

Committee(s): Epping Forest and Commons– For decision	Date(s): 11 03 2019
Subject: Chingford Golf Course Staff Welfare Facilities at Jubilee Retreat (SEF 12/19)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
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Summary

Following reprovision of a building at Jubilee Yard to accommodate the Orion Harriers Running Club in 2010, the Greenkeeping team at Chingford Golf Course have been using a vacant staff lodge, Flat 1 Jubilee Retreat, for their welfare and office facilities, which is unsatisfactory and does not comply with the building's C3(a) Use Class under the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987

In order provide fit for purpose facilities for the team and enable the return of Flat 1 to domestic occupation it is recommended that a Gateway 1-5 Authority to Start Work report be submitted to the Projects Sub Committee and associated capitalisation of local risk funds of up to £150,000 to support the construction and delivery of the project.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the Gateway 1-5 Authority to Start Work to be submitted to the Project Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee for March 2019 and associated capitalisation of local risk funds.

Main Report

Background

1. The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 oblige employers to provide welfare facilities for the wellbeing of staff.

2. The team of 4 Greenkeepers plus supporting casual seasonal staff maintaining Chingford Golf Course have no staff welfare facilities within the existing workshop and yard provision and are 1.8 miles from the nearest full staff facility at The Warren (public toilets are available at The Caddy House 0.4 miles away).
3. Previous but non-complaint staff welfare facilities in the adjacent Victorian 'Jubilee Retreat' Barn were redeveloped with Mayor of London and London Marathon grant funding in 2010 to provide a clubhouse for a long-established local running club – Orion Harriers.
4. A parallel project to re-provision staff welfare facilities within the clubhouse or in a depot extension shared with a telecommunications provider at the site failed both after the providers withdrew from the project. A Gateway Report in February 2017 closed the project.
5. The Greenkeeping team continue to use a neighbouring vacant residential flat – 1 Jubilee Retreat - for toilet, shower, office and other welfare facilities on a temporary basis, which does not comply with the building's C3(a) Use Class under the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987
6. To preserve housing stock the Local Planning Authority will not support the change of use of the flat to D2 Assembly and Leisure.
7. H&S Audits have recommended that the provision of acceptable, suitable office and welfare facilities for this team are provided as a priority within the existing depot facility.

Current Position

8. It is proposed to construct 'fit for purpose' welfare facilities, including toilet, small canteen and desk space either within the existing workshop, or in an extension or separate unit to the existing workshop, within the confines of Jubilee Yard.
9. This in turn will release Flat 1 which can be returned to residential occupation or rental – refurbishment of this flat will be managed under a separate project.
10. If not approved The City Corporation is in breach of both The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Town & Country Planning (Use classes) Order 1987. In addition, there will be continued poor support of the immediate Greenkeeping team, with potential impacts on morale, staff retention and recruitment.
11. In the 2018-19 financial year, unanticipated income was received in EF Local Risk from a large licence application for long-term works compound on Forest Land at Bury Road, very close to Jubilee Retreat. This has now ceased, and no similar unbudgeted income is foreseen in 2019-20.

12. The installation of budget solution container-style static welfare unit within the confines of Jubilee Yard was the preferred solution until the decision of London Borough Waltham Forest Planning Authority was received. The use of a 'container style' unit has been refused permanent planning consent, with temporary use limited to three years, and a requirement that the static unit be replaced by a permanent structure within this period, which renders this option unviable.

Options

13. Approve the submission of a Gateway 1-5 Authority to Start Work Report to Projects Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee for March 2019 and authorise £100-£150K to be capitalised from EF Local Risk to fund planning and delivery during 2019-20. ***This option is recommended***
14. A lower budget option of up to £40K, using a container-style static ready-made unit has been explored, but denied necessary long-term planning permission, therefore ***this option is not recommended***.
15. Retaining the team in neighbouring lodge is unsatisfactory, as well as contrary to planning classification, therefore ***this option is not recommended***.

Proposals

16. Dependant on final specification this project will result in either internal works in the existing workshop building or an additional small building or extension within the surrounding yard.
17. Maintenance requirements and environmental performance will be considered in the design and specification process. City Surveyors are aware of this requirement and have been involved in previous stages. Once this project complete, and Flat 1 refurbished and returned to domestic use, the maintenance and security requirements of this property will reduce.
18. Hot water and heating will be required. There is no mains gas to the site and neighbouring properties use oil fuelled boilers. The City Surveyors energy team will be consulted for viable sustainable alternatives to oil fuelled heating. Where possible the build will use environmentally friendly techniques, materials and design.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The proposals fit within the City of London Corporate Plan Outcome 10e. "We will champion a distinctive and high quality residential, worker, student and visitor offer" and 12a. "We will maintain our buildings, streets and public spaces to high standards".

Implications

20. **Financial** – The project would be funded by local risk income received in 2018-19.
21. **Legal** – if approved then planning permission will be required. If not approved then The City Corporation may be in breach of The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 and of the Town & Country Planning (Use classes) Order 1987

Conclusion

22. Welfare and office facilities are currently provided to the Chingford Golf Course team are currently in a vacant staff Lodge and this arrangement is unsatisfactory. Funds from unanticipated income received in 2018-19 can be used to construct suitable facilities as well as free up the lodge for a return to domestic occupation. In order to do this it is proposed to submit a Gateway 1-5 Authority to Start Work report to Projects Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee for March 2019.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Gateway1-5 Authority to Start Work - Provision of Staff Welfare facilities at Chingford Golf Course, Epping Forest
- Appendix 2 – Project Briefing - Provision of Staff Welfare facilities at Chingford Golf Course, Epping Forest

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