So this project will help students and the community to work towards this.
- 19 The proposal will also include a good environmental benefit, by the retention and enhancements of existing habitats. Depending on the location of the pitches, KCC proposed to undertake to enhance the habitat areas of the site in a way that enhances the education and community benefit.
- 20 The proposal would provide an economic benefit to the school and would enhance the overall economy of the area.

There is sufficient evidence to show strong partnership working.

- 21 There is a formal partnership between the schools, a local developer and architect.

The project is identified in an adopted strategy/plan.

- 22 This project is not specifically listed as a priority in the Council's Infrastructure Funding statement. It is clearly a project which will provide a local benefit. The school is identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which supports the Local Plan as being in an area of growth. In this document KCC state that they will not be able to cope with the increase of students caused by the increase of development in the area and will need to increase places in the school. Therefore, an increase in sports provision, whilst not providing all the additional school places needed, it will provide additional facilities to support this increase.
- 23 The number of dwellings has increased in the area e.g. Ryewood, leading to an increased demand for school places. KCC is also conscious of new developments in the area coming through in the new Local Plan. Of particular relevance is the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan and the area

around the Tarmac Quarry, which have the potential to provide 600 new homes. These sports facilities will provide an offer to the new residents, through this project.

- 24 This project is also taking into account the increase in forms of entry to the schools, increasing the intake. The forecasts for the schools provision making can be found in the Kent Commission Plan.
- 25 The need for the scheme is identified in the following documents:
- Playing pitch strategy - KCC
 - Sevenoaks Local Plan - Core Strategy and Allocations and Development Management plan
 - National Planning Policy Framework
 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation study.
 - Joint Health and Well being strategy.

Sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate a strong link between new development and the scheme.

- 22 As part of their submission, the applicant has specifically identified the following developments that have created a need for this project:
- Ryewood
 - Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan, in particular the Tarmac site.

- 22 KCC also state that the development areas of Fort Halstead, Dunton Green and Borke Hill will need sporting facilities that are provided by this project.

Sufficient evidence has been provided to show a clear public benefit to the scheme:

- 23 This project is providing a strong public benefit for the three schools, for Blind Children and also for all age groups of the community.

Sufficient evidence has been submitted to show that the scheme will be delivered

- 24 Sufficient evidence has been provided to show that there is clear management of the project, as it is clearly planned with timescales in place.
- 25 However it is recognised that planning permission has not been granted for the scheme. KCC have informed us that have held pre-application meetings with planners on 17th December 2020. They will be holding a virtual consultation event at the beginning of the year. They will then amend the application taking into consideration the results of the consultation.

- 26 The reason they have not submitted an application is that the purchase of the land was only concluded in September. They sought an early opinion from planners to reduce the light pollution. They have also met with Parish and Town Councils to explain the design.

Strong community support for the project

- 27 This bid has received a lot of support from the community, with over 100 emails. It has also received support from some of the Town Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Kent County Council members.
- 28 Please note - whilst issues have been raised in regard to the Green Belt and light pollution, through consultations, these issues will be addressed at the planning applications stage and should not influence whether CIL money be granted or not.

Application Considerations - Weakly Performing Criteria

- 29 When carrying out the assessment of this funding application, Officers felt that the application did not perform as strongly against the following criteria:
- Insufficient evidence has been submitted to show that there is a strong economic benefit to the community.
 - Insufficient evidence has been provided to show that funding has been maximised as not all the project funding is secure.
 - Insufficient information has been submitted to show that the scheme will be delivered as planning permission has not been granted.

Conclusion

- 30 Kent County Council have submitted an application to the CIL Board to consider awarding CIL money towards the creation of playing fields and other sports facilities to be used by the 3 schools on the Wilderness school site. When not in use by the schools, it will be open to the public.
- 31 The need for the scheme has been demonstrated and there are a number of social and environmental benefits. The proposal is identified in a number of plans and strategies and is supported by the local community. It is noted that

the applicant is asking for 40% of the funding in comparison to the total project cost, and has not benefited from CIL funding previously.

- 32 After reviewing the application and subsequent supporting evidence, it is recommended by Officers that £1,500,000 of CIL funding be approved to support the delivery of the project. It is clearly demonstrated that the scheme provides clear public benefits and approving this bid would provide good value for CIL money applied for, compared to the cost of the overall project.
- 33 As planning permission is not yet in place it is considered that a condition be placed on the granting of the CIL money that the money only be awarded once the planning permission is in place. As a community use agreement does not appear to be in place, officers would also recommend that a condition is also put in place to ensure that this is place before the CIL money can be released.
- 34 In addition as not all the funding is secure. Members of the Board may also want to consider adding another condition to ensure that all the sources of funding as laid out in Section 11 of the bid pro forma are secured before the money is released.

Appendices	Original bidding proforma and supporting information
Background Papers	None
Contact Officer(s)	Claire Pamberi ex 7221/Carlyn Kan ex 7264
Richard Morris	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning and Regulatory Services