



The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the development programme for Boniface Fields, outline a schedule for it and ask Members to agree the release of funding for the initially necessary works.

No. DETAILS

1) BACKGROUND

- a) Boniface Fields is one of four areas in the Town at the centre of the Town Council's Regeneration Plan.
 - b) The Town Council is committed to retaining this important green space for the town and developing it as a community resource.
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2) PORTACABINS

- a) Letting arrangements have been agreed for three of the four Portacabins on the upper of the two fields.
 - b) Ventnor Men in Sheds have already moved in to the older Portacabin and are making good use of the new space it provides for the next stage of their development.
 - c) The pair of the three newer ones forming a two-storey block will soon be occupied by a group of local Artists working co-operatively under an umbrella organisation named Atelier Ventnor, creating shared studio space and teaching area.
 - d) The intention for the single storey Portacabin is for it to be retained as a bookable space for community organisations, youth work and meeting space.
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3) ALLOTMENTS

- a) The response to the invitation to submit Expression of Interest Forms for the 20 new Allotments to be provided soon in the lower field is clear evidence of the suppressed demand for the opportunity.
 - b) With a closing date for submission of the Forms of 16 March and subject to the approval of an allocation process it is hoped that allocations will be completed by the end of that month.
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4) PLANNING APPLICATION

- a) An application to the Planning Pre-planning Advice Service was submitted on 23 January and a copy of the required Project Description that accompanied it is attached to this Report for Members' information.
 - b) A response is anticipated by the end of this month following which, and in response to that advice, it should be possible to submit a full planning application by mid-March.
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5) WORKS SCHEDULE

- a) The Assets & Services Group's latest meeting has recommended that the Town Council agree to release the funding for the works necessary to ensure the effective and safe development of the site if the Pre-Application Advice is positive.
 - b) The required initial works and their estimated costs are:
 - o alterations to the lower Portacabin of the two storey set, including disabled toilet, large sink, drainage and electrical works: £7,300;
 - o External site works, including CCTV, external lighting and testing: £6,600; and
 - o Allotment preparation, including marking out, grass clearing, repairs to existing toilet block and provision of two eternal taps: £1,100.
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VENTNOR TOWN COUNCIL

REGENERATION PROJECT

LAND OPPOSITE ST BONIFACE SCHOOL

JANUARY 2018

This is an outline proposal for the development of the Isle of Wight Council-owned land (Title no. IW67187, title plan attached) opposite Ventnor's St Boniface School as a unique community resource within an area ranked in the most deprived 20% of the country.

The development will provide additional spaces for the growth activities of the town's lively voluntary sector, new allotments in a town that currently only has three, a new education and training facility and the care and maintenance of a valuable green space.

The three linked Portakabins purchased by the Town Council from the Island Free School in the upper field together with the older one will provide over 200 square metres of new rooms for use by the town's vibrant voluntary sector and a replacement for the recent closure of Ventnor Youth Centre and the important facility at Café 34 provided by Ventnor Together.

As the existing Planning Permission (P/00174/15) for the set of three expires on 9 April 2018 this application is for an extension of another three years temporary approval to allow proof of concept before their replacement at the end of that period.

The older Portakabin near the set of three is proposed as the new home for the Ventnor Men in Sheds currently based in a High Street shop too small for its potential growth. As part of a rent agreement, it is willing to take on caretaker and maintenance responsibilities for the whole site.

Remarkably for a semi-rural town of 6,000 population the Town Council is only currently able to provide three Allotments with the demand for more evidenced by a long-standing waiting list.

The lower field is clearly good grounding for Allotments as the Free School has successfully established four. As the attached initial site drawing shows, even after sharing the space with provision for car parking and Emergency Vehicle access, there is room for 20 new Allotments that will both add to the strong sense of a community hub and allow the Town Council to comply more comfortably with its Statutory responsibility for allotment provision.

The site requires significant maintenance to preserve its green space value to the town. The Ventnor's Men's Shed, with its members' extensive experience of all related trades, have agreed to rent the older Portakabin and to contribute to the necessary oversight and maintenance works. Management of the trees, in view of their importance to the site in general, the Green space in particular and compliance with the site's 2008 Covenant, is essential and we have already obtained quotations from local Tree Surgeons for the necessary works.

As one of three regeneration projects currently under development by the Town Council, this development would make a major contribution to responding to the deprivation ranking of the town in the context of both the Island and nationally.

It also sits well with our intention to submit a substantial application to the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund that is aimed specifically at LSOAs in the 20% most deprived in the Index of Deprivation: it will be an invaluable asset base for activities and services committed to addressing that deprivation.
