



Cabinet
November 19th, 2025

Item

Public



Skateboard & BMX Pump Track Provision in Oswestry

Responsible Officer:		Steve Law	
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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):		Cllr Roger Evans	

1. Synopsis

This report sets out the site options to support the requirement for a new Skatepark and or BMX pump track in Oswestry. The chosen site will be leased to Oswestry Town Council who will then undertake local consultation to inform the design of the new facility.

2. Executive Summary

In support of the Council’s new direction and aligned to the Shropshire Plan supporting Healthy People, this report recommends supporting the recommendation of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee following discussion of a petition presented to the Committee at its meeting on the 10th of July 2025 and the recommendations supported at the Cabinet meeting on the 15th of October.

- 2.1. The report sets out the importance of the health benefits, and support for young people in delivering a site to best meet their needs in Oswestry
- 2.2. The report recommends supporting the principle of transferring land to Oswestry Town Council for use as a pump track and skate park, enabling the Town Council to invest in the development of the new facility and to take on its future

management. We have undertaken a site options appraisal, listed below are the sites where it could be built.

- A. Land next to Oswestry Leisure Centre
 - B. Broadlands Way
 - C. Unicorn Road
 - D. Llwyn Coppice – has a restriction place on it which relates to the dedication to the public as a public playing Field and recreation ground in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of HM QEII. Please see 8.1 of the report for further information
- 2.3. Following future consultation, conducted by Oswestry Town Council, one of the sites will be leased to them to enable a pump track and or skate park to be built.
- 2.4. The report details a recommendation for Shropshire Council to lease a parcel of land to Oswestry Town Council. This will encompass
- A. Lease land next to Oswestry Leisure Centre, Broadlands Way, Unicorn Road or Llwyn Coppice to construct a pump track and or skate park.
 - B. Oswestry Town Council to undertake consultation to determine the preferred site
 - C. Carry out feasibility work on the design and spec of a pump track and or skate park
- 2.5 This proposal aligns with the Shropshire Plan's 'Healthy People' priority and is listed as a formal infrastructure item in the Oswestry Place Plan (Ref 2260), reinforcing its strategic importance

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet agrees for Oswestry Town Council to undertake the final consultation to determine the preferred site.
- 3.2. Cabinet agrees that a lease will be put in place for the site OTC select from those shortlisted and delegates to the Head of Property and Development in consultation

with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to agree terms and finalise the lease for the agreed piece of land for a pump track and or skate park to be built based on the outcome of the consultation.

- 3.3. Cabinet agrees for Oswestry Town Council to carry out detailed feasibility and design work to determine what the new facility will look like.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. Risk narrative - Needs Assessment – to determine what type of facility is built i.e pump track or skate park.
- 4.2. Risk narrative - Site Selection – Oswestry Town Council to undertake consultation to determine the best site.
- 4.3. Risk narrative - Site Suitability – There are a number of physical and technical requirements. Sites will need to be assessed to ensure they are capable of accommodating the facilities.
- 4.4. Youth engagement will be embedded through co-design workshops and ongoing feedback mechanisms to ensure the facility remains relevant and well-used. Shropshire Council officers will support Oswestry Town Council with this process.

4.5. Risk table

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Detailed needs not fully understood or met.	Consultation proposed with stakeholders and target users to ensure the specification is appropriate.
Optimal site not chosen	Detailed Site Evaluation
Chosen Site technically unsuitable	Site Suitability Assessment
Lack of engagement with young people leading to lack of utilisation of the facility	Stakeholder engagement led by Oswestry Town Council and supported by Shropshire Council
Inappropriate site selection compromises other plans or intended uses	Option appraisal will consider current and future uses or demands on the sites being considered
Chosen site is not accessible or inclusive	An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment will be undertaken considering the needs of protected characteristic groupings and broader social inclusion impacts
Planning permission not secured	Shropshire Council will provide support as landowner for the selected site and will provide advice and guidance to OTC in terms of the planning application process.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands and a financial emergency was declared by Cabinet on 10 September 2025. The overall financial position of the Council is set out in the monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council reducing spend to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports to Members provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers and/or Portfolio Holders review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. All non-essential spend will be stopped and all essential spend challenged. These actions may involve (this is not exhaustive):
 - scaling down initiatives,
 - changing the scope of activities,
 - delaying implementation of agreed plans, or
 - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2. Shropshire Council is working to enable Parish and Town Councils to invest in their localities and take on and manage services and facilities to support their local communities
- 5.3. Oswestry Town Council have provided a commitment to fund and operate a new facility provided Shropshire Council transfer an appropriate piece of land which can be developed for its intended use.
- 5.4. The intended design and specification will provide a budget estimate for the facility to provide an understanding of the likely development cost.
- 5.5. The only cost to Shropshire Council will be the transfer of a parcel of land by way of a long lease. An appropriate valuation will be undertaken for the land and a transfer will be likely progressed at an undervalue as the disposal is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of economic, social, or environmental well-being of the area.
- 5.6. The proposed undervalue transfer complies with the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, as the disposal promotes social and environmental well-being and falls below the £2 million threshold.
- 5.7. The lease will provide for the mechanism for Shropshire Council to approve the construction of the facility and will enable OTC to provide the funding and lead the implementation. The terms of the lease will be finalised depending on the final site preferred by OTC.
- 5.8. The lease will be prepared so it is ready to progressed to meet the timescales set by OTC on bringing forward the new park.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 Shropshire Council will support Oswestry Town Council in the design and specification to ensure sustainable principles in terms of its materials and future maintenance requirements.
- 6.2 The chosen site will be assessed in terms of its ecological impact to mitigate any erosion or damage to the surrounding environment.
- 6.3 Access requirements will be considered to promote sustainable modes of travel to access the facility as part of the option appraisal.
- 6.4 The project will incorporate biodiversity net gain principles and include signage and education to redirect informal biking away from sensitive habitats

7. Background

- 7.1. At the 10th July 2025 meeting of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee petitioners asked the Council to pass over a suitable section of land to the north of Oswestry Leisure Centre to enable them to provide a biking and skateboarding facility for the town. Local residents who attended this meeting explained how popular biking is to the young people of Oswestry, as well as the valuable mental and physical health benefits that having a skatepark locally would bring.
- 7.2. The petitioners confirmed that planning permission was granted for a BMX / Skateboard facility on this site in 2008, however this had not yet been developed. They also understood that Oswestry Town Council have prioritised this as an action, have the money to complete it, and have been negotiating with Shropshire Council on the subject of this land for some time.
- 7.3. It is believed that the development of this pump track will relieve stress and damage to nearby ancient woodland and protected bluebells, as this area is currently being used by large numbers of bikers who are unknowingly damaging wildlife, such as a protected species of bluebells. The petitioner confirmed that these bikers are using this woodland as they have nowhere else to go in the absence of a facility of this kind.
- 7.4. Members also heard from the petitioners that the local biking community would be enthusiastic in being involved in the running of this facility in some way.
- 7.5. Members discussed this request and were very enthusiastic as to the health benefits, and supportive of the opportunity to engage with young people in delivering a site to best meet their needs.
- 7.6. Whilst Oswestry Leisure Centre provides one option there are other potential locations around the town which should be considered before a final decision is reached. This prompted the option appraisal work and the agreed shortlist of sites now available for further consideration by OTC.
- 7.7. Work has commenced on scoping the alternative locations to be considered alongside the Leisure centre site with planned stakeholder engagement to be undertaken by OTC now the shortlist has been set out.

7.8. The petition presented to the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2025 demonstrates longstanding community demand, with planning permission granted in 2008 and amended in 2012. OTC has confirmed capital funding availability and prioritised this project.

7.10 At the 15th of October Cabinet meeting members agreed that there is a need, demand and benefit of a skatepark and BMX Pump Track in Oswestry and will work to deliver a new facility in an appropriate location in partnership with Oswestry Town Council. To complete an options appraisal of available sites within the Council's ownership, considering the most appropriate and beneficial location. This work has been concluded and the short list is now being presented for agreement and consideration by OTC.

8. Additional Information

8.1. Further to section 2.2 D, the Llwyn Coppice site has certain restrictions and obligations relating to its HM QEII dedication as a public space. The deeds set out the following:-

The Council to keep all boundary fences hedges in good stock proof condition and repair and all ditches lying outside but adjacent to the property in good repair and all are the property of the council.

Subject to covenants not to use the property except as public open space and not to interfere with any surface or underground channels or streams which may flow into the reservoir situate on adjoining land.

The title is subject to a restriction that no disposition of the registered title by the proprietor is to be registered without a certificate signed by National Playing Fields Association of 15 Crinan Street London or by its conveyancer that the provisions of a Deed of Dedication dated 7 December 2012 and made between 1.

Shropshire Council and 2. National Playing Fields Association have been complied with. The restriction relates to the dedication to the public as a public playing Field and recreation ground in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of HM QEII .

9. Conclusions

9.1. The provision of a new skate park and BMX pump track in Oswestry is strongly supported, recognising the significant health and wellbeing benefits for young people and the wider community. Engagement and empowerment of local youth by providing a safe, accessible space for outdoor activities.

9.2. Protection of sensitive local environments by reducing informal use of ancient woodland and safeguarding protected species.

9.3. Strong stakeholder engagement between Shropshire Council, Oswestry Town Council and local users.

9.4. No direct cost to Shropshire Council, as Oswestry Town Council will fund and manage facility.

9.5. Next Steps as advised by Oswestry Town Council:-

9.5.1 January 2026: preferred site agreed following local consultation

9.5.2 Q4 2025/26, Q1 2026/27: OTC to undertake detailed design and feasibility work of new facility and determine planning considerations

9.5.3 Q1 2026/27: Land transfer and commencement of development (subject to OTC readiness).

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

- Petition to Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee (10 July 2025)
- Oswestry Place Plan (Ref 2260)
- Oswestry Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2020)
- Historic Planning Permission (2008, amended 2012)

Local Member:

Cllr James Owen

Cllr Duncan Kerr

Cllr Mark Owen

Cllr Wendy Owen

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]