Results from the wheel-sports (skate park) facility consultation

December 2014

This report is compiled from a range of feedback we received from local residents and stakeholders. It includes responses given during face-to-face and telephone conversations, email enquiries and the online consultation.

A web-based survey ran from 30 October to 1 December 2014 asking members of the public to state their preference from the three approximate locations, identified within Charlton Park for a new wheel-sports facility. These were:

- **Site A** – in the north-west corner of the old running track, close to the Pavilion and entrance by Mulberry Close.
- **Site B** – in the green area north of the children’s play area
- **Site C** – in the south-east corner of the park at the corner of Cemetery Lane and Charlton Park Lane.

74 respondents took part in the on-line survey, and 47 left their contact details. The results are as follows:

- Preference for site A – 50% (37)
- Preference for site B – 15% (11)
- Preference for site C – 35% (26)
Location of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post code prefix</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DA15*</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME2*</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE10</td>
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<td>41</td>
</tr>
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<td>SE9</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
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(*) addresses outside of the Royal Borough

Comments

Here are summaries of the comments made about the different sites, both in the on-line survey and through other feedback:

Site A

- Nearest to bus stops and is close to park amenities.
- Best location in terms of the participants’ safety.
- Co-location with other sporting facilities is a good idea.
- Too close to the Old Cottage Coffee Shop. It would disturb the customers there.
- Too close to the outdoor gym.

Site B

- Is close to park amenities.
× Too close to Riding for the Disabled Association’s paddock.
× Too close to the children’s play area.

Site C

✓ Would cause the least disruption to local residents.
✓ Has good transport links and is close to Queen Elizabeth II Hospital.
✓ This site offers the most space for development.
× Cut off from the rest of the park.
× No infrastructure here: may require toilet facilities and floodlighting.
× Would lose too much green space.
× Too close to the cemetery.
× No pathways leading to this site and too far from an entrance.

Other comments

• Need to consider access for emergency vehicles.
• Please consider a water fountain and appropriate shelter.
• Please consider use for younger children you use scooters and peddle-free bikes.
• The presence of teenagers may be off-putting for the older users of the outdoor gym.
• Please renovate the toilets.
• This will really add value to people with young children and families.
• The Royal Borough needs a modern facility of this type. My son has to travel to Mudchute to use the park there.

Your questions answered

A number of themes and questions have been raised in feedback from residents and stakeholders to date, and we hope that we are able to address the majority of these below.

What is a wheel-sports facility? Isn’t it just a skate park?

We have used the term ‘wheel-sports facility’ as well as ‘Skate Park because we want the new facility to be suitable for a range of other self-propelled wheeled sports equipment, such as kick scooters, in-line skates, and wheelchairs, as well as skateboards.

Why is a wheel-sports skate park facility being built?

Skateboarding and other wheeled sports are coming increasingly popular and there is a demand for a new facility in the Royal Borough. The existing skate facility in Royal Arsenal Gardens is underused and has not been popular with a significant number of local skaters. The site of the current skate park is due to be redeveloped so the park will need to close in September 2015. Part of the planning agreement with the Royal Arsenal developers is that
funding will be provided for a replacement skate park within a two-mile radius of Royal Arsenal Gardens.

**Will I be able to see, and comment on how the new skate park will look?**

Yes. This initial consultation was to gauge feedback on some of the options for the potential location, as well as give people an opportunity to become more involved as plans are developed in the future. We will work with skaters, riders and other stakeholders on the design of a facility and how it fits in with its surroundings.

Detailed plans will be made available as the project progresses, and the development will be open to the full planning process and further consultation.

**The skate park is replacing one in Woolwich, so why is it moving to Charlton?**

Potential users were consulted on what needs to be considered when building a new skate park and the decision of Charlton Park as a location was made by the Council’s Cabinet. The demand for a skate park has been a borough-wide issue and Charlton Park was deemed as the best location in terms of its transport links to other parts of the Royal Borough, alongside existing accessibility, infrastructure and local amenities.

It was seen that the addition of a skate park would integrate with the other sport and leisure facilities in Charlton Park. There are many families and young people living in the area that would benefit from a facility of this type, including pupils at the neighbouring Charlton Park Academy – which allows for a first class facility on the doorstep of the school.

Hornfair Park, which some have said could have been a potential site, has benefited from extensive investment from the London 2012 Olympic Legacy with the inclusion of the new BMX track, vastly improved lido, changing rooms and tennis courts. As the funding for the skate park does not limit the location to Woolwich, Charlton Park provides a good opportunity to deliver new investment across all areas of the Royal Borough.

**What will be done to prevent graffiti, vandalism and anti-social behaviour (ASB)?**

Skateboarding and other wheel-sports are constructive activities that require skill and focus. They are a way people of all ages derive exercise, enjoyment and social interaction. There is evidence to suggest that facilities of this type actually help to reduce ASB, as well as encouraging young people to become more active, particularly in outdoor sports.

The new facility will be constructed out of sprayed concrete, which is very durable and resistant to intentional damage. We will also endeavour to design out graffiti but where it occurs we will ensure it is removed promptly. The Royal Borough will work with the local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to ensure the facility remains safe for all users and the site will be covered by Royal Borough wardens and parks staff.
We will also ensure there is adequate lighting and consider whether CCTV may be used to provide a safe environment for skaters, as well as preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.

**What is being done to accommodate extra parking provision?**

There are no plans to create extra parking space in Charlton Park as part of this project. This was another reason why public transport links, and proximity to all parts of the Royal Borough, were an important factor in choosing where a new skate park should be built.

**Won’t this be an eyesore in Charlton Park?**

The Royal Borough is committed to ensuring that the new facility enhances the facilities and attractiveness of Charlton Park for current and new visitors. Modern skate park designs include measures such as the partial sinking of the facility below ground level, the use of coloured concrete, turf mounds and landscaping which can all help to make the facility fit sensitively into its surroundings.

The new facility will not look like the existing outdated Royal Arsenal Gardens skate park. We will work with stakeholders make sure the facility is attractive and fit for purpose. As well as being sensitive to the current layout and facilities in the Park, we can confirm that no trees will lost as part of this development.

**What will the hours of use be?**

Access to Charlton Park is not restricted at present and there are no plans to introduce restrictions. Planning permission is in place for floodlighting to be kept on until 9:00pm and the Royal Borough is not intending to request any extension as part of this project.

**What happens next?**

The Royal Borough is keen to work with local people and potential users on the design of this facility and how it fits in with its surrounding. A Core User Group will be set up to give input into what features there should be skaters and riders and a Stakeholder Forum will be established to involve local residents and other interested parties.

There will also be further consultation prior to a planning application being made details of which will be available in Greenwich Time, via the Royal Borough’s website and other means. The first Stakeholder Forum will meet on 14th January 2015. If you would like to take part, then please contact the project manager, Amy London, on 020 8921 5618 or email amy.london@royalgreenwich.gov.uk