
Agenda Item: Major Capital Projects Update

Meeting Date: Monday 3rd November 2025

Contact Officer: Project Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update regarding the major capital projects that are currently in flight.

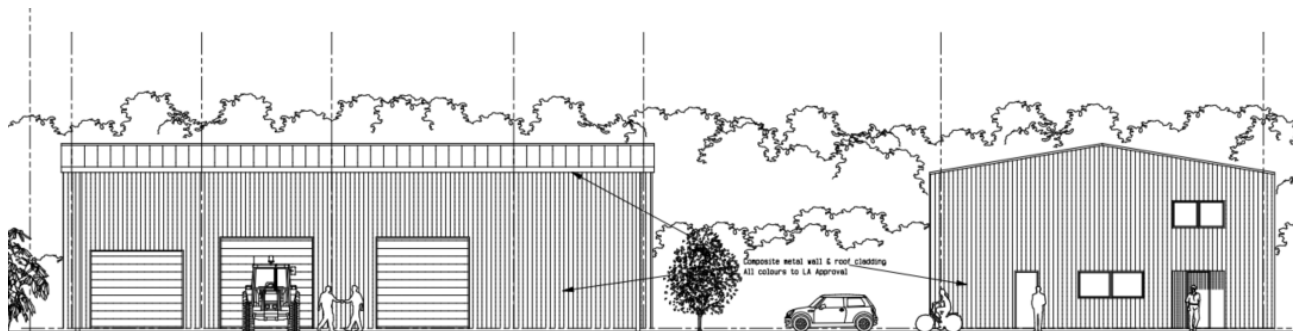
Background

As you are aware, Witney Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy cited 5x themes to deliver improvements for our community: Parks, Sport, Leisure, Infrastructure & Effectiveness.

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major capital projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which are: 'West Witney Project', 'Courtside Hub at the Leys' and 'Ralegh Crescent MUGA'

West Witney Project

New Depot



West Witney Clubhouse



Current Situation

- The West Witney Project combines the construction of a new works depot and the refurbishment of the existing Clubhouse.
- All mandatory documentation—including technical drawings and surveys—has been completed and approved. This enabled the creation of a tightly defined, specification-led tender document designed to ensure submissions deliver best value for money, meet quality compliance standards, and align with required delivery timeframes.
- In accordance with the Council's financial regulations, the project tender was published on 16th September 2025 and remained open for five weeks, closing on 20th October 2025.
- The tender process has significantly surpassed initial expectations. While Officers and Berry's (consultant) projected up to 8 site visits resulting in 4 submissions, the actual outcome was 15 site visits and a substantial number of formal tender submissions
- Officers and Berry's are currently evaluating all submitted tenders in accordance with the Council's financial regulations. A report containing the award recommendation will be issued in time for the scheduled meeting on 10th November 2025.
- Work to satisfy planning approval conditions has been completed and submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council. Confidence is high that we will obtain a positive decision, which is due at the beginning of December.
- The Loan Application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has been successfully approved.
- Following contractor consultations, the revised project delivery dates are as follows:
 - New Works Depot = 13th February 2025
 - Clubhouse Refurbishment = mid- April 2025

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – n/a
- b) Biodiversity – In accordance with planning conditions the new depot satisfies the required uplift in BNG rating.
- c) Crime & Disorder – security of both buildings have been specified in the tender to ensure the building remains safe and potential thieves are deterred. This includes required ratings of locks, doors and windows together with window bars, external lighting and CCTV.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials, which will also improve thermal efficiency. PV roof panels have also been included in specification to reduce energy consumption.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- To reduce the risks typically associated with construction projects, the council is working in partnership with Berry's, a specialist construction consultancy. This collaboration provides assurance that the project will deliver value for money, meet the required specifications and be completed within the agreed timeframes
- The council's rigorous procurement protocols and use of financial regulations significantly reduces the risk of engaging substandard contractors, thereby safeguarding public funds from corrective costs and legal disputes.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- New depot will improve the team's ability to maintain and enhance the valuable services they provide the town. This improves the appearance of the town and its green spaces, making it a cleaner, neater and more pleasant environment for our residents.
- A refurbished Clubhouse will provide the community with a new modern building to socialise and rent function rooms. It will also provide the community with refurbished changing rooms facilities for sports teams and eliminates the current safeguarding issue restricting its use for youngsters.

Financial implications

- The financial implications have been documented comprehensively in our RFO's Full Council Report dated 23rd June 2025

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

Courtside Hub at the Leys



Current Situation

- Councillors attended a site visit on 30th September 2025 for an in-depth tour and update.
- Currently contractors are working on the interior fit out, changing rooms and drainage infrastructure.
- Project is on track for opening in January 2026

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- e) Equality – n/a
- f) Biodiversity – the project plans to achieve over 100% improvement in BNG
- g) Crime & Disorder – contractors are on site, which ensures site security and reduces risk of trespassing, vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- h) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials, which will also improve thermal efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Officers intend to phase the council's £250,000 contribution to Courtside at set milestones that are weighted towards the end of the project, to minimise the risk of any financial loss.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- Increased variety of sports will encourage Witney's residents to exercise and feel the physical and social benefits
- The completion of the Courtside Hub, coupled with new skatepark, mini-golf, renovated splashpad and excellent play area, establishes the Leys as a destination park for the area.

Financial implications

- Witney Town Council's contribution of £250,000 will be segmented and phased in accordance with project milestones and acceptable level of risk.
- Work is underway to renegotiate the lease between the council and Courtside

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

Raleigh Crescent MUGA



Current Situation

- Officers have received clarification from District Council on the conditions of use for the S106 money allocated to provide a MUGA at Raleigh Crescent.
- Officers have re-issued the tender document to reflect the S106 requirements for WODC to approve and publish in November 2025.

- WTC Officers have collaborated with WODC Officers to respond to several complaints from a local resident who is concerned with location of planned MUGA. Officers have captured relevant concerns and included within proposed tender to WODC. Resident has also been given guidance on formal process they can follow to comment on planning when design and location has been confirmed.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – inclusivity and accessibility to everyone are important design features of this park, which are highlighted in tender and subsequent evaluation process.
- b) Biodiversity – the project plans to deliver above the minimal uplift in BNG
- c) Crime & Disorder – location is an area subjected to occasional anti-social behaviour, which was raised at consultation events. We have asked for this issue to be addressed within the design and lighting/CCTV innovations.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials and lighting will be energy efficient. Muga specification includes soundproof materials to reduce sound of ball strikes.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Differences in Town Council and District Council protocol, processes and cultures could present challenges agreeing tender specifications and transferring ownership to Witney Town Council. We are managing risk by learning from previous experience with Play Park and effective comms through robust procurement process and project management.
- Officers recognise that concepts which were presented at public consultation last year will be different to what is being delivered due to S106 spending criteria. Officers are taking relevant feedback from consultation event to incorporate into new design scope. In addition, officers are working with WODC officers to re-engage community to reset expectations.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- A key objective of the park is to encourage exercise through fun activities, which attracts users from every segment of the community to encourage social, generational, cultural and physical integration.

- Another key objective is making a safe and fun area for girls to participate in sporting activities.
- The park will address a growing concern of anti-social behaviour in the existing park, due to its covered seating areas, which are poorly lit.

Financial implications

- The project budget is reliant on S106 monies from District Council, which means the town council must work in partnership to deliver project. Robust processes need to be in place to ensure robust contracts are in place and smooth transfer of ownership is achieved.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated

The Splash Park



Current Situation

- In preparation for the winter period, the seasonal closure and protective maintenance of the splash park have been successfully completed. The park has now been secured for colder weather to ensure its longevity and readiness for reopening next year.
- The park experienced a successful summer season, operating without any faults or technical issues. Community feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, even with the introduction of reduced operating hours due to the hosepipe ban.

- Notably, the park has significantly improved water efficiency, allowing for extended operating hours while reducing our water bills. This has resulted in the Council achieving cost savings on water consumption, coming in under budget for the season.
- All outstanding defects have now been resolved with Ustigate. This included the correct sizing of water jets and the installation of water efficient features, which were initially capped off. These enhancements will contribute to an improved user experience when the park reopens in 2026.
- The project is now formally classified as complete.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

1. Equality – WTC aim to ensure that all children, regardless of their background or abilities, have access to safe, inclusive, and engaging play environments with good accessibility, diverse equipment, safe spaces that are welcoming and enjoyable for everyone, helping to break down barriers and promote social equality from a young age.
2. Biodiversity – Integrating biodiversity into playground design not only enriches the play experience but also fosters a deeper connection between children and the natural world. WTC aim to incorporate natural elements like trees, shrubs, and wildflower meadows, which help support local wildlife and create more engaging environments for children.
3. Crime & Disorder – consideration is given to equipment that can withstand vandalism and reduce risk of anti-social behaviour. Efforts will be made revitalise spaces leading to improved community relations and a reduction in crime and disorder, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for residents.
4. Environment & Climate Emergency – consideration is given to ensuring equipment is manufactured from sustainable and recycled materials for equipment and surfaces. Equipment and sequencing indicates we will reduce our water usage by 60%.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- n/a

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

- A key objective of the play areas review is to identify parks that can be improved to encourage exercise through fun activities to attract users from every segment of the community which encourages social, generational, cultural and physical integration.

Financial implications

➤ n/a

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.