

CALNE WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL (CWPC)

**RESULT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ABOUT A PLAYGROUND AND EQUIPMENT FOR PETTY
ACRE DERRY HILL**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council notes that the outcome of the public consultation on the provision of a children's playground and outdoor fitness equipment at Petty Acre, Derry Hill did not satisfy all the thresholds to proceed (Para 5).

That the Council does not initiate a feasibility study into the provision of such a facility (Para 10).

That the topic of investment in community facilities be included as an agenda item for the next Annual Parish Meeting, when this can be convened (Para 13).

That the Council agree the content of the proposed article for the Website and Inspire (Para 15 and Annex).

DETAIL

1. The October 12th meeting of Calne Without Parish Council (CWPC) approved initiation of a project to examine the feasibility of providing a children's play area with equipment, together with outdoor fitness equipment, at Petty Acre, Derry Hill for use by the community.
2. In advance of commissioning a funded feasibility study, the council agreed to establish the permissions necessary to use Petty Acre for such a facility and undertake a public consultation about the proposal to establish the levels of community support from residents adjacent to Petty Acre and more broadly within the Derry Hill community. It was agreed the survey should also establish the level of community support to participate in a community led group to support delivery and commissioning of the facility.
3. The consultation was undertaken through a leaflet drop for all residents of Derry Hill and Studley villages, including Pewsham Ward and posted on the CWPC website and Notice Boards. A facility was established to enable residents to respond on-line as well as by returning completed questionnaires, if that was preferred. A total of 628 leaflets were distributed.
4. The assessment criteria against which to measure the outcome were established in the initial proposal as:

- a. Overall response rate – a response from no less than 65% of households surveyed could be considered the minimum acceptable;
- b. Positive response rate – of those responding a positive response from more than 65% could be considered the minimum acceptable;
- c. Weighting – If less than 75% of those responding from properties adjacent to Petty Acre do not support the project, then proceeding with the project should be reconsidered.
- d. Community Involvement – a minimum of 5 expressions of interest in supporting delivery of the project. These to be followed up if criteria at a and b satisfied to confirm necessary commitment to involvement.

RESULTS OF SURVEY

5. The consultation concluded on 8th January 2021 and the results, measured against the assessment criteria established by the Council, are:

Overall Response Rate (Threshold: 65% (408): Result: 21%, 130¹ returns – NOT MET

Positive Response Rate (Threshold: 65% (83): Result: 79%, 103– MET

Weighting² (Threshold: 75 % (19): Result 11%, 3³ – NOT MET

Community Involvement (Threshold 5): - 7⁴ MET

6. The majority of positive votes did not include a comment beyond expressing support and, in some cases, regarding it as addressing a longstanding deficiency. Some positive respondents drew a distinction between their support for a playground whilst questioning the need for outdoor fitness equipment.
7. Those against usually provided a more detailed commentary to support their objections. Key concerns included the potential change of use of what is currently considered a well-used community green asset – even more so during the periods of lockdown. The potential for use and abuse of any playground or outdoor fitness equipment during unsocial hours with the attendant impact on the houses that back onto or overlook Petty Acre, particularly if it became an area of congregation rather than activity.
8. Concern was also expressed that the necessary infrastructure would detract from the green space, particularly if it required access paths and lighting. A reduction in

¹ 120 online returns, 10 paper or email.

² 26 residences immediately adjacent to Petty Acre i.e. with garden or property next to Petty Acre.

³ Only 14 overlooking properties identified in returns. 3 for and 11 against.

⁴ On line 31 respondents indicated a willingness to help although only 7 followed up as requested.

privacy for adjacent houses if the facility was poorly located and provided high level vantage points resulting in the overlooking of properties and gardens was also raised.

9. The potential for the facility to attract users beyond the village community was another concern with the additional traffic and parking issues that may result e.g. children attending Derry Hill school but not resident in the village.

NEXT STEPS

10. Given that not all the criteria established by the council at the outset have been satisfied it would seem unreasonable to proceed with the project at this point.
11. The overall response rate is disappointing given that of those who did respond there was a significant majority (78%) in favour of examining the feasibility of establishing a children's play area with equipment, together with outdoor fitness equipment. There was also a good number of respondents (31) expressing an interest in establishing a community group to aid development and delivery of the project, although only 7 followed this up by providing details to the Clerk as requested.
12. Whilst it was only possible to identify 14 returns from the 26 properties overlooking Petty Acre, the majority (11) were against the provision of a children's playground raising many of the concerns outlined earlier. There were 18 returns (15 for and 3 against) where it was not possible to identify a location.
13. Based on the results of the survey and the criteria established by the council at the outset it would not be appropriate to proceed. However, the council may wish to consider discussing the subject with the community further at the Annual Parish Meeting, whenever this may take place. This should form part of a wider discussion about community investment given the council has struggled to attract any significant proposals from the community.
14. A number of respondents suggested that consideration might be given to supporting or enhancing the facilities available at Studley Gardens and which are used by some Derry Hill residents already. This is something the council may wish to discuss with the Studley Gardens Management Committee, when established. Although as there have been reports of anti-social behaviour associated with that facility, this is a factor that should be taken into account.
15. The results of the survey and the council decision should be published on the website and an article placed in Inspire. A proposal is at Annex.

DRAFT STATEMENT FOR INSPIRE AND WEBSITE

PLAYGROUND AND FITNESS EQUIPMENT FOR DERRY HILL – SURVEY RESULTS

Based on the outcome of the recent survey the Parish Council has decided not to proceed with a feasibility study to examine the provision of a children's playground and outdoor fitness equipment at Petty Acre, Derry Hill.

The survey was initiated following representations from some residents about the provision of a children's playground and outdoor fitness equipment at Petty Acre, Derry Hill. The survey was conducted throughout December 2020 until 8th January 2021. 628 questionnaires were distributed. The results, measured against the criteria established by the council, were:

Overall Response Rate: (Threshold: 65% (408): Result: 21%, 130 returns – NOT MET

Positive Response Rate: (Threshold: 65% (83): Result: 79%, 103 – MET

Weighting: (Threshold: 75 % (19): Result 11%, 3⁵ – NOT MET

Community Involvement: (Threshold 5): - 7 MET

The majority of positive votes did not include a comment beyond expressing support and, in some cases, regarding it as addressing a longstanding deficiency. Some positive votes supported a playground but not fitness equipment.

Those against usually provided a more detailed commentary to support their objections. Key concerns included the potential change of use of what is currently well used community green asset – even more so during the periods of lockdown. The potential for use and abuse of any playground or outdoor fitness equipment during unsocial hours with the attendant impact on the significant number of residences that back onto or overlook Petty Acre; particularly if it became an area of congregation rather than activity.

Concern was also expressed that the necessary infrastructure would detract from the green space, particularly if it required access paths and lighting. A reduction in privacy for adjacent residences if the facility was poorly located and provided high level vantage points was also raised.

The potential for the facility to attract users beyond the village community e.g. children attending Derry Hill school but not resident in the village with the additional traffic and parking issues that may result.

As a result of the survey, the Parish Council will not be proceeding with the proposed feasibility study. However, given the level of support from those who did respond to the survey, investment in community facilities is a subject on which the Parish Council would again ask for proposals from residents and it will be a topic for discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting when there is an opportunity to convene one.

The detailed papers considered by the council can be viewed on the Parish Council website.