

Kenilworth Town Council



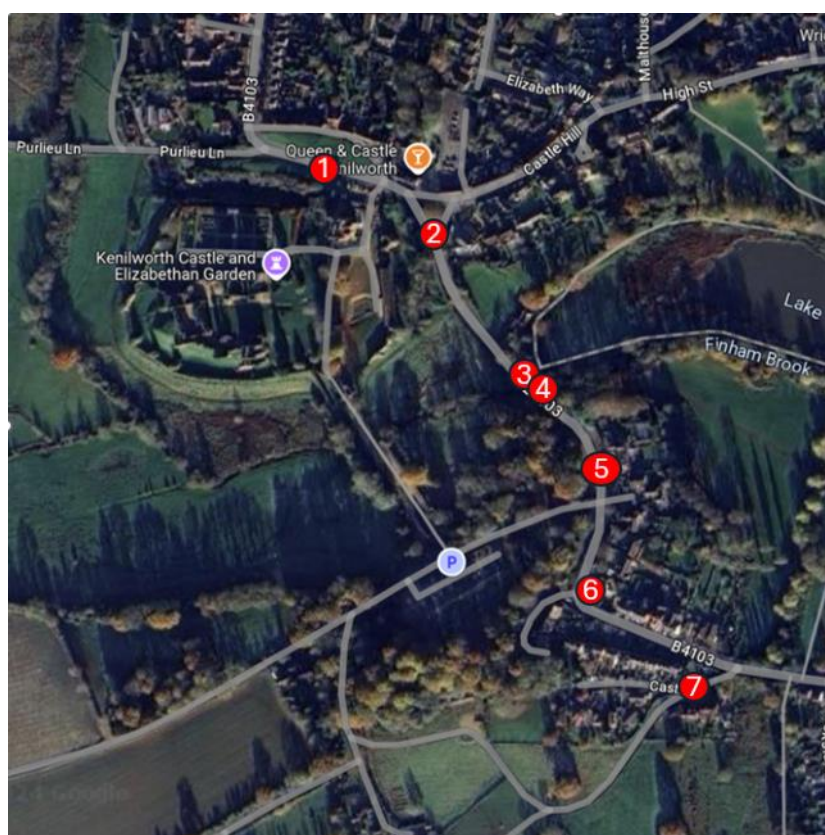
Application for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds

Project Title Kenilworth Castle pedestrian access
Name of Organisation/Group Kenilworth Town Council Castle access Task & Finish group
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Background of your Organisation/Group (Tell us a little about your group/organisation e.g.: what does it do? Who is it for?) Following issues raised by local residents and explored by Abbey ward Cllr Leventhal, and subsequent engagement between Town Councillors and English Heritage, Kenilworth Town Council established a Task & Finish Group on 25 July 2024 to progress the long-standing goal of connecting Kenilworth Castle to Kenilworth Town Centre and Kenilworth Old Town for all non vehicular users (pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists). - This objective is a specific policy in Kenilworth's Neighbourhood Plan (KP10) because of the poor access between the Town Centre and the Old Town and the Castle – there is no safe pedestrian crossing and pavement access to the Castle from either direction at present. - Attempts under the previous administration to progress this directly with Warwickshire County Council have not so far been successful.
Overview of Project/Scheme (Outline proposed use of CIL funding) Background - Improving pedestrian and cycle access to the Castle will be beneficial i) for encouraging visitors to the Castle and Kenilworth town centre and old town, as well as ii) improving active travel & disabled access, and iii) reducing congestion in the town. - There are currently <u>no</u> clear and safe pedestrian routes to enter the Castle on Castle Road – all current pedestrian routes involve crossing the busy road without a pedestrian crossing, and there are no safe walkways on the Castle side of Castle Road. - This is already part of the statutory development plan in place since September 2018, developed in conjunction with the local community by KTC. - Policy KP10 of the Kenilworth Neighbourhood Plan is focused on 'Connecting the Castle to the Town.' It provides that '<i>Proposals for appropriate development at Kenilworth Castle and within the Town Centre that will encourage a greater footfall between the two will be supported.</i>' This sets a similar objective for the route between Abbey Fields and the Castle. The supporting text reads: <i>"5.42... There is now very poor pedestrian access to visitors to the Castle and poor links to either Castle Green or the main town centre. Too many visitors are therefore including to drive off having visited the castle [by car] without bringing any benefit to the town. One</i>

possible solution would create steps from Castle Grove to the Brays Car park whilst another would create a safe crossing to Abbey Fields over Castle Road at the Ford. All possible options will continue to be explored with English Heritage, Historic England, WDC and WCC Highways."

Overview of project

- Funds are sought to commission a feasibility study from a transport consultancy as to i) the feasibility of several potential options for infrastructure improvements on and around Castle Road in the vicinity of Kenilworth Castle, ii) outline designs for any such options, iii) the costs of any recommended options and iv) advice on next steps to progress these with stakeholders (WCC, public engagement, funding sources).
- An outline paper containing seven initial options was produced after discussion between Cllr Chalmers, Cllr Leventhal, Matt Bulford and Scott Elson from English Heritage and a site visit, which are shown on the map **below**. The intention is that the feasibility study will assess approx. four of these options (Options 1, 5 6 and 7), subject to the advice of the consultants.



- Following the feasibility study, the Task & Finish Group will seek to progress the option / options in partnership with English Heritage, Historic England, WCC and WDC, and the local community, as well as other relevant stakeholders (e.g. Sustrans). At that stage, KTC / the Task & Finish Group may look to the CIL fund for further financial support to deliver the project, in conjunction with other funding sources.

Project Timescales

(Please provide an outline of the implementation timetable including any key milestones. If the project is to be undertaken in this or the next financial year then set out the outline quarterly project plan)

1. September / early October 2024 – seek proposals from minimum 3 reputable transport consultants for feasibility work (already in progress)
 2. Report to CIL committee and in turn Town Council in October 2024 with details of final costings agreed
 3. October 2024 – commission feasibility study
 4. October – December 2024 – engagement with consultants & EH on site and via meetings
 5. January 2025 – receive report to share with Town Council via Task & Finish
- Timings are approximate until consultant agreed.

Total Amount of Funding Requested

(Please give the total amount of CIL monies sought)

£ up to £25k

Costing of Project with Full Detailed Breakdown

- Initial quote from a reputable consultant familiar with the area and regularly instructed by WCC is c.£16.5k, based on feasibility for four options, plus associated work. This is subject to further discussion and detail
- Advice from WCC is that a study of this nature is likely to cost £10-£25k
- Accordingly, funding of up to £25k is sought at this stage.

**Details of other sources of funding applied for and names of any partner organisations.
Please include any funding applied for by any partner organisations.**

English Heritage have been asked whether they could share or contribute towards the costs of this study. We are awaiting a response. No other funding sources explored.

Please specify here the responsibility for ongoing maintenance costs

N/a

How your Proposal meets CIL Funding Criteria

(Your application may meet some or all of the criteria of the CIL priorities. Please explain, where applicable, how your scheme/project meets these criteria. If the criteria do not apply please mark N/A)

Community Priorities

How the proposal has been identified through consultation with residents and the community

- As above, the need for improved safe connectivity between the Castle and the town is a key element of the Neighbourhood plan which was developed via engagement with the resident and business community of Kenilworth over a period of time
- Since then, the previous administration sought to progress this via councillors and in conjunction with residents but to no avail
- In May 2023, a local resident approached Cllr Leventhal to raise the issue and again and other residents have since reiterated their view that this project remains critical to improving the active travel and disabled access options in the town, and to enabling visitors to Kenilworth to access the local businesses and services elsewhere within the town centre and old town easily.

How the Project will benefit the community as a whole; for the "Common Good"

- The project aims to improve essential walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure to the Town's key heritage asset – the Castle.

- This will benefit all residents of Kenilworth who have free access to the Castle at present, as well as visitors, and local businesses
- It will also benefit the community indirectly by enabling traffic to flow without less congestion if fewer cars are on the road
- It will also have indirect benefits in terms of health and well-being, as well as economic benefits if visitors can better access the other facilities and businesses in Kenilworth (rather than driving away)

How the Project will Benefit Young People and their Future

- Active travel routes around Kenilworth are of importance to people of all ages, but young people will benefit in particular from increased independence and indirect health & wellbeing benefits if the routes & connections across Kenilworth are improved for them as pedestrians or cyclists, rather than having to rely on cars. They will have better access to the whole connected town, as well to the heritage, educational and open space opportunities provided by the Castle and its wider area
- Local student group Pedal to Protect has campaigned for better cycling routes across Kenilworth, especially to link up Kenilworth school, and improving the infrastructure in this vicinity will make progress towards their objectives
- Both the climate working group and cycling working groups have been focussing on improving active travel options for young people because of its importance as an in issue in our town

Strategic Priorities

How the Project prioritises long-term Investment in Infrastructure

Safe access to the Castle has been a priority for KTC for a number of years and it is a key element of Kenilworth's Neighbourhood plan. This proposal will lead to a key piece of infrastructure for the town for many years to come.

How the Project Promotes Kenilworth as a Business and Tourist Destination

The Castle and Elizabethan Garden is a key feature of Kenilworth as a tourist destination. Any visitors to the town are also likely to increase the footfall to Kenilworth's other attractions, including its retail and hospitality businesses. Visitor numbers are especially expected to increase next year as it will be the 450th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Kenilworth. A number of commemorative events are planned for the year. Safe access from the town to the Castle is essential for the visitors to enjoy their time in Kenilworth and thus be encouraged to return.

How the proposal addresses demands imposed by the increasing population in the town

Safe access to the Castle will be a key factor for the new residents of Kenilworth to regularly visit this part of the town.

How the proposal supports Kenilworth Town Council initiatives (e.g., Cycling Strategy Group, Tourism Group, the Town Centre Working Group, Climate Emergency Roadmap).

This proposal directly supports the KTC initiatives of the Cycling Strategy Group, Climate Emergency Group, Business & Visitor Economy Group, the Town Centre Working Group. As mentioned before, safe access should encourage more visitors to the castle, and also it will more likely that these visitors will adopt active travel to get there rather than use their cars.

Management Priorities

Will the proposal seek joint funding/partnership arrangements with WDC/WCC and external bodies (e.g., universities, Sustrans, English Heritage) for infrastructure?

Any subsequent developments that come about from this initial consultation will have to be in conjunction with English Heritage, KTC, WDC and WCC.

How will your organisation/group explain publicly how the CIL receipts are forecast, managed and reported?

The Castle Crossing Task & Finish Group will be providing a report regularly to the Town Council meetings which will include details of how the CIL receipts are forecast, managed and reported.

How will your organisation explain publicly how CIL has been spent and allocated?

Details of the project will be communicated via the KTC and English Heritage websites. In addition, the Task & Finish Group will be providing a report regularly to the Town Council meeting which will include details of how the CIL money has been spent.

How will your organisation ensure that the costs of consultation and project management are covered?

The spending of the CIL funds will be managed by the T&F Group working closely with the Town Clerk and Councillor Richard Dickson, Chair of the Town Council Finance and General Services committee.

Additional Information that may support your Application

The consultation planned in this proposal will be the first step towards finally addressing a key point in Kenilworth's Neighbourhood plan. Safe access to the Castle has long been desired but nothing has ever been done concretely about it, until now.