



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

AREA PANEL 4
30 MARCH 2005

Report of Director of Commercial Services

Woodcote Way, Heatherton – Petition requesting provision of new play area as required as part of the housing development

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 A Petition dated 13 January 2005 was submitted to Area Panel 4 on the 19 January 2005 by local residents requesting:
 "We the undersigned are unhappy that the play area off Woodcote way has not been finished. Some of us have been in our new properties for over three years and we are still waiting. This play area was clearly marked on plans both builders and also designated on council plans. Without an extensive walk, which is not insignificant for toddlers, there is no other suitable facilities for the area. Considering the Government is trying to encourage an increase in activity levels in young children to reduce the prevalence of obesity the lack of such facilities is unacceptable. The area is currently an eyesore and unsafe as it is covered with builders rubbish. Our children are growing up and we would like this play area NOW. "
- 1.2 It is a requirement that this site is laid out as incidental public open space as part of the housing development. The proposals for the open space include a small play area with play equipment aimed at younger children and a grassed dog free area, all enclosed within bow top fencing. The play area is located alongside proposed footpaths and cycleway and a minimum of 10 metres way from adjacent residential property boundary and 20 metres from nearest habitable room in accordance with the guidelines the Council follows for locating play areas.
- 1.3 There has been a substantial amount of discussion about this play area. In addition to the current petition the Council has also received an earlier petition opposing the provision of the play area in this location and representations from individual residents stating that in their view:
 - the play area is too close to residential properties
 - that due to the proximity of the play area to the brook the play area would be unsafe and contravenes Royal Society for Prevention of Accident's (RoSPA) guidelines for play area location

PROPOSED ACTION

- 2.1 The Council has considered all the views received and has taken the decision that the play area should be provided by the developer as required by the agreement for the housing development. The reasons for reaching this decision are:
 1. The play area and open space has always been part of the development proposals for this area and meets the council's desire to provide small play areas within 200 metres of all houses where possible
 2. There is a demand from residents with children for this play area to be provided
 3. The location of the play area meets the minimum distance requirements from residential properties as set out by the National Playing Fields Association

standards for Local Equipped Area for Play

4. The Council has considered the comments made by some residents regarding the risk posed by the brook and guidelines issued by RoSPA and has taken appropriate measures as follows to minimise risks:

- Boundary fencing will be 1.2 metres high instead of the standard 1.0 metre height, as recommended by RoSPA in their guidelines as follows -

“What height should the fence be?”

Normally a 1m high fence is sufficient around play areas. However if there is water nearby, (a stream or river for instance), a minimum of 1.2m is recommended.”

- The gates to the play area are located so as to open away from the brook
- The play area is designed for young children who would not be expected to use the play area unaccompanied by carers or parents

- 2.2 The Council is now in the process of agreeing with the developer the final design of the play area and open space with a view to having the work completed as soon as possible.

- 2.3 There are a number of related issues that need to be agreed and implemented alongside the play area, such as the footpaths and cycle routes as these will provide the means of access the play area. The Council notified the developer in the middle of February of the requirements for the play area and is now waiting for the developer to submit detail designs of the play area for approval by the Council.

For more information contact: Andrew Morgan Telephone number 715547 e-mail

Background papers: andrew.morgan@derby.gov.uk

List of appendices: Appendix 1 Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The developer will pay for the installation of the play area. Maintenance of the play area up to the time of adoption by Derby City Council will remain the responsibility of the developer. At adoption of the play area by the Council the developer is required to pay a commuted sum to the Council to cover the costs of maintenance of the play area for a period of ten years.

Legal

- 2.1 None

Personnel

- 3.1 None



Equalities impact

- 4.1 The play area meets an identified need for the provision of accessible play facilities within walking distance of residential properties

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 The proposal comes under the Council's Objectives of a providing a healthy environment and leisure activities