

REPORT FROM: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER

TO: BARROWFORD & WESTERN PARISHES COMMITTEE

DATE: 6 AUGUST 2015

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Pendle BMX Pump Track – Steven Burke Sports Hub Phase 2

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with detail of proposed plans for Phase 2 of the Steven Burke Sports Hub which includes the development of a BMX Pump Track on the existing Mountain Bike Trail, a junior skills area and additional car parking.

To obtain Members support/approval for the plans and a small contribution towards the total project cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Members support/approve the proposed plans.
- (2) That a small contribution is made from Barrowford & Western Parishes Committee's Capital Programme towards the project costs.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To gain members approval and move forward in terms of progressing the project.
- (2) To add to the Council's match funding pot which will enable external funding bids to be made.

ISSUE

1. The development of the Steven Burke Sports Hub has been a tremendous success since it opened in June 2014. The track is used for organised sessions by local Cycling organisations such as Cycle Sport Pendle (CSP), GoVelo and Pendle Forest Cycling Club as well as Pendle Leisure Trust, Pendle Schools and Pendle Triathlon Group amongst others. In addition, the track is open to the general public to use when organised sessions are not taking place. The usage of the track by people of all ages and abilities has been extremely encouraging and cycling has become very popular across Pendle and East Lancashire.

2. To build on phase 1 and complement the track at Swinden, we are now looking to develop phase 2 of the Hub to incorporate a BMX Pump Track, junior skills area and additional car parking. The original idea for the Pump Track came from a local BMX group who had previously used the existing Mountain Bike trail at Swinden but had stopped using it due to it being in a poor state. As such, they now have to travel to Preston, Blackpool, etc. to access suitable facilities for safe off-road BMX riding.
3. The group also mentioned that people were complaining about teenagers on BMX's hanging around the town centre with some incidences of anti-social behaviour. In addition, local riders were complaining about the lack of anywhere to ride their BMX bikes and were being told off for riding in town using pavements as jumps. It was felt by the BMX group that a purpose built BMX facility would give them a place to call their own and would take away bikers from the Town Centre. It would also provide the basis for developing a proper club and promoting BMX riding across the borough.
4. As such, they approached Neighbourhood Services about the possibility of refurbishing the existing track and making it in to a proper Pump Track which would primarily be for BMX riding but could also be used by Mountain bikes, Cyclocross bikes, etc.
5. Around the same time, the Council were undertaking an exercise relating to Problem Sites. These were sites that had had no previous maintenance carried out on them even though they were under Council control. The proposed site of the Pump Track is one such problem site.
6. The existing Mountain Bike trail had been built in 2008 from a variety of funding sources including monies secured by Barrowford Parish Council who had driven the project forward. Although it is still used, it has in recent years become a run down and underused facility. No regular maintenance has taken place on this site and it has now got to a point whereby the signage is unreadable and money needs investing in to it for it to become a viable facility (see Appendix 1)
7. Prior to the approach from the BMX Group, through the Problem Sites Working Group, it had been established that this site would come under the old Parks & Recreation Services area. As there was no specific budget for the site, an initial one off budget of £1,000 to carry out urgent improvements was put forward. In addition, an annual maintenance figure was calculated at approximately £1,200 a year. This would be to maintain the land as it was and would include grass cutting, tree work, litter picking and signage and fencing repairs/maintenance. The Council would provide this budget to Environmental Services for them to maintain in the future.
8. A number of meetings have taken place since July 2014 with the BMX Group. Initially, discussions were based around the development of a Pump Track on the existing Mountain Bike Trail but when CSP became aware of the proposals they approached the Council stating that they would like to be involved. As such, a site meeting between the Council, BMX group representatives, CSP and the Parish Council took place in November 2014. At this meeting, it was agreed that the project be expanded and additional car parking and a junior skills area be incorporated in to the project brief.
9. A Plan and associated costs for the proposed development have been drawn up by the Council's Engineering section. The plan is provided in Appendix 2. This also details the proposed location for Phase 2. In addition to the regular drawings, Dirtworks BMX (who have recently designed and built the new Pump Track at Hope Engineering in Barnoldswick) provided us with some rough sketches of what the track could look like. This artist's impression is provided in Appendix 3 along with some photos of other similar projects they have been involved in previously.

10. The total estimated cost for the development is £130,000. The breakdown of costs is provided below:
 - Refurbishment of existing Mountain Bike Track in to a Pump Track - £50,000
 - Junior Skills Area - £32, 500
 - Additional car parking - £17,500
 - Fencing/Signage/Groundwork improvements - £30,000
11. The Pump Track would consist of a two track looping trail system over smooth mounds. There would be a beginner loop (identified as 'Pump Track loop' in Appendix 3) and longer trails/jump style loop (identified as 'Jump Track loop' in Appendix 3). The track would have Dolotrack surfacing and sub-base. Soak away drainage would be installed and the track would be made to look natural to fit in with the surroundings.
12. The Junior Skills Area would be located on Swinden across from the Cycle Hub (on the triangular piece of land to the right of the entrance – See Appendix 2). This would be similar in size to the junior cycleway at Victory Park in Barnoldswick. Primarily, this would be for teaching toddlers and young children how to ride a bike but would also be used as a hard standing area for events and race meetings for the cycle track.
13. A strip of land adjacent to the Pump Track site would be made in to car parking. Approximately 15 car parking spaces would be created on a stone surface. The additional car parking is necessary as there will be increased participation and usage of the site as a whole and parking is already an issue.
14. We have consulted with Planning regarding planning permission which is definitely needed but as it is a like for like development the Planning Manager can see no problems associated with the proposals put forward. The Council's Tree Officer has also had a look at the site and it has been identified that there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) or conservation areas extant on, or immediately adjacent to, the site.
15. The proposed track is to be routed through and around existing trees as per the present track and there may be only the need to remove the occasional tree on site. He has stipulated that it is important to retain as much structure as possible particularly along the edges of the site near the riverbank (nearest point of the track is to be more than 5 metres from the top of the embankment).
16. There is evidence of Japanese Knotweed on site although it is minor and is located on land that would not be included in the Pump Track boundaries. The knotweed is being treated and monitored by the EAG and will continue to be so. the fence line will deviate around where the knotweed is to prevent any disturbance and the risk of spread either within the site or elsewhere.
17. In March 2015, Proffitts (a Community Interest Company based in Rossendale) were commissioned to help with external funding bids, to bring together evidence of consultation done thus far and to provide a stronger evidence base for the need for the project. Proffitts specialise in submitting funding bids and developing new community based schemes. They have a good record in relation to schemes like this and have worked successfully with both Rossendale and Burnley Councils in securing significant pots of money for community projects of similar nature.
18. Subsequently, a Working group was set up which included Proffitts, Council Officers, CSP and the BMX Group. It was apparent from the start that we needed to focus on consultation to gather the evidence of need for the project. As such, it was agreed that a Facebook page

would be set up by the BMX Group for future promotional and feedback opportunities. In addition, we would look to start promoting the proposed plans at cycling related events, e.g. Colne Grand Prix, Tour of Britain, CSP events, etc. to show people what we were planning and give the opportunity for people to comment on and feedback to us.

19. It was also agreed in principle that the BMX Group would be better served being associated with CSP and as such become the BMX section of the CSP organisation. This would be beneficial in a number of ways for the long term success of the project specifically in respect of some of the funding bids being submitted by CSP (as the Council wouldn't be eligible) and future management arrangements for the Pump Track once built.
20. If the Pump track materialised, 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.
21. The Council's Neighbourhood Services have set aside a small budget for this project which has paid for the appointment of Proffitts, who we will work alongside over the next year to move the project forward, and will provide the basis for our match funding pot (which will hopefully be added to) and used as an anchor in future external funding bids. We are hoping to gain the support and approval of Barrowford and Western Parishes and Nelson Committee's for the proposed development with some financial contribution forthcoming from each Committee. We are aware that funding is scarce and as such we would only be asking for £2,000 at the most from both Committees'.
22. So far, we have done some limited promotion for Phase 2 via social media, Proffitts website and most recently a display and stand at Colne Grand Prix in July. The feedback from people attending the event was very positive. We intend to do more promotion over the coming months alongside other consultation work and funding bids to push the project forward. The next steps are:
 - Focus on consultation to gather evidence of need. This will include:
 - BMX display as part of the Tour of Britain CSP event on Saturday 5th September where we will promote the Phase 2 proposals.
 - Promote and obtain feedback for the Phase 2 proposals via social media outlets such as Proffitts Web page, the BMX Group and PBC's Facebook/Twitter accounts, etc.
 - Paper and online survey questionnaires – Distribute to local residents, existing group members/users and other interested parties
 - On site promotion of proposals via temporary signage/billboards
 - Submit funding bid to Lancashire Environmental Fund for £30,000.
 - Other potential funders identified at this stage are:
 - BIFFA
 - Sport England
 - Big Local (Bradley)
 - British Cycling

We hope to make funding bids, with the assistance of Proffitts, to a number of these organisations over the next 6-9 months.

23. BMX is now an Olympic sport which has gained momentum since 2012. There is no BMX facility in Pendle and yet there is significant demand. The proposed scheme has received

over 700 'likes' on Facebook already and there seems to be a real ground swell of support for a facility of this type. We feel that the Pump Track would entice youths looking for a safe skills area away from the streets and town centre and would contribute to public health aims of getting people active. It would also promote social interaction and bring people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures together. The proposed facility would complement the existing facilities on offer at Swinden and would in essence create a true cycling hub set to inspire future generations of potential Olympians.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The proposed Phase 2 development would help to achieve a number of the targets outlined in both Pendle and LCC's Cycling Strategies, e.g. to increase the number of cycle users in Pendle. In addition, with more people cycling they will gain health benefits which will help to achieve objectives from the Health and Well Being Strategy and Pendle's Leisure Strategy.

Financial: The estimated cost of the Scheme is £130,000. So far, £5,000 has been set aside from Council revenue budgets towards the project costs. This money and any contribution from Barrowford and Nelson Committee's will be used as an anchor (match funding) to secure other small pots of funding.

We are hopeful that the majority of the funding for Phase 2 will come from external sources.

As part of the development of funding bids, consideration will need to be given to the operating costs of the new facilities. As stated in 7, an annual maintenance budget of £1,200 has been provided for the existing Mountain Bike Trail site. This budget would be sustained for the Pump Track to enable regular maintenance to continue.

Additionally, any monies made from hiring out the facilities for organised sessions/events would be put back in to the future development of the site.

Legal: An agreement for use of the Pump Track by Cycle Sport Pendle's BMX Group would need to be drawn up similar to the one we have for the Steven Burke Sports Hub for Cycling Development Pendle Partnership (CDPP).

Risk Management: None

Health and Safety: The existing Mountain Bike Trail site is in a poor state and as such there are concerns over Health & Safety risks to users. The proposed improvements would bring about a facility that was much safer and was fit for purpose.

Sustainability: The proposed development of a Pump Track would future proof the long term viability of the existing Mountain Bike trail site. If we don't pursue this project then the land would be tidied up and maintained as it is but the long term value of the Mountain Bike trail would be limited.

Community Safety: The use of the Pump Track and Junior Skills area by casual users and organised groups on a regular basis will hopefully provide greater presence at the site. In addition, instances of anti-social behavior caused by BMX riding in the Town Centre would be alleviated. The new track would provide a safe facility for off road BMX/Cycle riding.

Equality and Diversity: The facilities would be open to all to use for free on a casual basis. For organised sessions, there would be a charge similar to the Steven Burke Sports Hub. The new facilities would all be DDA compliant and accessible to all.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Existing Mountain Bike Trail site

Appendix 2: Proposed Phase 2 Plan

Appendix 3: Proposed Pump Track

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS None

