

Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Fenland Inspire! Manor Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project RIBA Stage 3 Progress Update	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To update Cabinet regarding progress of the Manor Leisure Centre redevelopment project.

Note; RIBA is short for Royal Institute of British Architects.

This report informs Cabinet about project development with a focus on:

- **RIBA 3 Completion information including:**

- Information regarding the planning submission including design updates
- Draft images of how the new facility may look, alongside section diagrams from the planning application
- Budget update
- Expected development programme timeframes

Overview

1.2 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre is a Fenland Inspire! project. The existing Manor Leisure buildings have reached the end of their useful lives with an expected conditions survey cost previously identified as £4.331m, now likely to be around £4.5m due to inflation, to allow the existing buildings to 'stand still'.

1.3 The existing pool building was built as an outdoor lido and then covered in the early / mid 1980's. The building has served its purpose but is beyond its useful life and does not represent the sort of leisure facility that people would expect. The 1974 Sport Hall building contains the hall and spin room and changing rooms for football. Football is no longer played at the Manor, and the rest of the facility is now well beyond it's expected life. Condition survey work required includes, amongst other issues, sports hall roof replacement, other significant external works, significant mechanical and electrical work and the replacement of pool plant.

1.4 The two facilities could continue to function – as previously advised to Cabinet – through conditions survey investments costed at £4.5m, allowing for inflation. Such an approach would allow an anticipated further 10 years of use, with interruptions to allow necessary works to be taken care of. Cabinet rejected this option in 2025, instead taking forwards the more substantial redevelopment plans that would provide a facility with a long lifespan.

- 1.5 Managing 2 buildings, 30m apart is inefficient, lacks customer focus and increases operational and maintenance costs.
- 1.6 This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on developing a wider user base by modernising the facility and improving the offer substantially. This will broaden the attraction of the facility to more potential customers from both the local area, as well as potentially importing users from Peterborough and Stanground whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low.
- 1.7 A further focus is integrating the facility into the beautiful site that the centre is situated within – the Manor Field. This project is an opportunity to blend the boundaries between a built leisure centre and outdoor activities. The new facility will invite users who walk and play at the field to also use the facility. People who fish, bowl, play tennis, cricket and netball will also be able to experience a fresh, vibrant facility. Users of the facility will take activity outside on the fields or in the padel courts. The new, relocated skate park will attract new users to skateboard, scoot and BMX. Users of the play park will also be able to enjoy the leisure facility.
- 1.8 Building a leisure centre just for sport is no longer a financially viable proposal. The facility must offer more, attracting users not just for physical activity, but for other activities too.

This could include community youth activities, rehabilitation activity from injury or surgery, group classes for older and frail people, or education sessions regarding movement and healthy food.

The facility may offer GP or other health professionals the opportunity to work closer to the community, impacting on the NHS [Core20Plus5](#) targets.

Integrating the facility into wider community life is essential to the ongoing financial viability of the facility. The new facility is being designed to be able to offer a broader set of opportunities to the local community that positively influences community wellbeing and community cohesion.

- 1.9 In February 2025, further ratified by a subsequent report in June 2025, Cabinet approved the project to move through the Royal Institute of British Architects pre-construction phases (RIBA Stages 2 – 4) to deliver a scheme that would have planning consent, a firm contractual construction cost and a construction partner on board. A RIBA Stage 2 report and project update was presented to Cabinet in November 2025.
- 1.10 The currently approved pre-construction RIBA Stages 2 - 4 work is a significant project and is costing around £1.1m. Work has commenced on RIBA Stage 4 and is expected to complete in May 2026.
- 1.11 Completion of the RIBA 2 - 4 Stages work will provide the Council with cost certainty, along with a detailed construction programme allowing an informed decision as to whether to proceed with construction or not.

The current project programme expects a report to Cabinet in June 2026 for Members to decide whether to commit to the full project cost of £18.67m. If Members do decide to go ahead, main construction works would commence on site in August 2026, and completion of the building redevelopment and

extension work would occur in December 2027. Following the opening of the new building, demolition of the old sports hall building would then take place and the development of the footprint as a car park would be completed.

2 Key Issues

2.1 The Council has appointed Alliance Leisure through the UK Leisure Framework to take the redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre through all pre-construction stages to the end of RIBA Stage 4. This work is progressing with a project team consisting of leisure specialists from Alliance, architects, mechanical and electrical specialists, pool specialists, other key supporting teams and, importantly, the construction company. This multi-disciplinary approach is tried and tested through the UK Leisure Framework with the inclusion of the construction company meaning that by the end of the process the Council will have a firm contract price to construct the facility and no further procurement to carry out.

2.2 This report is submitted at the end of RIBA Stage 3. A planning application has been submitted in December 2025. Please see Appendix 2 – Extract from Planning Submission for a section of that submission. The broad layout of the building and overall site is in place.

The target date for a planning decision is currently late April / early May 2026.

2.3 RIBA 3 documentation is available in the Appendices referenced with letters to this document.

2.4 Work is now underway on RIBA Stage 4 which is the detailed design element of the project, due to complete in May.

2.5 Enhancements to the Manor Leisure Centre will result in an increased Management Fee to be paid by the operator, Freedom Leisure, to the Council for the management of the facility.

The new Management fee will be impacted by the closure of the swimming pool building during construction works and likely to be tapered in initial period of opening to account for the rebuilding of the business due to the swimming pool closure.

Negotiations are ongoing in relation to firm contractual values, and an update will be provided within the next Cabinet paper in June.

3 Financial concerns

3.1 A redeveloped Manor Leisure Centre will come at a significant cost to the Council in terms of construction costs and borrowing costs, currently estimated at £18.67 million.

3.2 Cabinet members need to satisfy themselves that all elements of the leisure centre redevelopment represent best value for the Council.

The design of the leisure centre has been informed by assessments of the local market for leisure, as well as broader industry knowledge, of how the centre could be enhanced to provide a beneficial customer experience, but also be generating additional revenue where possible. New Soft Play and Cafe facilities, Padel Courts, an enlarged gym space and a more inviting

environment will encourage more visitors to use the centre and generate a significant revenue uplift.

- 3.3 Other aspects of the Centre will not generate additional revenue and make a return to the Council through the Management Fee. Cabinet Members need to consider whether the significant construction and borrowing costs associated with those aspects of the build can justify the addition of these facilities into the design. The aspects of the redeveloped centre that are unlikely to generate any Management Fee uplift to the Council to service borrowing costs are the rifle range, the commercial kitchen and the badminton court.

However, the major investment in these facilities would have significant societal and community benefits.

- 3.4 Based on current interest rates and MRP over 30 years, for every £1m borrowed, it is estimated that it will cost the Council £82.91k for each year that it is borrowed.
- 3.5 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, is detailed in the Budget Report at this Cabinet meeting.
- 3.6 Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit of £2.615m which the Council will need to address.

4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet considers the content of this Report and the Appendices and:

- 4.1 Notes the report and the progress of the project.
- 4.2 Notes the redevelopment project scheme details and the expectation of a firm cost for the redevelopment project to be presented to Cabinet for a construct or do not construct decision in June 2026, for a start on site in late July / early August.
- 4.3 Notes the significant financial pressures that the Council faces and pays close attention to Section 3 and the financial assessment section of this report in Section 12.
- 4.4 Notes that the Council is working with Sport England to secure supportive funding that will offset design improvements required by Sport England that have enhanced initial designs.
- 4.5 That Cabinet authorises, in advance of Cabinet's June 2026 decision regarding the construction project, the Monitoring Officer to prepare all requisite legal documentation required to ensure that the Council will have received the necessary legal advice, completed all necessary procurement documentation and prepared all necessary legal documentation and will be in a position to move forwards into contract for the main Development Management Agreement of the leisure centre project in a prompt and efficient manner, following Cabinet's decision in June, if that decision is to proceed with the redevelopment.

Wards Affected	Whittlesey and the surrounding area Users for the Manor facility also travel from the March area as well as from Peterborough	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/24AUG23/02 KEY/22JAN25/02 KEY/22JAN25/03 KEY/22JAN25/04 KEY/22JAN25/05 KEY/8DEC25/02 KEY/8DEC25/01	
Portfolio Holders	Cllr Steve Count	Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! Leisure Centre Projects
	Cllr Chris Boden	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Report Originators	Phil Hughes	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces
Contact Officers	Carol Pilson	Monitoring Officer and Corporate Director
	Peter Catchpole	S151 Officer and Corporate Director
	Sian Warren	Chief Accountant
Background Papers	Cabinet Report June 2025 Cabinet Report February 2025 Cabinet Report November 2023 Cabinet Report January 2025 Cabinet Report November 2025	

5 Background and Intended Outcomes

- 5.1 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre is a Fenland Inspire! project. The existing facility has reached the end of its useful life with an expected conditions survey cost identified as £4.5m, allowing for inflation, to allow the existing facility to 'stand still'. The existing pool was built as an outdoor lido and then, several years later, covered in the early / mid 1980's. The Sport Hall building was built in 1974 and contains the hall and changing rooms for football. Football is no longer played at the Manor, with the rest of the facility being exceptionally tired. Additionally, managing 2 buildings is inefficient, not customer focussed and increases operational and maintenance costs.
- 5.2 This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on attracting more users, broadening the appeal of the facility outside simply leisure and physical activity use, and

integrating activities better into the open space, all whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low to ensure the financial viability of the new facility.

5.3 Summary

This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on a more rounded approach to a leisure facility, incorporating wellness opportunities for the whole community, integrating activities into the Manor area more effectively and ensuring financial viability by attracting more users whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low. Simply presenting a modern facility is shown to raise income levels by 20%. This redevelopment anticipates exceeding this level considerably.

6 Completion of RIBA Stage 3

6.1 RIBA Stage 3 was completed in December 2025. The project remains:

- On budget as previously determined in the Cabinet report of November 2025
- On programme for RIBA Stage 4 completion in May for a June Cabinet report regarding the confirmed cost and construction programme for a decision to either proceed to construction or not

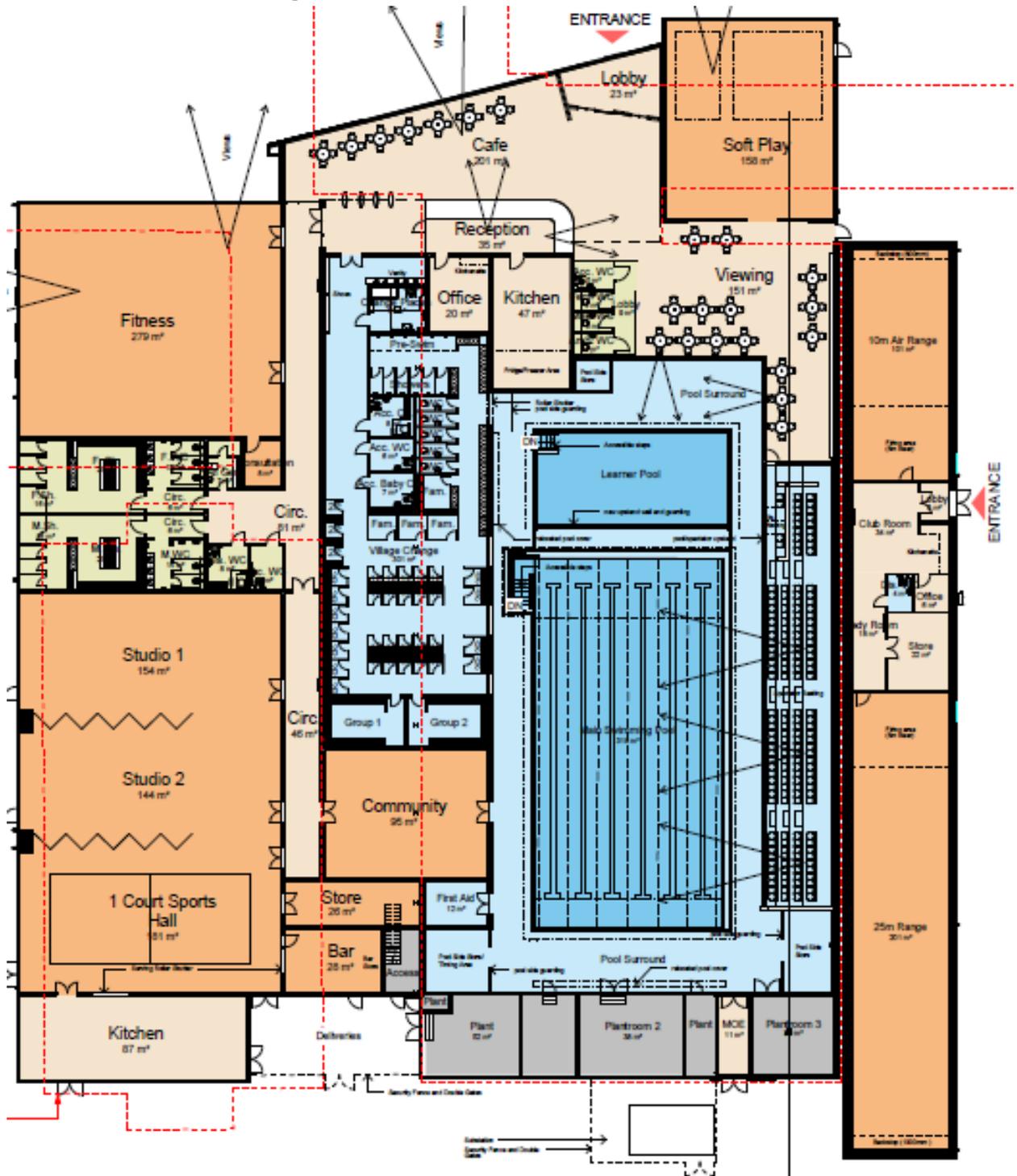
6.2 The key aspects of the project completed during RIBA Stage 3 include:

- Planning application developed and submitted to Planning Authority
- Alterations to floor plan agreed with Sport England
- Floor plan agreed by Cabinet
- Site plan confirmed
- Skate Park brought into project plan due to closeness of padel and skate park sites and safety considerations for construction work
- Submission and subsequent acceptance of Expression of Interest by Sport England, with a substantive invited full application now underway. Sport England officers are now part of the project team and technical working discussions

6.3 RIBA Stage 3 documents are available in the appendices referenced by letter to this report.

6.4 The floor plans / images below demonstrate how the new facility may appear. Already further minor adjustments are required, with further adjustments of a minor nature expected throughout the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design phase informed by the Council, operator, Sport England and through discussions with the architects and construction partner.

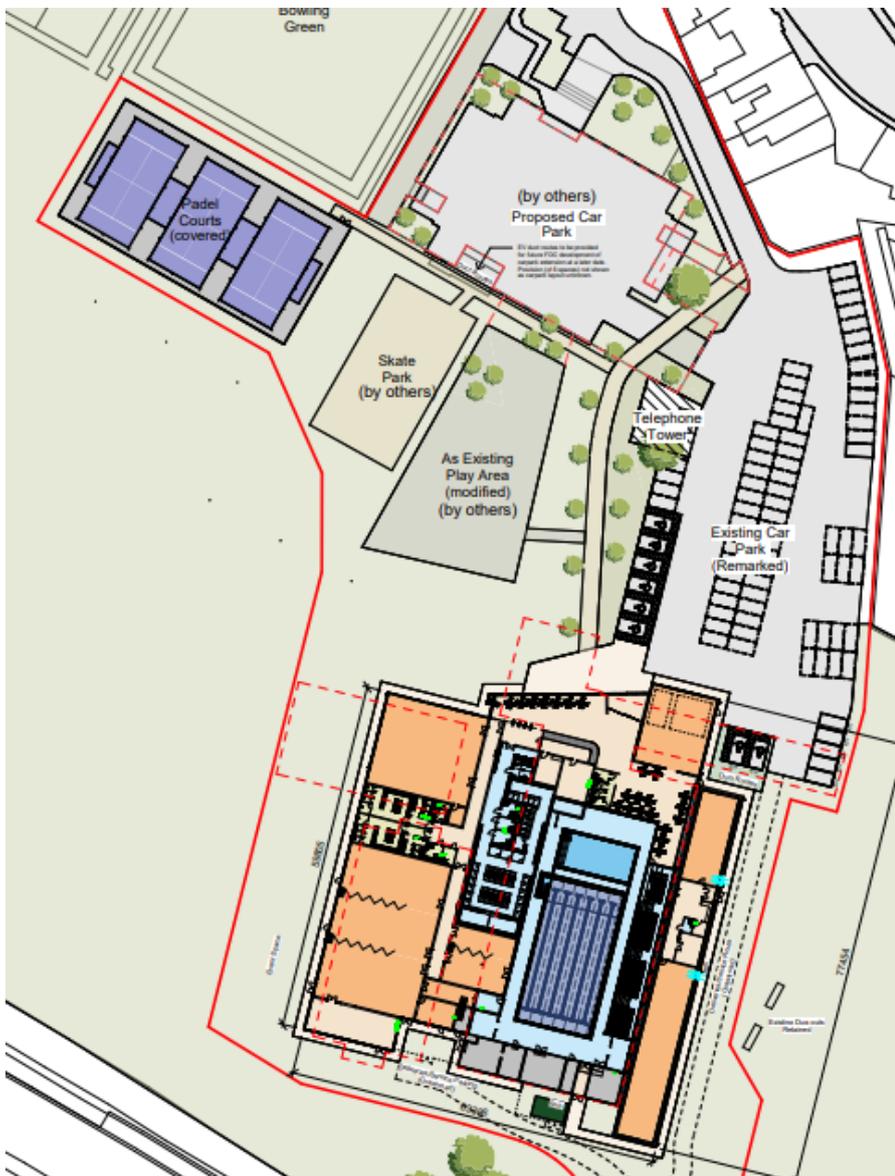
6.5 Current Floor Plan arrangement:



6.6 Visualisation of the front of the new facility:



6.7 Planned facility layout



6.8 Covered Padel Courts visualisation

No padel courts exist in Fenland and as the sport continues to gain significant momentum in the UK there is demand for more courts across the country. The [LTA's strategy for Padel can be found here](#), demonstrating the anticipated demand for courts and the expected long term opportunity that offering padel to the community presents.

Courts are generally outdoor and are either covered or uncovered. Due to the nature of the weather in the UK a covered court extends the amount of use the facilities would receive and subsequently the speed of their return on investment. Courts are also offered indoors, but these are generally as part of a major facility close to a city, or alternatively in a more rural setting with landowners taking advantage of disused warehouses or farm buildings.

A visualisation of the type of covered courts planned at the Manor may be seen below. Note that the roofing material is a synthetic material and not a rigid roof.



Visiting the existing Manor Leisure Centre

6.9 Cabinet Members may wish to visit the existing site to better understand the current buildings and their condition and the challenge the existing facilities provide.

Please contact Cllr Steve Count, Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! Leisure Projects or Phil Hughes or Carol Pilson to arrange to see the facility.

7 Financial Assessment

Third Party Grant Funding Progress

7.1 Sport England has accepted the Council's Expression of Interest for capital support for this project. The next step is a substantial grant application process and assessment. Whilst **no** funding is confirmed at this time, moving past the Expression of Interest Phase means that the project team will be joined by Sport England colleagues to support further iterations of the design, drawing on the considerable expertise of the Sport England team.

Currently the Council is in the process of submitting an invited bid for a grant of £2m from Sport England to support this project.

7.2 The Council is also writing to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to seek financial support for the project. Improving the leisure offer in the town of Whittlesey will support the local economy, the local visitor economy, community health and community cohesion, fitting in with some of the CPCA's core objectives.

Budget Review

7.3 In the November 2025 Cabinet report, it was highlighted that the expected cost for the redevelopment was initially £17.062m.

In November it was reported that the RIBA Stage 2 revised estimate was £17.18m, including contingency and inflation.

Further costs were highlighted as a result of Sport England input into the design. These amounted to an estimated £1.489m, enhancing the facility considerably, with increased changing area space and substantial accessibility improvements.

If the Council is successful with our application to Sport England for £2m, the net cost reduction to the overall cost will remain in excess of £500,000.

7.4 The addition of the £1.489m estimated costs for the Sport England enhancements brought the **November 2025** total current estimated project budget to £18.67m. The potential of a £2m grant from Sport England would reduce that total cost to £16.67m.

This total cost included costs already committed to the development of RIBA Stages 0 - 4.

7.5 The **end of RIBA Stage 3 construction cost estimates** for the project is £17.676m. This cost **excludes** the already committed RIBA Stages 0 - 4 costs and highlights **future construction costs** that Cabinet will need to deliberate in June 2026.

7.6 This cost is summarised in the table below. Cabinet should note that the cost now includes;

- The Skate park estimated budget of £247,000 (new to the budget estimate)
- A revised contingency budget of £846,550 (increased from £676,000)

The movement in the FDC-held contingency from RIBA Stage 2 to RIBA Stage 3 largely reflects the continued development of the cost plan. In earlier cost updates, additional cost items (such as Sport England items and the commercial kitchen) included embedded contingency allowances within those figures. Now that these items form part of the consolidated construction cost, the contingency has been rationalised and centralised within the client-held allowance.

This provides clearer visibility of risk provision and ensures there is no duplication across the cost plan.

While a number of trade packages are now more clearly defined and certain risk allowances have been incorporated directly into those packages, it remains prudent to maintain an appropriate client contingency to manage known outstanding items and residual risks that are still subject to confirmation. These include the padel, skate park elements, substation works and unknown planning condition requirements. Overall, the current allowance reflects the more developed Stage 3 position and ensures the project retains a sensible and proportionate level of flexibility and protection.

- 7.7 The Risk Register, attached in Section 13, details risks considered and their mitigation action. As further risks are identified and mitigated the risk of additional costs is reduced.
- 7.8 As highlighted above, the contingency sum included within the budget, held by FDC should the project proceed to construction, is considered a reasonable contingency with a project of this size.
- 7.9 The approach to the project, with the building contractor already working with the project team, means that the risk of unforeseen issues is reduced, meaning that the contingency should be more than sufficient for this project. It is anticipated that as packages of work are detailed and costed through the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design process, risks will be reduced and costs will become certain, with a corresponding reduction in the necessary contingency sum.
- 7.10 The skate park now forms part of this project instead of being an FDC open spaces project, as having 2 contractors on site at the same time in such close location is an unacceptable risk with regard to health and safety management of construction sites.

	ESTIMATED FEES
PROJECT ELEMENT	RIBA 5-7 Estimate
Architect - Design Services	£ 190,800.00
Structural - Consultant	£ 45,000.00
M & E - Consultant	£ 30,000.00
Planning Consultant	£ 2,500.00
Fire Engineer/Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Acoustic Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Landscape Consultant	£ 5,000.00
Pool and Filtration Specialist Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Specialist Design Input (Drainage)	£ 5,000.00
Specialist Design Input (Myrtha)	£ 5,000.00
Disbursements	£ 13,816.90
SUB-TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	£ 334,616.90
R&D Asbestos Surveys	£ 10,000.00
SUB-TOTAL SURVEYS and INVESTIGATIONS	£ 10,000.00
Construction Estimate (Full scheme,incl - Sports Hall, Rifle Range)	£ 14,369,702.51
Construction Estimate (padel courts)	£ 489,700.00
Construction Estimate (Skatepark)	£ 247,000.00
Construction Estimate (Demo of conference centre)	£ 500,000.00
Contingency 5%	£ 846,550.97
SUB-TOTAL CONTRACTOR	£ 16,452,953.48
Specialist Equipment Design (Audio Visual / Signage)	£ 89,000.02
Specialist Equipment Design (Reception, Kitchen and Bar)	£ 137,273.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Access Control)	£ 35,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Furniture)	£ 25,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Adventure Play)	£ 160,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Misc)	£ 35,000.00
SUB-TOTAL SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT SERVICES	£ 481,273.02
Project Management and Employers Agent	£ 152,123.69
Principal Designer (CDM)	£ 7,000.00
Principal Designer (BSA)	£ 7,000.00
ALS Development Management and Delivery	£ 130,694.74
FDC Project Manager	£ 50,000.00
Consultant support - operational contract / management fee change	£ 10,000.00
UKLF Access Fee	£ 40,428.06
SUB-TOTAL DELIVERY SERVICES	£ 397,246.49
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTED FEE TOTAL	£ 17,676,089.89

8 Project Programme

The outline current programme is below, with an expected completion date of mid-December **2027**.

8.1 Key milestones are:

- April / May Planning determination
- May Completion of RIBA Stage 4 and full design and cost certainty
- May A firm management fee uplift will have been agreed between FDC and Freedom Leisure
- June Cabinet Decision to proceed, or otherwise, with construction of the redevelopment project
- Early July Execute Freedom Leisure contract variation regarding any net costs of construction disruption to the business and the uplift in management fee payable to FDC annually following project completion.
- Early July Execute contract for construction works programme
- Late July Move existing gym into Sport Hall building
- August Closure of pool building
- August Start on site - construction commences
- September Closure of skatepark as it overlaps the construction site
- January 2027 Padel courts completed – daylight use only pending electrical connection
- January 2027 New skate park completed and opened – daylight use only pending electrical connection
- December 2027 Completion of main redevelopment work and opening of new facility
- January 2028 Demolition of former sports hall
- March 2028 Construction of new car park in sport hall location

8.2 Padel Court development

It should be noted that the development of padel courts, subject to receipt of a business case that indicates the same, are anticipated to prove a good investment. Expectation is that the courts should be constructed regardless of whether the larger redevelopment proceeds.

The estimated cost of construction is circa £489,700. A sufficient uplift in the management fee from Freedom Leisure is required to justify the capital investment. This work is being refined at present with this current report using anticipated income and expenditure figures provided by Freedom in 2025.

Development of the padel courts will proceed as part of the main contract if approved by Cllrs Boden, Count and Wallwork following a review of a detailed business case once that is available.

9 Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure centre is necessary due to the condition of the existing facilities that are at the end of their useful life. The

redevelopment will benefit the growing community of Whittlesey and surrounding villages.

- 9.2 The existing facility is now beyond its expected useful life and a do nothing option is not practical in the short term. Either the existing facilities receive considerable investment (in excess of £4.5m) to 'standstill' or the larger, longer-term approach of the redevelopment is required.
- 9.3 The project team has focussed on the design of an operationally financially viable facility that generates increased footfall and income whilst keeping the capital costs as low as possible. The redevelopment replicates the commercially viable aspects of the sports hall building, alongside the modernisation of the swimming pool building and pool changing area. The gym has been made larger to anticipate latent demand within the area, with the necessary gym changing rooms being added. These works will enhance the facility increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.4 Where aspects of the facility are not commercially viable elected Members have indicated that they wish to see these developed as they will ensure that the redeveloped facility becomes more of a community hub for the town, enhancing the more rounded community wellbeing aspect of the site. Whilst this may be the case in a social and community context, financially the non-commercial aspects of the redevelopment may be argued to not offer Best Value to the Council.
- 9.5 The reception area is enhanced and will offer a café suitable for facility users and will also cater for children's parties in the adjacent soft play space. These works will enhance the facility increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.6 Sport England has recommended enhancements that improve changing provision and disabled access to all facilities. Whilst at a significant cost, this cost is anticipated to be a negative net cost if a grant from Sport England is forthcoming. These works will improve access to all, whilst enhancing the facility increasing, further footfall and financial viability.
- 9.7 The sports hall area remains a sufficient size for 2 exercise class areas, as well as a separate badminton court space. These three areas can be combined into one large space that can be used for community events, functions and conferences. The adjacent kitchen will cater for those events, as well as events held on the fields.
- 9.8 Space that was part of the swimming pool area has been used to accommodate a community room that is anticipated to be used for meetings, training, activity sessions for older people or people with specific medical needs, for example healthy heart classes. This space will enhance community access and cross-partner use, drawing in a broader approach to wellbeing, increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.9 The proposed footprint is the minimum necessary footprint for the redevelopment, considering Member priorities regarding event and kitchen space, the rifle club and its enhancements, and Sport England's stipulations regarding changing facility and disability access enhancements.

10 Alternative options Considered

10.1 The Cabinet Report of February 2025 identified two other options instead of the redevelopment of the pool, namely:

- Build a new facility adjacent to the current facilities.
This option is estimated to cost a further £10m and was deemed unaffordable.
- Instead of a redevelopment, the existing facilities condition survey spending of £4.331m would allow the buildings to stand still.
It was considered that this would be wasted money on a facility that is no longer fit for purpose and would not serve the community for the next 20+ years.

11 Potential Reductions in Estimated Costs

This is a significant capital project – FDC’s largest. Estimated costs have been kept as low as possible, whilst fulfilling the project brief. Further cost reductions are possible, with a significant reduction in the project scope.

These aspects of the project have been deemed necessary for the future of community activity in Whittlesey by elected Members. Whilst that is the case, Cabinet should be made aware that the facility could be built and be successful without the following aspects of the project that add cost to the project;

11.1 Padel Courts

The padel courts are an enhancement to the existing facility. The cost of construction is currently estimated at £489,700. Whilst this cost could be removed from the project, it should be noted that the padel courts are expected to have a prompt payback period. A third party specialist is compiling a business case regarding what net management fee uplift to FDC might be expected once the courts are built.

Estimated anticipated financial performance suggests that the removal of padel courts from the project would be both a community and financial detriment.

11.2 Rifle Range

The rifle range will be used by a limited number of the community (circa 200 Members) and could be viewed as not representing best value for the Council. Options to reduce the cost of this facility include:

- Reduce the rifle range footprint to the original size, reducing costs by c.£200,000 and removing the 10m air range.
- Remove the rifle range altogether, reducing costs by c.£950,000.

11.3 Kitchen and Events Space

The kitchen and events hall aspect of the project add significant cost for an as yet unproven community and commercial gain.

Options to reduce the cost of this element from the existing footprint include:

- Remove the kitchen element, reducing costs by an estimated £800,000.
- Remove the badminton court aspect of the hall, saving a significant sum that has not been estimated at this time.

12 IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Financial Implications

12.2 Based on current interest rates and MRP over 30 years, for every £1m borrowed, it is estimated that it will cost the Council £82.91k for each year that it is borrowed.

12.3 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, is detailed in the Budget Report at this Cabinet meeting. Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit which the Council will need to address

12.4 It should be noted that the minimum spend required for the existing Manor Leisure Centre to stand still by way of conditions survey works is £4.5m, including inflation.

12.5 Estimates from initial discussions with Freedom in 2025 regarding the uplift in FDC management fee income as a result of the redevelopment of the facility was £345,000 p.a. excluding padel court income. This is sufficient to fund borrowing of £4.16m. Discussions have restarted following progress of the project and the improved facilities being added since the initial discussions. Anticipated padel court income is expected to fund further borrowing of £2.59m

12.6 The net *additional* borrowing can be calculated as:

Total construction cost, net of Sport England potential grant:	£15.676m
Less Skate Park cost funded by play area budget (delivery cost + contingency of 5%)	(£ 0.263m)
Funded by:	
Conditions survey budget (as detailed in 12.4 & Feb 2025 Cabinet Report)	(£ 4.500m)
Borrowing funded by increased revenue	<u>(£ 4.160m)</u>
Borrowing funded by Padel income (Based on Nov 2025 Cabinet report mature year estimate)	(£ 2.590m)
Additional borrowing requirement	<u>£ 4.163m</u>

As detailed in paragraph 12.2 the cost of borrowing £1m is £82,910. This means that the additional net borrowing required for this project will be approximately £345,154 p.a. The additional borrowing requirement has reduced by £110,939 p.a. from November 2025's estimate of £456,093 p.a .

This borrowing sum will be *in addition* to the borrowing required for the conditions survey budget that this project negates.

12.7 Legal Implications

- 12.8 In advance of Cabinet's decision regarding the main construction project, anticipated for discussion at Cabinet in June 2026, legal work will commence to ensure that, should the project be approved to proceed, the Council will have received the necessary legal advice and will be in a position to move forwards with contracts for the Development Management Agreement in a prompt and efficient manner following June Cabinet.
- 12.9 Any delay in signing contracts may lead to increased construction costs due to inflation. A prudent inflationary estimate of 4% p.a for the construction industry equates to an annual inflationary cost of £707,000 or £59,000 for every month of delay.

Best Value requirements

- 12.10 Members must satisfy themselves that this significant financial investment by the Council in the facility delivers best value for the community.

12.11 Equality Implications

The redevelopment significantly enhances equality of use and access to the facility.

13 Appendix 1 – Risk Register

1	DESCRIPTION	CAUSE	STATUS	IMPACT	PROBABILITY RATING	IMPACT RATING	RISK INDEX	CONTROL STRATEGY
2	Failure to achieve Building Control approval (construction phase)	Failure to complete works to correct specification/Building Regulations	Active	Delayed project completion	1	5	5	Regular contact with Building Inspector. Responsibility for compliance with Development Control requirements under the build contract is with the Contractor
3	Global pandemic	Site closure due and impact on construction works due to pandemic	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Follow public health guidance. New Relevant Event included in contract- EoT for delay
4	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Only exceptionally adverse weather conditions are Client risk (Relevant Event). Contractor's programme deemed to include allowances for normal seasonal weather conditions. Provide early warning of any potential delays. Review during construction.
5	Political change	Local political change could result in a change of priorities/delays	Active	Reputational risk; delays to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within Council fully updated on development. Engagement and appropriate governance from council elected members throughout the lifespan of the project.
6	Project governance	Inadequate scheme of delegation	Active	Delays to approvals cause delay to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development. Stages of project taken through Council's Cabinet. Final construction approval to Cabinet in June 2026.

7	Delay to project commencement	Delays to project approvals, council decisions	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed
8	Late placement of long lead in orders prior to execution of Building Contract	Client fails to instruct contractor to place any early orders identified	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed
9	Late project delivery (construction phase)	Building Contractor fails to deliver on time	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Construction programme to be monitored
10	Delay in receipt of/review of information	Delay in decision making process	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Regular reviews of information flow with Client
11	Inadequate communication plan	Stakeholders uninformed about the project leading to delayed decision making	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Regular reviews of information flow with Client
12	Scope change	Client variations to the brief	Active	Increased project cost and delays to completion	1	4	4	Early stakeholder engagement in design process to fix project brief
13	Contractor insolvency	Risk of contractor becoming insolvent during the currency of their contract; potential delay and additional cost	Active	Increased project cost employing another contractor to complete project at higher rates or through abortive works; Delays to project completion; Liability of workmanship/ materials. Client and continuity of warranties.	1	4	4	Ensure collateral warranties are executed; collateral warranties include step in rights. Undertake credit checks including quarterly credit checks during Stage 5. Provide maximum early warning of any financial issues.
14	Non-compliance with CDM regulations	Poor site management, breach of H&S obligations	Active	Accidents, delays to programme	1	5	5	Implementation of H&S and fire precautions; regular tests and checks; training

15	Unidentified services on site	Unidentified services discovered while carrying out the works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs	2	3	6	<p>Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p> <p>Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion.</p> <p>Cricket water connection also requires further investigation to determine how to maintain this.</p> <p>Planning application comments to be monitored and potential early mitigate actions considered should any problematic conditions be suggested.</p>
16	Planning conditions	Failure to discharge pre-commencement conditions in line with programme milestones	Active	Delay to commencement of works on site	3	4	12	<p>Clear responsibilities for discharge of conditions.</p> <p>Delay in submission of application to discharge is contractor risk (during construction phase); delay due to late discharge of condition by LPA is Client risk.</p> <p>Early progression of planning conditions during Stage 4 being reviewed which would mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Close work with Middle Level Commissioners is ongoing to ensure that any necessary MLC applications and approvals are in place for construction start.</p>
17	Failure to obtain Planning Approval	Application is not supported at committee	Active	Appeal of refusal would cause delay	1	4	4	FDC have confirmed PPA in place and pre app meetings undertaken.

18	Rifle club fit out and specialist equipment	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	2	3	6	FDC to consult rifle club. SBA/Curo to design range to standard National Smallbore Rifle Assn performance specification . Third party consultant from NSRA to be part of consultant team to ensure that the construction will meet all NSRA conditions.
19	Archaeological surveys	Discovery of items of archaeological interest	Active	Discovery of artefacts on site causes delay to progress	1	4	4	Low risk as no investigation requested by planning
20	Highway works	LA insists design standards apply to any highway works	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	No works planned outside site boundary. Would be main contractor responsibility
21	Surface water drainage	Surface water does not drain away as suggested by percolation tests	Active	Alternative drainage connection to main sewer required as alternative to attenuation	1	3	3	Ongoing monitoring of design works.
22	Statutory services connections	Installation of substation / incoming electrical service delayed	Active	Delay to handover of building due to lack of mains power	1	4	4	Establish any utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are obtained. Project team reviewing options for early DNO quotations and orders to mitigate programme risk.
23	Delays by Local Authority	Late approval by LA causes project delay	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event

24	Costs associated with Planning Applications/NMAs	Client decides to amend requirements	Active	Design time and approval would cause significant project delay	2	4	8	Ensure sufficient review pre-contract to finalise Client's requirements. Potential design changes related to SE funding.
25	Licences, bonds and deposits for S278 works	LA decides works are outside boundary and require approval under S278	Active	Additional cost and delay to progress	1	4	4	Early engagement with LA to review design proposal
26	Legal easements, relocations, title right relating to statutory services	Discovery and resolution of existing easements, etc	Active	Delay to progress	1	5	5	Early engagement with Statutory Authorities. Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event.
27	Ground contamination	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.
28	Obstructions in ground	Unforeseen obstructions and items in ground discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.

29	Asbestos	Unforeseen asbestos discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p> <p>Existing asbestos info reviewed, however R&D survey necessary and full extent of any asbestos present cannot be fully known until works commence.</p>
30	Japanese knotweed	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p>
31	Flood risk measurements	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	3	4	12	<p>FRA being undertaken and Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) consulted with.</p> <p>Planning application feedback awaited.</p> <p>Remains a risk until MLC approval received.</p>
32	Works outside site boundary excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	No works outside site boundary currently required
33	Operator FF&E excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	FF&E requirements all as per FF&E schedule

34	Any works for screening off or replacing the fencing of neighbouring properties excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p>
35	Final account figure exceeds contract sum	Unknown works required	Active	Funding gap. Additional funding not available.	1	2	2	<p>Regularly review early warnings and change control during the construction phase.</p> <p>Implement value engineering to reduce costs if required.</p> <p>Implement rolling final account.</p>
36	Car park barrier and management system excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	Car park barrier not required at this stage
37	Works are of inadequate quality	Quality and abortive works	Active	Aborted works, redo defective works	1	3	3	Regular monitoring and quality checking.
38	End-user requirements change and/or FDC requires additional scope / design changes during construction (i.e.. items not included in the Contractor's Proposals)	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	1	4	4	<p>Regularly review compliance of the brief.</p> <p>Variations to be instructed in accordance with the contract programme to prevent delays.</p>
39	Buildability issues encountered during construction	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	Active	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	<p>Continually review design development for apparent buildability issues.</p> <p>Confirm that Stage 3 design addresses potential buildability concerns.</p>

40	Forecast project / construction cost exceeds budget	Increases in costs, scope etc	Active	Unable to approve design stages / execute construction contract at end of Stages, critical path delay, operational impact	1	2	2	<p>Regularly monitor construction costs during design development.</p> <p>Implement Value Engineering if required.</p>
41	Physical condition of the existing structure is not capable of accepting the proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	1	4	4	<p>Curo undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction.</p> <p>Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope.</p> <p>Further surveys to be arranged if required. Whilst some surveys have been undertaken to inform the design it must also be advised that even if fully intrusive surveys were undertaken it would only identify a specific condition in that specific area of the building where the survey is undertaken.</p> <p>Whilst this may provide some assurance as to the extent of any risk it would not eliminate the risk as the full condition cannot even be known once the full strip out and opening up is completed given certain building elements remain unseen and inaccessible.</p> <p>Some surveys have been undertaken as noted in the proposals and further investigations will follow upon commencement of works as required.</p> <p>Further surveys are not considered beneficial or necessarily practical at this stage to mitigate the risk further.</p>

42	Condition and capacity of existing drainage cannot accept proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Delays, redesign, additional costs, protracted engagement with utility providers.	1	3	3	<p>Curo have commissioned surveys to inform design development. Curo to complete surveys and make recommendations for further investigations.</p> <p>Curo to provide maximum early warning of a potential issue during Stage 5. CCTV survey completed of existing drainage and what could be surveyed is generally be in an reasonable condition. However, not all runs and MH could be inspected.</p> <p>Further investigation will be required following possession of site. No works to the existing drainage systems are included within the scope of works.</p>
43	Works by Statutory Undertaker carried out in pursuance of its statutory obligations (not works contracted to Curo) impact construction activities	Delays to main contract works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs, operational impact.	1	2	2	<p>Under the contract (2.26.7) this would be a Relevant Event and grounds for an Extension of Time.</p> <p>Doesn't apply for delays associated with works contracted to Curo.</p>
44	Design doesn't comply with brief	Client approval, scope change etc	Active	Re-design required. Programme delay.	1	3	3	Ensure redeveloping design remains compliant with the brief.
45	Fit out not coordinated with base build design	Coordination	Active	Works delayed, re-design required. Additional costs incurred.	2	2	4	<p>FF&E schedule to be issued.</p> <p>Review fit out items and ensure the developing design is coordinated.</p> <p>Confirm developing design is aligned with fit out design.</p>
46	Non-compliance with funding conditions (e.g. Sport England)	Non-compliance	Active	Funding withdrawn / delayed	1	2	2	<p>Funding conditions to be confirmed.</p> <p>Continued monitoring of project to ensure compliance.</p>

								Sport England officers embedded in project team and technical design group
47	Risks to members of the public & users of facilities during construction.	Site management	Active	Injury, disruption, programme delay, additional costs	1	2	2	Ensure works are executed in accordance with approved Construction Phase Plan. Close monitoring / reporting.
48	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Active	Programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	Council to provide advance warning of any anticipated restrictions
49	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Active	Works stopped, programme delay. EoT would be time no cost.	1	2	2	Ensure appropriate insurance provision is included in the construction contract
50	Additional information required to support planning application	Non-compliance	Completed	Delay in receiving consent, additional costs for fees etc.				Validation requirements to be established to ensure the application is complete. Pre app meetings held.
51	Delay in planning consent being received	LPA requirements	Active	Delay to commencing works on site.	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project programme objectives. FDC confirmed PPA in place.
52	Planning consent not received	LPA requirements	Active	Redesign, suspend / cancel project, programme delays, increased costs	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project programme objectives.
53	Requirement for Consequential Improvements in order to comply with Building Regulations	Building Control requirements	Active	Increased costs which exceed the budget, redesign and value engineering required.	1	2	2	Curo to liaise with Building Control to establish requirements.

54	Post-contract (base date) changes to statutory / regulations that need to be complied with	Statutory authority changes	Active	Redesign, works suspended, costs incurred, operational impact	1	2	2	A Relevant Event under the contract and grounds for an Extension of Time. FDC to provided with maximum early warning of any anticipated regulatory changes that may impact the project.
55	Ground conditions (e.g. geo tec, UXB, archaeology etc) differ from surveys / site investigations.	Ground conditions	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	2	3	6	Curo have undertaken surveys to establish ground conditions and inform design development. Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope.
56	Delayed commencement of works due to survey findings extending completion of design and planning submission	Survey findings	Active	Loss of revenue, construction price inflation, poor PR / reputational damage	1	2	2	Continually review programme and survey progress. Provide early warning of delays.
57	Increase in construction costs due to incorporating works required to resolve survey issues	Survey findings	Active	Increased costs, programme delay	1	2	2	Continually review construction costs. Provide early warning of cost increases and implement Value Engineering.
58	Environmental conditions and restrictions (e.g. presence of protected species) impact on construction activities.	Environmental conditions	Active	Programme delay, additional costs, requirement for additional consents.	1	2	2	Ecology surveys have been undertaken and included in the approved planning application. Curo to monitor during construction.

59	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions. Delay in procurement of new incoming utilities	Unknown utility works or delays in relation to DNO	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish and utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest substation may be required. Project team exploring early DNO quotations and orders during stage 4 to mitigate programme and risk. Allowance included within Stage 3 cost plan for incoming services. Transformer, substation and new connections costs vary significantly deepening on utility provider requirements, sizing and capacity, trenching lengths etc. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are received.
60	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions - Diversions	Unknown utility works	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish any utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion. This has been taken into account in the phasing, however the project team are reviewing if this can also be mitigated by amending the skate park area layout. Cricket water connection also require further investigation to determine how to maintain these.
61	Skate park works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well	3	3	9	Skate park works now being incorporated into the main contract. Provisional cost included.

				as potential coordination issues during construction phase				Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC.
62	Padel works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well as potential coordination issues during construction phase	3	3	9	<p>Padel works now being incorporated into the main contract.</p> <p>Provisional cost included. Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC.</p> <p>Costs remain a risk until final quotes received from contractor.</p>
63	Sports Hall centre temporary gym	Coordination	Active	Setup requirements including temporary wall, power requirements, adaptations and moving arrangements as well as impacts upon operational and construction logistics	2	3	6	<p>FDC to review moving arrangements.</p> <p>Curo reviewing site setup arrangements</p> <p>Likely use of local electrician for electrical requirements.</p> <p>Use of gym eqpt supplier to move eqpt from pool to hall building.</p>
64	Entrance gate and bell mouth	Unknown works	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	<p>Note the bell mouth is a shared road. It also appears to run down to two properties numbers 30 & 32.</p> <p>Current gate arrangement is narrow.</p> <p>Design will need to engage highways.</p> <p>Transport survey has been completed.</p> <p>Whittlesey Society feedback on gates received.</p>

65	Sports England Funding application and design change requirements	Sports England Funding and design requirements	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	3	4	12	<p>Meeting held with SE to review proposed design changes to achieve compliance for funding.</p> <p>FDC EOI approved.</p> <p>FDC confirmed to proceed with design version incorporating SE requirements with option to omit at later date if funding is not achieved. Larger building area will have additional cost, NMA to revert to smaller scheme will have programme/cost/planning implications depending on when instructed.</p> <p>FDC submitting substantive grant bid to SE in February</p>
66	Pool structure and design changes	Changes to pool structure to accommodate SE access	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	2	3	6	<p>Pool condition being reviewed by Curo, provisional budget included creating access by breaking out pool surround but difficult to fully determine until broken out due to intrusive nature</p>
67	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Active	Costs, design changes etc	3	2	6	<p>Specialist commercial kitchen fit out required. Design requirements to be coordinated. Provisional budget included but specialist input being progressed to achieve fixed design and coordinate buildings services etc.</p>
68	Process of LGR affecting LA's ability to enter into contract	Local Government Reorganisation	Active	Delayed start on site, delayed contract, imposed inflation costs on delivery, impact on operator and stakeholders with programme changes.	4	4	16	<p>An internal governance process to ensure allocation of budget and commitment to the project.</p> <p>Clear evidence of need for the project.</p> <p>Understanding of the LGR process and any additional governance required explained to the project team.</p>

69	Physical condition of the existing structure - steel work corrosion	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	3	4	12	<p>Curio undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction.</p> <p>Corrosion identified to existing steel frame. This has been factored into the design and proposed work, however remains a risk until the works have commenced and steelwork is fully exposed</p>
70	Party wall awards	Unknown works / approvals required	Active	Delays, costs, design changes	2	2	4	<p>Party wall notices to be reviewed during stage 3.</p> <p>FDC responsible for securing awards.</p> <p>May be required for the telephone tower wall removal as part of sports hall demo' in 2028</p>
71	Biodiversity Net Gain	Unknown works/costs required		Delays, costs, design changes	3	4	12	<p>Ecology assessments undertaken and incorporated into the work.</p> <p>BNG credits excluded should they be required by the LPA.</p>
	Licenced bat works	Presence of bats	Active	Costs, delays, design changes, planning issues etc	4	2	8	<p>Bat survey indicated presence of bats, mitigation measures and licenced bat watching brief required during relevant works. Phasing to be considered. Any pre commencement planning requirements awaited.</p>



14 Appendix 2 – Extract from Planning Submission



Saunders
Boston
Architects

Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey

Design and Access Statement

Job Number: 2049

Date: December 2025



Design and Access Statement

for

Manor Leisure Centre

at

Station Road, Whittlesey, PE7 1UA

on behalf of

Fenland District Council & Alliance Leisure



Saunders Boston Architects
Eastern Gate House
119 Newmarket Road
Cambridge
CB5 8HA

Tel: 01223 367733

Revision:	Purpose:	Prepared by:	Date:	Checked by:	Date:
A	Planning application issue	JH	28/11/2025	NS	28/11/2025

0.0 Contents

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Project Background
- 1.2 Design Team

2.0 Site Context and Information

- 2.1 Site Location
- 2.2 Site Walkthrough
- 2.3 Site Analysis

3.0 Project Brief

- 3.1 Project Objective
- 3.2 Existing Sports Centre
- 3.3 Accommodation Requirement

4.0 Architectural Design

- 4.1 Design Development
- 4.2 Materiality & Massing
- 4.3 Floor Area Assessment
- 4.4 Masterplan
- 4.5 Masterplan Phasing
- 4.6 Internal Layout
- 4.7 Inclusivity and Accessibility Strategy

5.0 Sustainability Strategy

6.0 Landscape and Ecology

- 6.1 Landscape Proposals
- 6.2 Ecological Strategy
- 6.3 Existing Roadside Gated Entrance

7.0 Planning Policy

- 7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- 7.2 Fenland District Council Local Plan

8.0 Supporting Surveys, Assessments and Reports

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Manor Leisure Centre is an existing Leisure Centre located in Whittlesey. The existing facilities comprise of both wet and dry side facilities and include a club managed rifle range. Currently the wet and dry side facilities are within separate buildings either side of the main car park. Proposals for the new extension/refurbishment will include the demolition of the existing dry facilities separate site and the facilities currently adjoining the Pool Hall and to consolidate the two by retaining the existing pool tanks and building new dry and wet side facilities adjacent to the pools, all linked within one larger building footprint.

1.2 Consultant Team

The consultant scheme for the Manor Leisure Centre project consists of the following:

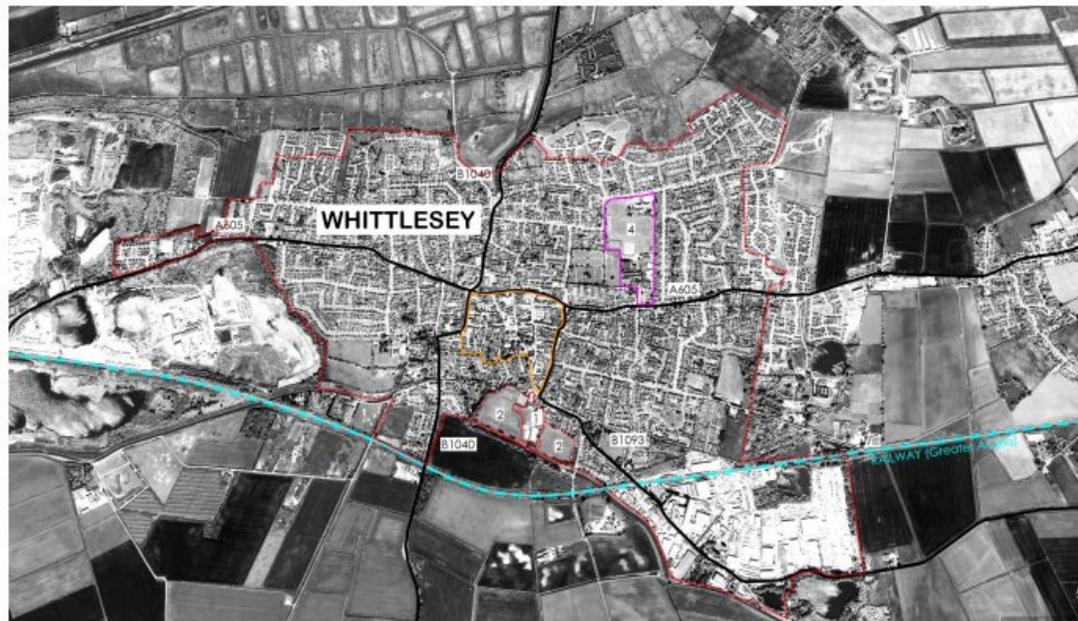
Client	Fenland District Council
Leisure Consultant	Alliance Leisure
Project Manager	Varsity Consulting
Quantity Surveyor	Varsity Consulting
Architect and Lead Designer	Saunders Boston Architects
Structural and Civil Engineer	Furness Partnership
Building Services Engineer	Hensall
Pool Filtration Consultant	Barr + Wray
Geotechnical Engineer	Omnia Consulting
Traffic & Transport Consultant	TPS Consultants
Acoustic Consultant	Acoustic Design Technology
Lighting Survey	Kingfisher Lighting
Lighting Impact Assessment	Millergoodall
Arboricultural Consultant	Arbtech
Ecology Consultant	waiting for confirmation
Bat	waiting for confirmation

2.0 Site Context and Information

2.1 Site Location

Whittlesey is a market town and civil parish in the Fenland district of Cambridgeshire, England. Whittlesey is 6 miles (10 km) east of Peterborough. The population of the parish was 17,667 at the 2021 Census. Whittlesey is known for its agricultural surroundings, historical buildings like the 1680 Butter Cross, and its annual Straw Bear Festival. The area also features wetlands and nature reserves like the Nene Washes, which is ideal for birdwatching and is located near the river Nene, offering opportunities for fishing.

The proposed Manor Leisure Centre development site is located at the existing Sports Centre on Station Road, on the southern edge of the town.



Satellite image of Whittlesey

1. Site Boundary – Manor Leisure Centre
2. Associated Boundaries
3. Town Centre
4. Educational Boundaries



Satellite image of Manor Leisure Centre

1. Existing Manor Leisure Centre (wet-side facility)
2. Existing Rifle Range
3. Existing Manor Leisure Centre (dry-side facility)
4. Existing Bowls Green
5. Existing MUGA
6. Existing playarea
7. Existing carpark
8. Recreational Field
9. Cricket Field
10. Existing skate park

2.2 Site Walkthrough

Vehicular access to the site is via a gated entrance from Station Road (B1093), which also serves pedestrians approaching the site from the north, east and west.

The land to the west, and east is associated playing fields and pitches. To the south the site is bounded by the Briggate River (Drain), established tree line and subsequent agricultural land.



pictures of existing wet-side building envelope.

At the front of the site is located the existing dry-side fitness centre building (due for demolition). Vehicular access continues through to the primary carpark with the existing rifle range and leisure centre situated to the south of the existing carpark.



pictures of existing wet-side building envelope.

The existing leisure facilities comprise of two separate buildings with the main carpark situated between. Both existing buildings constructed circa. 1970's are ageing and in need of significant refurbishment. It was noted that during recent public consultation feedback suggested that one reason for not using the existing facilities was their outdated and ageing appearance.

The site and facilities provide a multitude of health and leisure opportunities including swimming; tennis; gym; bowls; cricket; skateboarding and a club managed rifle range. It should be noted that the recreational fields to the west of the building facilities that no marked pitches ie. Football are present due to the undulating ground conditions making the recreational field not suitable for this purpose. The overall site grounds are an important part of the local community and require modernisation to increase their use and overall appeal.

To the east and west of the existing Centre are the playing fields, an open grass area accommodating a cricket pitch with a fine-turf cricket square, and is lined on the southern boundary by an established, mature tree line.

2.3 Site Analysis



existing car park to front of Manor Leisure



west elevation of existing building



View of the existing building from MUGA



brickwork elevation of existing rifle range



view of the existing wet-side centre from the recreational field (east)

Proposed Site



The existing site comprises of two separate buildings which form the Manor Leisure Centre, along with the associated recreational playing fields including a cricket pitch. To the north-west of the site are existing facilities comprising of tennis courts and bowling green. Adjacent to the existing wet-side building is located an existing skate park, MUGA and playground.

Site Massing



The primary adjacent buildings are situated more directly to the north of the site. These residential areas border the town centre and extend to the east and west.

To the north of the site is a residential area which borders the town centre of primarily two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings.

The site extends from centrally located buildings and associated facilities across associated recreational fields to the west and cricket pitch to the east to trees lined boundaries and the Briggate River along the sites southern boundary.

Landscape



The site is surrounded and bounded on east, south and west sides by mature hedgerows and trees. To the south of the site along it's boundary is an inland river (Briggate River). Beyond the course of the River is agricultural fields.

The topography of the site is relatively level, gradually sloping towards the south bounding inland river from north to south across the existing grass recreational field and cricket pitch. The topographical survey also indicates the site falls away from the building to the East and West approximately 0.6-1.0m under the proposed footprint of the extension and as such the works may be partially out of the ground. A cut and fill exercise will be undertaken at the relevant design phase to inform volumes of fill required if any and materials to be removed. It may be feasible to re-use some crushed and graded demolition materials beneath the footprint of the new extensions.

The nearest surface water feature is an inland river (Briggate River) located approximately 24m to the south of the site, running northwest-southeast. It is listed that the agricultural land to the south of the river is at risk of surface water flooding to a depth between 0.10-0.30m within a 1 in 30 year return period. The assessment risk does not relate to the Manor Leisure site. For more information and detail refer to the associated FRA.

Site Access



Primary vehicular access to the site is from Station Road to the north of the existing site. This vehicular route is a primary route into and through Whittlesey (south) and has good associated pedestrian walkways on both sides of the highway.

Car parking on-site currently comprises 84 marked spaces, of which there are 7 (wet-side) / 5 (dry-side) accessible parking spaces. Throughout the construction of the new leisure centre building circa 45 of these spaces will be retained to serve the existing dry-side centre until it is demolished. During this period part of the existing carpark will be utilised as a construction compound with clear, defined separation to the carpark. In sequencing of the site development phasing it has been important to consider retaining public access to external elements and facilities on the Manor site, a pedestrian access route will be defined between the car park and the adjacent playground, new skate park and padel courts throughout the construction of the new leisure centre.

There is currently no designated cycle path provision in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Good surrounding pavements and pathways provide pedestrian access freely to the site via the existing site entrance located on Station Road. Pedestrian access can also be found via Alwal Road (east of the site).

The Whittlesey bus exchange is located at Grosvenor Road approximately 0.5km north of the site. The nearest bus stops are located in residential areas bordering the Town centre approximately 0.5-1.0km north and west of the site. Current bus services provide connections to local villages of Eastrea, Coates and a link to the adjacent city of Peterborough.

There is currently no designated coach parking on site.

Whittlesea Railway Station is located 1.0km south east of the site and provides connections to the surrounding local area via the greater anglia railway service.

Site Access

Opening hours for the facilities and activities provided by the centre are covered by the general opening hours listed below;

Monday – Friday	06:30 – 21:00
Saturday	07:30 – 16:00
Sunday	08:00 – 16:00

In addition to these hours there may be instances where the centre's community spaces ie. Combined studio/sports hall space remains in use beyond these hours to act as a hosting space for community events such as The Mayor's Ball. Therefore opening hours for the centre have been extended marginally relating to opening hours and extended through to midnight relating to closing hours.

Access to the recreational grounds around the main centre building remains open to the community at all times.

3.0 Project Brief

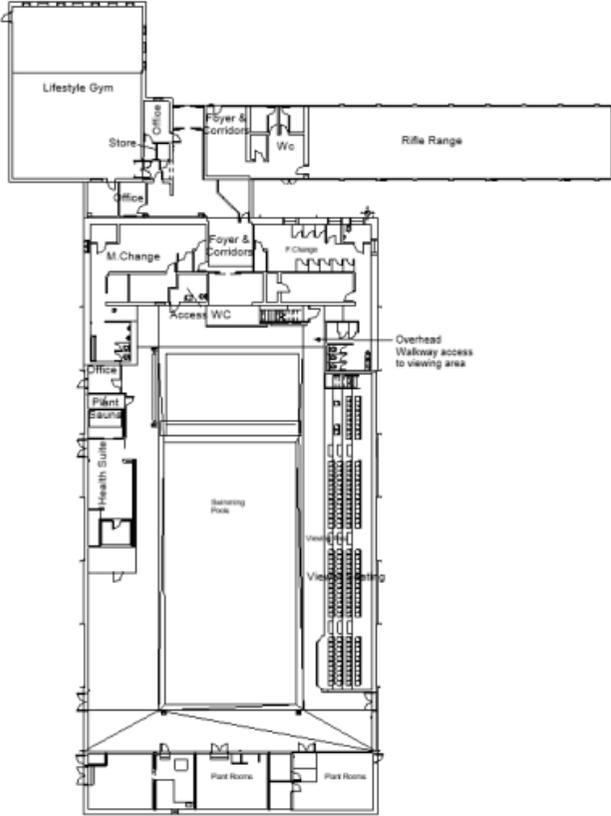
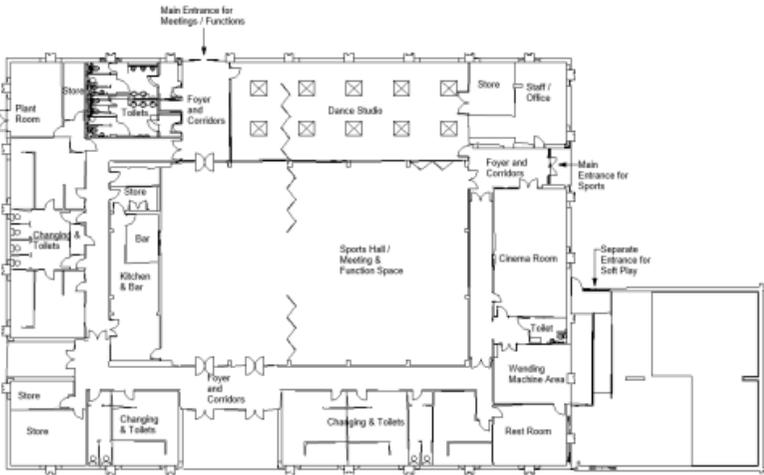
3.1 Project Objective

The project involves the partial demolition and comprehensive redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre wet-side Building.

The existing swimming pools and associated plant rooms will be retained, while all other areas of the building will be demolished and replaced with modern, energy-efficient facilities to support enhanced leisure and community services.

3.2 Existing Sports Centre

The existing Sports Centre provides facilities as illustrated within the dry-side and wet-side building footprints (below);

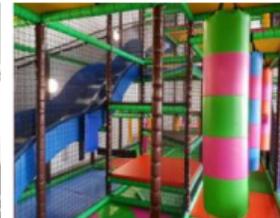


Floor plan of the existing Manor Leisure Centre (Dry side Building) to the left and (Wet side Building) to the right

3.3 Accommodation Requirement

The proposed accommodation requirement is as follows:

- **6 Lane 25m Swimming Pool & associated village changing.**
Refurbished Community swimming pool. The 25m swimming pool to receive new finishes but retain the existing pool tank structure. The associated adjacent village change will provide changing provision, showers and lockers alongside accessible facilities and changing places provision.
- **Increased capacity Fitness Suite.**
Typically, a suitable space to form a 'shop window', or active frontage to the building. Provide a fitness space which gives larger provision to the proposed building than the existing provision.
- **Studio space**
multi-purpose studio space for a variety of health and wellbeing classes with the added function of being able to connect directly to the sport hall space (adjacent) for larger community events.
- **Community Rooms**
A flexible space for meetings/ small functions or support to wet-side gala functions and events.
- **New 'dry' changing facilities.**
To provide a facility to provide changing provision to the dry-side aspect of the new centre; fitness gym; studios and sport hall.
- **Catering facility and servery.**
Small café style catering and servery. Event kitchen has also been accommodated as an extended space to the south elevation providing connection to the sports hall and studio spaces intended for community event use
- **Viewing Area**
Providing a viewing area to both pool hall and softplay. The existing spectator seating to pool hall is to be retained and refurbished, including incorporation of accessible viewing.
- **Rifle Range**
Upgraded to provide the increased provision of a 10m range alongside improved club facilities designed to accessible standards
- **Car parking**
Revised, refurbished and future extension to car parking provision for expanded and new facility offering on site, including compliant accessible parking and electrical vehicle charging.

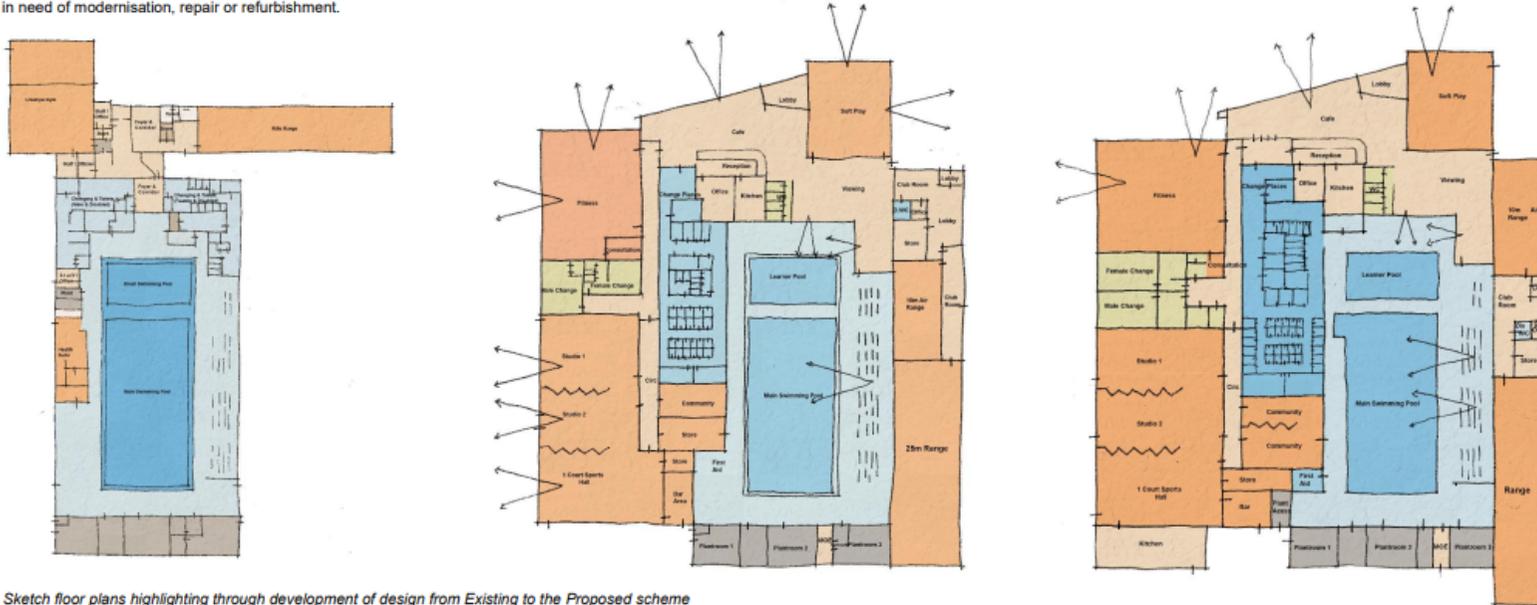


precedent imagery relating to leisure centres

4.0 Architectural Design

4.1 Design Development

The existing building (left) is arranged with a centrally located entrance point which leads into a small reception area. Building users then circulate to either a fitness gym directly adjacent to the main reception or to wet-side changing facilities or spectator seating through access control barriers. Building user circulation and movement is via small, claustrophobic spaces with low ceilings into function spaces which while serve their function are in need of modernisation, repair or refurbishment.



Sketch floor plans highlighting through development of design from Existing to the Proposed scheme

The RIBA stage 2 building proposal (centre) was the first iteration of combining and bringing all of the health and leisure facilities found at the Manor Leisure site into one building. The building development at this stage was already considering more specific community needs beyond the initial brief for development including the ability to combine studio and sports court spaces to form one, single large community events space and subsequently associated facility areas such as a bar. At this stage in the design process the development of the rifle range had been based on generic standards rather than specific guidelines and criteria given by the building user.

The basic renovation principles used for development of the RIBA stage 2 scheme was to retain the existing portal frame to pool hall. The retained steel would accommodate some adaptation to form the adopted roof profile. The existing pool tanks will be retained and receive new linings. The adjoining plant spaces to the

pool hall will be retained but will receive new filtration plant and provide a proprietary newly formed means of escape route from the pool hall.

The developing RIBA stage 3 and planning submission scheme has been developed to consider and support the design requirements and criteria in accordance with Sport England guidelines. This has increased the provisions of changing within the proposed village change, along with increasing the accessibility of the existing pool layout by incorporation of accessible steps into both learner and main pool. Increased dry-side change provision and facilities.

In addition to Sport England guidelines additional development of the proposed scheme has occurred due to liaison with client, building users and operator;

- commercial kitchen to south adjoining the 1 court sports hall (to cater for community events)
- development of rifle range in line with guidance given by the Whittlesey Rifle Club
- adjustment made to community spaces
- increased provision of storage opportunities
- provision to provide maintenance access to roof level (MEP plant required)

4.2 Massing Development

The key principle of the proposed redevelopment of the existing facilities was to create a modern, multifunctional combined facility building where all health and fitness activities could be located side by side.

The internal space and layout has been designed as such to consider and react to the movement and building user flow through the spaces, activities and function of the building. The building facility and associated activity spaces are demonstrated by the view (right) illustrating how these defined activity areas within the building link and provide guided passage for building users in a systematic and effortless manner.

- entrance / reception
- café / viewing
- village change / pool
- dry change / gym + studios
- community spaces / community facilities

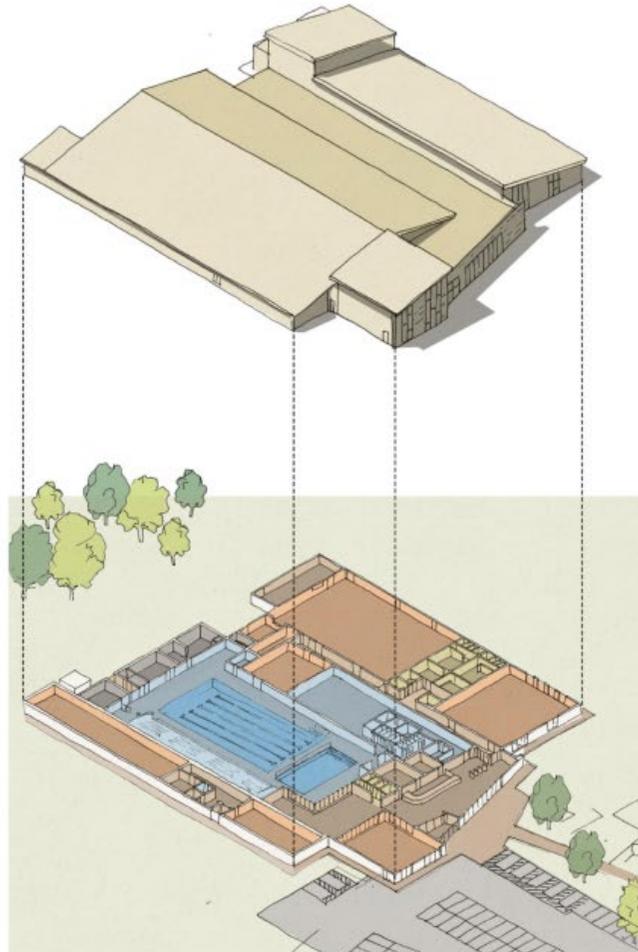
A key factor in the external massing was to simplify the form of the building removing the existing asymmetric duo pitch roof profile of the existing wet-side building. Roof profiles to the proposed massing have been kept simple in form, creating a series of sloping roofs elements with perimeter hidden gutter eaves.

The massing of the buildings form has been kept simple, clean and well proportioned in term to both aesthetics and appearance.

The main entrance façade will play an important role in welcoming building users and visitors to both the site and new building. Therefore this principal elevation has been created to add interest by use of a feature rainscreen cladding and large, expansive use of curtain walling to create a 'shop front' into the centre's café, fitness and softplay.



Massing of existing wet-side facility



Massing of proposed Leisure Centre Building

4.2 Materiality

The external materials palette has been proposed in order to situate the building comfortably in its setting, with its adjacency to green playing fields bounded by trees, as well as an extension to an existing building.

Additionally, the materiality is intended to make the building easily readable for users of the site, providing an active and dynamic frontage.



Visualisation of the primary facades, addressing the entrance to the site.

A horizontal laid Rainscreen cladding in various sizes and colour of three ranges (centre) on the main front façade that will be broken up with curtain walling system (left). This will give feature to the main entrance façade against the remainder of the leisure centre building formed in Composite cladding and the Rifle Range to the east formed in traditional masonry cavity wall construction with external facing brick finish (facing bricks are to be chosen to compliment brickwork of adjacent buildings in the surrounding area).



Curtain Walling

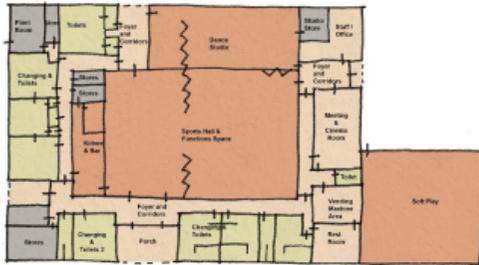


Rainscreen Cladding

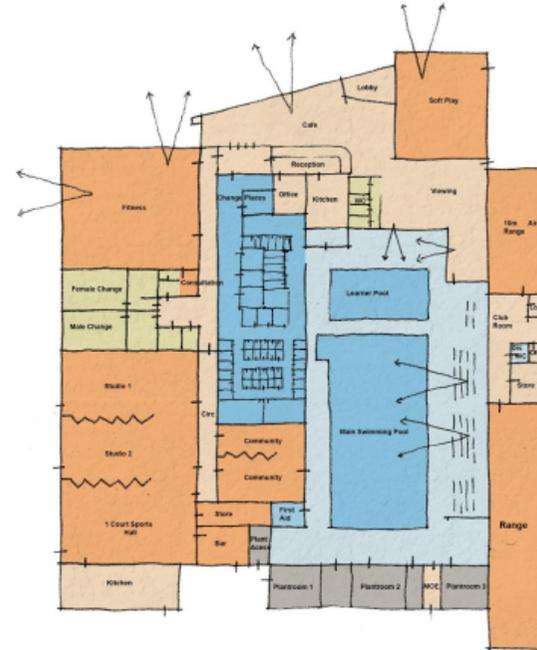
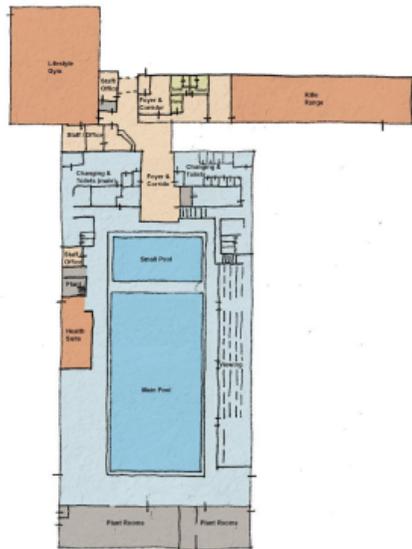


Composite Cladding

4.3 Floor Area Assessment



AREA COMPARISON OF CORE AREAS		
	EXISTING (m ²)	PROPOSED (m ²)
Staff Office	32	20
Cafe	0	201
Pool Hall	890	890
Viewing Area	0	147
Soft Play	185	158
Gym	207	279
Studio (total)	133	298
Sports Hall	353	181 (1 court)
Changing (total)	422	440
Kitchen & Bar (total)	40	150
Storage	71	56
Plant Rooms	163	163
Rifle Range (total)	251	387
Building GIFA	3502	3754



4.4 Master Plan

The scheme is designed to promote health and wellbeing for all users irrespective of their age, ability or background. In order to successfully achieve this, it is crucial to have a range of activities and facilities to reflect the interest of the members.

4.4.1 Outdoor Sports Facilities

The site will include activities like Paddle Courts, Skate Park, incorporating existing Tennis courts and modified existing play area. Outdoor courts will be floodlit to allow for an extensive use of the facilities during the day at all times of the year.

Padel Court layout illustrated within this document has been based on a generic 3 padel court arrangement. Final design to be provided and submitted by appointed specialist subcontractor. It should be noted that the proposal is for a covered padel court arrangement with floodlighting. The covered proposal will reduce light pollution into the surrounding area from court lighting. The appointed specialist subcontractor is to provide full details of installation lighting.

The proposed design concept for the skate park delivers a fully bespoke, modern spray-concrete wheeled-sports facility that caters for all ages, abilities and riding disciplines, including skateboarding, BMX and scooters. The design prioritises flow, functionality and simplicity, creating an inclusive, community-focused space that supports rider development from first-time beginners through to advanced users. The appointed specialist subcontractor is to provide full details of installation lighting.

4.4.2 Wellbeing Facilities

For the facilities to be successful, they need to create a community around them. The café area provides community refreshment space within the new building, leading to the viewing area which provides for a space where parents can engage in watching their children using the soft play area but as well spills into the viewing of the pool area. Its front location also provides for views to the outdoor facilities.

4.4.3 Vehicular Access, movement and Parking

All vehicular access to the site is via the principal entrance located on Station Road. As existing the entrance to the site consists of a sequence of brick piers and historical gates (plaques located on piers), the intention is to preserve, renovate and reconfigure the gates on completion of the main construction works (refer to section 6.3).

Movement of vehicles in general is between the principal site entrance and the main car park.

North of the proposed Leisure Centre Building is located the existing site carpark, this will be repaired (where required) and will receive new white-lining to provide an efficient parking solution. Accessible parking spaces, of which a portion will also have EV charging stations are located close in proximity to the buildings main entrance and reception. Provision ducts for future EV charging points will be located north of the existing playground area.

Further to demolition of the existing dry-side building during phase 4 it is proposed that Fenland District Council (FDC) will provide a design for approval to construct an extension carpark to the provision being proposed and constructed during Phase 2 (main building). During the design of this extension carpark FDC must consider a provision of further accessible bays and a total provision of x16 EV charging station.



Proposed Masterplan Development within red line boundary of application

4.5 Master Plan Phasing



4.6 Internal Layout



Entrance area / Reception / Servery

The main entrance and draft lobby is located on the eastern elevation of the building, directly opposite the reception desk providing users with clear direction upon entering the building. The reception desk will also act as a servery for simple café-style refreshments with a seating area with views into the Pool Hall.

Access control barriers allow users through to the main circulation space.

Pool Hall

The Pool Hall will accommodate a 4 lane 25m community swimming pool, with a shallow water depth of 0.9m increasing to 1.3m at the deep end. The design of the Hall, pool tank and pool surrounds have been in accordance with Sport England standards.

The Hall will have an area of glazing that addresses the entrance to the site, with solar control to mitigate glare on the pool water.

Village Change

The Village Change is located within the wet-side of the new building facility and provides full accessible changing provision along with access to the Pool. The facility has been developed with Sport England guidance and accommodates the following facilities:

- 38 changing cubicles, including 4no. family cubicles; 12no. 2 person, and 20no. single person.
- 2no. 10 person group changing areas.
- Showers, including 7 pre-swim and 6 post swim.
- Approximately 150 individual lockers.
- Grooming areas.
- Access to a Changing Places facility.
- Accessible and Accessible baby change facility

Fitness Suite

The Fitness Suite is located at the front of the building in order to provide an active frontage to the building and a 'shop window', promoting the facility to users and visitors of the site.

The space will accommodate approximately 60 fitness stations, with adjacently located WC, changing, shower and locker rooms and associated facilities.

Studio's

The facility will have two multi-purpose Studio spaces. The Studio spaces will be separated via top-hung sliding/folding moveable walls adjoining a single court sports hall space. The design of these spaces has been driven to create a flexible overall space which can be increased or reduced in size to suit and cater for community events or celebration – a key aspect which was highlighted as centric to the Whittlesey community and the way in which the facility could support and provide a flexible community space alongside its primary leisure purpose.

Dry Change

There will be a new dry change space to provide facilities for those using the gym and studio facilities. These will be located centrally to the gym and studio spaces. The dry-change facilities will comprise of separate sex WCs; changing and showers. Provision will also be made for all gender facilities and accessible spaces.



Existing pool hall

Changing Places

There will be a new Changing Places facility installed in the corner of the Village Change, to provide a large and well equipped accessible changing facility.

Community Rooms

These have been incorporated to provide access to both wet-side (pool hall) and dry-side facility (via the adjoining corridor). These spaces will provide important, key spaces during sporting events which are held at the existing centre through the year.

Kitchen and Bar

These have been incorporated at the request of the client to satisfy the local desire for community events to be held at the new facility. At times when community events may take place the Studio spaces and Sport Hall will become a single space by means of moveable sliding folding walls.



Visualisation of Proposed pool hall

4.7 Inclusivity & Accessibility Strategy

The proposed building will be designed to ensure that all users and staff are able to access and feel welcome in the facilities provided. The design will meet the requirements of Building Regulations, complying with Approved Document Part M Volume 2 2015 (Access and use of buildings other than dwellings), with reference to BS 8300 (Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people) as well as Sport England's Design Guidance Note, Accessible Sports Facilities 2010. Specific design inclusions that comprise the inclusivity and accessibility strategy are as follows:

- 8 accessible car parking spaces close to the building entrance.
- Level access into the building through the main reception.

- Automatic entry doors within the lobby area.
- Clear circulation widths suitable for wheelchair users.
- An Accessible WC associated to both the Outdoor Change and Dry Change.
- A Changing Places facility serving both wet and dry activities.
- Wheelchair accessible lockers and vanity units and counter in the reception desk.

Additionally, care will be taken to suitably specify the following finishes:

- Visual contrast of wall / floor finishes and leading edges of doors and ironmongery.
- Proposed colours and Tactile surfaces



Visualisation of viewing area



Visualisation of the proposed building entrance, with glazed elevations to the Reception Café area and Soft Play.

5.0 Energy Strategy

5.1 Overall Strategy

HVAC & Energy Strategy

The demolition of existing non-pool areas enables the implementation of a fully modernised, sustainable MEP solution.

Key elements include:

Heating

Deployment of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) linked to underfloor heating in the sports hall, changing rooms, and toilets. Low-temperature operation maximises ASHP efficiency and reduces carbon emissions.

Cooling

Installation of Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) systems in areas requiring active cooling (e.g., fitness suites, studios, high-occupancy public zones) VRF technology offers precise zonal control, heat recovery capability, and scalable modulation, ensuring optimal comfort and energy performance.

Ventilation

Heat recovery ventilation systems will be installed where appropriate the integrated heat recovery units shall reclaim thermal energy from extracted air, significantly improving overall system efficiency. Strategic ductwork layouts and smart controls will maintain indoor air quality while minimising energy use. Variable Speed Drives (VSD's) will be provided to pumps and fans to match their output to demand, reducing energy consumption during lower usage periods.

Electrical & Lighting

LED lighting fixtures shall be employed throughout the extension to reduce energy consumption. Installation of occupancy sensors in corridors, restrooms, and fitness areas to prevent unnecessary lighting use.

Controls & Monitoring

Implementation of a Smart Energy Management System to monitor and optimise energy usage. Installation of sub-metering across key zones (pool, fitness centre, public areas) to enable targeted performance analysis

Water Conservation

Specification of low-flush WCs and water-efficient showerheads to reduce potable water demand

Photovoltaic Cells

Part of the existing roof mounted photovoltaic array installed over the rear plantrooms will be retained, however, these will be required to be removed to allow for the re-roofing of the swimming pool area. The two zones of photovoltaic arrays installed on the pool roof shall be removed, relocated and set up to serve the Rifle Range building. New roof mounted photovoltaic arrays will be provided. The size and output of the array will be aligned to the SBEM / BRUKL requirements, with a minimum of 50 kWp. The panels will be monocrystalline solar panels which will be mounted on the pitched roof over the pool hall.

The panels will be wired to solar inverters located in the pool hall plant area. The system will use electricity on site where possible and export any excess electricity generated to the grid.



6.0 Landscape and Ecology

6.1 Landscape Proposals

The application area within the red line boundary comprises predominantly of either buildings, refurbished existing carpark or externally located facilities such as padel courts, skate park and playground. The proposal includes a hardscape perimeter pavement to the proposed building to facilitate both maintenance and egress from means of escape locations. To the north of the building at the buildings main entrance will be located a larger plaza style area of hardscaping to accommodate and guide building users and visitors towards the buildings main entrance. A curved link pavement will provide a new link between the site entrance and this plaza area to the front of the building. This pavement link will be landscaped to either side with some basic tree planting.

Within the landscaped plaza area to the main entrance of the building will be installed some benching to provide external seating to those using the site grounds. This area of benching may receive a future canopy dependant on frequency of use.

The existing car parking will be adapted to suit the footprint of the new building and to increase the overall parking capacity. The car park will undergo future expansion following demolition of the existing dry-side building.



Photo looking south from the playing fields to the existing wet-side building.

6.2 Ecological Strategy

A preliminary ecological survey was carried out that identified the presence of roosting bats in the existing nursery building that is to be demolished. Therefore a strategy will be put in place to mitigate the impact of the construction process and operation of the building post-construction, which will include the following measures:

- Restricted working hours during construction to daylight hours only.
- The creation of bat and bird boxes across the site.
- Development of a sensitive external lighting strategy.
- Limitations to environmental noise levels.

For further information, please refer to submitted documents titled; WAITING FOR CONFIRMATION

Biodiversity Enhancements

In accordance with NPPF (December 2024)41 and Policy LP19: The Natural Environment of the Fenland Local Plan42 the development should incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site.

The above section identified ecological enhancements that should be incorporated into the development proposal. Outlined below are further additional measures for consideration:

- Installation of invertebrate boxes within new dwellings e.g., bee houses.
- Creation of log piles in areas of Public Open Space (POS) to provide habitat for amphibians and other fauna.
- Any formal lawn areas should where possible be seeded with a species rich flowering lawn mix such as EL1 – Flowering Lawn Mix, Emorsgate Seeds.



View of the existing dry-side building

6.3 Existing Roadside Gated Entrance

The existing roadside memorial gates were installed following Alderman Jacobs' death in 1957 by the National Farmers Union and the Whittlesey Agricultural Society in appreciation of his service to agriculture in the district and were intended to be a lasting memorial to him and all that he did for the town.

Further to investigation and raised queries it would appear that, even though they are a monument of significant interest to the parish and town of Whittlesey, the gates have no formal protection at all. The gates are not 'Listed', the gates are not in a conservation area, the gates are not even mentioned in the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan.



Photos of Existing Roadside Gated Entrance



Photos of Existing Gates



Photos of Existing Plaques

Concern has been raised by The Whittlesey Society that as part of the proposed development these gates which are considered of local historical importance may be removed and lost. It has been requested that the gates and plaque elements of the existing arrangement remain on prominent display at the entrance to the Manor playing fields for the enjoyment of current residents of Whittlesey.

The existing gated arrangement (width) does not facilitate the required access for construction vehicles. It is therefore proposed that the existing arrangement will be removed during construction. The gates and plaques will be retained and stored.

It is proposed that the gates will undergo renovation (shot blast, repaint in original colours) and the same for the accompanying plaques – this process will ensure that both the gates and plaques remain in good condition. Removal of the brick piers that they are currently attached to and to then incorporate the gates & plaques into the curved brick wall at the entrance space but not have them as functional gates (these gates are never closed in the current arrangement).

This approach will restore and retain these local historic assets. Keeping them located at the Manor site will be important as that was their original purpose and moving them to another space in Whittlesey would not make sense in terms of their historic use and would be unlikely to satisfy the local Society.

The final arrangement for gates is to be developed during the construction phase and will be subject to liaison and discussions with the relevant local organisations ie. The Whittlesey Society.

7.0 Planning Policy

The following section brings together the relevant planning policies and regulatory framework, providing the context against which the planning application will be considered.

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Healthy Communities

A key element of the NPPF (2023) is to promote health communities. Paragraph 96 states 'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places' that 'enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs'. It has been identified that there is a significant need for a swimming pool facility in the area, especially for educational purposes.

Paragraph 96 also refers to an emphasis on promoting social interaction, and the 'meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other'. The facilities proposed as part of this submission provide a variety of opportunities and means by which people within the community will interact.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

The proposed facilities are close to residential areas as well as the town centre, providing ample opportunity for sustainable travel to and from the facilities. This aligns with the policies in paragraph 110 which promotes the mix of uses within an area to 'minimise the number and length of journeys needed' for employment and leisure activities. The paragraph goes on to mention the need to provide 'attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking', a policy which will be met by the inclusion of covered cycle parking in close proximity to the entrance to the building.

Climate Change

With regards to environmental concerns, paragraph 160 highlights the need to provide a positive strategy for low carbon and renewable energy. Additionally, paragraph 164 states that local authorities should give 'significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels)'. The proposals described in this document will utilise a combination of heat pumps and solar panels aspiring to achieve net-zero carbon in operation for the new building. The solar panels will additionally provide carbon off-setting for the existing carbon factors associated to the existing building.

7.2 Fenland District Council Local Plan

The Local Plan for Fenland District Council, adopted May 2014, sets out a series of policies that will have relevance to the proposals within this application.

Policy LP2 'Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents' and specifically the criteria outlined within section 5. 'Delivering Infrastructure' seek to ensure that the provision of health and wellbeing infrastructure are considered as integral to future development in the region as outlined within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, adopted January 2013.

7.3 Economic Impact Statement

The proposed development of the Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey looks to safeguard and protect public services with a more sustainable approach than to retain the two existing structures. The two existing facilities (the pool and the function building) are aged and passed their life expectancy, requiring significantly increasing costs to maintain to a safe and attractive standard for members of the public.

This development proposes to demolish the function and events building and the dry elements of the main leisure facility, significant repair and refurbish the pool hall and to build new dry side elements around the pool, effectively combining the two existing facilities into one purpose-built one. Providing longevity, reduced capital liabilities, operational efficiencies and modern and attractive services for the public. Whittlesey is a town that is expanding and community facilities such as the leisure centre need to adapt to the growth in the town. The new facility is expected to generate significant positive economic impacts for the local community and wider Fenland area. The project will create both short-term and long-term economic benefits, supporting employment, local businesses, and community wellbeing. Sport England statistics show that, for every £1 invested in community sport and physical activity, there is a return of approximately £3.91 to £4.38.

During the construction phase, the development will support job creation through contractors, tradespeople, and suppliers engaged in building works. This activity will stimulate local employment and support demand for regional goods and services. Once operational, the enhanced leisure centre is anticipated to increase footfall in Whittlesey town centre. Higher visitor numbers will benefit nearby cafés, shops, and service providers, contributing to increased local spending and business revenues. It will also provide new job opportunities for local residents.

A modernised leisure centre will strengthen Whittlesey's appeal as a destination for sport and recreation, potentially attracting regional events and visitors. Increased visitor expenditure on accommodation, food, and retail will further stimulate the local economy. Overall, the proposed development at Manor Leisure Centre is projected to deliver meaningful economic benefits through job creation, increased consumer spending, enhanced community wellbeing, and broader investment in the Whittlesey area.

7.4 Health Impact Statement

The proposed development of the Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey is expected to deliver significant improvements in the health and wellbeing of local residents. By expanding and modernising facilities for sport, physical activity, and community engagement, the project will support better physical, mental, and social health outcomes across all age groups.

The upgraded centre will provide accessible spaces for exercise, including fitness studios, swimming pools, sports courts, adventure play, community café, new skatepark and padel courts and exercise programmes. Increased opportunities for regular physical activity can help reduce the prevalence of lifestyle-related conditions such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and type 2 diabetes.

Participation in physical activity and group exercise has well-documented benefits for mental health, including reduced stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. The leisure centre will offer a safe, welcoming environment for individuals to build positive routines that support mental wellbeing.

The new combined leisure centre will act as a community hub where people can connect through group classes, clubs, and organised activities. Such social interactions are essential for reducing loneliness and strengthening community cohesion.

With adaptable facilities and inclusive programming, the development will cater to people of all ages and abilities — from children and young people to older adults and those with accessibility needs. This inclusivity ensures that health and wellbeing benefits are available to the widest possible group of residents. It should also be noted that the Manor site is a significant community hub in its own right and this facility redevelopment recognises this and aims to enhance community activity at the Manor. The grab and go café is beneficial for day to day visitors to the site and locals clubs on site. However, the inclusion of a significantly sized commercial kitchen serving the flexible community hall / exercise space in the new facility means that the new facility will be able to serve large community events held on the field and also hold community events such as weddings, birthdays, large community events etc. This approach further underlines the potential of the new facility to encourage community cohesion and local social wellbeing.

By promoting regular activity, offering supportive social environments, and improving access to health-enhancing services, the Manor Leisure Centre development will contribute to healthier, happier lives and a more vibrant, resilient community. This is evidenced by recent Sport statistics which showed that the average social value generated per participant in sport and leisure facilities is £242. This consists of the direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing (87%) and the wider value to society of changes in health outcomes (13%). With thousands of participants likely to be utilising the new facility, this will provide clearly demonstrable social value in the form of health and wellbeing improvements in the local community. A further supporting statistic from recent Sport England research is that there is a 20% increase in social value generated from a wet and dry leisure centre that is new compared to one that is greater than 10 years old. Considering the age of the Manor, this increase in social value generated for the local area should be significant.