

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS  
CABINET MEMBER**

**HEALEY ROAD PLAYING FIELD**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval to draw from the Scunthorpe Special Expenses Reserves (SSER) for works to improve Healey Road Playing Field.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The council is in the process of producing a “Parks Strategy” for all parks in North Lincolnshire. This will set out clear aims and goals for all parks and playgrounds and identify costs for both improvements and on-going maintenance.
- 2.2 In Scunthorpe the council is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of 25 Children’s Playgrounds and playing fields. The cost of meeting the council’s responsibilities for these sites is funded from the Scunthorpe Special Levy.
- 2.3 Healey Road, one of these 25 sites, a former disused allotment site was converted to a much needed community playing field space in 2006/07. Since the conversion the site has suffered from poor drainage and an uneven surface. There is also a limited amount of play equipment at this site, which does not fully meet community needs.
- 2.4 As an example the existing junior football pitch is often water logged and uneven; in its current condition it certainly is not of a satisfactory standard for the playing of formal “league” games.
- 2.5 Council staff have met regularly with Ward Councillors and Local Area Representatives to discuss the options available for the site. Residents have on a number of occasions asked the council to improve the site to enable the community to make better use of this facility. The council to date has only undertaken basic maintenance and repairs to equipment as there were no capital budgets available for larger scale improvements.
- 2.6 The SSER however could provide the larger scale works funding. Currently the Scunthorpe Special Expenses account has an accumulated reserve of £209,000.

- 2.7 The Scunthorpe Charter Trustees Group oversee the expenditure of the Scunthorpe Special Expenses. However, formal decisions need to be made by the relevant Cabinet Member. They are aware of the proposals and support the request that the SSER is used to fund the works in question.
- 2.8 Consultations with users have confirmed the drainage of the site to be a top priority, along with a desire for improved children's play facilities and a multi-use games area. During the consultations residents pledged to organise community activities on the field and help fundraise towards the on-going cost of maintaining the new facilities.
- 2.9 Neighbourhood Services have already explored the costs of the necessary works to resolve the drainage issue. The costs are expected to be in the region of £50,000 with an additional £30,000 required to lever in external grants to improve the existing play equipment.
- 2.10 Following discussion with the Commercial Property team it was determined that an area of the playing field was originally identified as a potential site for future housing (edged red and blue on the attached plan). It was agreed that development can still progress as long as:
- The area edged red can be incorporated into the playing field ("proposed playing field extension").
  - The area edged blue will be retained for potential development for housing in the future ("proposed Housing Area") and we will not erect, construct or lay anything within that area that might compromise its potential future usage for these purposes.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **3.1 Option one**

3.1.1 A sum of £80k is made available from the SSER to fund a scheme of drainage improvements, levelling and reinstatement works. This will also enable a partnership fund to develop to lever in external grants for new play equipment and a multi-use games area

#### **3.2 Option two**

3.2.1 Improve the drainage only at the site at a cost of £50k

#### **3.3 Option three**

3.3.1 Do not improve the Healey Road Playing Field

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 Option one is the preferred option. Proactive planned intervention will improve the existing facilities and provide a valuable resource to the community in this locality.

4.2 Option two will only address the uneven surface and drainage issues.

4.3 Option three would result in further deterioration of the field conditions. This may lead to a serious loss to the community of a valuable local asset.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

### **5.1 Financial**

5.1.1 A maximum sum of £80,000 would be required from the SSER to fund the work. At 31 March 2014 the Special Expense Reserve was £209,000.

5.1.2 Whilst the council would have to fund the drainage and reinstatement costs, it could apply to external organisations for additional support for matched funding to help with the cost of additional new facilities.

5.2 There are no other resource implications to consider.

## **6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

6.1 No specific issues identified at this time.

## **7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

7.1 Consultation has taken place with the local community. They have concerns that if the field is not improved it will be unusable at times. They say that the grass football pitch is already unusable owing to water logging, and a seriously uneven playing surface. They have also asked for the installation of improved play equipment and a multi-use games area.

7.2 The Scunthorpe Charter Trustees Group are aware of the proposals and support the request that the SSE reserve is used to fund the improvements suggested.

7.3 The councils Commercial Property Team support the proposed improvements subject to the conditions detailed in paragraph 2.10 above.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the improvement of Healey Road Playing Field and the allocation of £80,000 from the Scunthorpe Special Expense Reserve to fund the works in question.

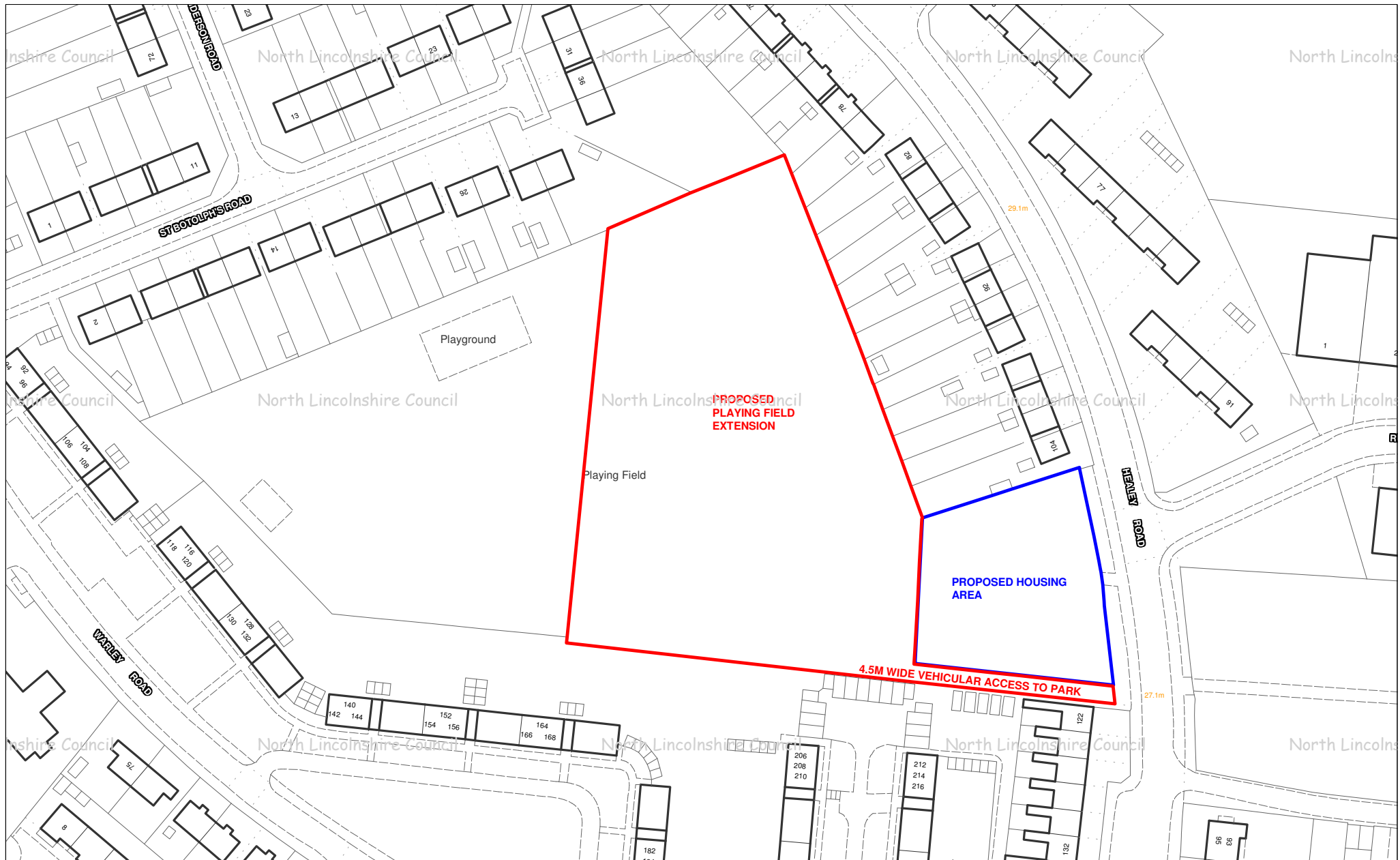
DIRECTOR OF PLACES

Hewson House  
Station Road  
Brigg  
DN20 8XY

Author: Simon Seal/Andy Long/Ken Wardman

Date: 19 November 2014

**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Nil**



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 Ordnance Survey 0100023560

Drawing Title: Former Healey Road Allotments Site-Scunthorpe

Drawn by: MD

Date: 14/11/2014

Scale: 1:1,250

OS Grid Ref: SE90480936



**Places**

**Director,**

**Peter Williams** BSc, DMS, CEng, MEI, MCMI, AMIMechE