

Shurlock Row Nature Reserve and Play Area Meeting 5th December 2019

Present

RBWM – Kevin Mist, Ambika Chouhan
PC – MJ Streater, Maggi Bevan, Clive Scott-Hopkins
Resident – on site discussion – Tony Ireland, David Lee
Contractor – Alastair Brooker
Borough Councillor Maureen Hunt

Why is the planning application different to the document presented to the village?

The document discussed in the village garnering of opinion was a proof of concept document. It was not the planning application, which is/was freely available to view online at the RBWM planning portal. The concept document and the consultation with the village were done in order to see if there was an appetite to go forward with the project. The final decision was taken by the PC in November 2017. The formal planning application was approved in July 2018. There were no objections from neighbours. Planning Application number 18/01445

Why is the entrance is at a different end – shown as being next to Downfield on the concept drawing?

This was partially a practical decision. The driveway at Downfield end of the site is not owned by RBWM so it would have been costly to arrange a right of way over the land and to get planning permission for an access way. RBWM already had an access way further along Shurlock Rd which has shared access with a neighbouring farmer. A deal was done with the farmer to give up his rights over that access way in exchange for a small area of land. This deal temporarily fell down over a mistake over the drawing of a boundary line. This miscommunication has now been discovered and is in the process of being put right.

How many car parking spaces will there be?

6 with one disabled and junior and adult bike rack spaces. The plans show that special care has been taken to keep cars from parking on the road and to allow enough turning space so that cars come out forwards.

Is there contamination in the ditch alongside Shurlock Road?

The contractor and the Officer thought that the orange colour previously witnessed is most likely to be rust from a broken and rusted pipe that was exposed when the ditch was dug out. The pipe has been replaced. The ditch itself was overgrown and filled with rubbish of various sorts. It may have also contained diesel or oil run off from the many vehicles that went in and out to Downfield Tip or from the road.

There was some evidence that pipe work had been incorrectly laid at some point in the past. This has also been corrected.

The ditch has been redone a second time as the flow wasn't working properly. The ditch and site levels are set by laser. There may still be a problem with general drainage caused by a blockage further along the road near to Mentone Cottages. The PC has this on its radar. RBWM will test the water in a few weeks time. If it shows leachate contamination – then further action will need to be taken. There was no evidence of soil contamination in the clay

dug out for the pond and that is closer to Downfield Tip. However it is recognised that contamination (if there is any) may follow a wandering route related to underground structure.

There was also a concern that the hedgerow was dead or dying along the roadside ditch. This hedgerow was overgrown and unmanaged so it may well be in poor health for that reason rather than anything more sinister.

Mounds of Soil

1. What is happening with the Pond?

It is planned that the pond be left to self seed. Hopefully with bulrushes that are present in the near vicinity. It offers an area for diverse wildlife, maybe even a home for any great crested newts no longer using Downfield Tip.

RBWM will get a price for fencing the pond off and then the PC will be able to decide if they want it fenced or not.

The Officer will see about getting a warning sign.

2. What are the fencing plans?

As shown on the formal plans and ANB details from backing papers to Nov 2018 agenda it will be wooden fencing with hedging along and also rabbit proof wire. Fencing will be dog proof. As part of the deal with the neighbouring farmer the fencing will be extended to the road gate.

3. Have Health & Safety considerations been properly implemented?

There has been a landscape ecological management plan and a construction environmental plan. ANB works within health and safety guidelines. The play equipment has been reviewed by specialists and sourced from a reputable supplier, it will be insured. The PC will need to organise an annual maintenance contract either using the same people as RBWM (HAGS SMP Ltd) or possibly the play equipment suppliers – Wicksteed. Or contact ROSPA for recommendations. In addition there will need to be a weekly/monthly visual inspection by volunteers and or PC members.

4. When will the Play Area be started?

Work on the Play Area is planned to start in Feb 2019.

350 tonnes of earth will be retained for shaping the play area; the rest will be used off site on other RBWM projects.

Entrance

1. Is the entrance wide enough?

The Officer will look at the entrance “bridge” and work out the best way of increasing its width slightly to allow an easier swing in from the Waltham St Lawrence side. She will also look at getting some sort of lip or edging on the “bridge” so that cars won’t inadvertently drive off into the ditch.

The Officer will check with Highways about erecting a roadside sign.

2. Will there be a height restriction?

Details from the construction contract state “Supply and install 1 x 2.1m high height restriction barrier in painted steel material, along with a fixing post to secure open if larger maintenance vehicles need to access.”

What is the total costs and how is it funded?

The funding of £136,000 is £36,000 s106 monies and £100,000 that David Evans won for us from RBWM. The £100k cannot be used for any other project if it is unspent – it goes back into the pot.

Miscellaneous

Is it going to be a BMX area? – definitely not.

What if it is used by those taking drugs? –Wardens and Police will get involved.

Will outsiders be able to use the site? Yes – it’s a civic amenity open to ALL

Will the site flood? Most likely, the site is flood zones 2 and 3 and will invariably be wet and boggy except in very dry conditions. The pond and running sward will take up some of the water.