

Application Number: DM/2019/01333

Proposal: Relocation of children's playground at Chippenham Mead Village Green, Monmouth

Address: Chippenham Mead Playground, Chippenhamgate Street, Monmouth

Applicant: Mike Moran

Plans: Site Plan MH-7254 - , Tree Protection Plan 190606-CMPA-TPP-NB - , Tree Protection Plan 190605-CMPA-TCP +Proposals-NB - , Other Images of Play Equipment - , Tree Survey Tree Survey - , Design and Access Statement Design and Access Statement - ,

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Mr David Wong
Date Valid: 19.08.2019

This application is presented to Planning Committee because it is a Council planning application

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

1.1 This application is seeking the relocation of children's playground at the Chippenham Playing Field. The existing play area is known as the Chippenham Mead Playground, which is situated off Chippenhamgate Street in Monmouth. It is understood that the play equipment is coming to the end of its life and some items are beyond economic repair. Following an inspection by the Council's insurers the play area had to be closed to the public for a short time in 2017 on the grounds of user safety, until repair works were undertaken. In 2014 the Council allocated £85,000 from local Section 106 funding to upgrade the existing play area or to move it to another location on the village green. That funding was due to have been used by the end of June 2019, but the developer has agreed to extend the 'use by' date for this money until the end of June 2021.

1.2 It is understood that there has been extensive consultation with local users, the Town Council and other organisations regarding the play area over the last three years. The vast majority of responses received have been in favour of relocating the play area rather than refurbishing it in its existing location. In July 2018, the County Council's Cabinet decided that it wished to relocate the play area to a different part of the village green and authorised officers to submit a planning application and a village green consent application to achieve this outcome.

1.3 The proposed new play area will have a similar footprint to the existing play area. The proposal is to reinstate the site to an open grassed area with some tree planting. The current play area is enclosed by a 1.2m high bow top fence, which measures 107m in length. The new play area will have a much shorter length of enclosure fencing. The new play area is triangular in shape and there will be three shorter lengths of 1.2m high bow top fencing, each measuring 13m in length. This equates to 71m less fencing than that relating to the existing play area.

1.4 In terms of the design of the new play area, its detailed layout is not yet finalised at this stage as the Council's Recreation Department intends to hold a public consultation exercise with the stakeholders to make sure that the new provision reflects the needs and aspirations of the users. However, for the purpose of this planning application, images of certain items of play equipment which it is intended to incorporate in the new play area have been submitted. There is one vehicular access point onto the village green from a field gate located immediately adjacent to the

entrance to the Monmouth Sportsground. This access will be used by any construction vehicles used to carry out the play area installation works.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)

Reference Number	Description	Decision	Decision Date
None			

3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Strategic Policies

S5 LDP Community and Recreation Facilities
S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

Development Management Policies

DES1 LDP General Design Considerations
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection
GI1 LDP Green Infrastructure
HE1 LDP Development in Conservation Areas
MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations

4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10

The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.

The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all.

5.0 REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 Consultation Replies

Monmouth Town Council – Recommend approval.

MCC Public Rights of Ways – No response.

MCC Heritage Management – There is no adverse heritage comment to make. The proposal is within the Monmouth Conservation Area, Monmouth ASA and the Registered Park and Garden G16, Grade II, the latter two GGAT and Cadw shall comment on. It is considered the proposal will not harm the special character of the conservation area or harm the setting of the listed buildings at Henry Burton Court.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust – No objection; an archaeological condition is requested. It is considered, as the proposed development will be of a relatively small scale, that pre-determination works are not necessary on this occasion. However, it is noted that the detailed play area layout has not been finalised at this stage and the possible installation of a soakaway is included within the proposed works (Design and Access Statement, sections 3.7 and 4.2).

Consequently, given the proposed development's location and the results of previous archaeological investigations, it is highly likely that archaeological remains will be encountered during any ground disturbance works.

Cadw – No response.

LERC Search Results – There are ecological records identified within close proximity of the site.

5.2 Neighbour Notification

There are a total of five letters of support:

The current playground site is abysmally located - and always has been polluted, dirty from vehicular debris and grime. This is a fantastic opportunity to remake a much needed play space for this town's children.

Current site is cut-off, unpleasant and passed by intolerable levels of traffic.

Please do not prioritise pollutants and vehicles passing by the town - not even through it - over a prefunded gesture of care and appreciation towards your constituents, families and children.

Children's activities, including creative, non-competitive play should be part of the main park, not hidden in a corner.

The current site has cars parked directly next to the fence on one side (meaning it's impossible to let children safely wander) and a dual carriageway on the other (right next to traffic lights, where pollution is at its peak). The mental and physical wellbeing of the town's children could be improved by this move.

This is a fantastic opportunity to equip the younger people of the town with the amenities they deserve.

The existing play area is dark, dilapidated, and within range of the many fumes from the dual carriageway that could permanently damage the lungs of our children.

The pollution tests when previously carried out were done so based on Adult heights, not those of children, and as pollution is heavier than other components in the environment levels are almost certainly far worse at child-height than at those measured.

The opportunity to make "Chippy Fields" a destination for families in the town should not be passed up, and I strongly commend this application to the committee.

The existing play area is very old and outdated.

Because of noise and air pollution it was decided to move the playground within Chippenham Mead which has necessitated the planning application.

The aim of this application also to replace the existing playground of metal materials with natural materials and make the space more eco-friendly for the benefit of the community and town.

There are other playgrounds which are also getting older and erected with metal materials.

6.0 EVALUATION

6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1 Policy S5 of the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) relates to Community and Recreation Facilities. This policy advises that development proposals that provide and/or enhance community and recreation facilities will be permitted within or adjoining town and village development boundaries subject to detailed planning considerations. Development proposals that result in the unjustified loss of community and recreation facilities will not be permitted.

6.1.2 This application is for the relocation of a play area, including the installation of new play equipment. It is noted that the existing play equipment is coming to the end of its life and some items are beyond economic repair. In addition, the current location of the play area is poor i.e. in a hidden corner and is close to the A40 trunk road. There will be no loss of the existing community facility and there would be an enhancement of this amenity by the installation of new play equipment in a more appropriate location, in accordance with Policy S5 of the LDP.

6.2 Design/ Place making

6.2.1 As noted in the application, the detailed layout and design of the new play equipment are not yet finalised at this stage. A public consultation exercise with the stakeholders would ensure that the new equipment reflects the needs and aspirations of the users. Notwithstanding this, it is advised that the highest equipment would be approximately 2.6m from the ground to the top of the frame.

6.2.2 It is considered that the design and appearance of the proposed play equipment would be visually acceptable in this setting. Although the final layout of this new play area is not yet finalised, it is possible to control the overall height and the design of the play equipment via the use of a planning condition. In terms of place making, the existing play area is poorly located with little natural surveillance, whereas the new location, it is within the Chippenham Playing Field itself and is an open space. In addition, the new play area is in a car free area, unlike the existing play area, which is located immediately adjacent to Chippenhamgate Street,

6.2.3 Given the above, the new play area should offer a safer environment for its users than the existing site. Furthermore, the new play area is further away from the A40 than the existing play area and it will be screened by the mature tree line and the earth bund along the boundary of the playing field. Therefore, the noise and air pollution from the A40 will be significantly reduced, offering a safer, more secure and pleasant environment, in accordance with Policy DES1 of the LDP. As mentioned above, the detail of the equipment will be requested and agreed before installation.

6.3 Impact on Amenity / Promoting Healthier Places

6.3.1 The closest residential properties are those at Henry Burton Court. However, there is sufficient distance between these properties and the proposed play area - approximately 40m - to ensure that residential amenity is not adversely affected, in accordance with Policy EP1 of the LDP.

6.3.2 The proposed play area is actually within the playing field itself and that should encourage more people to use the play equipment, which supports Welsh Government policy (Planning Policy Wales Edition 10) to promote healthier places.

6.4 Active and Social Places

6.4.1 The existing play area not well located with little natural surveillance and the equipment is coming to the end of its life. The new play area will be located within the playing field itself. It is considered that the location of the new play area will offer better/new equipment as well as a safer, more secure and more pleasant environment than the existing play area. Therefore, it should promote better use of the play equipment and enable people to engage with each other, which is in accordance with Policy DES1 of the LDP and the Planning Policy Wales Edition 10, which embraces the creation of active and social places.

6.5 Access / Highway Safety

6.5.1 The nature of this application will unlikely to attract a significant amount of traffic movements by users. In terms of access for the construction and maintenance vehicles, there is currently a vehicular access point onto the playing field from a field gate located immediately adjacent to the entrance to the Monmouth Sportsground. This access will be used by any construction vehicles involved in the installation works. It is understood that this access point is used on a regular basis throughout the year for grounds maintenance purposes. Therefore, it is considered to be acceptable and does not conflict with Policy MV1 of the LDP.

6.6 Tourism

6.6.1 Monmouth Town is one of the main tourism destinations for Monmouthshire. The location of the existing play area is poor and its equipment is coming to the end of its life and some items are

beyond economic repair. It is considered that this proposal i.e. an improved location and new play equipment, would be a valuable asset for the local residents and would also enhance visitors' experience of the town, especially, for families with children.

6.7 Historic Environment

6.7.1 The site lies within a registered park and garden, Monmouth's Conservation Area and an Archaeologically Sensitive Area. It is in a sensitive location so its design and layout needs to be sympathetic to the area. Although the layout of the play area is not yet finalised, the majority of the equipment will be constructed from sustainable hardwoods and it will be set well apart. In addition, the siting of the playground in this location (being located towards the corner of the field) is not considered to have significant harm to the special character of the conservation area or harm the setting of the listed buildings at Henry Burton Court.

6.7.2 According to Planning Policy Wales Edition 10, planning authorities should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interest of parks and gardens and their settings included on the register of historic parks and gardens in Wales. This application is minor in scale and will be located to the corner of the wider playing field. It is considered that the scale of the proposed railings and hardstanding would be minimal and so the value of this Historic Park and Garden would be protected and conserved.

6.7.3 There is no objection from Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust as the proposal is of a relatively small scale; no pre-determination works are considered necessary on this occasion. However, they note from the application's supporting documents that the detailed play area layout has not been finalised at this stage and the possible installation of a soakaway are included within the proposed works (Design and Access Statement, sections 3.7 and 4.2). Consequently, given the proposed development's location and the results of previous archaeological investigations, it is highly likely that archaeological remains will be encountered during any ground disturbance works. Therefore, an archaeological condition and informative is requested.

6.7.4 The Council no longer uses wet pour rubber as a safety surfacing material; it uses artificial turf with safety shock pads installed underneath, which is natural-looking. Also, it is the intention of this project to minimise the amount safety surfacing used i.e. it would only be used if it is absolutely necessary. The remainder of the site will have a natural grass surface to respect the setting of the surrounding natural environment, which is in accordance with Policy GI1 of the LDP. A hard landscaping scheme shall be agreed prior to installation by condition.

6.8 Biodiversity

6.8.1 It is noted that there are ecological features on the playing field but no tree will be removed as a result of this application. It is considered that the amount of ground disturbance is not significant and no lighting is proposed under this application. Therefore, no further ecological information is requested. However, the standard ecological informative will be applied to the decision notice should the application be approved.

6.9 Flooding / Drainage

6.9.1 The scale of this proposal is minor and the proposed hard surfacing would be set well apart within the site, the majority of the area being grassed. Therefore, it is considered that this proposal would not result in any significant additional flood risk in the area and/or cause flooding elsewhere.

6.10 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

6.11.1 The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales has been considered, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been taken into account and it is considered that this recommendation is in accordance with the sustainable

development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

6.11 Conclusion

6.11.1 It is considered that the result of this application would create a safer and more secure play space for the children than the existing play area can offer. The new play area is on an existing playing field and is well screened by the existing mature tree line along the boundary. Also, it is located further away from the A40 with less pollution than the existing play area. In addition, it has minimal impact on the historic setting of the site and is in accordance with Policies S5, S13, S17, DES1, EP1, G11, HE1 and MV1 of the LDP. Therefore, this application is supported subject to condition.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

1 This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below.

REASON: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.

3 No development shall take place until full details of hard landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall be carried out prior to the beneficial use of the approved development and remain as such in perpetuity.

REASON: To ensure the long term maintenance of the landscape amenities of the area and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy G11.

4 No development shall take place until full details of the equipment have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall be carried out prior to the beneficial use of the approved development and shall remain as such in perpetuity.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with Policies DES1 and HE1 of the LDP.

5. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured agreement for a written scheme of historic environment mitigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the programme of work will be fully carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards of the written scheme.

Reason: To identify and record any features of archaeological interest discovered during the works, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource.

INFORMATIVES

1 Due to the minor nature of the proposed development (including any demolition) and the location of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals did not need to be screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

2 Please note that Bats are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection includes bats and places used as bat roosts, whether a bat is present at the time or not.

If bats are found during the course of works, all works must cease and Natural Resources Wales contacted immediately. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) (0300 065 3000).

3 All birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The protection also covers their nests and eggs. To avoid breaking the law, do not carry out work on trees, hedgerows or buildings where birds are nesting. The nesting season for most birds is between March and September.

4 We also recommend that a note should be attached to the planning consent explaining that: The archaeological work must be undertaken to the appropriate Standard and Guidance set by Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), (www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa) and it is recommended that it is carried out either by a CIfA Registered Organisation (www.archaeologists.net/ro) or an MCIfA level accredited Member.