



AGENDA ITEM NO.15

Avonmouth and Kingsweston Neighbourhood Partnership 11th June 2013

Title: Location of first new Seamills Play Park

Report of: Gary Brentnall – Area Environment Officer

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DECISION REQUIRED:

Decision for Neighbourhood Partnership:

The committee are being asked to decide upon one, of two locations for a new play area within Sea Mills. These are:

- (1) Sea Mills Square
- (2) Sea Mills Recreation Ground

If a decision cannot be reached, the money will need to be returned to the Service Director, Environment & Leisure, for reallocation.

Background

In early 2012, monies were made available through the capital stimulus fund for partnerships to investment in their green spaces. The former ward councillor bid for funding from this initiative, to install a new play area on either the Sea Mills Square or the Recreation Ground.

The original bid was non-specific in relation to the exact location. The two sites under consideration were identified in the Avonmouth and Kingsweston

Neighbourhood Partnership Parks Investment Plan (dated 7th September 2011 – see appendix A). As the bid was submitted on behalf of the Neighbourhood Partnership, the decision on where the play area should be sited, rests with the committee.

Consultation Process

The former local ward councillor requested that the Area Environment Officer undertake a consultation exercise, to establish where local residents wanted the new play area to be installed. Details of the series of consultation exercises undertaken on this project, can be found at Appendix B.

The results of this exercise show that:

109 are in favour of locating the play area on the Square

37 are in favour of location the play area on the Recreation Ground

The basis of this consultation was purely to establish the preferred location with local residents and site users. Once the decision has been made, further discussions will take place regarding the design, size and type of equipment to be installed.

Site Considerations

As Sea Mills is a Conservation Area, detailed discussions took place with both the City Design Group and Development Services to establish what restrictions there could be with either site. Their feedback was that the Conservation Area designation should not be seen as an impediment to the idea of having a well-designed children's play area on the central green area in Sea Mills. The play area would also fall under permitted development rights and as such, would not require planning permission, so long as the dimensions did not exceed the permitted standards.

Sea Mills Square location:

The positives associated with putting the play area on the Square are:

- safety in terms of passive surveillance – the site is overlooked by shops and some residential houses, which would provide this element and act as a deterrent against vandalism;
- closer to other local amenities, e.g. café, toilet facilities, local shops;
- better lighting from street lights;

The negatives associated with putting the play area on the Square are:

- its close proximity to Shirehampton Road;

- not a universally popular location with all residents;
- the existing play area on the Rec will need to be removed to cover the maintenance costs of the new play area.

Recreation Ground location:

The positives associated with putting the play area on the Rec are:

- no passing road traffic;
- an established play area already exists in this location;
- the existing old and vandalised equipment will be removed from the site.

The negatives associated with putting the play area on the Rec are:

- its secluded location makes it vulnerable to vandalism and anti-social behaviour and is not an inviting location for parents and young children;
- being surrounded by houses and trees, the site can be very dark and uninviting;
- it has to share the site with three football pitches, which could pose a potential health and safety risk on match days;
- this site is well used by dog walkers and is prone to high levels of dog fouling.

Officer Recommendation

The feedback from the consultation shows that the Square is the option preferred by the majority of people who commented. Given the comments received from Planning Officers, the anti-social behaviour issues the Recreation Ground has already suffered from, and the fact that the existing site is under-used, the recommendation is to install the play area on The Square.

Alternatively, the committee could decide not to use the capital stimulus money on this project. In this instance, the money would be returned to the central budget for reallocation.

Risk Assessment

Once the site has been agreed upon, the Project Team will undertake a full risk assessment around the proposed site and design.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Once the site has been agreed upon, an equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the project planning process.

APPENDIX A



Avonmouth and Kingsweston Neighbourhood Partnership

Report of: Gary Brentnall: Neighbourhood Engagement Officer

Title: Prioritising investment into Parks and Green Spaces in Avonmouth and Kingsweston

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 352 1045

Decision for Neighbourhood Partnership:

The Partnership is asked to agree in principle investment priorities for parks and open spaces recommended by the representative group as part of the Parks Improvement Plan for Avonmouth and Kingsweston. The agreement is in principle only and is subject to further consultation with residents.

Background

At the Neighbourhood Partnership meeting of September 7th 2011 it was agreed to engage with officers to produce a set of investment priorities for the Neighbourhood Partnership of Avonmouth and Kingsweston.

The investment priorities will help the Neighbourhood Partnership guide spending for open spaces in the area and ensure money is spent effectively and efficiently.

What process was used

Representatives from the Neighbourhood Partnership have taken part in two 2 hour sessions in which the suggestions within the Area Green Space Plan (AGSP) Ideas and Options Paper were discussed along with how the standards of the Parks and Green Space Strategy should be applied and the results of the AGSP 2010 public consultation. The discussions also included where gaps in provision relating to open space currently exist.

In conjunction with this, there is ongoing consultation with residents in the Neighbourhood Partnership as to what the key priorities for open spaces are. This is expected to continue throughout early autumn and will feed into the production of a final priority list, which is hoped will be agreed at the winter Neighbourhood Partnership meeting

Recommendations

The group recommends that priorities are arranged under strategic themes of Children's Play and improvements to Formal Space (including access into parks and open spaces). This is to address existing gaps in provision and upgrade current poor quality provision.

Please note that these recommendations are subject to further consultation and additional specific priorities for individual spaces will be compiled after this consultation.

Within each of these strategic themes, priorities are split into 3 different categories of 'Quick Wins', 'Refurbishment' and 'New Provision'. The preliminary priority recommendations are set out in the table below.

1. Children's Play		
Quick Wins	Refurbishment	New Provision
St Mary's Rec (Beachley Walk)	Springfield Avenue Park	Ridingleaze
Richmond Terrace Park	Richmond Terrace Park	Sea Mills Rec OR Sea Mills Square
	Henacre Park	As part of redevelopment of Sea Mills Infants School

2. Formal Space and improving access		
Quick Wins	Refurbishment	New Provision
Lamplighter's Open Space	Lamplighter's Open Space (Including improving access along River side)	St Mary's Rec (Beachley Walk)
Sea Mills Square	Access in Saltmarsh Open Space near to new foot bridge	Nibley Road Open Space (Improving access at Nibley Road entrance)
Ridingleaze		
Shire Green		

The Neighbourhood Committee considered a report (agenda item no. 11) which set out the suggested priorities of investment into parks and green spaces in the

Avonmouth and Kingsweston Neighbourhood Partnership area. A public statement was noted.during the discussion the following points were made;

- There was strong feeling at the meeting that the form 'Parks and Green Spaces investment prioritisation Consultation' did not have sufficient information for residents to make an informed decision. It was explained that officers and members of the Partnership had attended events to deliver the form face to face and explain the options to local residents.
- There was some confusion regarding the land with Sea Mills Infant School which some felt it implied that decisions had been made already for redevelopment. It was confirmed that the land in question was not Parks land, although the Neighbourhood Partnership had made it a priority for a park in Sea Mills. A clause within the Open and Green Spaces Strategy was highlighted which stated that surplus playing fields could be re-categorised as parks.
- It was agreed that the questionnaire would be amended to add the suggestions

that the school site would also be an appropriate place for a formal park.

- It was acknowledged that the form had to be produced within a tight timescale and with no budget to ensure the Partnership area was in the position to allocate the funds.
- The Partnership encouraged the establishment of parks groups in order to help campaign for areas and access other sources of funding.
- It was agreed that Councillors meet with the Sea Mills residents to discuss their concerns and explain the project further.

APPENDIX B

Proposed New Sea Mills Playground - Consultation To Date

15 November 2012: Venue: Sea Mills Methodist church.

All residential occupiers were invited to comment on where a new play area should be located. A letter was sent out to everyone who lives in a property that backs on to either the Recreation Ground or is around The Square. If residents were unable to make the session at the church, then they were encouraged to e-mail or phone their comments through to the Neighbourhood Engagement office.

The church session ran from 10.00AM to 4.00PM to engage with stake holders, local residents and user groups who wished to share their views regarding this proposal.

On display were aerial maps showing the two identified areas. In addition to this, at the request of the local councillor, Simon Rayner, two sketches were on display, showing what The Square might possibly look like should this be identified as the preferred site, by the majority of the consultees.

Also on display were two photographs showing both The Recreation Ground and The Square after dark.

Present at this consultation exercise were, Gary Brentnall (Area Environment Officer from Bristol City Council); John Knowlson (Children's' Play & Youth Officer from Bristol City Council); Tim Leaman (local ward councillor).

A number of local community stakeholders attended, including representatives from Save Sea Mills Garden Suburb, the local Scout group, Shire Colts football team, the local Little Monsters Pre-School group. There were also a number of local residents present, who

made their comments but did not wish to leave their contact details. A total of 30 replies were recorded from this event.

December 2012 – Sea Mills Primary School

During December 2012, 235 letters were delivered to Sea Mills Primary School primary to engage with local parents. This took the form of a letter which was handed out to all the children and asked parents to return their comments to the Neighbourhood Engagement Team. The letter was also given to 15 members of staff who live in the Sea Mills area.

The letter asked for a view on which of the two identified sites, (shown by way of a map attached to the letter) they would prefer to see a new play area installed. They were asked to tick a box to show their preference. 48 letters were received back from this consultation.

9th and 10th March 2013 - Shire Colts football club

On the 9th and 10th of March, the Area Environment Officer, Gary Brentnall, visited The Recreation Ground to talk to parents and young people who play for the Shire Colts football team and also to the club officials. This visit had been advertised on their web site, and also on the team's notice boards. Contact was also made with the Colts teams who were playing away matches on Sunday.

This consultation process received feedback from 25 parents and children from the teams, as well as comments and views from the club officials. In addition to this, the views from members and players who did not attend matches held on this weekend, but were posted on the Shire Colts web site, were also captured.

9th April 2013: Venue: Sea Mills Library

In addition to the above consultation exercises, another general open consultation event was held on 9th April at Sea Mills library.

Notification of the event was sent out to all the churches in the area and they were asked to read the notice out at the end of their services. Posters advertising the event were placed on the community noticeboard next to the café on The Square, on the noticeboard in the local library and also on the main gateway into The Recreation Ground. These were all on display two weeks before the event was held.

The Area Environment Officer also sent out an e-mail with an attached notification of the event, to the area's local community champions and asked that they pass the information on to anyone who they felt might be interested in attending and giving their views. This included representatives from Save Sea Mills Garden Suburb.

At this event the same letter was used as before and 27 replies were hand back to the officers running this consultation.

10th April 2013: Engagement with local pre-schools

The three pre-schools in the area have also been contacted. Two of these groups run on Thursday and Friday in Highgrove Church and the third takes place in the children's centre in West Parade. The same letter that was used for the Sea Mills Primary School exercise

was used in this process. 60 letters were sent out via the group leaders and 46 replies have been returned.

On-line consultation.

This was held for a period of two weeks starting from the 1st may and advertised on the council's consultation finder.

The results were 5 respondents 3 were in favour of the square and 2 for the recreation ground.

Other Opportunities for Comment

There has also been two other opportunities for residents to make their views known on this issue. The local ward councillor, Simon Rayner, wrote an article for the Liberal Democrat local newsletter, asking for residents to give him their views on which of the two proposed sites they preferred. The Voice, Sea Mills local community newsletter, has also run an article regarding this issue.

Both of these newsletters cover all households in the Sea Mills locality.

Consultation Coverage to date

At the present time the responses received can be broken down as follows:

Area Post Code	Number of respondent's
BS9	89
BS11	10
BS8	7
Area served by Sea Mills Primary School BS9	48
Letters with only email address given	22
Total letters received	176