

New Leisure Centre Preferred Site

Cabinet Member for Major Projects & Economic Development

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Key Decision? YES

Local Ward Members All Wards



**Leisure, Parks and
Waste Management
(Overview and
Scrutiny) Committee**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the configuration of the new Lichfield leisure centre. This is not a finalised building design, rather an expression of scale and facility priority.
- 1.2 Agreeing the outline configuration allows the feasibility of the new Lichfield Leisure Centre to be progressed.

2. Recommendations

That Committee

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 Support the proposed outline configuration of the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.
- 2.3 Acknowledge the work of the New Leisure Centre Overview and Scrutiny Task Group in developing the proposed outline configuration of the new centre.

3. Background

Background

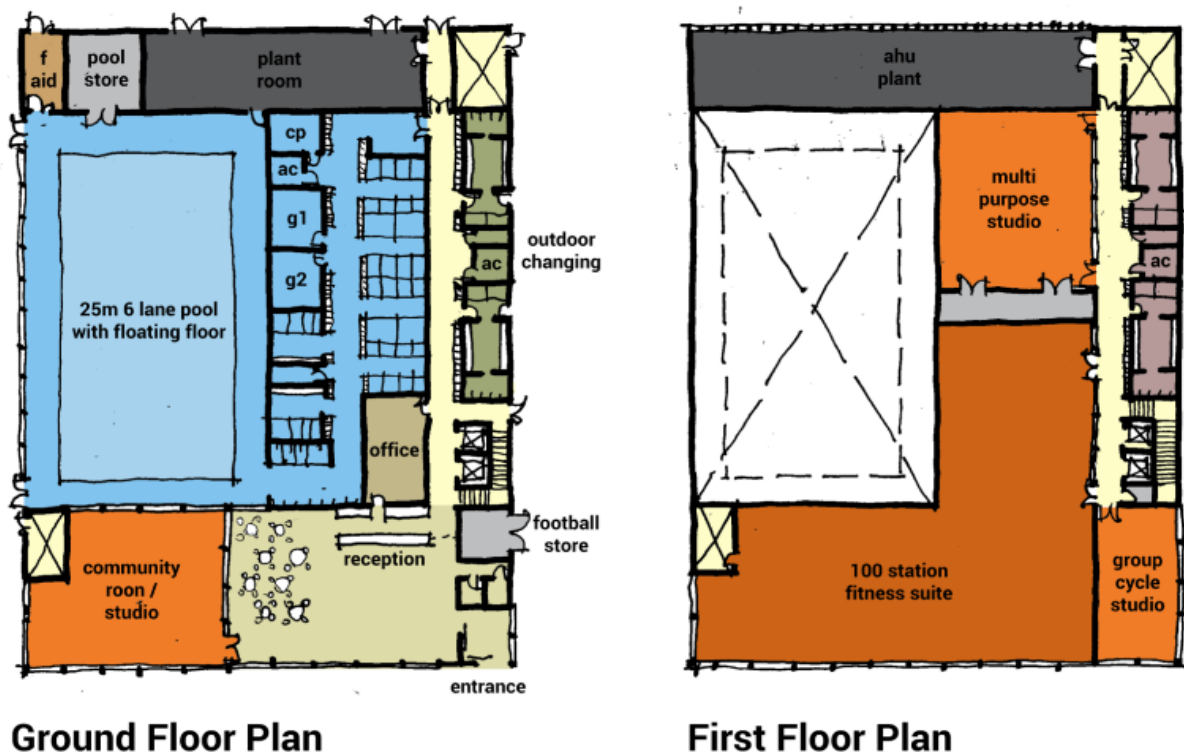
- 3.1 Cabinet confirmed at its meeting on 7 October 2019 the Council's aspiration to invest in future leisure provision to address the limited lifespan of Friary Grange Leisure Centre. Feasibility work on a new leisure centre commenced shortly thereafter, assessing strategic and community need to inform the design development of the centre.
- 3.2 Cabinet approved the selection of Stychbrook Park on 6 October 2020 as the preferred site for the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.
- 3.3 The New Leisure Centre Overview and Scrutiny Task Group has continued the development of the proposals for the new leisure centre, considering what facilities should be included in the new leisure centre. The production of an outline building configuration, allows for further work in relation to design, feasibility and affordability.
- 3.4 The starting point was a robust assessment of the sport and leisure needs of district residents up to 2040, completed in accordance with Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Model guidance. Primary research was commissioned including both on-line and face-to-face surveys and focus group sessions with target groups. In addition national participation data was analysed and modelled alongside projected demographic change to understand how need will change over time.

- 3.5 The research is being developed into a Built Facilities Strategy, which should be presented to Committee later in 2021. The draft strategy identifies that, in the context of a new leisure centre, the following facilities should be considered:
- 25m x 6 lane main pool
 - Teaching pool 15m x 10m with moveable floor to assist with access and egress and programming
 - 2 studios
 - 2 squash courts
 - Possible 2 court badminton hall with other physical activities alongside for younger children
 - Fitness facility
 - Provision of a junior fitness facility for those under the age of 15 years.
- 3.6 A fundamental priority is the long-term revenue sustainability of the proposed facility. The configuration and facility mix need to optimise the revenue performance of the centre, the aspiration being that the centre achieve a revenue surplus, which is common in modern leisure centres (pre-Covid). A surplus could present an opportunity to secure additional capital to close the funding gap.
- 3.7 The Task Group have considered a range of building sizes and configurations. The building needs to balance facility demand with affordability in both capital terms and longer term revenue sustainability. The design also needs to reflect good practice guidance and customer expectations.

Proposed Outline Configuration

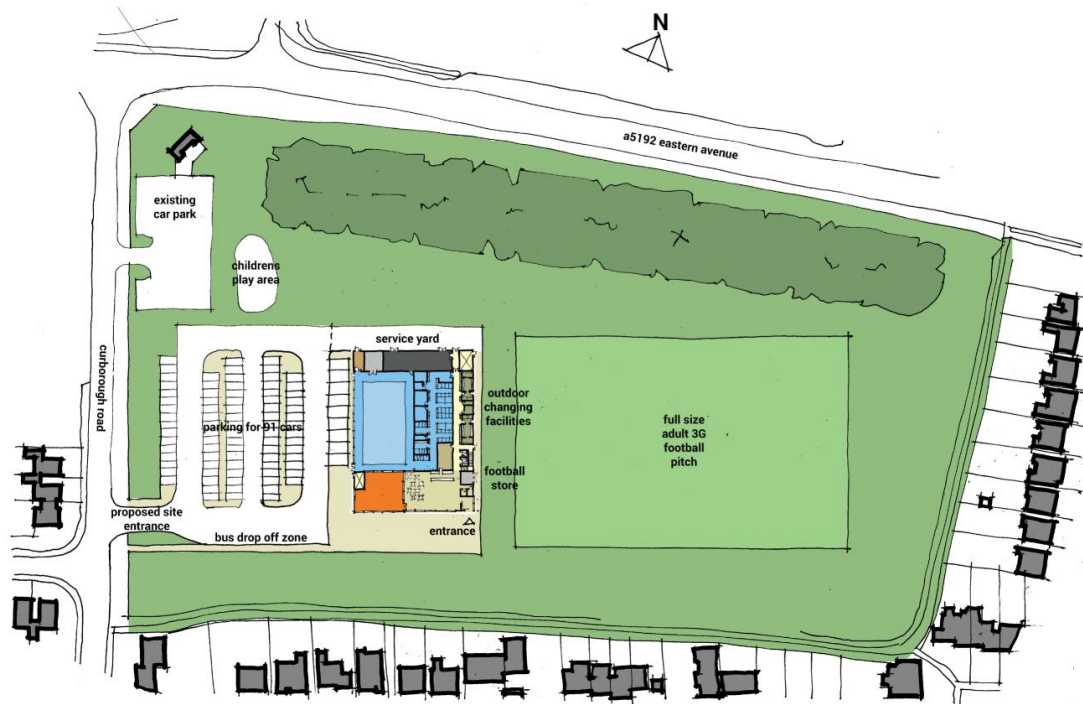
- 3.8 The proposed configuration for the new Lichfield Leisure Centre is presented in figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Indicative leisure centre layout



3.9 The centre is presented in the context of Stychbrook Park in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Indicative leisure centre in site context



3.10 The facilities proposed in the outline configuration currently comprise:

- 25m x 6 lane main pool with moveable floor
- Fitness facility – 100-stations
- 3 studios / multi-function rooms
- 3G Football pitch (outdoors)

3.11 This outline configuration reflects the optimal facility mix to encourage mass participation and to have the greatest impact on physical activity at a population level. By providing facilities at scale for swimming, fitness and football the centre will be able to deliver high levels of usage and deliver the activities Lichfield residents are most likely to participate in.

3.12 It is important to stress that this is not necessarily the final centre configuration, facility mix or site layout. It is however critical at this stage to start to identify the priority facilities and the scale at which we intend to build. By agreeing an outline facility mix, feasibility work can be further developed and meaningful discussions progressed with potential funding partners.

Financial implications

3.13 Based on a high level assessment of the outline configuration the capital cost has been estimated at £11.9m. This clearly presents a significant gap to the £5m funding that has been allocated to the capital programme to provide for future leisure facilities in Lichfield.

3.14 Setting the outline configuration will allow work to progress to refine the financial implications including:

- Refining the design to achieve greater cost certainty.
- Working with funding partners to understand the level of external funding that such a facility may attract.

- Further developing the business plan for the leisure centre to assess the revenue implications, including net income that may be used to service additional capital borrowing.

Next Steps

3.15 Subject to agreement of the outline configuration, the Task Group will further develop the design and a fuller understanding of the funding that will be available. A refined facility design will be presented to Committee once more fully developed.

Alternative Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for a more modest facility based solely on the allocated £5m funding could be developed. This may miss the opportunity to secure additional funding from partners to add value to the project. • A more ambitious facility could be proposed, inclusive of all the facilities outlined in paragraph 3.5. The capital cost of such a facility is estimated in the region of £17m. Such a funding gap would represent an extremely high risk to the project. • Developing multiple facility scenarios in parallel would be extremely resource intensive and risk undermining the deliverability of the project.
Consultation	Sport England, Max Associates, Football Foundation Leisure Centre Task Group agreed the preferred site 17.11.20
Financial Implications	<p>Financial implications of the outline facility configuration will be developed in the next phase of work.</p> <p>The funding for a replacement leisure centre of £5,000,000 funded by borrowing has been included in the Approved MTFs. The cost of borrowing of £294,000 impacting from 2024/25 onwards for a budgeted period of 25 years has also been included in the Approved Revenue Budget.</p>
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<p>Sustainable leisure centre provision in support of active lifestyles contributes to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling people – to live healthy and active lives. Developing prosperity – to enhance the district for visitors A good council that – is financially sound, transparent and accountable.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	There are no equality, diversity and human right implications associated with the proposals.
Crime & Safety Issues	None at this time.
Environmental Impact	<p>The proposed site is currently public open space.</p> <p>The environmental impact of any development will be explored in detail as part of subsequent site investigations and any planning application.</p> <p>Mitigation measures will be identified and agreed as appropriate.</p>
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	Not required.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Funding gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications to external funders • Value engineering 	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Red Severity of Risk: Red
B	Funding priorities – LDC ability to fund long-term borrowing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget setting and management 	Likelihood: Green Impact: Red Severity of Risk: Yellow
C	Facility does not meet all Lichfield's facility needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners and local schools to ensure community access to facilities (esp sports halls & squash courts) 	Likelihood: Red Impact: Green Severity of Risk: Yellow

Background documents

None

Relevant web links

None