

Attleborough Recreation Ground Masterplan

December 2017

KEY

- Existing tree
- Hedge / hedgerow
- Close mown grass
- Buildings within the park
- Bow top railing
- Barbed wire
- Gates
- Path
- Lighting
- Football pitch markings
- Play area
- Skate park
- Goal end
- Seats and tables

CURRENT CIRCULATION

- Most habitual access points and routes
- Occasional access



1 TOWN CENTRE ENTRANCE

The nearest entrance to the town centre could be more visible and welcoming. The entrance gate can be obscured by parked cars, apart from the decorative gates, the fencing is unattractive with barbed wire along the top and there is poor pedestrian access along Thieves Lane and crossing to the entrance area



2 THIEVES LANE ENTRANCE

The single pedestrian gate is partially obscured by hedging with functional fencing and gate. There is no footway on the historic Thieves Lane



3 CONNAUGHT HALL ENTRANCE

Access is through the car park to Connaught Hall and other facilities. Car park ownership and permissions for access to the park are unclear although this is likely to be the busiest entrance for car users, especially to the play area. Visibility is clear but the perimeter fence is unattractive and unwelcoming



4 RAILWAY STATION ENTRANCE

Entrance nearest to Attleborough Railway Station is mainly used for maintenance and potentially football activities at the weekend from the car park which is on Town Council owned land. Access and parking surfacing is poor. The double maintenance gates are occasionally locked



PLAY AREA

The play area is obviously much needed and well used and has some seats and tables which allows those visiting to spend more time in the space. The existing play 'offer' is a mix of modern and traditional equipment which only offer a prescriptive, fixed form of play. Some of the older pieces of equipment are quite historical and may have fond associations for generations of park users.

The play landscape consists of metal equipment, timber or plastic furniture, rubber surfacing and mown grass with no other planting or loose, manipulative or natural materials. It could be more interesting, challenging and attractive.

As no dogs are allowed in the park, the need for fencing around the whole play area should be reviewed, except perhaps alongside the football pitches. A fenced in area creates the impression that play is only allowed in this space, limits children's freedom of movement and often detract from the overall attractiveness of a space.



PAVILION NURSERY

The nursery lacks outdoor playable space suitable for pre-school years despite being situated within the recreation ground. The path from the main entrance is narrow and in disrepair. There is no paved path from the Thieves Lane entrance.



SKATE PARK

The skate park is well used, popular and valued by users. It is in an easily accessed and highly visible location and well lit which help make the park feel safe and welcoming for users. However it is very close to the play area and to housing which may be a source of occasional conflict.

The ramps now need repair or replacing with better designed ramps particularly where ramps meeting the tarmac ground surfacing.



INFORMAL BALL PLAY

The single goal and basketball end is well-used but inadequate for use, worn and grass is worn and puddled. The small rebound goal end is not usable and both facilities lack cohesion for informal ball play.

NB A new ball court is / will be installed in 2017 with 2 goal ends and hard surfacing. The inclusion of access paths and seating will be a welcome addition to this facility making it more accessible and shareable by more people.



BUILDINGS

The buildings within and bounding the recreation ground such as the former railway goods yard building ,now Attleborough Football Club's pavilion, form an attractive part of the landscape and are an important heritage asset. Some, such as Gaymers Bowls Club pavilion look to be in need of attention.



FENCING

Unplanned fencing can lead to pinch points and the creation of redundant space



Poor run-out area between football pitch & play area



The style of fencing and security needs should be reviewed and existing fencing, especially with barbed wire, replaced with a more attractive, welcoming fence in keeping with a public open space.

TREES

Mature trees create a sense of place and give a parkland feel to parts of the open space. There is some new planting of large species trees to replace some which have had to be removed and it's important to maintain large trees here for the future



PATHS

There are hardly any hard-paved paths, only to the play area and to the Pavilion Nursery. Where they exist they are narrow and in some places in poor repair.



SIGNAGE

Some of the signage is either redundant or too forbidding. Where signage is needed it is more effective when friendly and designed with involvement of park users










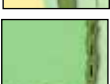

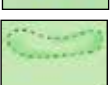








SEATS

There is good seating provision generally especially in the play and tree seats. Some need seat bases and the style of seating could be more aesthetic



KEY

-  Existing tree
-  Existing boundary hedge
-  Close mown grass
-  Football pitch markings with min / max run-out areas
-  Meadow grass
-  Ball court (approximate position) with proposed new seating
-  New path - self binding gravel or bound gravel
-  Proposed new tree
-  Proposed hedge or woven willow wall permeable boundary to play space
-  New hedging and fence to bowling green
-  Proposed ornamental planting
-  Grassed mounds
-  Sand for play and impact absorbing surface
-  Water play with manual water pumps, water channels feeding into sand
-  Play equipment
-  New concrete wheel park - optional location
-  Seat or bench
-  Picnic table

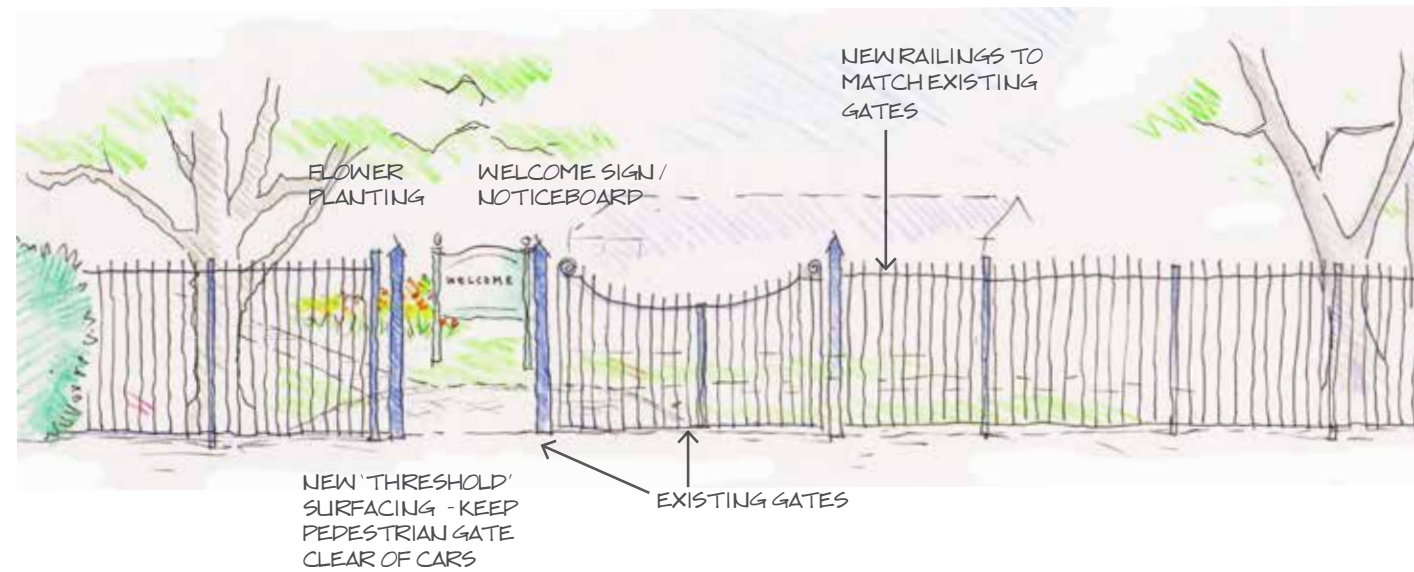


1 Main Town Centre Entrance

The main entrance for those arriving from the town centre and an important link.

It can be enhanced by retaining existing gates and with the addition of new railing to match. New signage and flower planting and a new surfaced 'threshold' would make the entrance more welcoming.

Retain limited short term or disabled parking spaces leaving a gap between bays for pedestrian access



2 Thieves Lane Entrance

The entrance is hidden and obscured by hedging but is an important link for residents living along Thieves Lane and those cutting through the park.

Improve by removing hedging to open up the views and make the entrance more visible with a new gate, railings and with new feature surfacing at the threshold to the park



3 Connaught Hall Entrance

This is likely to be the busiest entrance for play and for those arriving by car. Remove barbed wire and replace perimeter fence and gates. New signage and flower planting with new surfacing at 'threshold'

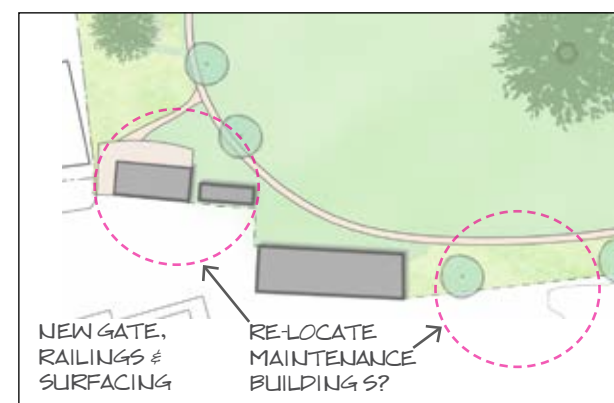


4 Station & Goods Yard Building Entrance

This entrance is currently used mostly by football club users and for maintenance vehicles. As the town grows the park could be an attractive pedestrian route from the station to the town.

There is an opportunity to create a more formal entrance to help create a pedestrian link from the railway station with new surfacing, gates, railings and signage.

Maintenance and storage buildings could be re-sited to open up the entrance



ENTRANCES

Improving the entrances to the recreation ground can be 'quick win' projects bringing many benefits including making the park more visible and welcoming.

Improvements could extent beyond the recreation ground to the pedestrian public realm beyond e.g. improving pedestrian links, crossing points, paths and pavements to the town centre and the railway station

PLAY HUB

Sand and water provide low key yet extremely valuable play opportunities, creating places where children tend to linger and play more than in a more traditional play areas.

Timber framed play equipment can create a more natural and attractive environment and can be designed to be shareable by all ages and abilities without compromising on challenge and excitement.

Seating is important throughout the play hub and the open space generally to create a sociable, shareable family space with tables for picnicking and placing belongings.

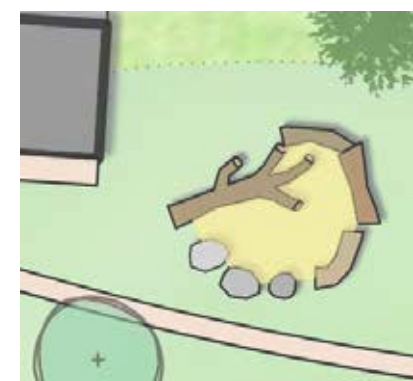
The inclusion of planting makes a more attractive landscape for children to play in and allows for closer contact with the living world.



Shareable and accessible equipment



Sand and water



SMALL PLAYABLE HUBS

Low key, playful interventions can be introduced throughout the recreation ground, e.g. a small sand area with logs, fallen tree and boulders next to the Pavilion Nursery to be shared by all



Informal and playable seating



Seats with backs and armrests



PLAYABLE BOUNDARIES

Where there needs to be a boundary or barrier, Softer, natural, living and more 'permeable' barriers that are also highly playable are a more attractive option to fencing



NATURAL PLAY

Natural materials such as fallen trees and logs of durable timber such as oak and landform, both high or low can form low key playful interventions throughout the park



WILDER PLAY HUB

More challenging play opportunities can be located in the wilder, more rural area of the recreation ground in the south east corner to form a wilder play hub. This could include natural features such as logs, trunks, 'fallen trees' as well as more active and challenging equipment such as high swings and zip wires



WHEEL PARK

New wheel park in a location that is visible so that all can share can enjoy the spectacles and so that it's more integrated into the open space. High quality design and finish for all types of users - BMX riders, skateboarders and mini scooter users. The wheel park would be lit as the current skate park with lights timed to go out at agreed times



Options for wheel park location

- 1** Located in south east corner: away from main play hub:
 - more remote but still visible. More challenging, 'wilder' other play opportunities can also be located here.
 - needs to be located at a suitable distance from housing and where users feel safe using the wheel park. Timed lighting can be lined to football floodlights or with own lighting
 - potential conflict with football training area
- 2** Located in the same position as current skate park:
 - has the advantage of a tried and tested location although current skate park is quite close to houses on the south western boundary.
 - Potential conflict with & less space for new play hub

PATH NETWORK

A well designed path network for direct routes and for circulating the open space is crucial to the success of a public open space. Surfacing can be light coloured, naturalistic and low key, such as self binding gravel, in keeping with a rural feel. It should be accessible for wheeled vehicles and wide enough for multiple use



THRESHOLD SURFACING

New hard surfacing at entrance should complement new path surfacing and provide a ‘threshold’ on entering the park. Small element paving such as granite setts are on a human scale and suitable for delineating pedestrian routes



SIGNAGE

Signage to be welcoming and informative for users. New signboards at entrances can be used for local notices and information. New noticeboards could be part of a process of engagement such as choosing a new name for the recreation ground

RAILINGS

New vertical barrailings to entrances and boundaries to give a more distinctive park feel to the open space, to improve visibility and the aesthetic feel whilst still providing security



MEADOW WITH MOWN PATH

Large areas of long grass re-sown with suitable wildflower meadow mix, meadow turf or existing grass enhanced with wildflower plug planting. Provides seasonal interest, a playable landscape, contact with nature and good for wildlife and biodiversity

WELCOMING PLANTING

Flower displays of bulbs, annual bedding or sown annuals to provide a cheerful welcome at entrances. Naturalised bulbs and wild flower planting can be introduced into meadow and mown grass areas to improve seasonal interest and biodiversity

