

Part I Briefing paper:

Approval to proceed with disposal of public open space at Brickfields, Damerel Close, Devonport PL1 4NE after consideration of objections received following notice of the intention to dispose of the land.



1.0 Background

1.1 Further to the decision taken at Cabinet on 9th March 2023 the Brickfields site is to benefit from a transformational £21m investment, encompassing the redevelopment of the outdoor sports facilities to increase the number and scope of playing pitches, as well as the reconfiguration of the existing sports centre to create a new community wellbeing and sports hub.

1.2 The proposals are a once in a generation opportunity to regenerate the community and elite sports provision for the west of the city. This plays into the three key themes of the Plan for Sport:

Participation – the Brickfields project will increase the community use around sport and physical activity, widening the different opportunities and ensuring that the offer is more engaging and more accessible.

Places – the project seeks to maximise the potential of Brickfields, a sporting facility in one of the most deprived areas of the city. Significant investment is needed to maintain the facilities at their current level and this proposal goes significantly beyond that.

Pride – the project will locate the Plymouth Argyle Youth Academy in Brickfields which further strengthens the links between the city and Plymouth Argyle Football Club (PAFC) – as well as making it more accessible to young people living locally and creating a sense of aspiration.

1.3 Pursuant to Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council placed a Loss of Public Open Space Notice advertising the Council's intention to dispose of the site in the Public Notices Section of the Plymouth Herald on two consecutive weeks in November 2023 (3 November and 10 November 2023) and on the Council's website on the Legal Notices page. Objections to the proposed loss of open space were invited with a closing date of 25 November 2023.

2.0 Objections

2.1 The Council received one email objecting to the loss of public open space.

The objection received can be summarised as follows:-

Objection Received	Comment
Concern that provision for the general public is adequately made.	The project will provide new and improved sports and recreation facilities for the people of Plymouth. 'Community Promises' will secure hours of use across new and improved facilities for local residents, sports groups and grass roots sports clubs. The project will lead to an enhanced community offer and an increase in community use hours over improved facilities.

<p>Concern over public space being 'sold out' to the public.</p>	<p>The Brickfields project is being delivered in partnership with various stakeholders including Devonport Community Leisure Ltd (DCLL) to ensure that community use hours are captured within the various agreements over the site. DCLL operates within Devonport and its objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing or assisting with the provision or improvement for recreation or leisure; - Promoting community participation in healthy recreation; - Promoting health; and - Promoting the physical, social and intellectual development of young people. <p>Once the redevelopment of the site has been completed, DCLL will take a leadership role in the ongoing governance and would continue to represent and act in the interests of the community by ensuring that the project achieves its objectives and delivers the enhanced community offer.</p>
<p>Concern that the provision of recreational facilities will no longer be affordable.</p>	<p>The agreements being put into place will ensure that each facility which is to be made available to the public is bookable at affordable prices.</p>
<p>Concern over parking in the area.</p>	<p>A transport assessment including car parking strategy is being developed to support the delivery of the Brickfields project.</p>
<p>Concern that the people of Devonport are being excluded from the local amenity.</p>	<p>The project will provide additional enhanced facilities at the Brickfields site which will be bookable at affordable prices.</p> <p>The Brickfields sports ground is currently fenced off and intended to be secured to the general public outside of bookable times however over time fencing has been destroyed which has meant that the site has been used by dog walkers etc.</p>

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 To proceed with the disposal of public open space at Brickfields having considered objections to the notice of intention to dispose of public open space.

4.0 Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The Council passed a decision at Cabinet in March 2023 to progress with proposals for the exciting and transformational £21m investment in Brickfields.

4.2 The Council is working with a wide range of stakeholders to deliver this exciting investment into the Brickfields site. Stakeholders include but are not limited to; Plymouth Argyle Community Trust,

Plymouth Argyle Football Club, Plymouth Albion Rugby Football Club, Devonport Community Leisure Ltd, City of Plymouth Athletics Club, Sport England, England Hockey, Devon Football Association, the Rugby Football Union, England Athletics, the pétanque club, City College Plymouth and Livewell.

4.3 The proposals will help deliver the City’s plan for sport.

4.4 The land at Brickfields to be disposed of is shown red on the attached plan.

