



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Proposal to acquire land and upgrade facilities at Navarra Place White City.
Date:	14 August 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Walker, Departmental Portfolio and Programme Manager

1. **Relevant Background Information**

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on a proposal emerging through the North Belfast Area Working Group relating to facilities at Navarra Place in White City.

This is a small area off the Whitewell Road which runs adjacent to the Serpentine Road at a community interface. The land is currently owned by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). White City has a community centre and a small play area which, while in good condition is limited, and is mainly designed for young children. The playground was put in place by the Council in partnership with the NIHE who provided the monies for the project. .

At the North Area Working Group it was proposed that consideration be given to how the facility could be upgraded. A series of meetings have been held with some residents from the area, local elected representatives and the NIHE. Emerging from the discussions was a proposal that:

1. The Council acquire the land from NIHE;
2. The Council facilitate a discussion with local residents to consider options to upgrade the facility to include a junior and senior playground and possibly a small kick about area (MUGA);
3. The Council consider placing this proposal as an emerging project under its Capital Programme.

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Members will recall that they noted in February that the SP&R Committee had agreed to progress a MUGA Programme under its Capital Programme. It was highlighted that a series of condition surveys to inform a rolling programme of refurbishments would be undertaken which are currently underway and that an update on the MUGA Programme, including a proposed rolling programme for refurbishments, will be brought back to Committee later in the year.</p> <p>However in the interim there is now an opportunity to acquire the site at Navarra Place which could be suitable for the development of a MUGA. Members are asked to note that this proposal was considered by the SP&R Committee at its meeting on 22nd June where approval was given to officers to proceed with the acquisition of land at Navarra Place from the NIHE and to consider this proposal under the emerging MUGA Programme.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existing playground is limited and there is scope to enhance the facility; 2. There is no evidence of vandalism or anti social behaviour around the existing playground and it remains a respected asset by the residents; 3. NIHE has indicated a willingness to transfer the land to the Council for the purpose of providing a play area; 4. The cost is not yet known as no design work has been undertaken and this will be taken forward by Parks & Leisure and Property & Projects staff; 5. Preliminary site investigations are currently ongoing to determine any issues with the land that would present a risk to the Council should it wish to proceed with development – such as the presence of utilities underground; <p>Members are also asked to note that work is ongoing with the Department of Justice and the Council's Good Relations Unit to remove an interface wall and replace it with palisade fencing and an appropriate mural. This project is at an advanced stage.</p>

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>The capital cost for the works are currently being scoped out and will be brought back to the SP&R Committee in due course to move through the Stage Approval process as agreed for all capital projects.</p>

	<p><u>Human Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional human resource implications</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>This work would greatly the quality of life for children and young people in the area and would provide a facility for children from adjoining streets to enjoy.</p>
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4.	Equality Implications
	There are no equality implications

5.	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note that the Strategic Policy and Resources has given approval to officers to proceed with the acquisition of land at Navarra Place from the NIHE subject to satisfactory site investigations being completed and subject to Terms and Conditions being reached with NIHE on the basis that the land may be suitable for the development of a MUGA facility as part of the MUGA Programme; 2. agree that Council officers facilitate a discussion with residents from the area to develop and agree a concept plan for the site. This will be brought back to Committee with a view that this is recommended to the SP&R Committee

6.	Decision Tracking
	A further report will be presented to Committee at a later date.

7.	Abbreviations
	<p>NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive MUGA – Multi Use Games Area</p>

8.	Attachments
	None