

From: [Julia Thornton](#)
To: [Rachel Hewett](#); [CIL Mailbox](#)
Cc: [Cllr Thornton, Julia](#); [Cllr Hogarth, Roddy](#)
Subject: CIL bid for Weald Recreation Ground
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Dear Rachel

Thank you for sending me a copy of the bid that you are about to submit to Sevenoaks District Council to be considered for the CIL Board on 1st September.

Having now had the privilege of serving the community of Weald as your District Councillor for 11 years, I am very well aware of the need to improve & update the facilities at the recreation ground and, in particular, to find a solution to the road safety issues generated by its current users on Morleys Road. This road is not lit nor does it have pavements and is at 40 mph at the point where congestion is caused by those parking their cars to visit the recreation ground. I agree with you that it is an accident, potentially a fatal one, waiting to happen if a solution cannot be found.

By the very nature of its geography, Weald village is neither near Sevenoaks, nor near Tonbridge. It is very much halfway between the two. The children of the village predominantly travel to both towns for their secondary (& in some cases their primary) education, however they are both too far to either walk or cycle to and, with bus services being reduced to the absolute minimum, public transport cannot be relied on either to get these young people to after-school activities or weekend social and sporting events outside of the village. As such, it is imperative that a usable and attractive recreation facility remains within the village for them to use. Or, at the very least, a facility fit for the twenty first century.

With the village children travelling to these towns for education, this has in turn had a positive impact on the recruitment for the Weald Wolves Football Club in particular, attracting young players from outside the village to come along & join having heard about it from their school mates. These additional players have boosted the membership numbers and subscriptions for the club and provides evidence of how this particular recreation grounds is used by a broader section of local population, not just by Weald villagers. But they do of course have no other option of how to get there but by car.

In a village like Weald in the heart of the Green Belt & the AONB, it is unlikely that much new development will every be forthcoming apart from the occasional conversion or infill, so CIL payments to the Parish are never going to amount to the levels needed for such a major refurbishment as is required here & now at the recreation ground. However this resource is a crucial piece of infrastructure for the existing community to support the ongoing well being of the residents of the village and to encourage healthy lifestyles & all the other positives, both physical & mental, that sporting activities can bring. Plus, in a refurbished state, the facilities will continue to attract players from outside the village, thus potentially supporting residents from new developments elsewhere in the District.

I have absolutely no qualms at all in supporting you in this bid and I truly hope that the Members of the CIL Board will support it too. Many of them represent smaller communities too & understand how difficult it is to secure funding for such projects so I hope they too will look favourably on your well constructed & argued case for funding for this valuable & crucial village resource. Good luck!

With kind regards

Julia

Cllr. Julia Thornton

Portfolio holder for Development & Conservation
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