

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Rise 61 – Westwood Open Space Proposal
Committee : Environment
Date : 29 September 2025
Author : Marc Read, Head of Environmental Services

1. Introduction:

- 1.1. Rise61, a registered charity (CIO No. 1158086) based in Bemerton Heath, has approached the Council with a request relating to land at Westwood Open Space. They wish to secure either a sale or long-term lease (125 years+) of the site in order to construct a new community facility to complement and help safeguard the Council's new pump track development.
- 1.2. The concept of using Westwood Open Space land for this purpose emerged during the pump track consultation, where local residents suggested it. Since then, Rise61 has gained the support of the Bemerton Residents Association, Bemerton Heath Inter-Agency Group, local councillors, and the community panel.
- 1.3. The site at Westwood Open Space currently contains an old and outdated play park. This proposal seeks to remove the existing facility, relocating any salvageable equipment to nearby play areas, and to replace it with a new Community Facility that Rise61 believe will provide greater benefit to the local community.

2. Proposal Summary

- 2.1. Rise61 requests legal use of the identified land through either purchase or long-term lease. They have requested that any lease ground rent would reflect the charitable nature of the organisation.
- 2.2. The charity would cover all legal, consultation, feasibility, planning, design, construction, insurance, and ongoing maintenance costs. They have asked only that the Council remove the existing play equipment (including the "castle") before construction commences.
- 2.3 A suggested timeline by Rise61 is as follows:
 - **2025:** Lease agreed; consultation process launched with residents and stakeholders (e.g., Harlequins).
 - **2026:** Plans developed; finance and planning permission secured; existing play equipment removed by SCC.
 - **2027:** Construction completed using modern, environmentally sustainable methods.
 - **2028+:** Ongoing community consultation to adapt facility use to local needs.

3. Community Support & Track Record

- 3.1. Rise61 has a proven track record of delivering high-quality community facilities and programmes, including the Bike Hub and Community Garden, with a Youth Hub due for completion by 2026.
- 3.2. The organisation has successfully raised funds through major donors, grant-making trusts, and community contributions, giving confidence in their ability to deliver large projects.
- 3.3. Their co-production model ensures that local residents are fully involved in shaping facilities and services. Feedback from surveys shows residents view Rise61 as inclusive, supportive, and vital to the community.
- 3.4. Rise61 works in partnership with local organisations such as the Bemerton Heath Centre and Harlequins Football Club, ensuring new facilities complement existing community assets rather than compete with them.

4. Benefits

- 4.1. Provides a permanent community facility linked to the pump track.
- 4.2. Enhances opportunities for young people and families on Bemerton Heath.
- 4.3. Aligns with the Council's commitment to resident-led development.
- 4.4. No ongoing financial cost to the Council with legal and construction costs borne by Rise61.
- 4.5. Supports long-term sustainability and community ownership.

5. Potential Issues

- 5.1. **Removal of existing equipment** – Rise61 has requested the Council undertake removal of play assets before construction.
- 5.2. **Future flexibility** – A long-term lease would require careful drafting to protect Council interests while giving Rise61 security to fundraise and deliver.
- 5.3. **Management & safeguarding** – While Rise61 has strong policies, the Council will need assurance these are updated and audited regularly.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial:

- All capital, maintenance, insurance, and consultation costs to be covered by Rise61.
- Lease terms (ground rent, duration, covenants) to be negotiated.
- Removal of existing equipment. Cost unknown.

6.2 Legal:

- A formal lease (or sale agreement) is required.
- Rise61 has confirmed they will cover all legal costs.

6.3 Environmental Impact:

- Facility to use modern, sustainable construction methods.
- Supports active, healthy lifestyles through synergy with the pump track.

6.4 Equalities Impact:

- Facility will be open to all, with design shaped by consultation across age groups and stakeholders.
- Rise61's co-production model ensures inclusivity and resident involvement.

7. Recommendations

7.1. It is recommended that the Committee:

7.1.1. Notes the presentation by Rise61.

7.1.2 Considers the request to lease the identified parcel of land for community facility development.

7.1.3 If minded to support, authorises officers to negotiate appropriate lease terms with Rise61, with all legal and associated costs to be met by the charity.

7.1.4 Make the necessary budget available to remove the existing park as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

8. Wards Affected:

8.1. The proposal directly affects Bemerton Heath ward, with wider benefit to Salisbury residents more generally.

9. Background Papers: Rise 61 PowerPoint Presentation

RISE:61

B E M E R T O N H E A T H

**A BETTER
BEMERTON
FOR ALL**

www.rise61.org



RISE:61

B E M E R T O N H E A T H

THE TEAM



Robin
DIRECTOR



Simon
BIKE HUB
MANAGER



Kate
YOUTH WORKER



Shaun
YOUTH WORKER



Beth
YOUTH WORKER



Jas
YOUTH WORKER



Becks
DEVELOPING
PEOPLE
MANAGER



Mike
CENTRAL OPS



Ben
ACTIVE HUB
MANAGER



Joe
ENGAGING
PEOPLE
MANAGER

...plus a load of awesome volunteers & other supporters (any adult in the branded clothing!)



Alfie
THE DOG

A BETTER BEMERTON FOR ALL

www.rise61.org

Rise:61 is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Registered charity in England and Wales (1158086)

📞 07471234764



The Proposal:



We are asking for SCC to sell or lease us the Castle Park land so we can build a community facility that will enhance and help protect the new pump track development.

The idea of giving us this land came out of the pump track consultation process and was suggested by local residents!



We would undergo a full consultation process if the proposal meets your approval but we have brought the idea to Bemerton Residents Association and the Bemerton Heath Inter Agency Group and got their full approval. The community panel have also expressed support for the idea as well as our local councillors.

We believe this space could help us achieve our vision of **a better Bemerton for all** for the following reasons:

- 1** The working group for the pump track were told that these facilities work best and are most looked after when there is an adult presence on the site.
- 2** We could provide something that allows parents to enjoy the facility too and watch their kids having fun as well as getting a drink, having a chat etc.
- 3** We've been looking for a site for our active hub activities to provide a community gym/fitness studio and the current site of our bike hub is not ideal and would work better by the pump track.
- 4** Our proposed youth hub build on Gainsborough is too small for all our activities and more space would allow us to create a chilled creative hub and a more noisy active hub thus meeting the needs of different groups of young people on the Heath.
- 5** It would help spread the community assets around different areas of the Heath and perhaps integrate the Harlequins Football Club even more into the community.

All we are asking for is legal use of the land through a sale or long term lease (125 yrs+) and any ground rent to represent the charitable nature of the facility.



We would cover all legal costs and ongoing insurance etc.



As well as the costs of a feasibility study, consultations, design and planning permission fees, surveys needed etc.

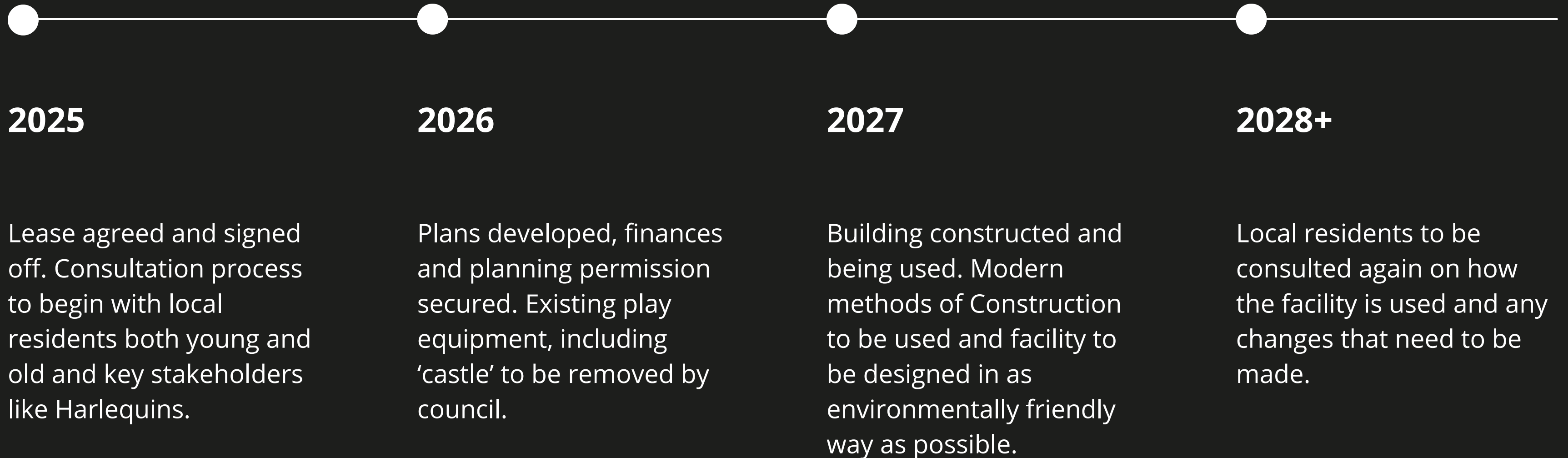


We would finance the construction of the facility and take full responsibility for maintenance costs associated with it.



We would also pay for the construction of the facility and take full responsibility for maintenance costs associated with it. Although we would ask that the council remove all the existing play equipment before construction takes place.

Suggested Timeline



Why do we believe we are the ideal partner for the council on this project:

1

We have a track record of delivering community facilities that are inclusive to all and are assets to the Heath - Bike Hub, Community Garden with Youth Hub on Gainsborough to be completed by the end of 2026.

2

We have had a lot of success in raising the finances for these type of projects both from major donors, individual givers and grant making trusts and foundations and are confident we could deliver on our promises.

3

We are highly professional in our approach and have very robust safeguarding practices and other policies in order to safeguard users of any facility that would be developed.

4

We have an excellent track record of working in partnership and would want any facility to compliment and not compete with other community assets and organisations on the Heath like the Bemerton Heath Centre or the Harlequins Football Club.

5

We already run a bike hub and 3 of our staff are trained in bike mechanics and leading rides or skills based sessions. Everything we do is done through co-production so residents are fully involved in the process of development..



“ I like rise61 because there all so supportive and kind and I respect them all and always will ”

“ The facilities Rise61 gives us is amazing ”

“ They support me the most out of everyone I know, they're supporting and they understand about anything and any situation. ”

“ Everyone gets a voice, and feel they have a sense of place ”

“ Because the facilities are for everyone not just certain people ”

“ Rise 61 has helped with my knowledge and skills because before I didn't know anything about bikes ”

“ They make you feel more included in everything ”

“ Because they act like family and they are kind. It's a big friendly community ”

“ Rise61 is like a second family to me, they have been amazing and I can't wait for the future ”

Feedback from 2025 Survey

RISE:61
B E M E R T O N H E A T H

LIKE AND FOLLOW

