

SUBJECT:	ABERGAVENNY VELO PARK
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE TO BE CONSIDERED:	2nd MARCH 2022
WARDS AFFECTED:	ABERGAVENNY AND LLANFOIST WARDS

1. PURPOSE

To receive an update on the Abergavenny Velo Park project and to commit S106 capital resources to the project in 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That a capital budget of £492,000 be created in the 2021/22 financial year to fund the construction of the first phase of the Abergavenny velo park and that this is funded by:

a) Contributions from balances held by the council from the S106 Agreements relating to the Westgate (£168,160 – Finance Code N560) and Gavenny Gate (£231,840 – Finance Code N581) developments in Llanfoist.

b) A further S106 contribution of £92,000 be added to the above budget, when received, from the residential development site at Grove Farm, Llanfoist.

2.2 That the Council continues to work with other partner agencies to support a community group to form and subsequently source and apply for further capital funding from external sources that contribute to the development costs of the second and third phases of the Abergavenny Velo Park project.

2.3 That commitment of any expenditure from the above sums is subject to the submission and approval of a satisfactory management agreement with a supporting business plan for the proposed new velo park; such approval being delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the council's S151 Officer.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 In 2020 the council was awarded a grant from the Welsh Government, via Sport Wales, to develop a project for the construction of a velo park (to include a purpose-built closed road circuit (CRC) and some recreational trails)

on part of the council's landholding at Racecourse Farm, Llanfoist. A copy of the site masterplan is attached at APPENDIX A.

- 3.2 The project has been developed in consultation with a number of stakeholders including Sport Wales, British Cycling, the national governing body and two local cycling clubs. The provision of a velo park in this location is a key component of the council's emerging cycling strategy and is intended to form part of a network of regional facilities promoted by Welsh Cycling, the governing body of the sport in Wales.
- 3.3 This has been a complex project to develop, mainly because of the site's topography, biodiversity and ecology, with a number of protected species identified on or immediately adjacent to the site. The land is also currently occupied under a farm business tenancy. The tenancy is holding over, pending a decision on whether or not to proceed with the velo park project.
- 3.4 A formal planning application was made in early 2021, with 34 documents submitted in support, including a Site User and draft Management Plan with an outline programme of use. These documents and the site masterplan have been updated as part of the planning proposals in the light of comments received from consultees, in particular the detailed comments submitted by Natural Resources Wales (NRW).
- 3.5 The velo park planning application is included on the agenda for the Planning Committee meeting on 1st March, with a recommendation for approval.
- 3.6 Officers are working closely with senior managers at Welsh Cycling and with local cycling clubs to develop proposals for ongoing management of the velo park, which will be similar to those at other similar facilities elsewhere in Wales and the UK. There is no proposal to appoint a permanent on-site manager or to increase staffing resources to manage the facility. The site will host a range of cycling related activities and events organised by the council, local cycling clubs and by Welsh Cycling. It will also be available for use by schools and will have a booking facility for cycling clubs to hire, so as to produce income to offset annual running costs. At this stage it is envisaged that a limited number of regional or national events (probably no more than six) may be held on the site each year. Temporary/overflow parking provision has been made in the management plan on nearby land in council ownership. Use of the site will not be restricted to just cycling and will include opportunities for all wheeled sports (including wheelchair users, roller blades, etc.), walking and running.
- 3.7 Members may be aware that there is a separate but adjoining proposal by the owner of Grove Farm and the Gwent Wildlife Trust, with support from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, to develop a wetland reserve on the water meadows situated between the River Usk and the proposed velo park. This was the

subject of a local newspaper article on 26th January this year. The wetland proposal is located on land in council ownership and if that scheme gains traction then it will be the subject of a separate report to members at a later date. That could provide the opportunity for future partnership on managing the new habitats proposed as part of the velo track but that, and other matters, would need to be negotiated as part of any future arrangements.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation can be found at **Appendix B** to this report.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The options are to:

- Take no action and return the money to the developers with no additional or improved community recreation provision;
- Allocate the funding to the projects proposed in this report – the recommended option;
- Allocate the funding on a different basis.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 Subject to a management agreement and supporting business plan, the funding being secured for the development costs of the project and the successful construction and delivery of the scheme there will be an annual evaluation of usage based on year to year comparisons and feedback from users of the facility.

7. REASONS

- 7.1 To ensure the funding is available in the Council's capital budget in the 2021/22 financial year to enable a management agreement and supporting business plan to be developed and approved and such as to allow phase one of the scheme to progress.
- 7.2 To ensure the Section 106 funding received from the developers is used effectively to enhance community recreation provision in the local area.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 It is estimated that the development of the velo park will cost between £1.4 and £1.6 million and the scheme is capable of being developed in three different phases of work.

- 8.2 The first phase of work would include the overall site set-up, access and car parking and construction of the first section of the circuit – the overall circuit consists of three separate but inter-linked sections of track. The first phase will provide a safe alternative facility to that currently used by local cycling clubs at the Abergavenny School/Leisure Centre site for younger age groups. This use will be displaced when work commences on the development of the replacement school on the KHVIII site.
- 8.3 The capital funding recommended in para 2.1(a) is available from the S106 payments received from the developers of the residential developments at Westgate and Gavenny Gate, so in that respect these proposals do not impact any of the other projects in the Council's capital budget.
- 8.4 The capital funding referred to para 2.1(b) will be received by the council from the residential development at Grove Farm, Llanfoist before the first occupation of the 20th dwelling on the site.
- 8.5 The funding of £492,000 set out in the recommendations will be sufficient to cover the cost of the first phase of works.
- 8.6 Potential additional sources of funding for the second and third phases of the project include British/Welsh Cycling, the Welsh Government and Sport Wales. Officers are currently working with Welsh Cycling and the council's lead consultant for the velo park on developing a funding strategy to complete the project.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Much of Abergavenny's success in recent years as a cycling town has been built upon the strong foundation of the sport's grass roots. There are several local clubs (Abergavenny RC, CC Abergavenny, Gateway Cycling and Monmouthshire Wheelers) and organisations such as the Abergavenny Cycling Group which encourage participation, coaching children and adults, organising local training and rides as well as successful cycling events of regional and national scale. These clubs have been involved in discussions in support of the cycling strategy and investment in new cycling facilities for the town over several years.
- 9.2 The pre-planning application public consultation for the velo park took place in November and December 2020 and included statutory consultees and neighbouring property owners/occupiers, including nearby residents and businesses. Some seventy comments were received, with the majority in support of the velo park proposal. Over sixty comments received from the wider public were in support, largely focusing on the potential for the project to provide a safe and high quality facility for cycling and other outdoor activities – and helping to promote leisure and tourism as well as the site's potential for

outdoor activities. Statutory consultees did not object although matters requiring further details and justification were raised, including the environmental impacts and management of the site.

- 9.3 A number of local residents and a nearby business raised concerns or objected and these focused mainly on traffic and parking management, lighting and noise pollution and the development's potential visual impact. All of the concerns raised were reviewed and addressed as part of the formal planning application process, but the broad-based summary response to these areas of concern are addressed below:

a) Traffic and Parking Management

The 80 parking bays provided on site will be sufficient for typical demand associated with the regular weekly use of the velo park, with users travelling to the site by a range of modes including car, walking and cycling. Infrequent regional or national events (likely to be no more than six per annum) may create the need for additional off-site temporary parking and a number of overflow options have been identified, including a nearby field owned by the council that was used successfully as an overflow car park when the Eisteddfod was held in Abergavenny in 2016

b) Lighting

In contrast with other outdoor sports such as football and rugby, the velo park does not require floodlighting with only the equivalent of street lighting necessary to enable the use of the facility for coaching and training into the evening throughout the winter months. To minimise any potential impacts the lights will be fitted with full cut-off louvres, directing lighting down onto the narrow area of the track and with no significant light spill or glow, as is often experienced with sports pitch floodlighting.

c) Noise

The management and use of the facility will not require or use a tannoy speaker/announcement system affecting residents. Traffic will be restricted to the northern car parking area located furthest away from the residential area and closest to the main roads and the waste recycling centre. The main coaching area will be located to the east of the circuit furthest away from residential areas. Research relating to similar closed road circuits located across the UK has identified no known cycling related noise issues or complaints. Also, as a further precautionary measure, use of the velo park will not take place after 9.30pm at any time of the year.

d) Environmental Impacts

The velo park site is a high-quality natural environment with habitats sustaining protected species, including great crested newts (GRC), bats, reptiles and otters. A wide range of environmental mitigating measures and improvements to the natural habitats are included in the detailed velo park design including amphibian and otter tunnels, rock gardens and access to the pond environment.

Opportunities for environmental education and the involvement of the community in the management of the site is an important benefit of the scheme and directly linked to the use of the adjoining One Planet Environmental Education Centre.

A series of ecological surveys have been undertaken since June 2019 that identified GCN and bats have been recorded and evidence of otters moving through the site. The GCN mitigation strategy and green infrastructure plan have been developed to ensure maximum protection and habitat connectivity/creation is afforded to these species. An impact assessment has also been undertaken.

The lighting design has taken all necessary steps to achieve the performance criteria required by British Cycling design guidance, whilst also limiting the environmental impact outside of the circuit area, following environmental guidance produced by the Bat Conservation Trust and the Institute of Lighting Professionals.

10 CONSULTTEES

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team
Local Member for Llanfoist Fawr
Local Members for Abergavenny
Section 106 Working Group

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Welsh Cycling Facilities Strategy 2017
Cycling Circuits – British Cycling Guidance July 2018
Abergavenny Velo Park – Site Options Appraisal December 2018

12 AUTHOR

Mike Moran, Community Infrastructure Coordinator

13 CONTACT DETAILS

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Email: mikemoran@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Notes:

- Planting Schedule**
- Existing Trees/Scrub Retained/removed (Root Protection Area dotted line)
 - Retained Ash Tree/Ash mix hedgerows
 - Proposed Tree Planting
 - Proposed Native Structure Planting
 - Proposed Native Hedge Planting
 - Proposed Amenity Grass
 - Wildflower Meadow : Slopes
 - Wildflower Meadow : Swale
 - Groundcover Planting Mix : Car Park
 - Habitat Creation
Provision of insect hotels & hibernacula (Refer Ecologist's Details)
 - Amphibian Tunnels (Refer Ecologist's Details)
 - Track Fencing
1.2m HT Timber Post & Rail Fencing
 - Proposed Pond Fencing
1.2m HT Post & Rail Fencing
 - Existing Lengths of Surveyed Post & Wire Fence Retained

- Notes:**
- For details on levels, services and drainage refer to Engineer's Details. (Note: embankments to be feathered in at top and toe, and drainage basin inlets & outlets to be designed to minimise visual impact. Inlet/outlet pipes to be housed in gabion baskets set in alignment with slope angles avoiding the need for headwalls.
 - For details on lighting, refer to Lighting Strategy by Signify. (Note: Hours of lighting operation will be no later than 9.30pm)
 - Dig to be read in conjunction with Broadway Tree Consultancy Tree Survey April 2020.
 - Works within Root Protection Areas to be in accordance with good arboricultural practice & BS 5837:2012.
 - Dig to be read in conjunction with Just Mammals Ecological Strategy.
 - Dig to be read in conjunction with EUS Planting Plans for details on species and specification.
 - All planting areas to be tested to ensure non contamination before ripping/topsoil placement.
 - Tree planting within the vicinity of underground services to be installed with root barriers in accordance with Engineer's recommendations.

REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
01	PLANNING ISSUE		

ELEMENT
URBANISM & LANDSCAPE

CLIENT: Monmouthshire County Council
The Radyr
UK, NP23 5GA

DOUBLE/SMART: Element Urbanism
Wystone Business Park
Monmouth
NP25 3SR

SITE: Abergavenny Velo Park, Llanfoist

TITLE: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

SCALE	AT/A2	DATE	REVISED	DRAWN	CHECKED
1:1000@A1		14/03/21	JS	ES	ES
PROJECT NO	DRAWING NO			REVISION	
1517	1517-304			B	

ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN
1:1000 @ A1

Report to Cabinet on 2nd March 2022 – Abergavenny Velo Park

monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

Name of the Officer Mike Moran Phone no: 07894 573834 E-mail: mikemoran@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal: To commit to the velo park project and to create a capital budget for the scheme
Name of Service area MonLife-Enterprise	Date 31 st January 2022

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The recommendations will have positive benefits to residents of all ages living in and many beyond the local area		There will be early years engagement through to older people being trained in the safe use of bikes, including electric bikes, as a means of transport for local journeys
Disability	The velo park has been designed to be accessible to people with disabilities and other support needs		A number of accessible bikes will be based at the site to facilitate use by different disabled groups

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Gender reassignment	Neutral		
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral		
Pregnancy or maternity	The site has been designed for ease of access with pushchairs and wheelchairs		
Race	Neutral		
Religion or Belief	Neutral		
Sex	The project is of equal benefit to both males and females		
Sexual Orientation	Neutral		

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to [have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions](#) This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	<p>Llanfoist Fawr is rated in the 10-20% of the most deprived in terms of access to service in Wales and in the 20-30% of the most deprived in terms of physical environment (WMID 2019) - so improvements to recreation provision and access to green spaces will help to address these inequalities.</p> <p>There is strong evidence from research undertaken during the Covid pandemic that access to good quality green spaces is an important factor in improving the physical and emotional well-being of individuals and families</p>	<p>It is not a negative impact of the velo park proposal, but there is a need to improve access for cyclists between Abergavenny and Llanfoist and to the site of the velo park.</p>	<p>As part of its Active Travel priorities, the council is working hard to improve walking and cycling links between Abergavenny and Llanfoist, including the provision of a new Active Travel crossing of the River Usk specifically for pedestrians and cyclists. When the project is realised it will create better access to the velo park site for a much wider catchment area, including many more people suffering from socio economic disadvantage.</p>

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.




<p>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</p>
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>The proposal will have a neutral effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language</p> <p>All site signage will be bilingual, with precedence given the Welsh language</p>		<p>Promote the availability of the site to Welsh language groups in the area</p> <p>Any promotional material produced by the council and/or other will be bilingual, with precedence given to the Welsh language</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>There are no new or existing posts involved in the proposal</p>		
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>All site signage and any promotional literature will be produced bilingually, with the Welsh language given precedence.</p>	<p>Users will be advised that if they have any concerns or wish to report an accident they can do so using the Welsh language if they choose to do so.</p>	



4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Positive - the first phase of the project will be funded substantially from S106 balances provided by developers of residential housing in the Abergavenny area.</p>	<p>We are working closely with Welsh Cycling and consultants to identify further sources of funding for the second and third phases of the project.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Positive – the Racecourse Farm site is important for both ecology and biodiversity and the velo park project includes important and effective mitigation proposals that have been designed to maintain the ecosystem of the local area</p>	<p>Discussions are taking place regarding the future management of the wildlife pond immediately adjacent to the velo park site which, if successful, will further enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the area.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>Positive - the proposals in this report involve improving peoples' physical and emotional wellbeing. In addition to its value as an important recreational facility, the velo park will be used for educational purposes and for events that will create a focal point for family orientated activities.</p>	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>The proposal will contribute to the safety and cohesiveness of the local community in Llanfoist, Abergavenny and the surrounding area.</p>	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>The availability of good quality & accessible facilities in the local community means that local people do not have to travel to other areas by car or by public transport.</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>There are no specific proposals in this report to protect the Welsh language, but the improvements proposed will encourage more participation in outdoor recreational activities.</p>	<p>Encourage the use of the Welsh language in on-site signage – bilingual noticeboards and publicity materials will promote the Welsh language and help to encourage Welsh language speakers to use the site</p>
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>The improvements will encourage improved access for and participation by disabled people and people with other protected characteristics, also by all sections of the community regardless of their background or ability.</p>	<p>It is proposed to use balance bikes for younger users and to purchase a range of adaptive bikes for disabled people and those with reduced mobility and movement. Also, to use electric bikes for off-road training to increase the competence and confidence of adults and encourage them to use bikes more often for local journeys.</p>

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The sustainability of the site has been assessed and officers are confident that the investment proposed will be sustainable in the longer term.</p>	<p>Funding is proposed from existing and future S106 balances to contribute towards the cost of the works proposed.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The project involves working closely with other parties to deliver a new facility that is a council priority and a governing body priority and to ensure quality access for children, adults and families.</p>	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The views of elected members of the county council, potential users and the local community have been sought during the planning stages of the proposal and in the drafting of the report and the recommendations it contains.</p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The project involves the creation of a major new recreational facility, in line with the intention of the S106 Agreements from which the funding has arisen. Problem prevention is not the basis upon which the funding has been given but investing in new and improved facilities will help to prevent problems occurring.</p>	
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The project will have a positive impact on the health & wellbeing of people living in and beyond the area of benefit stipulated in the Section 106 Agreements.</p>	

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	The velo park proposals provide a new recreational amenity that will be accessible to children with disabilities and other types of support need.		The landscaping of the velo park will create a welcoming and pleasant environment for children and adults and will include elements of sensory planting
Corporate Parenting	The proposal does not deliver positive impacts solely for looked after children, but it does provide new and positive opportunities for these children to mix with their peers and to form friendships more easily with other children in the local community.		

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

- Guidance from British Cycling and feedback from its Chief Assessor.
- Data from the Welsh Cycling Strategy and from emerging Monmouthshire Cycling Strategy
- Baseline data from the Abergavenny Velo Park Site Options Appraisal (November 2018)
- Feedback from local cycling clubs and from potential users of the facility

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The main positive impact of this proposal is the creation of an off road centre for cycling, other wheeled sports and other recreational and educational activities that will contribute to the health and well-being of the Monmouthshire community and will help to reaffirm the reputation of Abergavenny as one of the main regional cycling hubs in Wales.

It's not a negative impact of this proposal, but there is a realisation that the Active Travel improvements for pedestrians and cyclists proposed between Abergavenny and Llanfoist will improve accessibility to the velo park site to a much wider catchment area.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Discharge the conditions on the planning consent if approved	Over the next 3-6 months	MonLife
Develop a d management plan for t	Over the next 3-6 months	MonLife/Welsh Cycling
Work in partnership with Welsh Cycling, local cycling clubs and users to implement the proposal	Following the decision of Cabinet and over the next 12-18 months	MonLife/Welsh Cycling

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made
1	Velo Park Site Options Report	December 2018	
2	S106 funding received	18 th Jan & 9 th Sept 2017	
3	Cabinet Briefing	10 th December 2018	To advise on possible availability of WG funding
4	Welsh Govt/Sport Wales funding confirmed	11 th March 2019	
5	Cabinet Briefing	2 nd April 2019	To confirm availability of WG funding
6	Planning application verified	12 th May 2021	
7	Planning application determined (proposed)	1 st March 2022	
8	MCC Cabinet Meeting	2 nd March 2022	