

Edith Weston Recreation Ground

The Trustees would like to develop a concept plan to further develop the recreation ground for the good of the community and to allow for better use of the space for all age groups in the village. The Trustees have reviewed the previous inputs from villagers when the playground area was last developed and see opportunities to build these inputs into a future development plan.

Support and funding to develop a professional plan is sought from the Parish Council. Such plans are necessary to enable us to apply for grant, lottery funding and, in the future, for CIL payments if/when potential housing developments take place.

Funding would provide resources to develop an outline (concept) design for future development sufficient to socialise with the village and as the basis for future more detailed plans.

We have received a quote from a local Landscape architect for £2000 to develop a concept plan.

High level principles

Any development should honour the intention of Trustees including benefactor Tommy Hill who, in 1925, bought the 3-acre recreation ground in Trust 'to the village for the recreation of adults and playground for children and youths', and as far as possible complete outstanding items from the most recent planning permission – noted below.

The central nature of the space in the middle of the village should be leveraged and encourage pride and involvement in activities in the space.

A reasonable person would view any plan for change as a positive, attractive enhancement to the space, which enables an improved use of the space by all age ranges of villagers – either in groups or individually.

Biodiversity improvements are important.

Changes should improve accessibility for those less mobile or disabled.

Practical functionality including access to power and water for the purposes of maintenance are potentially important improvements.

Working with the existing land, the soil's shrink and swell features, water table, and existing hedges and trees is important. This links to ensuring as light a maintenance burden as possible.

Restrictions

Consideration for neighbouring households is important with regard for noise and visual amenity.

- It is unlikely any buildings would be considered as a positive development.
- There is no intention to allow or encourage free running of dogs in the space.
- Any lighting in the space would require planning permission and may be a concern for neighbours.
- We will not permit allotments.
- Any development is likely to take place in stages as funding becomes available.

Initial ideas to be incorporated into a high-level design

A new disabled access gate onto the Manton Road next to the vehicle gate.

A walking route/ pathways linking the new gate to the existing gates – potentially circular in nature, with shorter and longer walk options – and linking in with the neighbouring glebe field.

A more attractive and safer route to and from the primary school would be positive.

We are cognisant of the potential costs of built pathways, and we are keen to explore low-cost options that achieve the same purpose, but reduce the ‘muddiness’ of parts of the path in winter.

Segments or ‘rooms’ with a different look, feel and purpose – such as a community orchard area, a communal raised bed/gardening area, sensory spaces for reflection and chatting, including open grass areas for informal games, additional play equipment in the playground.

More benches and seating. Wildflower areas, dead hedges, attractive range of new trees to improve habitat.

A pond for wildlife impact - but only if we could get comfortable with any health and safety issues and our insurance charge would not increase as a result (natural dead hedge or other fencing for safety?)

The original planning had additional equipment that we would like to review and complete.

Any proposals would be cognisant of potential on-going maintenance costs.

We would like a plan that enable us to be able to bid for grants and any CIL resources due from local housing development in the next three - five years.