



Agenda Item 7

**Newparks Farm, Muiravonside
Country Park - Progress Update**

Falkirk Council

Title: Newparks Farm, Muiravonside Country Park - Progress Update
Meeting: Executive
Date: 09 May 2023
Submitted By: Director of Place Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update on the action agreed at Executive on 4 October 2022 that a report be prepared on the feasibility of transferring Newparks Farm to a third-party organisation to reduce ongoing costs.
- 1.2. In addition, this report provides an update on other opportunities to reduce costs and generate income at Newparks Farm and the wider Muiravonside Country Park.
- 1.3 The recommendations of this report assist the delivery of the 2022/27 Council Plan strategic priorities of supporting stronger and healthier communities and supporting a thriving economy and green transition.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. **It is recommended that the Executive: -**
 - **notes that the Council remains committed to maintaining Muiravonside Country Park as a valued public amenity and visitor attraction;**
 - **notes that Expressions of Interest for leasing Newparks Farm was released in March 2023 with a deadline date for submissions by Friday 19 May 2023;**
 - **agrees that, following this process, officers conclude negotiations for leasing Newparks Farm where the proposal is financially sustainable and delivers a positive community offering;**
 - **notes that marketing of the Muiravonside Country Park Café as a concession lease was undertaken and, following due process, a lease has been concluded with an operator;**
 - **agrees the new parking plan at Muiravonside Country Park including the relocation of the existing barrier; and**
 - **agrees the charges outlined at Table 5 should be introduced.**

3. Impact on Climate Emergency Targets

- 3.1 This report will have no impact on the Council's climate emergency targets – If the Newparks Farm buildings and operation are eventually passed to a third party this may have a minimal positive impact on the Council's carbon footprint. It is envisaged the Café lease and segregation of utility energy

costs will also reduce the Council's costs and carbon commitment to this third party.

- 3.2 It is important to recognise that this will also have a minimal impact on area wide carbon emissions. If the third party decided to decarbonise the heating system and install renewables this would ensure that this building has a negligible impact on area wide emissions.
- 3.3 It is acknowledged that increased visitor numbers at Muiravonside Country Park will lead to increased use of private transport as the Country Park is not currently served by public transport. This could potentially have a negative impact on climate change through carbon emissions, although it is impossible to quantify the extent of this as the increased journeys could be displacement from other parks or attractions in the area.

4. Background

- 4.1. Muiravonside is the Council's only Country Park located in the southeast of corner of our area near the border with West Lothian Council. It is one of fourteen key open space assets identified in the Council's Open Space Strategy. The Country Park provides: nearly 70 hectares (170 acres) of woodland and parkland; an extensive path network; a mini demonstration farm (Newparks Farm); café; community growing area; sculpture trail; and a children's play area. The River Avon Heritage Trail runs through the site and both the Union Canal and John Muir Way pass close by. The Country Park is considered to be an asset to the Council, but there is general recognition that it could be more extensively promoted to Falkirk Council residents, and those of neighbouring authorities, to increase visitor numbers.
- 4.2. An Executive Report presented on 4 October 2022 related to our Strategic Parks outlined that Muiravonside Country Park (incorporating Newparks Farm) had operated, whilst run by Falkirk Community Trust, with an annual average budget overspend of c£65k (2017/18 – 2021/22) out of a total annual average running cost of c£141k (2017/18 – 2021/22).
- 4.3. Since the transfer of the Country Park from Falkirk Community Trust to Falkirk Council, officers have been working to identify ways of making the Country Park financially sustainable. The potential transfer of Newparks Farm to a third-party operator is one of a range of ongoing initiatives being progressed to reduce costs and increase income at Muiravonside Country Park. The animal farm is a popular Country Park asset but there is no requirement for Falkirk Council to run it, and if a cheaper alternative provider can be identified then this could have a genuine financial benefit to the Council. Other initiatives already implemented, and savings achieved in 22/23 are shown in table 1 overleaf:

Initiative	Reduction in Expenditure
Livestock Reduction	£5,000
Reduced Casual Worker Costs	£2,400
Energy Efficiency	£15,000
External Funding of Path Maintenance	£5,000
Total	£27,400

Table 1: Expenditure Reduction Initiatives

- 4.4 There have also been challenges relating to the malfunctioning vehicle barrier at the main car park entrance which has meant that car parking income was £10,200 for 2022/23 (£4.8k below the £15k/year 2018/19 – 2021/22 average).
- 4.5 During 2022/23 one vacant post (a Countryside Ranger from May 2022) and one additional full-time temporary post (an Assistant Countryside Ranger from August 2022) have been recruited at Muiravonside Country Park. The cost of the Assistant Countryside Ranger has been offset by an external revenue grant from Naturescot as part of Covid recovery approach to countryside sites.
- 4.6 Private sector interest and confidence in the site (i.e. at the café and Newparks Farm) is inextricably linked to Council's investment in the wider Country Park infrastructure and visitor offer. Towards this goal, funding has gone into a range of Country Park infrastructure, conservation and health and safety measures in the last year including:
- Investment of £186k in path upgrading and related infrastructure enabling the re-opening of the River Avon Heritage Trail through the park fully funded by Sustrans;
 - Path upgrading around Newparks Farm, Muiravonside Visitors Centre and play area to meet Equality Act 2010 compliance standards also enabling the re-opening of the River Avon Heritage Trail through the park; £20k of health and safety upgrading to park buildings (farm, visitor centre and café)– notably the upgrading of fire alarm systems; and
 - Investment of £24k in new pond creations, habitat enhancement and path maintenance work carried out by volunteers supervised by partner charities (The Conservation Volunteers, the Council's Employment Training Unit and Froglife).
- 4.7 The staff recruitment and investments made at the Country Park in the past year may have contributed to higher annual visitor numbers at the park (c160k/year) than existed pre-covid (c125k/year).

5. Considerations

Newparks Farm – Expressions of Interest

5.1 Market interest in taking on Newparks Farm as a going concern was canvassed through property website Nova Loca and the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA) in March 2023 as well as direct canvassing of other third-party organisations. Interested organisations were asked to outline:

- Their vision and objectives for the site;
- An outline business case for the operation of the Farm including what the sources of revenue might be. For example, with the provision of additional facilities (such as retail or recreational) or if additional charges for public access would be considered;
- Which parts of Newparks Farm are of interest;
- What lease term would be required;
- An indication of level of annual rent payable to the Council;
- Whether any additional visitor attractions would be provided or other investments in the Farm made;
- What assistance, if any, they might need from the Council relative to TUPE responsibilities;
- Their approach to the payment of the Real Living Wage and the Fair Work First agenda, and
- An outline of what welfare arrangements would be put in place for the existing animal stock (including maintenance of all necessary paperwork – Scottish Rural Payments; Animal Plant Health Agency; ScotEID; County Parish Holding), and what plans there might be for additional animal attractions thereafter.

5.2 The Expression of Interest closing date is 19 May 2023. At that point officers will review the applications and identify the provider that best meets the criteria issued. It is recommended that authority to progress negotiations regarding the most financially sustainable and best fit with Council's ambitions for the park, following the conclusion of the Expression of Interest process, should be delegated to the Director of Place Services.

Relocation of Vehicle Pay barrier

5.3 Muiravonside Country Park currently has two operational car parks, the "Main Car Park" at the centre of the park equidistant between Newparks Farm and the visitor centre and "The Woodland Car Park" nearer the entrance to the country park. At present a vehicle payment barrier exists only at the entrance to the main car park, the price of entry is set at £1 per visit.

5.4 A vehicle counter monitors the number of vehicles entering the park. Table 2 below compares the number of vehicles entering the park against the income generated by the payment barrier at the main car park. This reveals that most vehicles entering the park chose to park at the woodland car park, not the main car park, therefore not using the vehicle payment barrier with a commensurate loss of potential revenue income.

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Number of vehicles entering the park	51,608	23,194	69,881	98,751	63,923
Income from barrier	£10,512	£17,410	£11,924	£19,302	£10,244
Percentage of vehicles paying for parking	20%	75%	17%	20%	16%

Table 2: Vehicle and parking income data

- 5.5 It is recommended that the best way to increase income at the park is to install a new vehicle payment barrier at the position located on the plan shown at Appendix A so that all vehicular entry to the park can be fully monetised and monitored by CCTV. This will reduce issues of reliability and security as well as increase income to make the running of the Country Park more financially sustainable.
- 5.6 Charging for vehicle parking at Country Parks in other local authority areas is commonplace with charges of between £2 and £4.50 per day levied at, for example, Vogrie, Dalkeith, Pollock and John Muir Country Parks. As a further comparison the parking charge at the Helix is £6 per day and £2.50 per day at Callendar Estates' Canada Wood car park. Table 3 below shows how income levels might increase when coupled with a reasonable increase of car parking charges to £2 upon installation of a new vehicle payment barrier.

Year	2023/24	2024/25
Vehicles entering park (assuming 80% of 2018/19 – 2022/23 yearly average)	56,832	56,832
Car Parking Charge per vehicle	£2	£2
Total Income generated	£62,515 ¹	£113,664

Table 3: Indicative parking income projection

- 5.7 The relocation of the vehicle barrier and associated CCTV installation would come at a modest capital cost which can be met from within existing budgets. It is recommended that Executive agree to the relocation of the vehicle payment barrier on site, as per the map in Appendix 1, to enable the generation of additional income. Initial consultation with Roads and CCTV

¹ Assumes £1 charge April 2023 – September 2023 with 20% of vehicles paying the charge, then £2 charge October 2023 – March 2024 with 100% of vehicles paying the charge.

colleagues has taken place on technical feasibility. Further technical design to ensure traffic and parking considerations are addressed, in particular ensuring blue badge holder vehicles can access parking without payment, is required.

Café concession

- 5.8 A tender offering a 5-year concession on the steading café and adjacent public toilet in the courtyard at Muiravonside visitor centre was released on Public Contracts Scotland on 6 March 2023 inviting submissions by 21 March 2023. Bidders were invited to outline both the proposed yearly rent payable to the Council as well as the financial value of investment to be made into the café and public toilet over the 5-year period.
- 5.9 The cafe tender has been to market with submissions received. It is anticipated that the concession will have been let and the lease period begun by the time of Executive. The effect of letting the café concession will reduce the cost to the Council of operating the café and public toilets (electricity, water and building maintenance charges) as well as generating a modest annual rent. A further verbal update can be given at Executive.

Visitor Attraction Improvements

- 5.10 Crucial to monetising operations at Muiravonside Country Park is the attraction of an increased number of visitors. Visitor numbers at the park have been extrapolated from collected data on vehicles visiting the Park (assuming 2.4 passengers per vehicle) and have seen growth over the past number of years. The increase in visitor numbers in recent years, with a spike in the last two years, reflects the wider increase in post pandemic public demand to access countryside and greenspace attractions such as the Country Park. Table 4 shows this data.

Year	Visitors
2014/15	118,106
2015/16	127,702
2016/17	134,105
2017/18	131,424
2018/19	123,859
2019/20	no full year data available
2020/21	167,715
2021/22	203,568
2022/23	153,415

Table 4: Park Visitors

- 5.11 Both the café concession and the transfer of Newparks Farm have the potential to improve the visitor experience at the Country Park and contribute towards an increase in visitors and consequent increase in income from parking charges. There are other planned initiatives (detailed at 5.12 – 5.16 below) which should also help to improve the visitor experience and drive growth in visitor numbers and in some cases generate their own income stream.

- 5.12 Since taking up their posts in 2022 the Park Rangers have been developing an activity/ events programme. Over sixty ranger-led events are planned for 2023. Event charges are projected to generate an income of approximately £3,000 in 2023/24. The service will liaise closely with the Council's Communications service.
- 5.13 The Country Park's play area, adjacent to the visitor centre and café, is near the top of the priority list for play renewal investment. A recent public consultation, which canvassed ideas for how the play area could be best improved, generated over 400 individual responses. 91% of respondents indicated that they used the park for walking and 88% of respondents indicated that they also visited Newparks Farm. This demonstrates that an improved play area which generates an increase in playpark users will also drive an increase in visits to other parts of the park.
- 5.14 Officers will progress the upgrade of the play park using the Council's Play Renewal Fund allocation. This will be progressed immediately without awaiting the outcome of the ongoing Expressions of Interest process at Newparks Farm.
- 5.15 A further £100k of path improvements (funded through developer contributions and external funding) within the Country Park are planned for 2023/24 which will enhance visitor experience further.
- 5.16 Plans are underway to apply for Visit Scotland Quality Assurance membership in April 2023. Currently the only Council run attractions which have membership of the scheme are Callendar Park and the Helix. Membership will help marketing the Country Park to new visitors and will also make the park eligible for additional brown tourist signs.

Introduction of new fees and charges

- 5.17 There is additional scope to charge for new activities within Muiravonside Country Park as follows:

Detail	Proposed Fee	Implementation Timescale
Camping charge for schools	£55 per night	Immediate
Visitor Centre Room Rental	£55 per day	Immediate
Ranger led nature/ farm based activity for schools	£2 per child from Falkirk Council schools £2.50 per child for schools outside area Minimum charge £20	Immediate
Vehicle parking charge	£2 per day	Upon relocation of vehicle barrier
Vehicle parking annual pass	£104 per year	Upon relocation of vehicle barrier

Table 5: New Fees and Charges

- 5.18 It is recommended the Executive agree to the immediate introduction of these new fees and charges in Table 5 which will help generate additional income for the Country Park.

6 Implications

Financial

- 6.1 Some financial efficiencies have already been made in the last year as outlined in Table 1 above contributing towards the Country Park net expenditure of £156k in 2022/23.
- 6.2 Installation of a new vehicle payment barrier at a new location and introduction of new Ranger events fees and charges will help generate additional income. A projection of potential income (rounded down forecast figures) and the impact on the cost to the Council of running the Country Park is shown in table 6 below:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Income from Café	£0	£5,800	£5,800
Event Charges	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000
Vehicle Barrier Charges	£63,000	£114,000	£114,000
Total income	£66,000	£122,800	£122,800
Gross Expenditure	£198,000	£198,000	£198,000
Net Expenditure²	£132,000	£75,200	£75,200

Table 6: Potential savings

- 6.3 The capital cost of relocating the vehicle payment barrier and associated CCTV can be met from within existing resources.

Resources

- 6.4 The potential transfer of Newparks Farm to a 3rd party operator will impact on the 1.38FTE stock keepers currently employed at the Farm. Interested parties have been notified that TUPE arrangements would apply.
- 6.5 Staff in the asset management and legal teams will need to dedicate time to the project if a lease of the Newparks Farm is put out to market.

Legal

² Further efficiencies could follow from a successful lease of Newparks Farm to a third party operator

- 6.6 Work will be required to draft and agree a lease for Newparks Farm.

Risk

- 6.7 There is a high risk that no party will be interested in taking forward Newparks Farm as a going concern leaving the c£79k cost of running it with the Council. This risk is mitigated by the income generating steps recommended within this report and a further report would come back to Executive if that was the case to consider additional options.
- 6.8 There is a risk that relocation of the vehicle payment barrier may negatively impact on the number of people visiting the park. However as the current parking charge is low, and even with the £2 charge later in the year being proposed, this risk is also considered to be low. This will also be mitigated by the improvements in the offer available in the park in the coming months and years.

Equalities

- 6.9 The Council is required to have regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty (PSED). The PSED places a statutory duty on the Council in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 6.10 A full Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) has been completed (see appendix 2) regarding this report's recommendations that meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Any subsequent decision to conclude a lease for Newparks Farm with any interested party will require a further full EPIA.
- 6.11 Any decision to relocate the vehicle barrier at Muiravonside Country Park will mean that some users who currently visit the Park by vehicle will no longer be able to do so free of charge. Visitors who travel by foot, bicycle or horse will still be able to access the park free of charge.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 Officers have explored a range of options to assist in making Muiravonside Country Park a more financially sustainable facility. The recommendations of this report, at paragraph 2.1, will enhance the Country Park as a visitor attraction and will further improve its financial sustainability.

Director of Place Services

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Date: 26 April 2023

Appendices

Appendix 1- Vehicle barrier relocation proposal.

Appendix 2 - EPIA

Background Papers

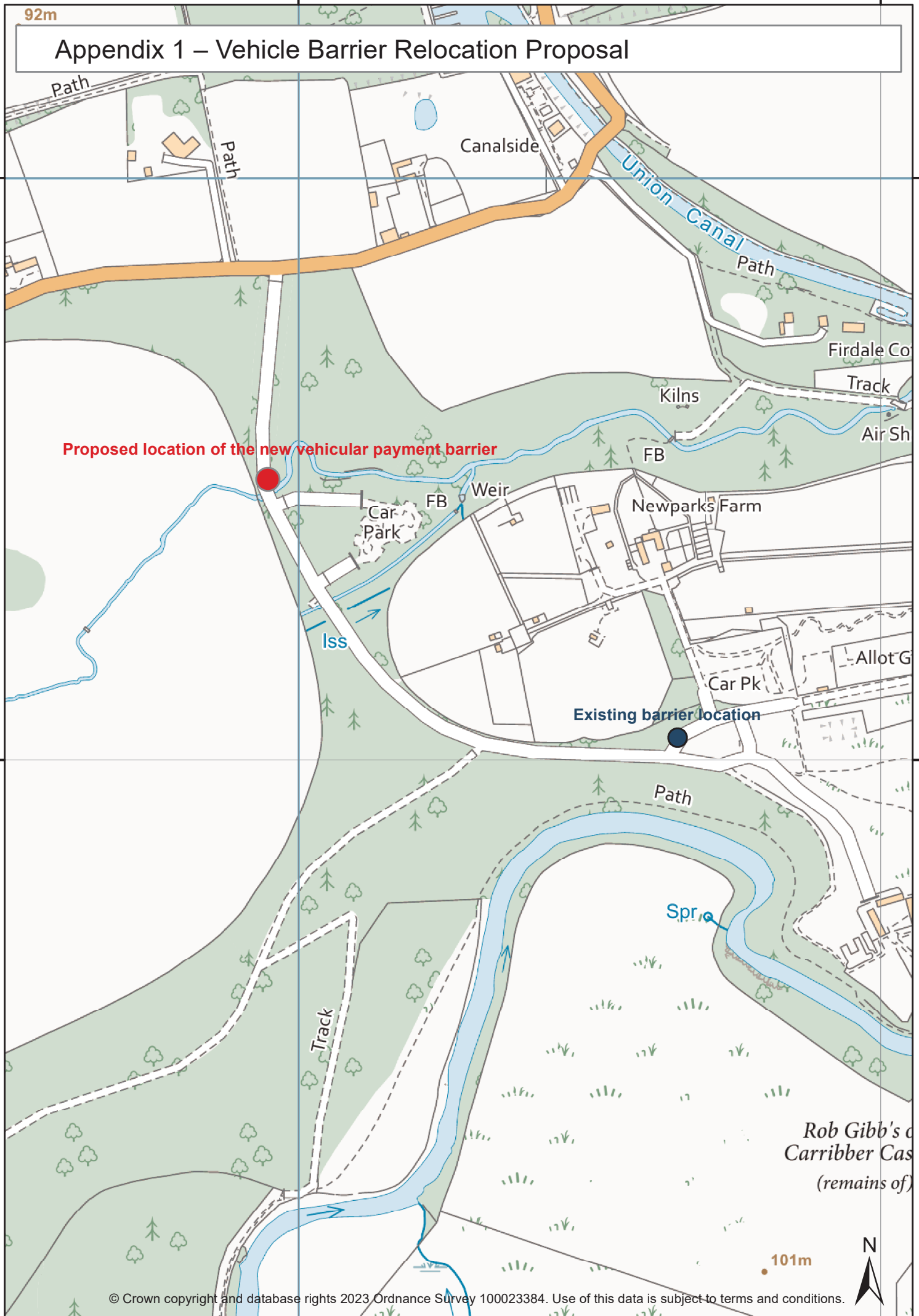
- Muiravonside Country Park Management Plan 2015-2020
- Newparks Farm, Visitor Attraction in Muiravonside Country Park, Expression of Interest Invitation document

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Appendix 1 – Vehicle Barrier Relocation Proposal



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SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Service & Division:	Place Services Growth, Planning & Climate	Lead Officer Name:	Danny Thallon
		Team:	Planning & Greenspace
		Tel:	01324504927
		Email:	danny.thallon@falkirk.gov.uk
Proposal:	Newparks Farm, Muiravonside Country Park - Progress Update - Executive Report	Reference No:	

What is the Proposal?	Budget & Other Financial Decision	Policy (New or Change)	HR Policy & Practice	Change to Service Delivery / Service Design
	No	No	No	Yes
Who does the Proposal affect?	Service Users	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
	Yes	Yes	No	No
Other, please specify:				

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):	
27/03/2023	To increase the proportion of Country Park users accessing the Country Park by car paying for car parking
27/03/2023	To improve the financial sustainability of Muiravonside Country Park
27/03/2023	To introduce new fees and charges relating to certain services at the Country Park

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	£166k	Unknown
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:	£10k	NA
	Expected Annual Income Total:	£100k	NA
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:		
	End Date (if any):		

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE	Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)
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A - Quantitative Evidence	This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.
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5 year average vehicles visiting the park is 66k @ 2.4 visitors per car equates to 158,400 visitors.

Recent play area survey indicated that 12.7% of survey respondents considered themselves as having some form of disability which would extrapolate to roughly 20,000 disabled visitors per year.

B - Qualitative Evidence	This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.
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Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Best Judgement:

Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?	Yes
Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?	Danny Thallon - Professional best judgement.
What gaps in data / information were identified?	
Is further research necessary?	No
If NO, please state why.	Impacts not considered to be significant so no further research warranted.

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place**

Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	No	
If YES, please state who was engagement with.		
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.	Not adequate time to consult with service users. £1 parking charge already exists, albeit park users can avoid this by parking in the Woodland car park.	
How was the engagement carried out?	What were the results from the engagement? Please list...	
Focus Group	No	
Survey	No	
Display / Exhibitions	No	
User Panels	No	
Public Event	No	
Other: please specify		
Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?	No	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	No	
Is further engagement recommended?	No	

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
Age	✓			Age has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Disability	✓			Disabled users of the Country Park can park for free anywhere within the park, this will not change.
Sex	✓			Sex has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Ethnicity	✓			Ethnicity has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Religion / Belief / non-Belief	✓			Religious has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Sexual Orientation	✓			Sexual Orientation has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Transgender	✓			Gender preference has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Pregnancy / Maternity	✓			Pregnancy/ Maternity has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Marriage / Civil Partnership	✓			Marital status has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Poverty			✓	Currently 80% of Country Park vehicle users currently park for free. Following the relocation of the vehicle payment barrier 100% of vehicle users will have to pay a £1 per day or £52 per year charge.
Other, health, community justice, carers etc.	✓			health, community justice, carers etc, has no impact on a person's decision to pay or not pay for car parking
Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)				

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	No potential for unlawful discrimination to occur
Advance Equality of Opportunity:	Country Park users who arrive by foot or on bike do not need to pay a parking charge. A increase to a £2 per day charge for car parking is unlikely to deter car users experiencing poverty as this would equate to a very low proportion of the daily cost of running a car.
Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):	Not applicable

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
Business	No	
Councils	No	
Education Sector	Yes	Some outdoor education happens at Muiavonside Country Park
Fire	Yes	Fire Services will the ability to bypass the new barrier for emergency needs
NHS	Yes	Ambulance Services will the ability to bypass the new barrier for emergency needs
Integration Joint Board	No	
Police	Yes	Police Services will the ability to bypass the new barrier for emergency needs
Third Sector	Yes	A number of 3rd sector activities are carried out from within Newparks Farm.
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.		

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

Imposition of a £2 per day parking charge is only considered to have a minor impact on the poverty characteristic. Users can access the Country Park free of charge by foot or by active travel, can purchase a discounted annual pass for £104 per year or can use other nearby open spaces free of charge.

Are actions being reported to Members?

No

If yes when and how ?

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	Yes	A £2 per day charge is not considered to have a significant impact on the poverty characteristic. People can still access the park free of charge by foot or go to other nearby open spaces.
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

Signature:	Danny Thallon	Date:	29/03/2023
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SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:		Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
ASSESSMENT FINDINGS			
If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA			
If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA			
Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?		Yes	If YES, please describe: Free disabled parking provision.

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA		
LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes / No	
MEDIUM	Yes / No	
LOW	No	It is recognised that the introduction of a parking charge could have a small impact on users of the car park who are experiencing the affects of poverty, however there are alternative areas that could be used for parking that are farther from the park and users can access the Country Park free of charge by foot or by active travel, can purchase a discounted annual pass for £104 per year or can use other nearby open spaces free of charge.. There will be free disabled parking provision.

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

Director / Head of Service:			
Signature:	<i>Malcolm Bennie</i>	Date:	14/04/2023