

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Environment Committee

15 September 2022

Decision Report 3

Results of the Consultation Exercise carried out regarding a new Skate Park in the Isabella Ward

Recommendation

Committee consider the results of Consultation Exercise and resolve:

- **where the new skate park will be located**
- **the use of further funds if the Council are successful in their funding applications**

Ward

Isabella

Risk Management

There is budget provision of £103k, in the Play Area programme, for this facility to be refurbished in this financial year. The impact of the recent rises in inflation and other costs would suggest that costs would now be in the order of £125,000. These additional costs can be met from within the overall Committee's budget. A Consultation Exercise has been carried out to obtain views from a variety of groups. NCC have given authority for the new Skate Park to be in the proposed location should the Council make such a decision.

Objectives

To promote the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community. One way this can be done is by the provision of Play/Sports Areas to create a facility for children/teenagers to both learn and play within a secure environment.

Report

At a meeting of this Committee in December 2021, it was agreed to relocate the existing Skate Park, due to the drainage problems on the current site, with a new one near to other existing facilities, those being the Olga Potts Play Area and the MUGA. The Committee's decision was subject to a Consultation exercise being carried out, supporting this proposal.

The Consultation document/questionnaire, see Appendix A, was issued to households overlooking the proposed new location, as well as placed on social media on the 27 June, with a closing date of 13 July 2022. Information and questionnaires were also available within the Isabella Community Centre.

This exercise has seen some 163 responses, 26 handwritten and 137 electronically, and the summary results are more in favour of the Council's proposals. Shown in Appendix B are a selection of the key results from the Consultation.

(The individual responses have been printed and are available within the Council Offices should you wish to view them)

There have also been comments submitted and a selection of those favourable are shown on Appendix C, as well as **all** the non-favourable comments on Appendix D. These need to be considered both in the initial decision on skate park location as well as any proposed equipment and other issues.

Alongside these responses, Members also need to be aware of where NCC are with the drainage issues on the existing Skate Park site.

NCC have employed Contractors to investigate these problems and they believe that they have a solution to solve the badly blocked drains. This would cost towards £15k, but they don't appear to have the budget available to fund this work. NCC have asked and received support from a number of Councillors MLIS funds. There is also no guarantee that this will be the solution.

Whilst the Council have a budget of £103k, £88k for equipment and £15k for reinstatement work if a new location is agreed, there may also be the opportunity that we are given funding in terms of S106 money from NCC and from an application to the Banks Group. These requests should be considered by mid-September and can be verbally reported at Committee if known. Unfortunately, because of the recent rise of inflation and other costs the scheme is now likely to be nearer £125K. Given Committee approval there are other budgets where this increase could be met from. The Committee need to consider, if either or both requests are successful, what they would wish to do with the additional funding. This could be, either to provide additional skating facilities, or simply reduce the cost of the scheme.

The agreed budget of £88k for equipment was based upon a range of equipment/facility that moderate to advanced skaters would use, after initial discussions with manufacturers.

Once Officers are aware of the finance available then Officers can be liaising with a sample of contractors to confirm the current equipment available to help ensure that the most suitable equipment is procured within the existing budget and that the Tender documents are prepared. The design of the Council's new Skate Park has been agreed that it covers users of moderate to advanced skills.


The existing Park is for moderate skills and for comparison, the Park at Blyth Sports Centre is for advanced skaters.

These documents will allow flexibility, in the event should further equipment be agreed following any additional funding being awarded by NCC or the Banks group.

Malcolm Wilkinson
Deputy Town Clerk

5 September 2022

APPENDIX A

 **Blyth Town Council**
are seeking your views on the installation of a proposed new Skate Park for children


▲
Current Site


◀ **Example of Proposed design**


- Level 2 (moderate ability)
- 9 features
- 18m x 27.4m



Proposed Location for an improved facility for children ▶



Land East of Olga Potts' Play Area

The skate park in situ currently suffers from flooding due to inadequate drainage systems and there is an overall benefit in its relocation.



Complete the consultation form overleaf and return it to us.
Your views will help determine whether there is a need for a new skate park in a new location and the suggested design/specifics that would be most suitable to you.
This consultation period will end on 13th July 2022.

Please return your consultation sheet to either:
Blyth Town Council Offices, Arms Everytne House, Quay Road, NE24 2AS OR
by an Online Survey - See overleaf.
or
Isabella Community Centre



Blyth Town Council are seeking your views on the proposed installation of a new Skate Park for children

▶ Are you responding as: (Circle all that apply)

- A local resident / Skate park visitor / Community Group
- Other (please specify) _____

▶ What age group are you in? 6-13 14-21 22-36 37-50 50+

▶ Do you agree that an improved skate park is needed for the area? YES NO
If yes, what do you see the benefits of an improved skate park.

▶ Would you agree that a moderate ability skate park to accommodate
beginners and those with slightly higher level skills is suitable? YES NO

▶ If you are a skate park user, how often do you use skating facilities?
More than twice a week Once a month Twice a year Never

▶ Do you have any further comments/suggestions?

▶ Contact details (If you wish to provide)

If you'd prefer to complete the survey online, please visit our website
home page or [facebook.com/BlythTC](https://www.facebook.com/BlythTC) for the survey link and
complete this by 13th July 2022
www.blythtowncouncil.org.uk



Appendix B

Proposed new location	Response
Yes	150
No	8
No response	5
Total	163

Who responded	Number of
Local resident	124
Skate Park visitor	29
Community group	3
Other	5
No response	2
Total	163

Local resident responses in favour of new Skate Park	Number of	Notes
Yes	113	97 of whom provided positive comments
No	8	7 of whom provided negative comments
No response	3	
Total	124	

Age range of respondent using the facilities more than twice per week	Number of
6-13	16
14-21	13
22-36	*11
37-50	*14
50+	*1
Total	55

Key * it may be that some within these age categories are accompanying younger users and not actual skating users

A moderate ability skate park to accommodate beginners and those with slightly higher-level skills is suitable.	Numbers of
Agree	26
Disagree	1
Total	27

Appendix C

Positive Comments from Consultation

Benefits

It will be great for the local skatepark users as it will be improved and safer as compared to the active skateparks in blyth as they are both extremely dangerous and at times, unusable

More activities for people to use in the local area to progress in there skate park abilities. Mostly BMX riders use the parks so new big Rails and good Ramps for bikes would really benefit the riders. The bmx community would be over the Moon to finally have a good skate park in blyth thank you all for reading.

Somewhere for the kids to go and have fun the sports centre park is probably too far for some and can help spread the people that use the skateparks apart.

More rideable surface and a bit more regular maintenance

Something extra for the kids to do Keeps them hanging about the streets. Kids need somewhere to go and hang out with their friends. As long as the skate park is well maintained/safe and monitored by cctv/police driving past etc to deter anti social behaviour I think it will be an asset.

It will give people an improved place to use their skate boards and improve their skills

Occupy and inspire children and adults.

It's a great activity for children to get involved with, both in skill and community. A new skate park will allow kids to practice and improve their skills in a safer environment with better facilities. Great idea

keeping children amused and out of trouble. especially teenagers.

Improved skatepark will give local residents and visitors something to do which will reduce anti social behaviour in the town and also gives a space for exercise, improvements in mental health and all around enjoyment.

Improved attendance by people who use it for correct reasons, if done well. Physical and mental health benefits, sense of community and public ownership/independence in respecting and looking after the skatepark/area.

Better social interaction to those who participate with BMX, skateboarding, scooters and rollerblading

I skate myself and my kids like to skate aswell but the 2 local parks we have are not safe to ride at all so a new improved one would be amazing for us and alot of other local children

Further comments/suggestions

Add a drainage system to prevent the flooding as can be seen at the one at the Isabella and make it concrete which is a lot safer than the metal ramps and is less likely to become condense on the night time meaning the users can ride it at all times, also I think it should be made larger with more ramps and a bowl.

Big ramps Good street rails in park big space for maneuvers (not made out of metal. BMX) Scooter friendly a good flow around the park well planed out. car park so you can walk to the park for family's and friends. need a path to park so don't have to walk Iver wet grass. Bowl for Bikes scooters and skateboards outdoors lights for winter time

Proper drainage system and some good flat rails!!!!!!

More rideable for bmx.

An outdoor gym equipment such as that at Cramlington Alexandra Park/ Furness Bank which would also encourage others to use the area would be another suggestion since people are more accustomed to exercising outdoors nowadays.

Ideally we need to look for something that will last over time and be a draw for talent from across the region

I used to be a skate park user back in the day. It's a place I will definitely be introducing my son to when he's older.

Please do not use the prefab drop in metal ramps you are proposing- they are noisy, decay quickly and from a budget perspective extortionate for what they are. The layouts are also not designed by skaters and you are not maximising the space you have. Speak to canvas or maverick and get a concrete park that is designed by people that know what they are doing, longer lasting with less maintenance and better for users. Themis will ensure that the park is used to the yt Maoist and hood parks are self

policing, reducing antisocial behaviour associated with skateparks (which happens when kids get bored on the basic parks you have in your proposal). These companies can also get you in contact with governing bodies such as skateboard gb and British cycling to help you fund a better park.

Contact legitimate skatepark builders such as maverick, campus, gravity, concrete and many more. Create something accessible for every level of ability. Look at skateparks in the area such as glenholme park in crook and birtley next to the community centre. Modern skateparks with exciting designs and obstacles.

Ensure the tender for skatepark uses all the biggest uk builders - canvas, TJM. There is nothing worse than not consulting professional designers on skateparks.

Would use them if they was looked after and repaired once in a while just too unsafe for me. Let alone for children to use.

Appendix D

Negative Comments from Consultation

Do you agree that an improved skate park is needed for the area?

No

Do you have any further comments/suggestions

Something is needed that everyone can use not just skaters.

Hi, why not place down at the beach so it can be open to more residents. I live in south beach estate and the facilities on my estate for the children in comparison to the surrounding estates is very poor, we don't even have a small football/basketball area whereas the Isabella already does. We have had an adults outdoor workout area installed and it doesn't even get used.

It's not needed, focus on building a small park there instead, not just a skate park, considering here is a BIG skate park at the sports centre and you do not see skaters at that skate park any day of the week.

It hardly gets used other than kids sitting drinking and smoking, or the area floods when it rains, so why waste more money.

There is a skate park at the sports centre so that would be two in close proximity when there isn't another anywhere else in Blyth. This is a waste of money! Wensleydale parish i.e. Solingen, Gordon Road, Old Wensleydale school site have no place facilities for children, the nearest being Ridley Park or the beach which are both too far for smaller children when there is such a busy road to cross.

Antisocial behaviour is more than likely to be attracted to this area.

I don't like the location. I live down the road from the area and take my 4 young children along to the playground regularly. A skate park would attract teenagers who can often be foul mouthed and disrespectful to public property. I think the two should be kept separate as they are designed for very different age groups. The current skate park at the Isabella should be improved instead as it's an eyesore these days