

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

DOWNS COMMITTEE

22nd April 2013

Report of: The Director of Environment and Leisure

Title: The Downs Children's Play Area

Ward: N/A

Officer Presenting Report: John Knowlson – Youth and Play Officer
Vicki Abel – Project Development Officer
(Parks)

Contact Telephone Number: (0117) 922 3868

RECOMMENDATION

That the Downs Committee consider the results of recent public consultation regarding the redevelopment of the children's play area.

That the Committee select one of the two options being proposed for the redevelopment of the Downs Play Area so that the project can be progressed and implemented.

That a sub group of the Downs Committee is appointed with devolved decision making powers so that further decisions relating to the proposals can be made quickly and allow the project to progress at an appropriate rate.

Summary

This report is to inform the Downs Committee of the outcome of a recent public consultation exercise to ascertain which of two design options the local community would like to see implemented for the Downs play area.

A decision is required from the Downs Committee on which option should be progressed.

The significant issues in the report are:

- Two options were previously identified as potential play schemes for the new play area. One with a large range of wooden play equipment and the other with a large bespoke play unit (based on a local landmark) and a reduced range of play equipment.
- The public consultation asked people to decide which option they preferred and why.
- There were 46 responses to the question 'Which Option do you prefer and why'?
- Feedback indicates that approx 80% (37) of local people are in favour of Option 1 (without a bespoke play structure) which maximises play equipment options and that 20% (9) are in favour of Option 2 (with a bespoke play feature).

Policy

1. PGSS

Consultation

2. **Internal:**

Richard Bevan - Park Estates, Play, Cemeteries & Crematoria,
Manager, Operations

John Knowlson, Play & Youth Co-ordinator

Don Ward – Landscape Architect

Phillip Higgins - Consultation & Research Officer, Insight and Design

3. **External:**

Various play manufacturers.

Context

4. Following discussion with the Downs Committee two possible schemes were designed for the new play area.

Option 1 incorporates a range of wooden play equipment and associated land modelling to create terraced seating and play mounds laid out around a circular tarmac path with new entrances:

Option 2 which includes for a large bespoke play unit but less individual items of play equipment around similarly configured landscape features. This option has a simplified layout and reduced landscape features.

Quality/Play Value

5. The proposed range of wooden play equipment will be very high quality, from an established play equipment manufacturer. This equipment will be selected to fit appropriately into the landscape, be robust and long lasting and offer a wide range of play opportunities and experiences. The proposed equipment will need to meet BSEN1176/77 or equivalent to meet the council's responsibilities for Health and Safety required for a children's play area.
6. The bespoke unit shown for Option 2 is based on Clifton suspension bridge and is also produced by a well established play equipment manufacturer. This is a one off item and would be specifically designed and manufactured for this site.

Consultation

7. The first round of consultation on the two options for the design of the new play area on the Downs closed on the 8th March 2013.
8. Consultation material was uploaded to the BCC Consultation Finder web page for a period of three weeks. Consultation Finder is where the general public can find all the council's consultations past, present and forthcoming. The consultation questionnaire was prepared by an officer from BCCs Consultation Research and Intelligence Team.
9. The consultation material illustrated the 2 options in layout and 3D form along with photographs of the proposed play equipment. This was also available to view in Clifton library. Posters were put up on the Downs notice boards publicising the consultation and asking people to take part in the survey.
10. Results from this consultation were :

80% (36 responses) of local people in favour of Option 1 (without a bespoke play structure) and

20% (9 responses) in favour of Option 2 (with a bespoke play feature).

Comments received from this consultation can be seen in Appendix 2

Costs

11. The total budget for the project is £140,000. Detailed costs have not been obtained but an approximate allocation for the funding is:
 - Option 1 - £35,000 – land forming and infrastructure works
£105,000 – play equipment
 - Option 2 - £30,000 – bespoke play unit
£25,000 - land forming and infrastructure works
£85,000 – play equipment

Timescale

12. Potential Timetable:

April – Decision on Option 1 or Option 2

May /June – Produce final design and obtain costs from AS

June/July – Consultation with school children

July - Present final design to Downs Committee and obtain approval to progress.

Aug – Make final changes to scheme

Sep/Oct/Nov - Apply for Planning Consent

Dec /Jan – Start on site

March 2014 – Work completed

Proposal

13. That the Downs Committee select which of the two options should be progressed to implementation.
14. That a sub group of the Downs Committee is formed to progress the implementation of the scheme with BCC officers.

Other Options Considered

15. None

Risk Assessment

16. There is a risk that £70,000 of funding from BCC could be withdrawn from this scheme if the project is not progressed and the scheme completed on site by March 2014.

Equalities Impact Assessment

17. The design of the play area will incorporate DDA compliant play equipment and the play area will be fully accessible by wheelchair users via a tarmac path.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal:

No legal advice sought.

Financial:

The project has a budget of £140,000

(a) Revenue £0

(b) Capital £140,000 (£70k – BCC, £70k – Downs Committee)

Land

The land is under the control of the Downs Committee.

Personnel

BCC personnel will progress the scheme.

Appendices:

APP 1 – The two design options

APP 2 – A Summary of comments from consultation.

App 3 - Potential design for the bespoke unit.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None

C:\Documents and Settings\brlsvcal\Local Settings\Temp\XPgrpwise\Report template.doc

Welcome



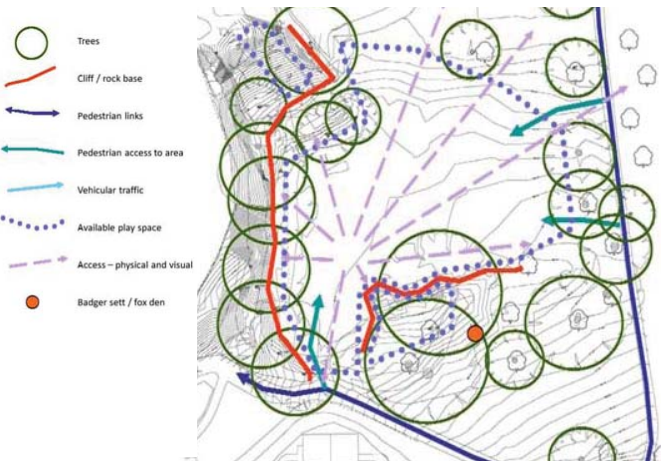
Proposed improvements to the Clifton Down play area.

The Downs Committee have commissioned Bristol City Council to make improvements to the play area at the Downs in Clifton.

Sketch designs have been developed to secure funding for the project in collaboration with various groups and stakeholders.

We have been working on some ideas and now we want your feedback.

The design process



1

Constraints and opportunities

The site is a core feature within the Downs in Clifton

The rock face is part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (requiring English Heritage planning consent) and is within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) boundary (requiring Natural England planning consent)

The site is secluded within the formation of the gorge cliff edges and rock formations

Semi-enclosed with natural features but good access

Mature trees surround the main play space

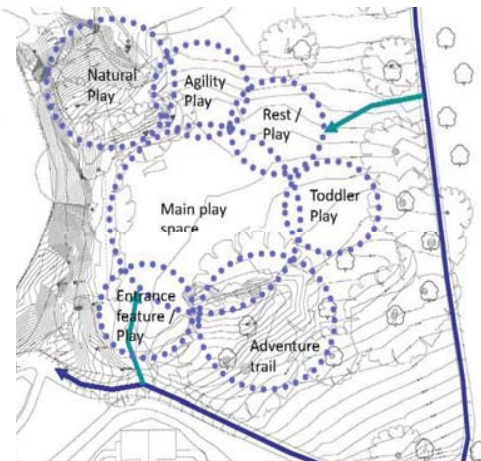
Underlying rock sub-terrain

Badger sett / fox den within the copse of trees

Natural features as influence for play equipment:

Climbing – rocks, timber, natural play -slides

Natural setting, gentle landform



2

Concept

Surrounding context:

River, water, flow, movement

Natural forms – rock, treescape, wilderness

Suspension bridge – towers, platforms

Leave play area unfenced as informal space

Activities:

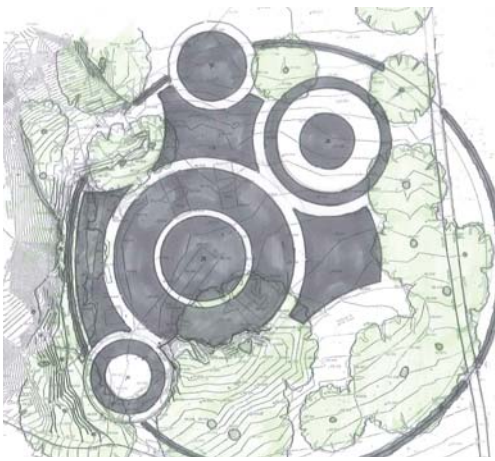
Age ranges and type of play / activity

Agility, learning, experience, ability, fun, safe

Sit and rest, look, watch, listen, talk, eat, drink

Explore, adventure

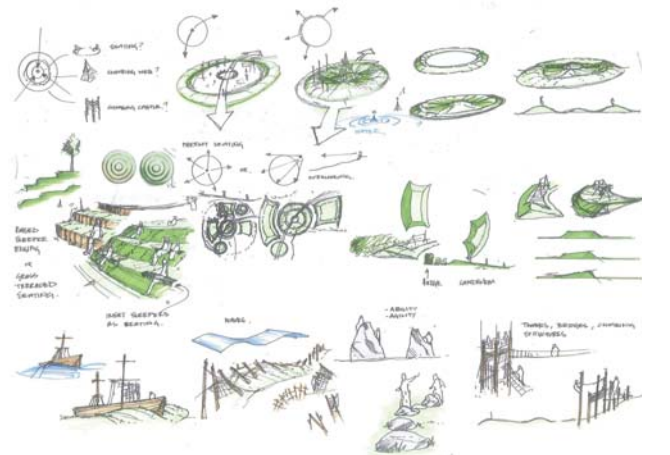
Climb, spin, jump, see-saw, swing, slide



3

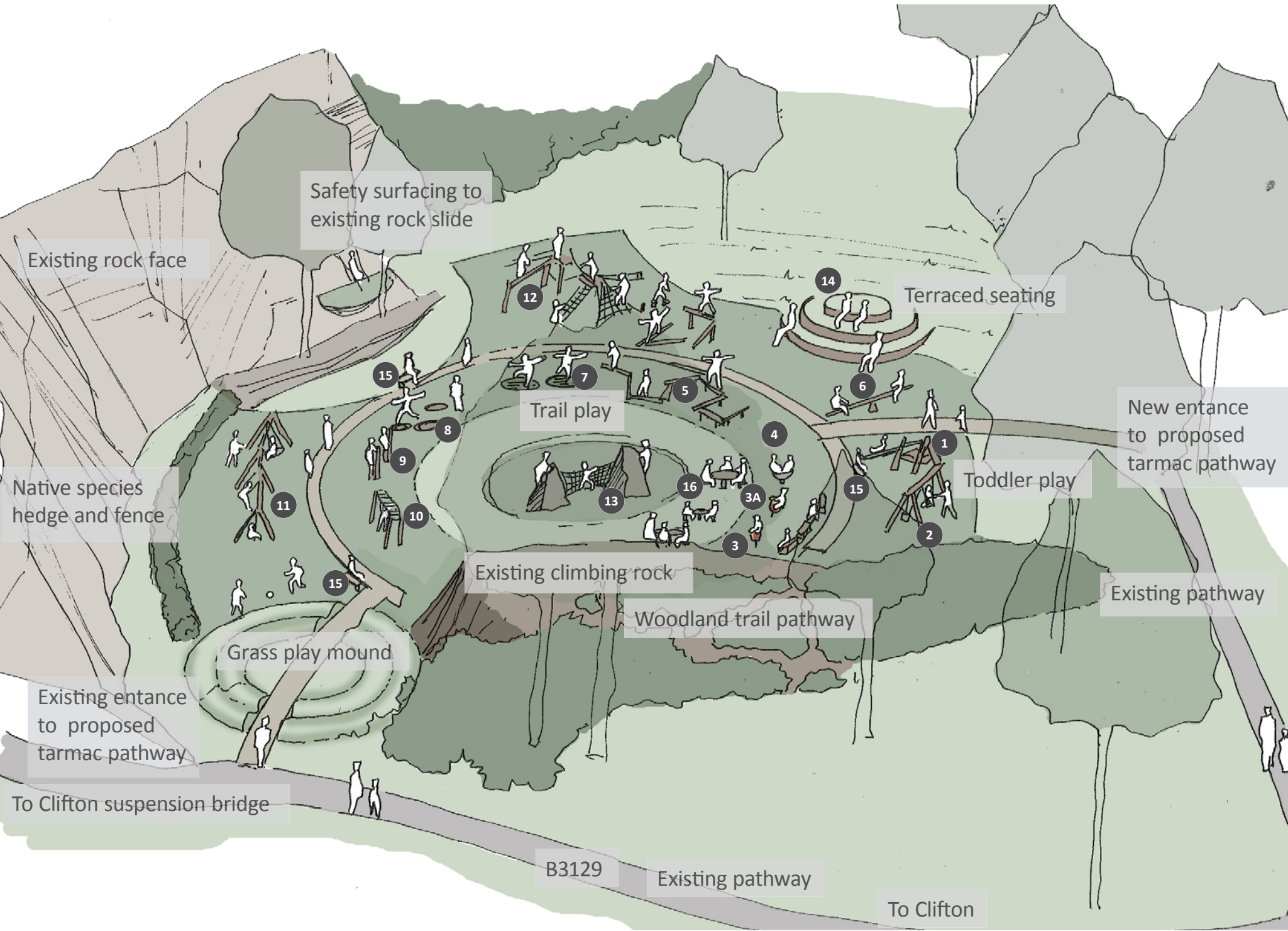
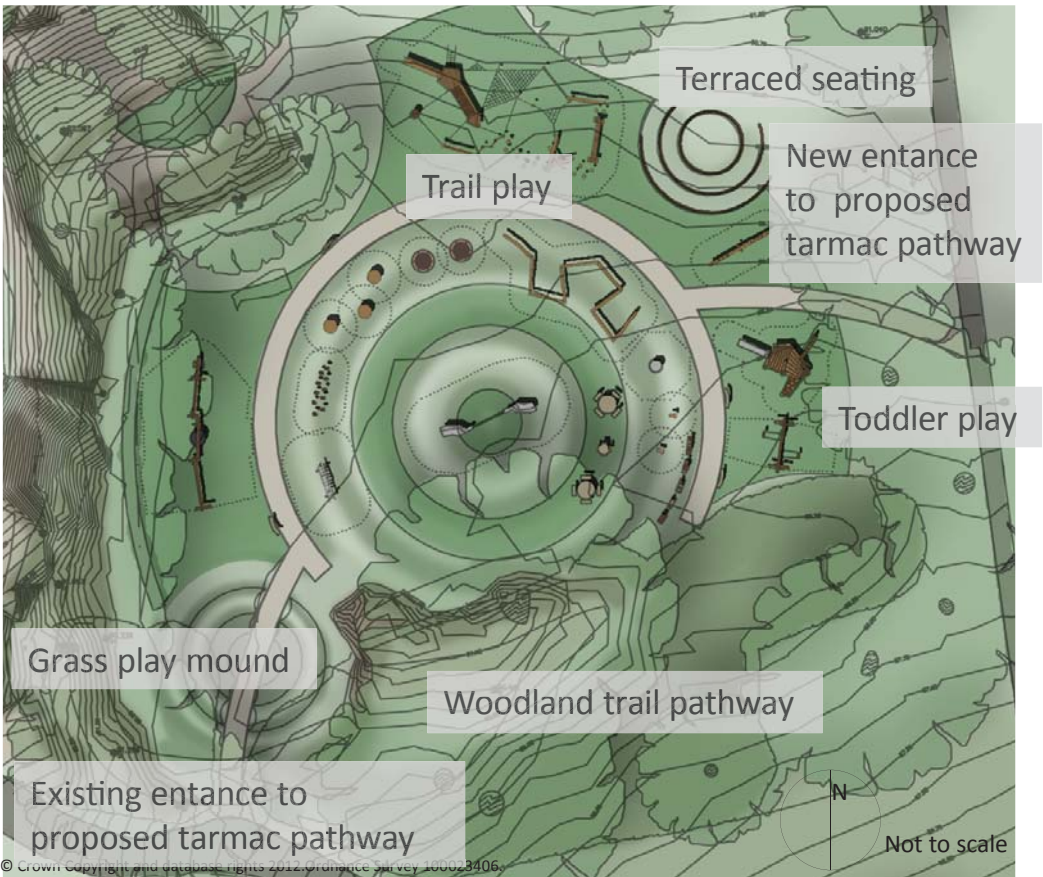
Sketch design

A sketch design was developed in consultation with the Downs Committee and various groups.



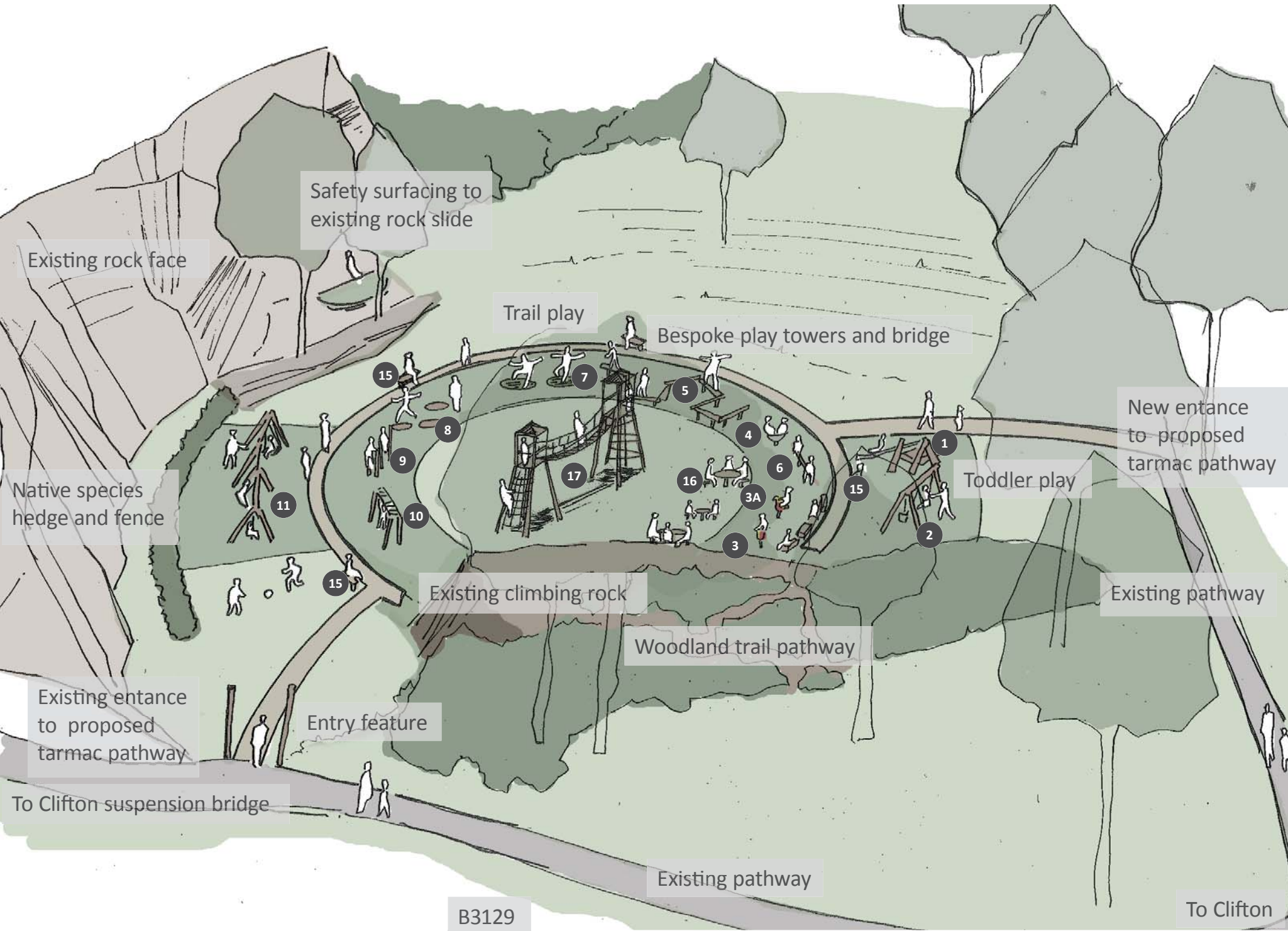
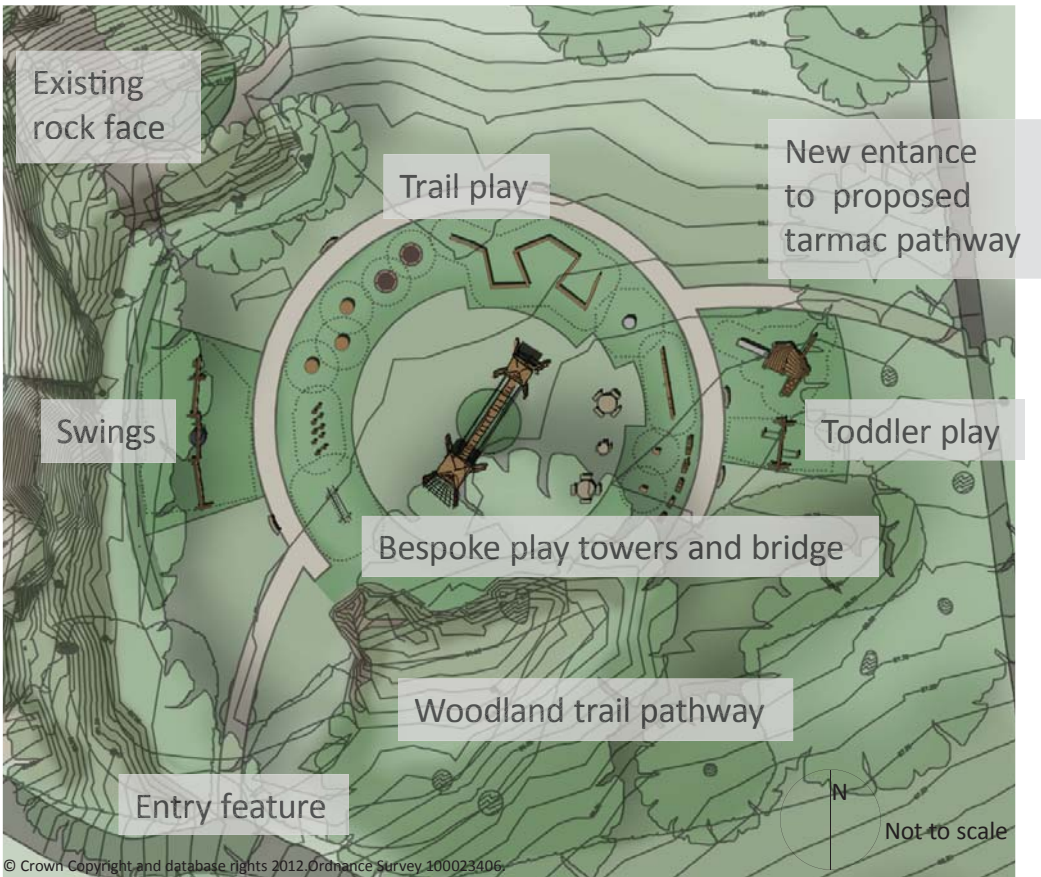
Option 1

This option shows a range of play equipment types and features that could be included.
Photographic examples are shown on page 4.



Option 2

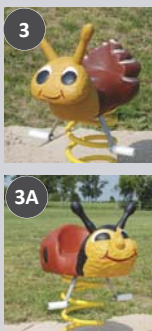
This option shows a simplified layout without some of the landscape features but with a bespoke tower and bridge unit to replace the timber agility and rock climber in sketch 1. The tower and bridge unit is an example of what could be provided but not necessarily the final design.



Play equipment

What could the play equipment be?

- The play equipment needs to provide for 0 - 12 year olds
- The choice of play equipment should enable such activities as climbing, swinging, sliding, jumping, spinning, rocking with balancing and agility equipment too.
- Timber play equipment is being proposed as it would integrate with the surroundings.
- Seating is also to be included, with picnic tables and benches
- The pictures below show a range of play equipment that could be installed.
- A selection from this or a similar range is proposed for the Downs play area



- 1 Timber play house
- 2 Cradle seat swings
- 3 Snail Springer
- 3A Ladybird Springer
- 4 Spinning dish
- 5 Snake balance beams

- 6 See-saw 4 seats
- 7 Round trampolines
- 8 Bouncing plates
- 9 Balance poles
- 10 Waving ladder
- 11 Multi-swing combination

- 12 Multi-unit 'Lausanne'
- 13 Rox wall x 2 with spider net
- 14 Small train
- 15 Timber bench
- 16 Picnic benches
- 17 Alternative bespoke timber towers and bridge



Thank you

Please leave your comments about the Clifton Downs play area project online at www.bristol.gov.uk/cliftonplay or if you're not online, feedback forms can be found at the Clifton Library, Princess Victoria Street.

Comments to be returned by 8th March 2013.

Play your part in the future of the play area by giving us your feedback.

Clifton Downs Play Area Project
Bristol Parks
Bristol City Council
4th Floor Brunel House, St Georges Road
Bristol BS1 5UY
www.bristol.gov.uk/cliftonplay



Option 1

Positive Feedback	Negative Feedback
<p>+++ Terraced Seating. Lots of variety. Safe and Secure. Greater variety of choice. Good design and use of space. Looks like a great playground. Looks great like the play trail. Excellent idea. Looks amazing. Good mix of play structures. Looks like a fun, active and well designed play space. Like the use of landscape features. Good to leave it unfenced. Don't add any fencing. Love the climbing wall.</p>	<p>Don't like grass mounds. Too cluttered. Needs more kit for older kids. Needs bigger swings. We cant afford this. Need PCSOs instead. Both designs are profoundly unsatisfactory.</p>
<p>Queries/ Issues / suggestions</p> <p>Why tarmac paths? Do we need formal footpaths? Why use safety surfacing? Safety surfacing not needed for rock slide leave it alone. Can you add abseil points to rock face? Artificial bouldering rocks (for adults too)? Zip Wire? A bbq or place for takeaway bbqs? Would like fence. An autistic child lives nearby but cannot use the site as she runs out. Could natural fencing be considered also to keep dogs out.</p>	

Downs CPG Summary of Consultation

Option 2

Positive Feedback	Negative Feedback
<p>Love the look of Option 2. Like the idea of the central tower and bridge. The bridge is a nice idea. Really like this option especially the bridge. The bridge is a good addition. Like the towers as a central feature. Like the suspension bridge as an historic element.</p>	<p>A stripped down version of Option 1. Dislike the bespoke play towers and entry feature. Too cluttered. Not so keen on bespoke tower. Feels quite empty compared to option 1. Less interesting than Option 1. Bespoke tower is overkill. Not keen on this it looks boring. Less interesting areas for interaction and free play. This has less on offer. Would rather option 1 with more facilities than a showcase bridge. Good mix of play structures but not as varied as option 1 Entry feature is irrelevant as site can be accessed from three directions.</p>

Other comments received:

The Climbing Academy: Interested in the Rox Wall proposal and would like to be involved, offer knowledge and advice, would like to develop teenage/adult facilities as in Heeley Park, Sheffield with artificial boulders.

Julia Killingham: Julia has a number of comments and proposals on the 2 options and would like the story about Giant Vincent to be developed.

FoDAG: Don't like either proposal as they are unsympathetic to the site and intrusive in form and layout. They suggest either 'doing nothing' or minimal change.

