

Subject: Phoenix Pool & Gym Car Park Extension

Report to: Council

Report by: Lindsay Barker – Strategic Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The success of the Phoenix Pool & Gym has resulted in additional car parking pressures which have impacted on neighbouring residential properties. In addition to this the footfall through the Phoenix is set to further increase due to the planned closure of the Marina Centre on 31st October 2019.

Therefore, this paper recommends the following to address the issue of car parking at the Phoenix site:

Committee is asked to approve that;

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) the proposed car park extension detailed within this report is approved subject to agreed terms between the Borough Council, Sentinel Lesuire Trust with Lyn Grove School and subject to planning permission.
- 2) a planning application for this car park extention is submitted, once the final specification for works is confirmed.
- 3) maximum funding of £130,000 is allocated to progress this project as a capital project.
- 4) the project is overseen by the Council's Partnership Board, which meets regularly with Sentinel Leisure Trust.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Since the Phoenix Pool & Gym reopened, following its refurbishment in 2016, the site has thrived in regard to fitness members, fitness class attendees and swimming lesson customers. Due to this and the timings for peak business of these

revenue streams, the existing car park of just 63 spaces (inc. 3 disabled bays) has struggled to cope with demand. As a result, customers often try and park in the surrounding areas which is impacting on local residents.

- 1.2 Sentinel Leisure Trust and the Council have therefore tried to mitigate this issue in several ways. There have been notices/letters to members and casual customers to promote the use of accessing the centre via foot, cycles and buses where possible to try and reduce the amount of vehicle traffic in the area, specifically trying to relieve pressure on the Phoenix car park and Widgeon Close (car park access road).
- 1.3 Widgeon Close has, on occasions, been fully parked with cars on one side of the road and in the early days of the re-opening some resident's driveways have been blocked or partially blocked by Phoenix Pool & Gym customers using Widgeon Close to park and/or turn their vehicles. White lines ('H' bars) have since been introduced in front of resident's drive way access points to stop such access issues, but the road still receives heavy parking issues during peak hours of operation (circa 1600-1930).
- 1.4 The Phoenix pool car park itself has just 63 spaces, and is often clogged due to not having a one-way system and cars 'double parking' using the chevron areas and also the cycle rack area.
- 1.5 Therefore, as well as impacting on residents, there are also health and safety risks in relation to pedestrian movements, especially as pedestrians move to and from the site and their vehicles.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Sentinel Leisure Trust, officers of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council and representatives from the Lynn Grove Academy (part of the Creative Education

Trust) have been looking at options of extending the current Phoenix Pool & Gym car park onto the adjacent school playing field land.

- 2.2 Only one viable access option has been identified (please see the appendix for the site diagram) that gives access from the current car park around the back of the site to the east side where a 30 metre x 30 metre section of land could be used as overflow during the main peak hours of 1530-2030 weekdays and for any other events or as the business continues to grow, especially during the closure period of the Marina Leisure Centre. This land would create between 35 – 40 additional spaces, depending on the number of disabled and parent and toddler spaces required.
- 2.3 Lynn Grove Academy has agreed to lease this land to the Borough Council subject to access being given to their students to use some timetabled sporting facilities through Sentinel Leisure Trust.
- 2.4 Whilst the land will be leased to the Borough Council, works are required to enable the grass area to then be used as a carpark. Specifically, the area will need to be fenced and lit. Furthermore, the surface of the carpark also needs to be considered.

3 OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR CARPARK SURFACE

- 3.1 A grass option for parking was considered but deemed not to be suitable given the amount of traffic, type of movement of traffic and the conditions throughout winter when the site is at its busiest that would churn up the area and soon turn into a quagmire. Therefore, the option of leaving the grass as the parking surface has been discounted.
- 3.2 A tarmac / concrete / block-weave parking area was considered but deemed not suitable due to the additional works required for drainage and the costs involved for the larger excavation works required to lay a sub base. This would also provide

a permanent hard standing which, if required, would not lend well to future use and potentially less likely to receive planning approval.

- 3.3 An interlocking cellular porous plastic paving grid system was considered and it is proposed that this approach is best for ground reinforcement which can be installed with either a grass or gravel filled surface. Manufactured in the UK from UV stabilised 100% recycled waste plastic this grid system is strong, chemically inert and non-toxic. It resists lateral movement, improves traction and allows expansion and contraction whilst promoting optimum grass growth, root protection and surface stabilisation. Its porous paving provides a durable, safe and environmentally friendly surface for trafficked areas with a very low carbon footprint compared to traditional paving solutions. This is the recommended surface solution.

4 COSTS & TIMESCALES

- 4.1 Estimations for the works have been obtained by SLT and include the cost of materials for the site, equipment hire and soil removal, along with lighting and fencing. As such it is recommended that a maximum capital budget of £130,000 is allocated for the progression of this project.
- 4.2 The timescale for these works is as follows;
- Lead in from order placement; 4 weeks
 - Schedule of works; 4 weeks
 - Snagging; 12 months

NOTE – Planning approval is required and must also be considered within the project timeline.

5. FINANCIAL & LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The car park extension will not drive any new revenue streams, however, it will enable current revenue streams to maintain the levels they have achieved and reduce risk of losing customers due lack of parking provision, especially due to the

increase in participation from patrons during the Marina Leisure Centre closure period.

5.2 In return for the use of the site the Lynn Grove Academy and Sentinel Leisure Trust will enter into a contract for usage of the Phoenix Pool and Gym along with discussions around the usage of other facilities within Sentinel's operations. The heads of terms are being developed but will be centered around;

- Lease for use of the land to the Borough Council for 10-20 years (preferred 20 years due to the investment).
- Free student classes / access to the gym at the Phoenix Pool and Gym (program being devised).
- Free student classes / access to other sites within the SLT Group to further benefit the Academy, the community and so not to cause greater impact on the usage of just the Phoenix Pool and Gym.

5.3 The report recommends a capital budget of £130,000 to be included in the capital programme for 2019/20, this will be funded from borrowing for the capital programme and will result in growth of approximately £6,000 per annum to the annual revenue account from 2020/21.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Early engagement with planning officers has indicated that the extension to the car park utilising existing grassed areas from the Lyn Grove playing field would not be within current planning policy however, due to the nature of the agreement with Lyn Grove for additional sporting activities at Phoenix and potentially other sites as well as the additional 'green space' achieved through the installation of the school's 3G pitch, it is felt a fair and balanced case can be proposed to achieve permission.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 To protect current business and potentially grow this business alongside servicing the increased usage of the carpark due to the Marina closure it is recommended that;

- the proposed car park extension detailed within this report is approved subject to agreed terms between the Borough Council, Sentinel Lesuire Trust with Lyn Grove School and subject to planning permission.
- a planning application for this car park extension is submitted, once the final specification for works is confirmed.
- maximum funding of £130,000 is allocated to progress this project as a capital project.
- The project is overseen by the Council's Partnership Board, which meets regularly with Sentinel Lesuire Trust.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Through ELT
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Through ELT
Existing Council Policies:	Sports, Play & Leisure Strategy
Financial Implications:	Detailed within report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Detailed within report
Risk Implications:	To be managed within the project
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	Disabled parking to be provided
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Every Child Matters:	N/A

Appendixes:

A – Block site plan (proposed extension area)

