
Agenda Item: Major Projects – The Leys (Courtside Hub)

Meeting Date: Monday, 1st June 2026

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.

Courtside Hub at the Leys



Current Situation

- The target opening date, as advised by the Council's tenant/Project developers, is 12 June and, subject to final arrangements, the opening will include the café, studio, sports facilities and toilets. Courtside are managing the opening event and ceremony.
- The Council has paid £200,000 of its total £250,000 contribution towards the project. The remaining balance will be released on completion, and officers are satisfied all plans, requirements and obligations have been fulfilled.
- The Council are continuing to work with Oxfordshire County Council on a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that will implement parking restrictions of "4 hours, no return in 2 hours" across the parking bays to the north of the playing field. Parking will remain free, but it will ensure the bays are used by legitimate users of the Leys and visitors to the Sports Hub.

Courtside request for additional bins, benches and cycle rack

The provision of bins, benches and cycle racks represents an important element of the wider park infrastructure. While these items are ancillary in nature, they play a significant role in supporting accessibility, user experience and the effective management of the surrounding public realm.

Since the opening of the serving hatch there is already evidence of visitors leaving bicycles in unsuitable locations and, in some cases, bringing them into the site. This creates operational and accessibility concerns, particularly for wheelchair users and others requiring unobstructed routes through the area. The absence of appropriate cycle parking is therefore beginning to affect site management and user movement.

Courtside have proposed an option to address the immediate issue in a cost-effective and timely manner, where WTC could provide the funds and Courtside would manage the purchase and installation of a cycle rack directly. The estimated contribution from WTC has been estimated by Courtside to be approximately £2,500.

With regard to bins and benches, Courtside consider these to be more closely aligned with the wider park environment and should therefore be selected and installed by WTC to maintain consistency with existing park furniture and maintenance arrangements. They have however offered to install these if WTC supply while their construction team is onsite helping to reduce mobilisation costs and expedite delivery.

The following facilities have been requested to support accessibility and improve the wider public realm:

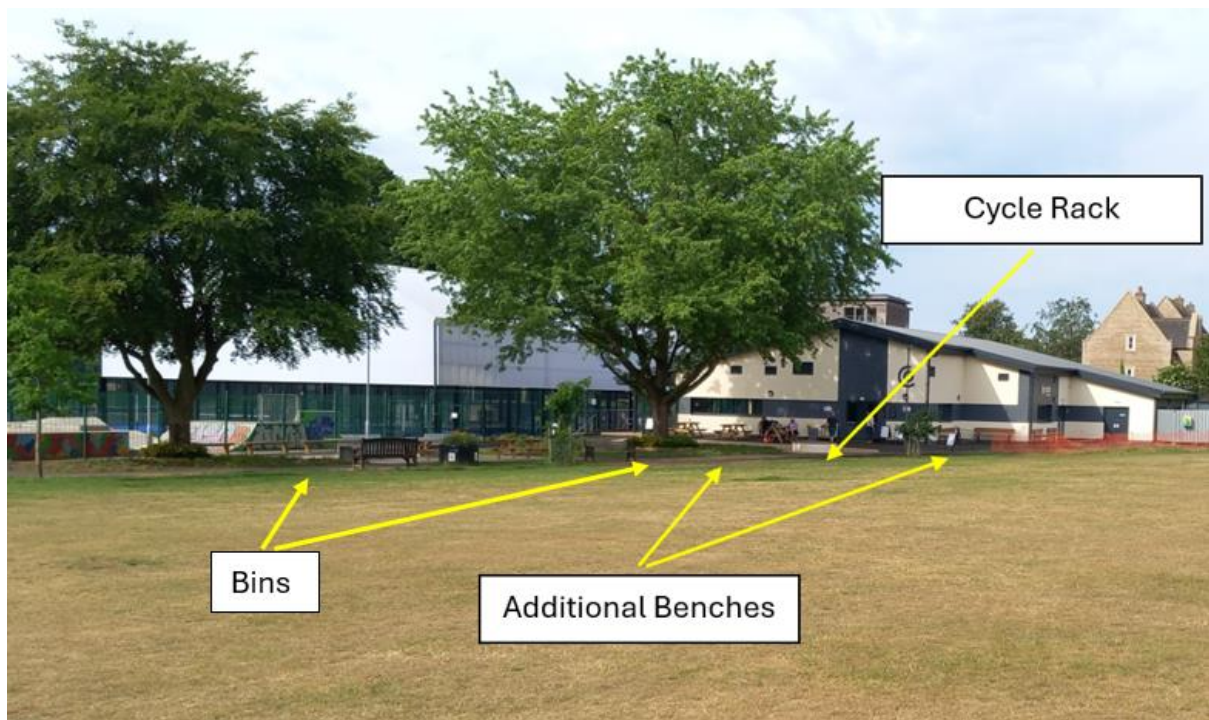
- 2 Eastgate benches
- 2 dual waste/recycling bins
- 1 five-loop cycle rack

The estimated supply and installation costs are set out below.

Indicative Cost Estimate

Item	Quantity	Typical Supply Cost	Installation Allowance	Estimated Total
Eastgate benches	2	£850 each	£250 each	£2,200
Dual waste / recycling bins	2	£700 each	£200 each	£1,800
5-loop galvanised cycle rack	1	£1,000	£600	£1,600
Estimated Total				£5,600

Location



Options for consideration

1. Courtside Cycle Rack Only

WTC funds the direct purchase and installation of a five-loop cycle rack, managed by Courtside as part of their existing onsite works. This is the quickest option, focused solely on addressing the immediate cycle parking need, with an estimated WTC contribution of approximately £1,600–£2,500.

2. Shared Delivery

Courtside deliver the cycle rack while WTC selects and supplies the benches and bins to maintain consistency with existing park furniture and maintenance arrangements. Courtside would install the WTC-supplied items while onsite, reducing mobilisation costs and supporting faster delivery. Estimated total cost: £4,000.

3. Full WTC Delivery

WTC procures and manages the purchase and installation of all requested facilities, including benches, bins and the cycle rack. This provides full control over specification and programme but is likely to involve longer delivery times and increased management input. Estimated total cost: £5,600.

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 – This construction project will adhere to Equality Act 2010, treating everyone fairly, creating an inclusive workplace, and designing buildings that can be used by as many people as possible.
- b) Biodiversity – the project plans to achieve over 100% improvement in BNG
- c) Crime & Disorder – contractors are on site, which ensures site security and reduces risk of trespassing, vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- d) 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.

- The council's £250,000 contribution to Courtside is at set milestones that are weighted towards the end of the project, to minimise the risk of any financial loss and to ensure the facility is delivered as expected.

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.
- The lease between the Council and Courtside is in the final stages of being agreed.
- Any decision to proceed with the request by Courtside for additional benches, bins and cycle rack will be covered by the ear marked reserve budget, 369, Infrastructure.

Recommendations

1. Approval of cycle rack only being funded by WTC
2. A shared delivery, cycle rack by Courtside and bins and benches by WTC
3. Full WTC supply and installation