

Ashley Down Green Proposed Play Area and Access Project

Bristol City Council Officers in parks and playground teams have been working closely with local councillors and Friends of Ashley Down Green (FADG) to produce a design for the new playground which reflects a wide range of views and ideas. At the most recent FADG AGM (July 2015), it was clear that some local residents felt improvements could be made to regular communication about plans for the new playground and Ashley Down Green in general. This list of FAQs may answer questions you have and also outlines next steps towards completing the playground in Spring/Summer 2016.

1. What stage is the proposed playground at now (January 2016)?

Bristol City Council is circulating the design for the playground during late January/early February 2016. This last phase of consultation will run for a couple of weeks and include a Saturday morning drop in session where the plans for the play area and the new access improvements at Stoney Lane can be viewed.

2. When and how will those who live adjoining the green be consulted about the plans?

Consultation of the proposed playground design will take place through January and into early February. This will consist of:

- A drop in session on a Saturday on Ashley Down Road.
- Information and links in local newspapers (Bishopston Voice & Bishopston Matters)
- Publicising through social Media
- Postal delivery to all properties surrounding ADG

3. When and how will local users of the green be consulted?

As above in point 2.

4. When will work start to build the play area?

The Council aim to begin work once the drier months arrive – hopefully April/May of this year. There is a need to consider the feedback following the consultation, undertake any revisions and then order the equipment.

There is potentially an 8 week lead in time on equipment orders, so by April/May works should have started.

5. What size will the play area be?

The play area is planned to be approximately 800 sq m. Children will also be able to play freely in the rest of the Green, for example, cycling round the existing paths.

6. Where on the Green will it be located?

The formal play area will be in the north-east section of the green in the area previously drained and levelled as part of the Ashley Down Development

7. Where will the funding come from to pay for this play area?

As part of the original Ashley Down Development, Bristol City Council received funds of £85,000 from the developers. This was specifically ring-fenced for the development of a play area on the Green.

8. Will the playground be fenced off?

Yes

9. What will the fencing be look like?

We are investigating a few options. Fencing details will be included in the plans.

10. What will the play area look like?

Based on feedback received so far, the playground will be designed to have an open look and feel with play elements that do not hinder the views but blend with the surrounding environment. The surfacing of the playground must not be bright or garish and must also blend into the environment as much as possible whilst considering: safety, maintenance, cost, aesthetics

11. What will equipment be made from?

The design of the playground and the equipment will be determined from the brief and the consultation carried out. The play equipment was discussed with local children and their responses will help to determine the type of play equipment that meets both BCC and the relevant EN and BN standards as per the Bristol Framework.

12. How big/high will equipment be?

The play area will contain a variety of play equipment of different sizes, including tall items to give children a sense of perspective.

13. Will it spoil the view from my home?

The playground is being planned to have an open look and feel with play elements that do not hinder views. The design will reflect the nature of this space, providing a low impact and natural play area which is complementary to the homes which border it on 3 sides and the small woodland on the 4th side. As part of this any taller and larger play apparatus will be placed at the lower, east side of the site to lessen visual impact.

14. Will it impact on the views across the green and the city?

As (11) above

15. Will there be space for local people to continue to enjoy the open space – eg for sunbathing, reading, etc?

The play area will cover an area of approx. 800 sq metres. The total size of the site is 11,000 square metres ensuring space for a variety of users and purposes.

16. Will there be space for dog- walkers to exercise their dogs?

Yes. It will be possible to walk around the outside of the play area. The other areas of the green are unaffected.

17. How are the needs of other users being considered?

Local groups, residents and children have been invited to contribute ideas for the green as a whole. Neighbourhood officers (Gary Brentnall and Matt Jones), Friends of Ashley Down Green (FADG), and local councillors collate and share responses from those who use the green and take these into consideration.

18. Will the play area encourage children to connect with nature?

Yes. Planting of suitable flowers and plants will take place once the play area has been built to encourage children to connect with nature. There are plans to create wildflower strips across parts of the green. The small wooded area to the east of the play area also provides a more natural environment.

19. Will natural structures be included – e.g. rocks and wooden structures?

Yes. It is planned to include some features such as wooden seating, timber balance beams alongside more durable play equipment but all must meet the required standards set out by the Bristol Framework provision.

20. Will there be equipment which is suitable for less able/disabled children?

Yes. The playground will include some play elements which are inclusive to all.

21. What about teenagers/young people, college students who visit the space?

The play park will be designed as originally intended for children up to age 13.

22. How will increased litter be dealt with?

There will be a new bin installed. The council's Play Inspection team will visit the new playground on a weekly basis to check the area and sort out any safety issues.

23. Will there be more bins?

The play area will have one bin as originally planned.

24. Noise – has there been an acoustic assessment?

No and it is not in the plan to do so. It is almost impossible to gauge the noise from a prospective playground as it would be dependent on numbers of children. Project Officers do not anticipate any problems with noise, and this has never happened in a playground in Bristol. An acoustic assessment is a tool which could be used later if it becomes necessary.

25. What happens if there is an increase in substance/alcohol abuse on-site?

There is often a perception that a new park might bring in new anti social issues. In the experience of Project Officers, this is rare – a new park also brings in many local residents, friends, neighbours and other visitors. In many ways this makes an area safer and more social. Any anti-social behaviour will need to be reported to the police. If necessary it can be arranged for your local police

community support officer to visit in the first few weeks. The police will also be invited to contribute to the consultation design.

26. How will the council counter vandalism, graffiti, anti-social behaviour?

The playground maintenance team will deal with issues on the playground on a weekly basis and any issues should be reported via the usual methods. There are funds set aside as part of the original agreement for this playground to pay for any issues like this to be sorted out quickly.

27. What do the council propose to prevent visitors to the play area parking in Dirac Rd (spaces there are allocated to owners of Dirac Rd properties only)

The proposed development is a small local playground. We have no plans to police this. It is not anticipated that many people will drive to this site.

28. There has been recent clearing of bushes and vegetation on the opposite end of ADG. What is going on there?

A new entrance linking Stoney Lane and the Green was intended as part of the original plan for the development of the site. It is part of the council's overall strategy to encourage more walking and to connect up different areas.

29. Why did the work stop?

Project Officers recognise that we didn't communicate well about our plans at the time, so we put the work on hold temporarily. As part of the overall development we want to communicate what we are doing and get views on the detail of the gate design.

30. When and how will you consult on the new gate?

The consultation on the new gate on Stoney Lane will form part of the forthcoming playground consultation.

31. When will the new gate be installed?

The new gate will be installed early in 2016 (before the playground build starts)