



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	20 September 2016
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	The Appendix to the Report is Part II because it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council. (LGA 1972, Part V, Schedule 12A paragraph 3)

Title of report:	Options for provision of athletics track within the borough
Contact:	Cllr Graeme Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources David Skinner - Assistant Director (Finance & Resources)
Purpose of report:	To consider the options for the provision of an athletics track within the Borough and the best possible location for the track.
Recommendations	That based on the principles outlined in this report, Cabinet:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approve that further, more detailed work be undertaken for the possible relocation of the athletics track from Jarman Park to Longdean School, to be funded from the sale of the location of the current track; 2) Recommend to Council the approval of a capital budget of £150k to progress more detailed design and planning works for the relocation of the athletics track from Jarman Park to Longdean School. 3) Note that a further report will be brought to Cabinet, within the next few months, detailing: the outcome of the detailed design work; the specific budget requirements; and, a marketing strategy for the site of the current athletics track.
Corporate	Building strong and vibrant communities

Objectives:	<p>Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</p> <p>Delivering an efficient and modern council</p>
Financial Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The anticipated financial receipt as set out in the part 2 element of this report would allow for a supplementary capital estimate to be made to allow construction of the a new athletics track and associated infrastructure (changing, spectator facilities, storage and parking).</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>The project should allow for the delivery of a new athletics track at no net cost to the Council.</p>
Risk Implications	<p>Delivery of the scheme is subject to planning approval and detailed design work at both the new site in Longdean and also to enable disposal of the current site at Jarman Park and to demonstrate the re-provisioned site.</p>
Community Impact Assessment	
Health And Safety Implications	<p>Health and Safety issues will be considered as part of the project risk assessment for delivering the project.</p>
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>This report seeks approval for further work to develop the proposal for the re-location of the athletics track. Accordingly, further comment will be reserved until full detail has been provided on key issues relating to the development such as achieving best consideration for the existing site, planning and commercial risk from the sale and re-provision, and proposed use arrangements/agreements with the school and other users.</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>The costs and income outlined in Part 2 of this report provides financial justification for further works to be undertaken on this project. As per the recommendation, above, a further report will be brought to Members for final budgetary approval once more detail is available.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Nicholas Brown, Group Manager (Commercial Assets and Property Development)</p>
Background papers:	
Glossary of	<p>DBC – Dacorum Borough Council</p>

acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	D&TAC – Dacorum & Tring Athletic Club
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. There is an opportunity arising from the work at Longdean School to deliver a new facility that will benefit the school through increased use and the Council through reduced running costs and the release of the current land at Jarman Park.
- 1.2. A stakeholder group has commissioned and discussed a number of surveys which indicate that sound like for like provision is possible at the school.
- 1.3. The income and expenditure has been costed out which suggest that it feasible for the Council to proceed,
- 1.4. Approval in principle is required to approve funds and the progress of further work.

2. Background

- 2.1. Options to relocate the athletics track from its existing site on Jarman Park have been explored by DBC officers, Sportspace and other stakeholders over recent years. The intention has been that the new track would be a replacement for the existing eight lane track and clubhouse at Jarman Park, owned by Dacorum Borough Council, and operated on behalf of the council by Dacorum Sports Trust (Sportspace) and the primary home of Dacorum and Tring Athletics Club (D&TAC).
- 2.2. Longdean school have expressed an interest in having the new track situated at the school and Sportspace support this proposal as there will be operational efficiencies to be gained by being co-located with the existing provision on the new school site.
- 2.3. The working group consisting of members from DBC, Sportspace, D&TAC and Longdean School has commissioned a feasibility and viability report from Labosport via England Athletics.
- 2.4. The facility will be on land owned by Longdean School and, for the purposes of the financial modelling of running costs is it assumed that they will have priority daytime use during the schools athletics season.

3. Feasibility and Viability

- 3.1. The feasibility and viability report surveyed the key partners to ascertain the best location for the facility mix on the proposed school site. It is proposed that a new site would provide like for like provision of the existing track and ancillary facilities as at Jarman Park. The report examined technical layouts, estimated capital and revenue costs and provided a recommended option based on affordability and viability.
- 3.2. The stakeholder group considered different locations on the school site and the merits of these and the practicalities of building on the site has been looked at and were discussed during a meeting of the stakeholder group on

the 11th July 2016. The group concluded that the facility should be developed in the south west corner of the site. The main reasons for this are based on the topography and the proximity to other provision within the school and the space required for ancillary facilities.

- 3.3. The existing clubhouse facilities at Jarman Park are contained in a single storey building approximately 35m x 15m, they contain a mix of changing rooms, equipment storage, a club room, kitchen facilities and officials rooms. There is some spectator seating along the main straight, this takes the form of 3 rows of fixed seats from the start line to half way up the main straight and is located outside the long jump / pole vault runway. The facilities in the changing / clubhouse building are functional but have been expressed by the club as being small. For the purposes of this report a slightly enlarged facility with similar facilities provided within and a viewing gallery above has been envisaged.
- 3.4. The proposed site is able to accommodate the following athletics facilities:-
- Standard size (36.5m Kerb Radius) 8 Lane circuit with 2 sprint straights, surfaced with a porous type material).
 - Inner steeplechase water jump pit.
 - One full high jump fan.
 - One single width double ended long / triple jump runway outside of southern straight.
 - One single width double ended pole vault facility at the eastern end of the infield.
 - 2 javelin runways one at either end.
 - One concentric circle hammer / discus cage.
 - One shot put throwing circle and hard porous landing sector inside track.
 - All associated fixed equipment.
 - Floodlighting
 - Access improvements
- 3.5. The existing facilities are managed by Dacorum Sports Trust (Sportspace). It is assumed that all annual maintenance is carried out by them. The estimated costs of the annual and longer term maintenance for the athletics track are a total of £52,000 excluding VAT.
- 3.6. The life cycle costs for changing rooms and ancillary areas would have to be worked out when a design is established, but this would take advantage of many new technologies to reduce maintenance and costs of services etc. Such as maintenance free exterior finishes, ground heat source / solar panel plus battery storage to reduce electricity costs, recycling of rainwater etc.

4. Disposal of current site

- 4.1. GL Hearn was commissioned by Dacorum Borough Council in September 2015 to produce a high level options and viability appraisal of the Jarman Fields Athletics Track. The purpose of the study was to articulate the development potential of the site.
- 4.2. For the report, GL Hearn worked alongside masterplanners LDA Design. The report set out planning considerations associated with developing the site, the

current residential market context, urban design considerations and site capacity. From a market perspective the most attractive and valuable form of development would be wholly residential.

- 4.3. The review by GL Hearn of relevant planning policy suggests that it will be necessary to demonstrate that the existing leisure facilities on the site are either surplus to requirements or that improved facilities are to be provided elsewhere. In addition the current allocation of the site as 'open space' could also be an impediment to securing a residential planning consent.
- 4.4. The residential development market is currently strong. There has been a lack of new development in the vicinity of the site in recent years and we would expect an opportunity of this type to attract significant interest from both local and national housebuilders.
- 4.5. Whilst GL Hearn consider that the market would be extremely interested in this opportunity consideration of the planning risks associated with it would be likely to act as a deterrent to bidders. Certainly it would be expected any bids to be subject to planning – an unconditional sale would come with significant discounts to reflect planning risk. The Council can mitigate planning risk by delivering a re-provisioned facility (as set out in this report).
- 4.6. The financial outputs of the GL Hearn report are based on the assumption of normal ground conditions. A recent report produced for the Council does highlight a medium to high risk of contamination from land gas egress for the purposes of future residential site users. With this in mind there is clearly a risk that costs will need to be incurred in remediation. These are set out in the part 2 report based on further reports commissioned to examine ground conditions and likely remediation costs.

5. Phase 3 – Next steps

- 5.1. Subject to Cabinet and Council approval:
- 5.2. There would be two parallel strands of work – the specification and procurement subject to agreeing the delivery methodology and the sale of the current site.
- 5.3. A full design brief will be established, a full working design will need to be progressed this will require the services of an Architect team and a specialist sports construction consultancy. Once an agreed design is established a full construction cost estimate will be required from a Quantity Surveyor. Planning would be the next requirement, followed by a tendering exercise to choose a suitable main contractor and sub-contract packages. It is estimated that this should take 25 weeks.
- 5.4. A report will then be brought to Cabinet detailing the outcome of the detailed design work, the specific budget requirements and a marketing strategy for the site of the current athletics track.
- 5.5. Satisfying any planning conditions or S.106 planning obligations prior to commencement of works (to run concurrently with 5.3 above)
- 5.6. Construction will begin once planning permission has been secured. Specific timeframes for construction will not be known until tender bids have been

received and evaluated, but it is expected to take around 30 weeks once a contractor has been appointed.

- 5.7. Officers will need to secure agreement with Longdean School and Sportspace regarding community use and access to the track that is consistent with existing arrangements.