
TITLE: NORTH ELY COUNTRY PARK STUDY STAGE ONE REPORT

Committee: Commercial Services Committee

Date: 8 July 2014

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[P30]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the North Ely Country Park Concept Design Stage One Report and to approve it to be taken forward for consultation and commencement of stage two of the study. The consultants will provide a short presentation at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are recommended to approve in principle the Stage One report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 In December 2013, consultants Sheils Flynn were appointed by the Council to undertake a study to develop the concept and design for a new North Ely Country Park.

3.2 The commission is for a two staged process:

Stage one to focus on the development of an early design concept to enable officers to identify the costs required to construct and lay out the new country park and also the possible revenue costs required for future maintenance. This was completed in April 2014 and the information has helped to inform the Section 106 negotiations for North Ely.

Stage two is a longer process and is expected to take a further six months. It will involve stakeholder workshops and wider consultation which will then inform a design review. The final proposals will then be developed further and the consultants will produce a delivery and cost plan and also a landscape management plan

3.3 The Study Steering Group involves officers from East Cambridgeshire District Council plus the Ecology Officer from Cambridgeshire County Council along with input from their Drainage Manager. Representatives from both developers for North Ely have also been involved in the selection of the consultants and have supported the work by providing technical information.

- 3.4 The Consultants, led by Eoghan Sheils, have now completed stage one of the study. The process has involved a site visit to the existing Country Park in Ely attended by Cllr Mike Rouse and also to the North Ely site.
- 3.5 The Consultants presented their stage one concept proposals to representatives from local interest groups on 15 April 2014, to take initial soundings. This involved the Ely Wildspace Group, Ely Wildlife Trust and Ely Society and we have since received useful feedback which will be taken forward into stage two of the process. Cllr Richard Hobbs and Cllr Mike Rouse also attended and a representatives from Natural England was invited but was unable to attend.
- 3.6 The North Ely development is eventually expected to provide a new country park of approximately 65 hectares. The current planning applications provide only a small portion of this facility, involving approximately 3.8 hectares of open space plus ponds and ditches as part of the surface water drainage scheme for the site.
- 3.6 The majority of the new country park will be provided as part of a future planning application, or applications, from the Church Commissioners as part of the wider Highflyer Farm development. There is no timescale for this at present.
- 3.7 An identity for the new facility and how it relates to the existing Ely Country Park will be further developed in stage two of the Study. The facilities do not quite join up physically, however safe crossing points at Thistle Corner from Clayway Drove to Prickwillow Road will need to be considered.
- 4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
- 4.1 The North Ely Country Park Study is being entirely funded from the Department of Communities and Local Government Local Infrastructure Fund Grant secured by officers from the Sustainable Communities Section.
- 4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) will be completed as part of stage two of the Study.

Background Documents

The Sheils Flynn Stage
One Report

Location

The Grange

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