

Report from General Purposes & Cemetery Advisory Group Chairman

Proposal: To increase by £1, 968.81 the previously-approved CIL funding to purchase and install Zip Wire and Bouldering Walls; the increase to increase the size/capacity of equipment due to amended locations, and so offer greater benefit for children and young people visiting the BVHT Playing Fields.

In September 2021 the Council approved expenditure of £10,393.39 (ex VAT) to purchase and install a Zip Wire 25m long and a single-sided Climbing (Bouldering) Wall about 2m high and three panels each 2-.5 wide.

On exploring the practical implications of these proposals further with both the supplier and the nominated Trustees of the Village Hall Trust, variations on the original plan were identified which are perceived to offer additional benefits for a relatively small additional outlay, specifically:

- To relocate the Zip wire from the originally proposed location and so facilitate an increase in length from 25m to 30m.
 - We are advised this provides a significant increase in the useable length of the zip wire beyond the apparent 20% change; and
- To locate the Climbing Wall at least 1.5 to 2m away from the BVHT-owned/managed high green metal mesh fence which protects the children's playground from footballs and cricket balls.
 - The gap thus required for maintenance and management of the high green fencing presented both a challenge and an opportunity.
 - The challenge was that with a gap between fence and wall some individuals might try to scale the reverse of the wall where there are no 'boulders' for hand or foot holds, and this risk injury to themselves and damage to the wall
 - The opportunity was to install a double-sided climbing wall, so that risks are reduced and the available activity space doubled.

It is recommended that both opportunities to extend the activity facilities (to 30m zip wire and double-sided climbing wall) are advantageous to the young people who use the playing fields adjacent to the village hall.

The additional cost to purchase the longer zip wire and the double-sided wall is:

Total additional cost = £1,968.81

(£12,362 vs approved £10,393.39) after discount

This additional cost is:

- £400 less discount, for the extra ground protection under the 30m Zip wire
 - No increase in equipment cost
- £1,653 less discount, for the double-sided wall panels vs single sided
 - £3,633 vs £2,154 for 3 panels (difference £1,497 before discount)
 - £1,575 vs £1,419 installation charge (difference £156 before discount)

These pieces of equipment are designed to provide activities for children, principally but not exclusively for the age group above that catered for by the current playground equipment. They are thus in line with the priorities identified by local residents and meet the criteria for use of the BPC share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.

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As previously agreed, the proposed equipment would be to owned and maintained wholly by Buckden Parish Council but is to be installed on Village Hall Trust land.

- If the proposal in this report is accepted by BPC Councillors no order will or can be placed by Buckden Parish Council unless and until we have written agreement from trustees via their Chairman about the location and final plans.
- The interim Chairman of the GP&C AG (Cllr SA) will continue to be the primary point of contact with BVHT on this matter and will report any developments to the Advisory Group and then to Council.
- The locations do not conflict with any of the work being carried out on The Valley lake and paths. Additionally, they have been selected by Trustees so that they will not interfere with space and access for adult or junior sports played on the fields or filed maintenance.
- The Clerk is fully involved as the manager of the BPC systems for risk assessment and risk management, including the use of professional play equipment inspectors (both to support our handymen and to make quarterly inspections as previously costed and agreed) and insurance for equipment damage and public liability.

The revised location plans and specifications will be shared with BVHT Trustees and Officers. Feedback from them will be reported to Advisory Group members and then to Council.

Once details of the order and location are agreed an engineer from Wicksteed playground equipment suppliers will survey the site. It is expected that final drawings will then be available to Councillors, along with information about installation arrangements.

- It is intended that at that stage information can be made more widely available to residents via the BPC website etc.

Zip wire and Double-sided climbing wall details

For further descriptions and photographs see Wicksteed Playgrounds website:

<https://wicksteed.co.uk/playground-equipment/traditional/slides-and-cable-rides/steel-cableways/>

<https://wicksteed.co.uk/playground-equipment/climbing-activity/climbing-walls/bouldering-wall/>

