

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

31 MARCH 2022

Report Title	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) – PROJECT VARIATION : CAM & DURSLEY RAIL STATION			
Purpose of Report	In December 2020, Environment Committee approved the project Bid to create improvements at Cam and Dursley Rail Station that would encourage sustainable travel. The County Council are requesting SDC's support in making some changes to the project works delivered.			
Decision(s)	The Committee RESOLVES to note the CIL funding Project Variation Form submitted by GCC and agree to the amended project proposals			
Consultation and Feedback	1. The Project Variation request has been passed to relevant officers in SDC's Planning Strategy Service who support the suggested amendments 2. Cam Parish Council is being consulted on the works directly by GCC			
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Options	Options are: 1. Approve the proposed CIL Project Variation request; or 2. Refuse the proposed CIL Project Variation request; or 3. Delay the proposed CIL Project Variation request pending further information			
Background Papers	The following papers are on the Members Hub: 1. CIL Strategic Funding Scheme Guidance Notes for applicant organisations			
Appendices	Appendix A – Copy of the Project Variation Form sent by the project applicant, Gloucestershire County Council Appendix B – Project Works Layout for Cam & Dursley Train Station			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	No	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In December 2020, Environment Committee considered a report which related to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Project Spending Allocations for 2021/22. One of the Projects that was discussed and supported by committee was a bid made by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to improve the facilities at Cam & Dursley Train Station.

- 1.2 This project bid proposed to create new cycle racks, a passenger shelter and the creation of a 25 space car park on GCC owned land. Environment Committee voted unanimously to support this project, awarding £75,050 to fund the works to be delivered in 2021/2022 financial year.
- 1.3 GCC have contacted SDC's CIL Team and reported that works to the cycle shelter are complete along with other supporting improvement works. Following further engineer's studies however, the proposed 25 space car park cannot be delivered under this current programme of works. The County Council would like to use the funding allocation made for the car park under this current bid to contribute towards other passenger travel infrastructure, and request SDC's permission to do so. This does not preclude the car park area being re-examined for delivery at a future time.
- 1.4 This report requests that the details presented in the Project Variation Form (Appendix A) are considered by Environment Committee and, if supported, permission is granted for the requested alternative works to proceed with immediate effect.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced by government in 2010 as a mechanism to fund the infrastructure required to deliver new development achieved under Local Plan growth strategies. Stroud District Council implemented its CIL Charging Schedule in April 2017, and started to collect CIL from planning permissions approved and implemented from this date.
- 2.2 For the last three years, the Council has invited partner delivery organisations to bid for CIL project funding through a formal bidding process which is explained in the scheme's Guidance Notes. This funding scheme has been able to support the delivery of some excellent local infrastructure projects in the District and the scheme is considered to be a great success. A monitoring report updating Council on CIL project delivery is provided to Environment Committee every 6 months, in April and October.
- 2.3 As with all capital delivery schemes, sometimes project delivery does not proceed according to the original anticipated plan. Unforeseen circumstances mean that project changes are necessary. SDC's CIL Team work with the project delivery organisations to assess any changes and provide the Council's formal feedback / and or approvals.
- 2.4 Requests for SDC's support for project changes must be done through the Project Variation Form. Where project changes are relatively minor, the Head of Planning Strategy may approve these changes. To ensure transparency and support for the democratic process, any significant changes to project outcomes must be presented to committee.
- 2.5 The Project Variation Form shown as Appendix A explains how the County Council were unable to provide for a 25 space car park, but wish to repurpose the remaining allocated funding to provide for alternative passenger provision at the train station.
- 2.6 Car parking provision at Cam and Dursley Train Station remains a priority and repurposing the allocated funding for this current Bid does not mean that future car park improvement works would be unsupported by CIL. A separate Bid would be necessary when the County feel that the more technical aspects of the site are more fully assessed and new design works are developed.

- 2.7** The revised proposals fit with SDC's Planning Policy objectives around sustainable travel and align with the original intention of the project bid: to promote better access and comfort for local people using the train station. The County have provided preliminary design works (attached as Appendix B) and are consulting with Cam Parish Council.
- 2.8** The area around Cam is a key growth area for the district and, as such, sustainable travel initiatives that promote better connectivity and user comfort for residents using the train station is a local priority both within SDC's Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) on which CIL funding is assessed.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1** It is the recommendation of CIL and Planning Strategy Officers that this Project Variation request is approved. The amended project proposals strongly align with planning policy and the CIL funding scheme's aims and SDC are pleased to be working with partners to improve facilities for local people using Cam & Dursley Train Station.
- 3.2** There are no additional funding requirements to facilitate this project change; the newly proposed works can be accommodated in the current CIL commitment for passenger improvement works at the train station. Subsequently there will be no impact on the overall CIL budget as previously approved by committee. If the project variation is not approved, the newly suggested improvements to the train station would be denied and an underspend of the CIL budget is likely.
- 3.3** There are also no identified risks in approving these proposed project changes. GCC have promised quick delivery of the alternative works, so the community benefits could be realised very soon after committee approval.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report as the CIL budget is already secured.

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4.2 Legal Implications

CIL contributions may only be spent on infrastructure projects in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The levy can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools hospitals and other health and social care facilities pursuant to Section 216(2) of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 59 of the Regulations.

The levy can, therefore, be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, healthcare facilities, academies and free schools, district heating schemes and police stations and other

community safety facilities. This flexibility gives the Council the ability to choose what infrastructure it needs to deliver the Local Plan.

Charging authorities may not use the levy to fund affordable housing.

The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development.

Local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area, and they will decide what infrastructure is needed in line with adopted policy.

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4.3 Equality Implications

CIL funding is based on growth and infrastructure requirements set out in the Local Plan, which has been subject to EIA. Consequently, there are no actions in or as a result of this report that will have a negative impact on Equalities or any groups recognised in an EIA.

4.4 Environmental Implications

The recommended projects invest in infrastructure that promise to bring significant positive benefits to the Environment. Facilities that reduce the need for motorised travel, supporting public transport and promoting clean travel (walking and cycling) and flood management schemes.

There are no perceived negative implications that would directly result from supporting any of the projects and environmental considerations are promoted throughout the scheme.