

Grants Committee: 8 July 2024 ENCLOSURE 1

CIL REQUEST: LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY – ADDITIONAL WATER TROUGHS

Issue

1. The Grants Advisory Committee considered a request from Lichfield & District Allotments Society (LDAS) at the meeting of 8 April. The request was for the provision and installation of additional water troughs at The Moggs and Christchurch allotment sites. Provisional scoping work and quotes estimated the cost for the project at about £10,224.
2. Some Grant Committee members were concerned about the estimated cost and wanted more details about the proposals and current provision before recommending that the request be supported. Specifically, the Grants Committee wanted additional information on:
 - i. The impact on overall costs if the number of troughs was reduced;
 - ii. The number of people on the LDAS waiting list for an allotment;
 - iii. The number of plots per site;
 - iv. A basic plan showing current provision and the proposed new troughs.
3. This paper sets out a revised proposal, cost options and answers the Committee's additional questions.

Proposed Project – Additional Water Troughs

4. LDAS rents five sites in Lichfield from Lichfield City Council and is run by a small Committee of volunteers. **The Committee takes a holistic approach to running the sites they manage. This project underlines that approach.**
5. All sites have access to mains water supply, run into troughs, and members take water from the troughs to their plots using watering cans. At the height of summer, watering a half plot may require 40 or more 5-7 litre watering cans, weighing about 15lbs/ 7 kg each time. On The Moggs site in particular, some members are very far away from troughs. Improving access to water will benefit members, including those who are older, suffer from any sort of frailty or have any mobility issues.

6. LDAS's original proposal was to increase the provision of water troughs for plot holders at allotments at The Moggs and Christchurch allotment sites. This would improve access to water for members with plots that are further away from existing troughs. It is considered that access for members at other LDAS sites is adequate.

Revised Proposals

7. The Grants Advisory Committee asked what the impact on overall costs would be if the proposed number of troughs was reduced. This section sets out a revised proposal, cost options and a preferred way forward.

8. The main costs are for the groundworks to excavate the ground and run new pipework from existing pipes/ troughs to the proposed new water troughs; the troughs themselves are a relatively small part of the overall cost. In response to the Committee's request for additional information on the consequences of reducing the number of troughs, LDAS's Committee reconsidered the proposal.

- i. After reviewing the current trough provision at **Christchurch**, it is proposed to drop the groundworks element of the Christchurch proposal. Instead, it is intended to situate a single additional trough close/ adjacent to existing pipework. It is considered that this will be a better placement and maximise the impact for plot holders at Christchurch. The cost of an additional trough would be about £150.
- ii. Two options have been considered for **The Moggs**.
 - **Moggs Option A** is as per the original proposal. This entails 153m of excavation in order to provide nine additional troughs.
The estimated cost is £7,584 (incl. £150 for the Christchurch trough) (incl. VAT).
 - **Moggs Option B** would remove a spur of the pipework. It entails 82m of excavations and would provide six additional troughs.
The estimated cost is £5,836 (incl. £150 for the Christchurch trough) (incl. VAT).

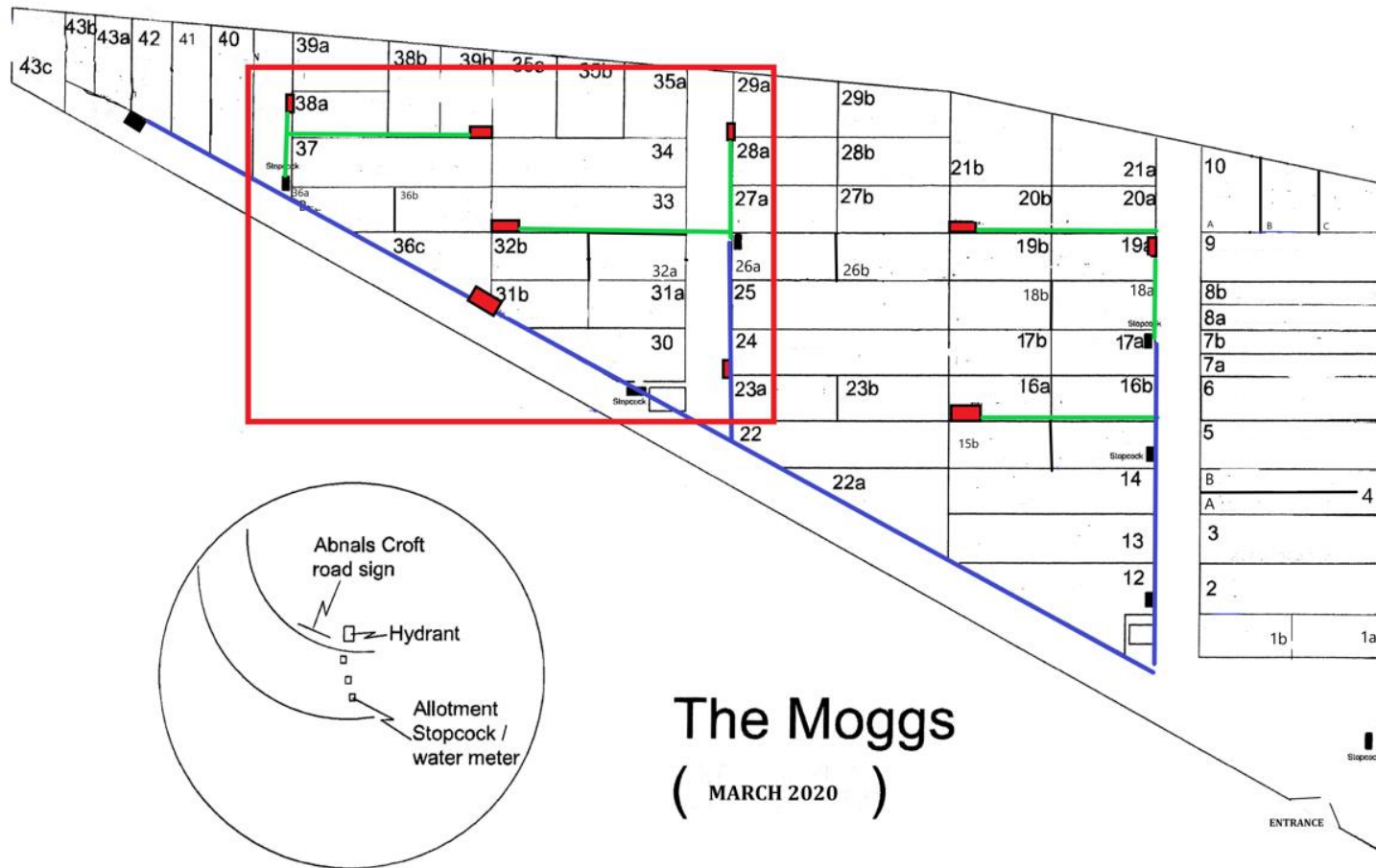
9. The proposed plan of works, including current allotment provision, is shown in **Figure 1**. The layout of the site means that a number of plots are situated distant from the existing water supply. As shown on the plan, the new troughs proposed at Plots 39b, 32b, 20b and 16a address the problem of particularly poor access to water supply, with those placed at 38a, 31b and 19a evening up access across the site.

Blue lines/black rectangles - existing

Greenlines/red rectangles - extensio

Option A - whole site

Option B - red box



The Moggs

(MARCH 2020)

Figure 1: Proposed Trough Layout, The Moggs

10. Moggs Option A is the preferred option and it remains our objective to complete the project as a whole.

- i. Option A provides a much better and much more complete solution. It does the job in a single project to a standard that is future-proofed, as well as reducing inconvenience to members and site disruption.
- ii. The costs of the overall project, now that the Christchurch excavation element has been dropped, are far less than the original bid at £7,584. This is the result of detailed consideration of the feedback and requests for clarification from the Grants Committee, and further discussion by the LDAS committee and with LDAS members.
- iii. The cost difference between Option A and Option B is relatively small and the benefits of doing the whole project (Option A) make it well worthwhile.
- iv. Option B would only ever be a half-way house that would need to be completed, either piecemeal by members (so far as it would be possible) or by a further set of works when it could be afforded, leading to further disruption etc. reduces inconvenience and disruption to the members etc.

Additional Information

10. In response to the Committee's additional questions:

i. Number of plots per site

Collectively the sites contain 162 full size plots. Many are subdivided into half or quarter plots, optimising the use of the allotments as a whole. To provide meaningful numbers, the breakdown is given by the number of members per site, as follows:

Beacon Street:	27 Members
Cherry Orchard:	23 Members
Christchurch:	53 Members
The Moggs:	62 Members
Netherstowe	87 Members
Total	252 Members

ii. Number of People on the LDAS Waiting List

The LDAS waiting list as at 29 April was 123.

This represents the position after plots were relet after the January/February rent round, so it is likely to represent a relatively low point in the year in terms of waiting numbers. The waiting list is added to on an ongoing basis, for example, eight new people were added in April.

The waiting list has steadily risen in recent years and it is fair to say that demand vastly outstrips supply. For context, the figures for the past four years are as follows:

Date	Waiting List Size
December 2019	40
December 2020	90
December 2021	119
November 2023 ¹	136

People at the top of the waiting list are currently waiting upwards of 20 months for an allotment – waiting time has also been creeping up as the list has got longer. Average turnover over the past four years is about 32 tenants a year, suggesting it will take more than four years to clear the current waiting list.

In order to address the waiting list we had some discussions with Lichfield District Council (LDC) in 2023/2024 and, consequently, with developers about potential additional allotment land connected to the new housing developments in Lichfield. Even if these discussions turn out to be productive (and it is uncertain), then the prospect of additional allotment land is some time distant. We are considering the options for acquiring more allotment space in a way that will contribute to resolving the current problem.²

¹ The Committee moved to bi-monthly meetings in 2023, so no December figure available.

² This would be likely to take the form of an approach through Section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments act 1908, to ask LCC to consider an application for allotment land.

Conclusion

LDAS requests a CIL allocation of £7,584 (incl. VAT) to allow it to pursue Moggs Option A, entailing 153m of excavation and nine additional troughs, and to provide an additional trough at Christchurch to be situated over existing pipework.

Lichfield & District Allotment Society

May 2024.

Supporting Calculation

LDAS Water Troughs			
Date	Site	Specification	£s
01-May-24	Moggs Option A	9 troughs: Install water pipe 450mm deep 153m. Provide fitting and maker connections. No 9 concrete slabs from stock set on stable compacted stone sub base. Excludes troughs.	4,800.00
		Sub Total Excl VAT	4,800.00
	Fittings - Moggs + CC	10 x Galvanised Water Trough @ £100 each excl VAT [9 for Moggs/ 1 for CC]	1,000.00
		10 x Service Box @ £37 ditto	370.00
		10 x Ballcock @ £15 ditto	150.00
		Sub total excl VAT	1,520.00
		Total Excl VAT	6,320.00
		Total incl VAT	7,584.00
Date	Site	Specification	£s
01-May-24	Moggs Option B	6 troughs: Install water pipe 450mm deep 153m. Provide fitting and maker connections. No 7 concrete slabs from stock set on stable compacted stone sub base. Excludes troughs.	3,800.00
		Sub Total Excl VAT	3,800.00
	Fittings - Moggs + CC	7 x Galvanised Water Trough @ £100 each excl VAT [6 for Moggs/ 1 for CC]	700.00
		7 x Service Box @ £37 ditto	259.00
		7 x Ballcock @ £15 ditto	105.00
		Sub total excl VAT	1,064.00
		Total Excl VAT	4,864.00
		Total incl VAT	5,836.80