

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL26 June 2019Report by Director of EnvironmentEASTWOOD LEISURE CENTRE**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is principally to advise the Council on proposals to build a new Eastwood Leisure Centre and theatre within Eastwood Park and also to highlight progress being made with regard to the wider Eastwood Park master planning exercise.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Council:
- (a) Approves Eastwood Park as the preferred site for a new Eastwood Leisure Centre and theatre;
 - (b) Agrees that the Director of Environment reports back as soon as possible with options and costs with regard to the new leisure centre and theatre in Eastwood Park;
 - (c) Notes the progress being made with the Eastwood Park master planning exercise and that the Director of Environment will report back on the wider issues and opportunities/possibilities in due course; and
 - (d) Notes that should these recommendations be approved then Shawwood and Broomburn parks would remain as protected urban green space in terms of the Local Development Plan.

BACKGROUND

3. The Council in October 2018 considered a report by the Director of Environment in relation to future work plans for the development of a leisure centre to serve the Eastwood area. In particular the report identified the consultant's recommendation that the preferred sites should be Shawwood Park and Broomburn Park (in that priority order). The report also clearly spelled out a range of significant reasons why Eastwood Park had been ruled out by the consultants. The Council:

- noted progress made in taking forward the actions from the report to the Cabinet in December 2017;
- noted the consultant's report on options for the new build leisure centre;
- noted that the Director of Environment will now undertake the master planning of Eastwood Park and this will specifically explore the feasibility of a new build leisure centre within Eastwood Park based upon the latest information on Council property options for schools and office accommodation;
- noted that the Director of Environment will report to Council with an options appraisal for the future provision of leisure facilities in the Eastwood area once this work has been completed; and
- agreed that this list is not exhaustive. Any sites which become available will be investigated.

REPORT

4. Since October 2018 a considerable amount of work has been carried out in relation to the possibility of a new build leisure centre and theatre within Eastwood Park keeping as far as possible to the original specification.

5. This has been a major challenge given the various constraints and other potential issues regarding Eastwood Park.

6. The conclusion of the Director of Environment is that it would be physically possible to construct in Eastwood Park a new state of the art leisure centre and theatre close to the original specification with around 5500 m² on the ground floor and 2500 m² on the 1st floor. Over and above this there would be a requirement for car parking which could be managed and accommodated at various locations. The broad specification which could be provided is;

- 6 lane 50 m swimming pool
- smaller teaching pool
- flumes (1 – 2)
- benched spectator seating area
- wet and dry changing village
- 140 station gym
- Spin studio
- 2 group fitness spaces
- 6 court sports hall
- theatre space (preferably multipurpose and flexible)
- health suite
- cafe space
- multifunctional cultural space
- interactive play area
- parking

7. The proposed location of the site is attached (appendix 1). This is indicative only and may require further modification.

8. However, there are compromises which need to be recognised and challenges which will need to be addressed if the Council wish to pursue Eastwood Park as the preferred site option.

9. The original specification included 4 floodlit outdoor 3G pitches. This was possible when the options related to large relatively clear open spaces with little or no development on them (Shawwood and Broomburn).

10. The current position is that there are 3 pitches within Eastwood Park. Two are related to the operation of St Ninian's school and the other is operated by Giffnock Soccer Centre who have a lease of the facility until 2038. Given the tight constraints and the existing developments within Eastwood Park it would not be possible to provide the additional 4 floodlit pitches as proposed in the original specification. The land required within Eastwood Park to do this makes the possibility currently unfeasible. There is therefore no proposal in relation to providing 4 additional 3G pitches.

11. Costs are not yet finalised given that there are options to be considered before agreeing the final proposal. However, it should be recognised that the Eastwood Park option is likely to be more expensive comparatively than providing the same facility on a clear site.

12. Careful consideration will need to be given to the management of the junction/lights at the existing entrance and exit to Eastwood Park from Rouken Glen road, traffic flows and parking within Eastwood Park and pedestrian accesses/exits/movements.

13. Notwithstanding this there is an opportunity to provide a significantly improved leisure offer within the attractive setting of Eastwood Park.

14. Importantly, the Director of Environment has ascertained that it will be possible to carry this out as a tandem build. In essence, the new facility would be built in a new location in Eastwood Park whilst the existing facility continued to operate. The existing facility would then migrate to the completed new facility followed by the demolition of the old facilities.

15. With a proposal of this scale there are a range of options/combinations and costs with regard to the leisure centre and associated matters. These will be outlined in a further option appraisal to be submitted by the Director of Environment to the Council in due course.

16. With regard to the wider master plan a vision is being developed to create a new park that not only has a different mix of land uses but also creates an outdoor space that can be used productively as a combined resource for people at work within the park and for those that visit and use it for recreational purposes. Buildings should link to each other, facilities should be joined and footpaths and cycle connections should be improved. Outdoor event space should be encouraged. Eastwood Park should become a place that has a purpose and draws people to use its facilities. This will be the subject of a separate report in due course building upon the leisure centre options appraisal.

Options at This Stage

17. The Council has made no decision with regard to the proposed location for a new Eastwood Leisure Centre.

18. The Council at its meeting in October 2018 noted the consultant's recommendation that the preferred option for a new build facility should be Shawwood Park or failing that Broomburn Park.

19. This report outlines the alternative possibilities of a new build facility within Eastwood Park albeit there are some constraints and challenges compared with building on a clear site.

20. Essentially, should the Council wish to pursue a new build Eastwood leisure centre and theatre there are 2 (or 3) sites available. These are;

- Shawwood Park
- Broomburn Park
- Eastwood Park

CONCLUSION

21. Based upon the full discussion at the Council meeting in October 2018 there was a general consensus to explore first the possibility of a new leisure centre and theatre being constructed in Eastwood Park before making any final decision on the preferred location.
22. The consultation exercise reported to the Council in September 2018 showed a clear majority in favour of redevelopment on the existing site (33%) or redevelopment on a new site (54%). Regardless of alternative views regarding the consultation what is clear and vitally important from the detailed analysis around this is that 87% of people wanted to see a new leisure centre development which provided far better facilities.
23. It is feasible and physically possible to provide a new leisure centre and theatre within Eastwood Park based broadly on the original footprint and specification (with the exception of the 4 pitches and with some challenges as outlined earlier in the report).
24. The facility could be constructed as a tandem build meaning that the current facilities could remain open until the new facility is constructed.
25. Taking into account all of these considerations it is recommended that the Council's preferred site option for a new leisure centre and theatre is Eastwood Park
26. Should the Council approve the recommendations in this report then there would be no need to promote either Shawwood Park or Broomburn Park through the Local Development Plan process for the purposes of a leisure centre and theatre. They would remain as protected urban green space.

RECOMMENDATIONS

27. It is recommended that the Council:
 - (e) Approves Eastwood Park as the preferred site for a new Eastwood Leisure Centre and theatre;
 - (f) Agrees that the Director of Environment reports back as soon as possible with options and costs with regard to the new leisure centre and theatre in Eastwood Park;
 - (g) Notes the progress being made with the Eastwood Park master planning exercise and that the Director of Environment will report back on the wider issues and opportunities/possibilities in due course; and
 - (h) Notes that should these recommendations be approved then Shawwood and Broomburn parks would remain as protected urban green space in terms of the Local Development Plan.

Andrew Cahill
Director of Environment



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