

Statement of Community Involvement

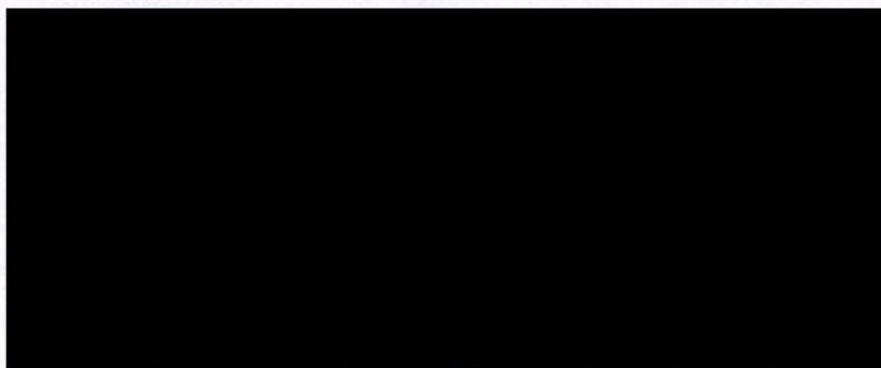
Hunts Grove POS

Crest Nicholson

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report details the consultation activity undertaken by the applicant with residents of Hunts Grove, local members, and the Parish Councils of Hardwicke and Haresfield, in respect of the major public open space area to be provided at Hunts Grove.
- 1.2. Engagement and consultation with local stakeholders is a key part of the planning process and, prior to submitting this application, the applicant sought to engage with the relevant parties in order to gain feedback on the proposal.
- 1.3. Where appropriate, suggestions for improvements/changes have been incorporated into the submitted design.

2. Principles and scope of engagement and consultation

- 2.1. The applicant's approach is in line with Stroud District Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement which aims:
'To provide all sections of the community as well as any other interested parties with the best and equal opportunity to easily become involved with the plan making and planning application processes in the most transparent and efficient manner.'
- 2.2. The applicant sought to ensure that relevant stakeholders:
 - 2.2.1. Were made aware of the proposal at the earliest opportunity; and
 - 2.2.2. Were encouraged to comment on plans.
 - 2.2.3. Stakeholders will also be kept informed of progress.

2.3. Relevant stakeholders for this planning application were identified as follows:

- 2.3.1. Residents of Hunts Grove;
- 2.3.2. The local member of Stroud District Council;
- 2.3.3. The local member of Gloucestershire County Council;
- 2.3.4. Hardwicke Parish Council;
- 2.3.5. Haresfield Parish Council.

3. Engagement and consultation activity

3.1. Full details of the applicant's engagement and consultation activity are set out below.

3.2. Residents of Hunts Grove

- 3.2.1. Residents of Hunts Grove were invited to attend a special exhibition of materials detailing the proposed design of the public open space area on 21 August 5-8pm. This was held at the new Hunts Grove sales centre on Marconi Drive.
- 3.2.2. The event was advertised on the Hunts Grove Facebook page and posters were put up on local noticeboards. A sign was also displayed outside the sales centre from 4pm on the day.
- 3.2.3. A full set of exhibition materials as well as feedback questions were uploaded to the Facebook site for residents unable to attend the exhibition.
- 3.2.4. Around 80 people (mostly residents) attended the exhibition and were able to chat with both the landscape architect and the applicant's representatives.
- 3.2.5. Feedback sheets were provided at the event and a feedback e mail address was given to those unable to provide feedback on the day.
- 3.2.6. Residents are also able to contact the applicant via the Residents' Association at any time.

3.3. Local members

- 3.3.1. The applicant is in regular contact with Cllr David Mossman (SDC) and sent him a full set of the exhibition materials.
- 3.3.2. Cllr Stephen Davies (GCC) was invited to and attended the residents' exhibition.
- 3.3.3. The applicant will be in regular contact with these Councillors throughout the planning process.

3.4. Parish Councils

- 3.4.1. Hunts Grove straddles the Parishes of Hardwicke and Haresfield.
- 3.4.2. The applicant is in regular touch with both Parish Councils and will maintain a dialogue throughout the planning process.

- 3.4.3. A full set of the exhibition materials was circulated by the Clerks to members of both Parish Councils and members were invited to attend the residents' exhibition.
- 3.4.4. Both the Chairman and Clerk of Haresfield Parish Council attended the exhibition and the two Hunts Grove members of Hardwicke Parish Council also attended.
- 3.4.5. The applicant will attend any future Parish Council meeting to talk about the proposal should it be required.

4. Feedback from the residents' exhibition

- 4.1. Around 80 people (mostly residents) attended the exhibition.
- 4.2. 18 feedback forms were completed.
- 4.3. Questions on the feedback forms were as follows:
 - *Do you have any comments about the design of the open space area?*
 - *Do you have any comments on the facilities that will be provided in the open space area?*
 - *Do you have any comments on the revised route of the Public Right of Way?*
- 4.4. Feedback on the design and facilities to be provided in the public open space was overwhelmingly positive both anecdotally, and formally, on the written forms.
- 4.5. The main themes of the feedback were as follows:
 - Positive about size of area and quality of provision.
 - Like range of activities – suitable for all ages and interests.
 - Liked access to the large area of open space and the ability for a long family walk with interest on the way.
 - Especially liked the extended walking/cycling trail and that it was accessible in parts.
- 4.6. Some specific suggestions for improvements to the design and facilities were made as follows:
 - Adequate bin provision across area (dog and recycling for bottles especially);
 - Bike park areas for families/kids to safely lock bikes;
 - Ensure suitable width of main path so that there is safe split between bikes and runners/pedestrians;
 - Potential for lighting in key areas;
 - Expansion of pocket park with more play equipment suitable for toddlers;
 - Potential for adult fitness equipment;
 - Addition of skate park.

4.7. All suggestions were reviewed by the design team and, where considered appropriate, have been incorporated into the submitted design (see below). Feedback on these amendments will be provided to the Residents' Association, local members and the Parish Councils.

- Adequate bin provision across area (dog and recycling for bottles especially). *Design Response: Provision of litter bins and dog bins has been added to the detailed design drawings and forms part of the submission.*
- Bike park areas for families/kids to safely lock bikes. *Design Response: Bike parking areas have been included in the detailed design proposals adjacent to the main play area and the family picnic area.*
- Ensure suitable width of main path so that there is safe split between bikes and runners/pedestrians. *Design Response: The width of the main path has been reviewed and increased to 3m and a notional cycle/pedestrian lane segregation has been established at key entrances. Forward sight lines have been reviewed and adjusted to limit the risk of collision caused by blind bends etc. Full (lined) segregation of the path is not practical to achieve with the surfacing material proposed for the path which is intended to have a more natural appearance.*
- Potential for lighting in key areas. *Design Response: The addition of lighting to the park has been carefully considered but has not been taken forward at this stage in order to avoid lighting impacts on wildlife areas and species using the site, including bats which are disturbed by lighting; and to minimize any risk of late night and antisocial behavior in the parkland in areas close to peoples' homes. This position will be kept under review as the development progresses.*
- Expansion of pocket park with more play equipment suitable for toddlers. *Design response: The design has been reviewed and amended to include a wider range of equipment suitable for younger children, providing a greater play opportunity than the smaller play areas currently at Hunts Grove.*
- Potential for adult fitness equipment. *Design response: The fitness trail will include ground level "markers" to indicate potential exercise stops but the inclusion of fixed equipment is not proposed in order to avoid visual clutter beyond defined activity zones and retain more open areas for general walking and recreation.*
- Addition of skate park. *Design Response: The parkland and play areas have been designed to offer a range of facilities catering for all ages and including active and quieter areas. The only appropriate location for a formal skate park would be in the main play area and, to be successful, this would require a reasonably large area to be accommodated and result in the exclusion of some of the play equipment currently proposed for children of a range of ages, making the play area less attractive overall. The detailed designs have, however, included a "surfaced loop" within a section of the play area suitable*