

North Heatons Play Area

Report of Services to Place Management: Greenspace Team

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1 The siting of a new play area in the North Heatons Ward at either Heaton Moor Park or Peel Moat Open Space.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 Further to the provision of £117,311.43 in Section 106 funds for play improvements. The contributions have been received from developments DC050793, the former Stockport College and DC052816, Buckinghamshire Road. Both are eligible to be invested at Heaton Moor Park and Peel Moat Open Space
- 2.2 There is a further £12,096.32 in commuted sums allocated to Heaton Moor Park made up from various smaller contributions. These can only be invested at Heaton Moor Park.
- 2.3 Community consultation was undertaken between the 10th September 2018 and 4th November 2018. The consultation pack is attached for reference.
- 2.4 The questionnaire presented the community with two options for the siting of the play area in the North Heatons Ward; Heaton Moor Park or Peel Moat Open Space. The same play equipment was proposed for each site.
- 2.5 The consultation questionnaire was hosted online via Stockport Councils website.
- 2.6 The consultation was promoted using the following methods;
- Stockport Councils social media.
 - Friends of Heaton Moor social media.
 - St Thomas Primary School social media.
 - Posters placed in Peel Moat Open Space, Heaton Moor Park and Thornfield Park.
 - Letters sent to residents that neighbour Peel Moat Open Space and Heaton Moor Park.
- 2.7 There were 535 responses to the online questionnaire.
- 2.8 79% of the respondents were a parent, grandparent or carer of a child under the age of 14 years old.
- 2.9 78% of respondents felt it was important that children of different ages and abilities can play together in one shared space.
- 2.10 57% of respondents preferred Heaton Moor Park as the location for the new play area.

2.11 Common themes from the consultation on why Heaton Moor Park was preferred are;

- Its good accessibility.
- Semi supervision from other park users.
- Compliments and enhances the parks other facilities

2.12 41% of respondents preferred Peel Moat Open Space as the location for the new play area.

2.13 Common themes for why Peel Moat Open Space was preferred are;

- Its currently an under utilised space.
- It's a larger space that can better accommodate a play area.
- Its good accessibility from the local primary schools that neighbour the greenspace.

2.14 The Friends of Heaton Moor Park, a key stakeholder, are strongly opposed the development of a new play area in Heaton Moor Park. In a letter to residents, the Friends felt Peel Moat Open Space represented a better option for the following reasons;

- It would spread local recreational facilities over a wider area while preserving well used and much loved space in Heaton Moor Park
- It is easily accessible by the community and St Thomas Primary School and the Heatons School.
- Peel Moat is currently an unappealing and poorly laid out.
- Conversion to a playground would provide some protection against further housing.

2.15 Common themes from the consultation against siting the play area at Heaton Moor Park are;

- It would detract from the parks historical character
- Space is limited within the greenspace.
- Play and sport would dominate the park to the detriment of other park users.

2.16 Common themes from the consultation against siting the play area at Peel Moat Open Space were;

- It's a secluded and isolated space vulnerable to anti social behaviour
- No natural supervision from other park users / passers by.
- Less accessible than Heaton Moor Park.

2.17 Stockport Council uses the Fields in Trust, Six Acres standard to classify its play spaces. The new play area would be classified as a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP).

- 2.18 Fields in Trust use a general rule that a LEAP will attract families from within 400 metres of its boundary (approximately 5 minutes walk). There are 1840 households within 400 metres of Heaton Moor Park and there are 840 households within 400 metres of Peel Moat Open Space. A visual showing the catchment zones of the play areas that cover the North Heaton's Ward is attached.
- 2.19 It is good practice to site a LEAP, at least 20 metres from a residential boundary. At both Heaton Moor Park and Peel Moat Open Space, the play area proposals are 30 metres from residential boundaries.
- 2.20 The delivery of the new play area would require all the committed sums allocating to the preferred site. Given the proximity of the greenspaces to one another there would be no advantage to duplicating play provision at each site. Although this remains an option to the Area Committee.
- 2.21 It is proposed that the new play area be sited in Heaton Moor Park.
- 2.22 The proposal for Heaton Moor Park would see the existing toddler play area landscaped and new play area for both toddler and junior age groups provided in the one shared play space next to the tennis court.
- 2.23 The play area sketch design will require amendments to the layout and type of play equipment in light of the consultation. The Greenspace Team will use this opportunity to carry out some further consultation with key stakeholders.
- 2.23 Improvements to the quality of Peel Moat Open ongoing. Work on a swale has recently complete, to aid drainage of the greenspace. A small community orchard (approx. 20 trees) will be planted in January 2019.
- 2.24 There is currently £158,000 ring fenced to Peel Moat Open Space for the remediation of the artificial pitch to a grass football pitch. There currently is no timeframe for the delivery of this at this time and this area of the park has been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that Area Committee support the proposal to locate the new play area in Heaton Moor Park.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Richard Booker on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 4829 or alternatively email richard.booker@stockport.gov.uk