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Response to issues outlined by Barrowford Parish Council regarding Steven Burke Phase 2 proposals

In response to a letter (dated 3rd September 2015) sent to Pendle Borough Council's Neighbourhood Services by Barrowford Parish Council regarding issues relating to the Phase 2 proposals, I have tried to answer the questions outlined individually.

I have also provided a revised plan/drawing and costs that has been produced in response to some of the issues highlighted by the Parish Council and Barrowford & Western Parishes Committee members particularly around access, vehicular movement and car parking.

Revised draft plans for phase two will include the development of a BMX Pump Track through the refurbishment of the existing off-road track, a multi-purpose tarmac area that can be used as car parking for the Cycle track and/or the new Pump track, for events and as a safe bike skills learning area for toddlers and young children. In addition, some access/traffic movement improvements have been included, e.g. passing places, appropriate signage, etc.

The revised estimated costings for phase 2 currently come in at circa £120,000.

1. Is there a local need for a large competition class Pump Track which could potentially draw users and competitors from a 30 mile radius?

This was never the main intention for the upgrade of the existing Mountain Bike trail and has never been mentioned as the priority use of the Pump Track. Potentially, it could hold races and events for more experienced BMX riders but on the other hand it would also be used by beginners and total novices to the Sport. The track would be like the Cycle track in that it has a good mixture of free casual use from all ages and abilities, organised use by local cycling organisations and one off events, for example the Tour of Britain event, Nelson & Colne College 24 hour charity ride, etc.

2. Who will run the site?

Pendle Council would manage and maintain the site in partnership with Cycle Sport Pendle (CSP). We would look to put in place similar arrangements we have now for the Steven Burke Sports Hub whereby we would work in co-ordination with CSP regarding bookings for the track and day to day management issues (this would be in the form of a legal agreement between PBC and CSP). We would work on the same premise as the existing Sports Hub in that the track would be open to all free of charge when no organised sessions were in place but if organised sessions take place then the track could be secured and exclusivity achieved.

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3. What will the access to local youngsters particularly at weekends?

As per the Cycle Track, access would be for anyone when the track was not booked out for Club use or other events. We would look to ensure that there is a period of time every day of the week when the Pump Track couldn't be booked out for organised sessions so that the general public could use it. We have done this at the Cycle Track from 7.00am – 10.00am. It is more than likely that CSP may book the Pump Track on a Saturday morning until 12.30pm (to tie in with their other sessions on the Cycle Hub) but if you look at the usage from organised groups in terms of the Cycle Track at weekends this is fairly minimal. I would imagine there would be sporadic events whereby access to the Pump Track may be limited but if members felt strongly that there should be more 'public time' allotted at a weekend then I'm sure this could be negotiated.

4. Will the facility be available free of charge?

We would work on the same premise as the existing Sports Hub in that the track would be open to all free of charge when no organised sessions were in place. There would be a charge for organised sessions where there is a necessity for the track to be closed and exclusivity wanted. We have a charging mechanism for the Cycle track that we would look to replicate for the Pump Track. The fees are extremely reasonable per hour session and any income derived from organised use is then put in to an income code and then off set against expenditure to hopefully achieve a profit at the end of each financial year. With the cycle track, any profit is then put back in to improving the track and surrounding area and/or a sinking fund for long term management/maintenance issues.

5. Will there be adequate parking with 12 spaces as provision for the Steven Burke Track are wholly inadequate particularly at weekends?

The original version of the scheme only provided for 12 car parking spaces. The scheme has now been revised (see attached drawing/plan) and there is now provision for 30 cars. A tarmac area 34.5m x 28.5m will be created on a triangular piece of grassed land adjacent to the existing Cycle Track. This area will be multi-functional in that it can be used as a car parking area, as a hard standing area for cycle events and also an additional area for toddlers/juniors to use for skills training, etc.

Apart from special events, we envisage that users of the Pump Track will be fairly local and as such we will be encouraging people to ride to the facility.

6. How many trees will be lost on the existing site as these are what the Parks determined would be the parameters for the construction of the existing track?

The original artists impression contained within the report that went to Barrowford & Western Parishes Committee (and then on to the Parish Council) was misleading. It

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looks like all the trees would be taken out but this is not the case. Most, if not all of the existing trees contained within the curtilage of the Pump Track area will remain. Some may be thinned out and the odd one may have to come out but this would be done as a last resort. We want to maintain the natural element to the track and do not want to unnecessarily take trees out. We would liaise with the Council's Tree Officer on any trees identified for removal. We aim to show trees on the artist's impression but until this time will stipulate in any consultation we do that any existing trees will remain.

As part of the revised drawing, we are looking at taking out some trees and shrubs near to the Swinden Bridge end of the Pump Track area. This is to provide a larger area for the Pump Track to operate in. The land that previously wasn't in the scheme will now be contained within the newly fenced area.

The removal of these trees/shrubs has been given the go ahead by the Council's Tree Officer. There is neither any Tree Preservation Orders nor conservation area extant and the trees/shrubs are of limited amenity. As part of the proposed scheme, we would look to compensate the loss of these trees with the planting of some new ones.

7. Who will maintain the facility in future years?

For the short term, Pendle Borough Council – Neighbourhood Services would be the lead Service Area in the strategic management of the facility with help from Environmental Services (grounds maintenance).

Obviously, work is ongoing in terms of the transfer of services to Town/Parish Councils with Parks and Playing Fields scheduled to be looked at in the next 2-3 years. Whether this facility and the Sports Hub will be looked at and transferred is open for debate but for the time being we would continue to manage/maintain the facility.

8. How will this be ensured?

As mentioned previously, the financial management model that will be Implemented will replicate the Cycle Hub one. Revenue budgets are already in place for grounds maintenance of the site. In addition, the profits made per year will be used to carry out any repairs and improvement works with a sinking fund for long term management/maintenance issues.

9. What facilities will be created as compensation for the more junior riders who will lose a facility aimed at their age group?

There is no need for additional facilities as compensation as the existing users be it young or old could use the track. The track would not be a specialist one and all

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ages and abilities would be able to use it. Children as young as 3 up to pensioner age could use the track on either a BMX bike, children's bike or Mountain Bike.

10. How will road safety for both pedestrians and cyclists be addressed at both where the road runs under the motorway bridge and the bridge over Colne Water on to Swinden?

The revised drawing shows the changes we have made in relation to road safety and access issues. We will install traffic management improvements including priority signage before and after the motorway bridge in addition to a couple of passing places along the tarmac track that leads to the bridge that goes over Colne Water to Swinden. We will also widen an area of the road near the Swinden Bridge due to there being a pinch point.

11. What provision will be given on non-competition days for possible injury to potential casual users?

None – as per the Cycle Hub, cyclists would use the facility at their own risk. This would be displayed on notice boards at each entrance. For organised sessions or events, clubs/organisations would need to provide evidence of their own insurance cover (as set out in the terms and conditions).

12. Who will be responsible for any accident claims arising from unsupervised use of the facility?

As per the Cycle Hub, cyclists would use the facility at their own risk (see above). If there was a claim for an injury/accident, it would go to the Council's insurance company Zurich and they would deal with it. The Council would have the facility on their public liability insurance cover schedule. Most claims would probably be refuted though as users are warned via the entrance signs that they use the facility at their own risk. We would only be liable if something had not been repaired properly or something faulty on the track.

Consultation

We are aware that although some consultation has been undertaken with local people this has been mainly with the local cycling fraternity (who are obviously keen on this proposed facility). As such, we intend to do some further consultation in the form of hard copy surveys and online questionnaires. This will be for anyone to comment on and put forward their views but we will also produce, print and deliver approx. 750 paper based questionnaires to local residents in Barrowford and Nelson (who live within close proximity to the proposed facility).