

# WinACC response to consultation on Bar End Leisure Centre

January 2018

(WinACC responses in green)

## Urban Design Framework (UDF)

The main features and provisions of the UDF include:

- A new Sport & Leisure Centre with a new 50m pool complex, sports hall, fitness suites, café and hydrotherapy centre
- A green parkland setting offering links to outdoor sports pitches (Garrison Ground and King George V), running track and informal Parkrun route
- A network of on-site pathways:
  - connecting the site with the national cycle network
  - links to Design principles for the Bar End Depot site the South Downs Way
- On-site car parking with improved links to nearby Park & Ride car parks for extra capacity for special events
- New roundabout access from Bar End Road to form a 'Gateway' feature entrance to Winchester
- Broad design principles for the Bar End Depot site

### 1. Do you agree with the main features and provisions of the UDF?

Yes  No  Don't know

**2. It will not be possible to deliver all aspects of the UDF in the first phase. In order to help us to make an informed decision about future delivery of the Sport & Leisure Park we would like you to select from the list below what you would like to see included in the UDF as a priority in the future. Using the boxes provided, please rank your first, second and third choice of facilities.**

A new or refurbished pavilion within King George V playing fields

A trim trail

**2.** A 'wild' (natural) play area or equipment

A designated area for archery

**1.** A new pedestrian link to the South Downs Way (in the north-east of the site)

A new circular path around the perimeter of the grassed playing pitches across the Garrison Ground and King George V playing fields

**3.** Improvements to play ground/ skateboard park and mini multi-use games area

A floodlit all terrain pitch (ATP)

Spectator seating for the athletics track

**3. Do you have any other comments that you wish to make about the UDF?**

Overall, we suggest that money used to create a new walking route on this site could be better used to create improved facilities for people to integrate walking into their daily lives. In our view, it isn't helpful to encourage the perception that walking is a separate leisure or keep-fit activity. We suggest that funding should be redirected to create / improve / widen pavements in villages where walking is dangerous, and on routes within Winchester town identified as priorities by the Council's own Walking Strategy. In addition, funding is badly needed to increase the take-up of cycling as a means of transport, rather than as a sport, again integrating it into daily life. There are many schemes, approved in principle, on the Winchester District Transport Plan which should be a higher priority for funding than most of the facilities planned for the Bar End site.

For example, an additional link to the South Downs Way is welcome. But it would be better, cheaper, and affect more people, to signpost the walking and cycling routes from Winchester station to the South Downs Way – pleasant and safe routes which exist but are not advertised.

The suggestion that walking routes should be designed / amended to go three sides round a sports pitch instead of following desire lines is unwelcome as it will discourage walking and create conflict with people using the pitches.

**4. Overall do you like the concept designs for the Sport & Leisure Centre?**

Yes  No

**5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I like the fact that the new Sport & Leisure Centre is situated within a 'green' and informal parkland setting.			No view		
I like the simple and unfussy design of the building.			No view		
I like the fact that the design looks to connect the sports hall and the stadium which provides a link between the			No view		

Strongly  
agree

Agree

Neither agree  
nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly  
Disagree

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dry sports and those  
outside.

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I like the way that the sports  
hall, swimming pools, fitness  
suite and café look out onto  
the park and surrounding  
landscape.

Agree

**6. Do you have any other comments that you wish to make about the Sport & Leisure Centre?**

WinACC recognises that the current leisure centre has a high carbon footprint and welcomes the decision to close it. We also welcome the City Council's repeated assurances that new facilities will be built to high environmental standards (variously described as BREEAM Excellent or EPC Grade A). If a new leisure facility is built on this (or any other) site, we would expect this to be the case. We would suggest that it would be useful to make public the findings of the study into an energy network at Bar End, including the technical and financial viability of a District Energy Network and of a Combined Heat and Power plant.

However, WinACC is disappointed not to have seen an overall assessment of the carbon footprint of the current proposals, especially considering the high carbon footprint of building materials and construction, and whether the Bar End proposals have a higher or lower footprint than the alternatives of:

- a) removing / rebuilding facilities in River Park Leisure Centre
- b) a decentralised and disseminated approach to improving health that increases access to leisure and sports facilities by the provision of small, local facilities in each centre of habitation across the District that encourage physical activity by the two-thirds of the population who currently take no exercise

Although this is not WinACC's primary concern, we are also surprised not to have seen a comparison of the financial cost of these two options, and how they compare with the cost of the Bar End site.

WinACC would also like to see more public information about consideration of the transport implications of the proposals for both greenhouse gas emissions and air quality.

The exhibition boards state that the Bar End site has been assessed as more accessible than River Park, but no data has been given about how this assessment was made – what catchment area was considered, what numbers of users from which directions, and what forms of transport were they predicted to use. While Bar End may be more accessible to people who drive there from the motorway, we do not understand how it can be more accessible to people who come into Winchester by bus. Only one public bus currently goes along Bar End Road. We suggest there may have been a misunderstanding about use of

Park and Ride buses: only people who park at the Park and Ride can use the Park and Ride bus; it cannot be used by anyone else to get to the Leisure Centre site. The walk from the bus stops in the town centre (Silver Hill or Broadway) to Bar End is further than the walk to River Park from the North Walls bus stop where many buses from different places stop. While Bar End is more accessible by foot or bicycle to people who live in Highcliffe, we suggest that it is no more accessible to people from Winnall, and less accessible to the large majority of dwellings in Winchester town and its immediate environment. Greater clarification of the assessment of the proposals would be welcome.

We also propose that there should be an explicit link to the coming Movement Strategy which ensures both that the Movement Strategy takes account of forecast transport and traffic movements from the leisure centre, and how the leisure centre may be affected by the conclusions of the Movement Strategy.

We also suggest that there should be plans for low emission public transport which takes people from the west and north of Winchester direct to Bar End without requiring them to change buses on the way.

Public parking at the site should be for people with disabilities and coaches for visiting teams and clubs.

Access to the site on foot and cycle along Domum Way needs to be made considerably more attractive.

This again highlights the importance of linking the development with the Movement Strategy.

We are concerned about the likely impact on the health of people who use sports pitches close to and below the M3, which has been identified by the Department for Transport as one of the most polluting stretches of motorway in the country (see the South East England maps in DEFRA's Draft Air Quality Plan for the achievement of EU air quality limit value for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in South East (UK0031), pages 15 and 21, September 2015 at [https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/no2-consultation-2015/AQplans\\_UK0031.pdf](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/no2-consultation-2015/AQplans_UK0031.pdf)). Pollution is shown as in the highest band of levels forecast, up to 2030, with no improvement after 2020. In the light of this it seems unwise to locate a sports facility close to, and below, the level of the motorway. At the very least we suggest that the council should commission extensive air quality tests and forecasts across the site before proceeding any further with the scheme. In addition, forecasts should take account of the probable increase in traffic volume resulting from the proposed Junction 9 improvements.

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## ***7, 8 Various questions about demographics of the respondent***

### **9. Do you have any other comments that you wish to make?**

May we publish your response?

- Publish in full – your first name and surname, organisation name, along with full answers **will** be published (your email will **not** be published)
- Publish anonymously – only your responses **will** be published (your name, organisation and email will **not** be published)
- Do not publish – **nothing will** be published publically on the hub (your response will only be part of a larger summary response document)