

Skatepark Working Group Community Consultation

19/05/2024

Biodiversity hump worst option. Take details afterwards

A query was raised over whether there are funds available from the parish council which needs to be spent or lost. Two different councillors disagreeing slightly therefore it is not clear whether there are funds available or not.

A member of the public said that a having a skatepark in Peel park would make them fearful of walking through the park at night, esp elderly people. Concern that it isn't lit. This will need to be something that the skatepark working group consider if either of the Peel park locations are shown as favourites by the community.

Question – have we looked at other facilities for the same money. Answer: our working group is only looking at a skatepark, therefore we are not reviewing how else the proposed budget could be spent within the community.

Question - Have we looked at privately owned sites? A: the sites considered are central to the village which is recommended for reducing anti social behaviour of facilities. Purchasing private land would likely be in a more remote location which would lead to more anti-social behaviour. Suggestion to add an extra line to the survey made to capture any recommendations of sites which the working group should consider.

Question - What about buying a field above peel park. A – This would likely take extra time and incur additional cost because need to also buy the land. As above, the survey will include a text field for other areas which could be considered.

A member of the public suggested that we should go for the less contentious site even if it is more difficult or expensive.

Another resident: Parish council has made a decision that they will make a skatepark but he is concerned that they have made the decision without sufficient information especially a project plan and how much of the cost is expected to be covered by the community (e.g. via a pre-cep). This is the biggest project ever undertaken by the PC and therefore needs to be well managed.

A: The first step, once the site is decided, is to get planning permission for the agreed site. This doesn't commit the PC to spend any money on the build phase. We need to secure the funds for the build phase prior to commencing build. Therefore the PC is not liable to build commitments which it cannot meet. We aim to raise the required money for the build phase through various national grants and there is possibility to look for local quarries to provide the materials for free (as has happened with other skatepark projects in the area). We need to make a plan to show where we expect the funding for each phase to come from.

Q: Noise, no assessment made to date. A skatepark will be used when it is sunny which is a lot of the day. If the site is elevated (such as West side of Peel Park), the noise will travel further. The resident thinks that a skatepark filling the proposed West side of Peel Park area is too big for the village. The resident wants to hear better noise mitigation proposals.

A: Agree that noise needs to be considered and mitigated as far as possible. However, suggests that the selection of the site is required first such that the working group can work with the designer to mitigate the noise for the specific site selected. This will be a prerequisite for planning permission on the selected site and therefore will not be missed.

Q: Have we talked to local residents close to the other skateparks/pump tracks in the local area? What is the feeling from those people? A – not specifically but we have engaged with the group who delivered the Temple Cloud pump track and Cheddar pumptrack and skatepark, neither group has raised concerns about their communities having negative feelings towards their facilities.

A public member mentioned that if 6 members of the parish can demand a parish poll then the council is then obliged to pay for a poll. This could be a mechanism for ensuring that the community is consulted. A – the survey should ensure the community has their say.

Also suggested that people with strong opinions about the skatepark can come and join the working group in order to ensure that their concerns are adequately addressed.

Ruth: A paper survey will go out in the parish newsletter. It will go to all people in LA. Everyone who receives the letter can vote. Additionally it will also be available online. It is very hard to pay for a completely secure vote but she is trying to make it as secure as possible. We will do our best to make it as accessible to as many people as possible. This will allow the PC to vote based on the results of the survey capturing what the community feels. Therefore there are lots of time and ways you can make your voice heard, whatever your perspective of the skatepark proposal.

Resident: commends the working group for their time and effort. Also for going to the school and engaging and then stopping what was going to happen. He believes it was a very important step to ensure the right design is selected for the community. He wishes us good luck. (thank you!)

Resident: Goes to Peel park everyday. Feels that the money could be better spent on fixing pot-holes.

Resident: Where will the money come from for maintenance and who will maintain the park?

A: We need to create a maintenance plan. The plan is to agree an allocation of budget from the PC to maintain it.

Resident: has there been an environmental assessment – there are bats, sloe worms and other wildlife in the park which could be impacted by the skatepark.

A: An environmental assessment is required prior to digging, but we need to engage the community first and ensure the community has its voice heard over which site should be selected. Once this is done, an environmental assessment will be required as part of planning permission.

Resident: Thanks for organising the session and allowing this discussion, we hope to get a skatepark soon.

Resident: All the concerns being mentioned will be addressed through the planning stage of the project, whichever site is selected. Suggests that we get rid of the two which they believe are not viable (Birdwell school & redevelopment of the existing play park). Regularly visits local skateparks

with family and they are great places and are a real asset to children. It would be a great facility for the community. But we need to get on with it!

Resident: Recently went to Nailsea skatepark and it was a positive environment and enjoyable trip. The perception of skateparks only attracting antisocial behaviour are not right.

Resident: Went to a presentation from Temple Cloud and their pump track was 65k. Why is our proposed park so much more?

A: That didn't include construction costs because these were free. The differences between skateparks and pump tracks were discussed mentioning that skateparks give more versatility and creativity of lines (than a pump track with really only one or two line), but in doing so cover a larger area which can account for increased costs.

Resident: What areas of Leigh woods have we considered? Thinks that the vote might be too premature.

A – currently none. Would children from Long Ashton be able to easily get to Leigh Woods? The working group is trying to find the site which is best for the community. The council bring everything together and ensures that all working group projects work together and do not fight one another. Currently the council are supporting our approach to engage people. The proposed survey is an engagement vote. The survey has an option: "I don't want a SP in my village" plus will include a text field for other suggestions for sites (beyond the 4 presented).

Resident: They do not want it to be which is the least worst. We should find the right location which doesn't have a lot of resistance from the local residents.

A: The survey will allow the whole community to provide their order of preference for the sites.

Resident: The skatepark probably hasn't been built and is meeting resistance because there isn't a right place for it in our village.

A: The skatepark won't please everyone. The role of the working group is to the community and mitigate any concerns identified by the community as far as possible. The PC will decide what goes ahead and where.

Resident: If you look at the other parks, they are all in towns and all very central. There are 5 other skateparks in the local area. The community centre car park is already full. Kings Cross currently has a parking issue due to the park. Fire engine's couldn't get through as it is. The resident is concerned that further parking could be dangerous/become a hazard.

A: The aim of the working group is to provide a local facility to benefit the locals. Parking issue will need to be part of the planning permission assessment and will therefore have to be considered and appropriately mitigated. It is likely that the park would be busy (and attract visitors) when it first opens, but will quiet down once settled in and people have visited it once or twice.

Resident: Is concerned that due to the large expansion of the village over the past decade that the facilities of the village have not kept pace with the number of residents. Therefore residents are forced to drive to other facilities because they are not the right ones in the village. The resident is

concerned that the environmental impact of this itself is large and counters the arguments being made about the creation of the park destroying the local wildlife. There is a real need for the skatepark within the village for the numerous families that live in the village.

Resident: Has a concern about the U11 football pitches. Are the working group still looking at other sites?

A: we are working with the football group to ensure that it works with football. The working group is not wedded to a site. We will listen to other suggestions.

Resident: one person has driven the project on for themselves, not for the community.

A: The previous working group was working in response to a survey from the children of the village who were asking for a skatepark. It was not done solely for one person.

Resident: Two proposed sites seem infeasible which only leaves Peel park. As a resident adjacent to Peel Park it is concerning that Peel Park has (almost) already been selected.

A: Please let us know if you can think of a better site. Wherever we put it, someone will have opposition to it.

Resident: The skatepark is a bit of a dead duck for the current locations.

A: The working group is performing community engagement to ensure that it is right for the community. Surveys from the schools showed that the children want a skatepark and pump track. We will consult on location first and then features afterwards to ensure we get both right for the community. We have a wide range of people on the working group to ensure we hear from a diverse group and the survey will cover all ages.

Resident: is there going to be a dedicated entrance to the park? Because the public right of way currently prevents people coming in with cycles (narrow entrance).

A: This will need to be considered if one of the Peel Park sites is the preference of the community.

Resident: You need a detailed project plan otherwise this will never succeed

A: The previous working group employed a manager & had a plan. The current engagement events are to ensure we get the right site and then we will update the plan once we have agreed the site.

Resident: Is there time to review the survey prior to it going out to residents? The resident does not feel that they have had time to input their views.

A: The survey has been created and will be adjusted following the consultation today to add an option for the purchase of private land. The working group will report back to the council to provide the results. There are opportunities for you to influence the decisions; meetings, surveys, planning permission.

Resident: Perhaps there is a professional planning consultant in the village who might be able to support the project which could be a valuable asset to the working group?

A – Agree, if someone is identified they would be welcome to join the project.

Resident (discussion after the meeting, they didn't want to speak in the open discussion) – there is a biodiversity action plan in place for the village which has been passed by the council. This needs to be taken into account for all decisions by the PC. The PC has a legal obligation to consider it. The site on the West side of Peel Park (the hump) is an well established ecological area. Although today it is mainly grass, there is a real opportunity to make it much more enhanced for biodiversity which would be be hindered if this site was selected by the community. This will need to be considered by the working group and PC going forward.