

Application No: Y16/1393/SH

Location of Site: Radnor Park Radnor Park Road Folkestone Kent

Development: Formation of new play area including erection of new play equipment, surfacing and landscaping

Applicant: Mrs Sarah Robson
Shepway District Council
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
CT20 2QY

Date Valid: 19.12.16

Expiry Date: 13.02.17

Date of Committee: 28.02.17

Officer Contact: Mr Alexander Kalorkoti

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report, following receipt of comments from KCC Archaeology

1.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application seeks to develop a new play area, landscaping and complimentary features such as seating at Upper Radnor Park, Folkestone.
- 1.2 The proposal includes a range of new play equipment in zones to provide for a broad age range. The submitted Design & Access Statement makes reference to the inclusive design of the play equipment which will be accessible for disabled and non-disabled children. The design comprises a formal entrance space, toddlers zone, 'terrain for play' and adventure play areas.
- 1.3 The proposal also includes the resurfacing of existing pathways, refurbishment of the disused fountain and existing public toilets, retention of trees where possible and replanting using native tree species, removal of hedges and replacement low level shrub planting, timber benches and picnic tables

2.0 LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 2.1 The proposed development is located in the south-east portion of Radnor Park closest to the recently renovated Radnor Park Lodge, which operates as a community tea rooms. Currently, there are pathways, a disused public fountain and play equipment, hedging and public toilets in this area of the park.

- 2.2 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Folkestone and within an area identified as having archaeological potential in relation to its historic park setting.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history in relation to this application.

4.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 4.1 Consultation responses are available in full on the planning file. The main points raised are summarised below.
- 4.2 Parish Council
No objection; Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 5th January 2017.
- 4.3 K.C.C. (Planning - Archaeology)
Response awaited.

5.0 PUBLICITY

- 5.1 Site Notice. Expiry date 06.02.17

6.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 1 letter was received supporting the application on the following grounds:
- The small existing play area is not fit for purpose and is in terrible condition.
 - The new design is excellent and will enhance the park and be of benefit to local families for many years.
 - Children and young people will benefit from quality accessible facilities to stay healthy.
 - The play park will instil exercise and outdoor play in young people from an early age.
 - References to the nearby train station help to give the play area an identity.
 - The refurbishment of the disused public fountain and its use as a central feature are seen as positive.

7.0 RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

- 7.1 The full headings for the policies are attached to the schedule of planning matters at Appendix 1.

- 7.2 The following policies of the Shepway District Local Plan Review apply: SD1, BE1
- 7.3 The following policies of the Shepway Local Plan Core Strategy apply: DSD
- 7.4 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Government Guidance apply:

National Planning Policy Framework: Paragraph 17
National Planning Policy Guidance
Kent Design Guide

8.0 APPRAISAL

- 8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are the visual amenity and design of the proposal, impact on neighbouring amenity and the safeguarding of archaeological interest.

Visual Amenity/Design

- 8.2 The proposal is part of the Upper Radnor Park Play Park Redevelopment, which has been led by the Radnor Park Community Group, a group of local residents within the Radnor Park area focussed on improving the quality of life for the local people in the vicinity. The group aim is to improve the facilities at the Radnor play park by way of raising funds, in conjunction with Shepway District Council, to supply and deliver a high quality, exciting and innovative new play park which will be of benefit to the community as a whole, whilst enhancing the natural green space of Radnor Park.
- 8.3 The project will provide play, sport and fitness equipment for the whole community and specifically children aged 0-18yrs , building a creative play area in the current park on Radnor Park Road/Cheriton Road that encompasses a wide range of challenging equipment for children of different ages and abilities to utilise both individually and with their families and friends.
- 8.4 The existing play area/equipment in Radnor Park is of low quality and in poor condition. If approved, this proposal would provide additional play space catering for a range of ages, as well as enhancing the landscaping in this area of Radnor Park through the selective removal of trees and hedges and replacement with native tree species and low level shrub planting. This will allow views through the site and will help to connect the recently refurbished Radnor Park Lodge Café with the proposed refurbished fountain and play areas, allowing natural surveillance across the site.
- 8.5 The focal feature of the equipment would be the climbing net and den. Standing at just over 6 metres in height, this would be the most prominent part of the proposed equipment; however it is considered that the structure is not significant in bulk or mass and would therefore not create a significant

or detrimental visual impact. The rest of the new play area would have distinct zones, including a Toddlers Zone, 'Terrain for Play' and Adventure Play area. It is considered that the new play areas and landscaping have been designed in a positive and inclusive manner, with a variety of play equipment for a range of ages and level access to ensure that it is accessible to all.

- 8.6 The proposal includes a new resin bound gravel path with plastic sleepers at regular intervals as a design nod to the proposal's location in close proximity to Folkestone Central train station. This design ethos is echoed in the timber benches and litter bins to be provided as part of the landscaping scheme.
- 8.7 The landscaping proposal includes formal bedding and fastigiated trees (*Pyrus Calleryana Chanticleer*) in concentric circles around the refurbished fountain. In conjunction with the proposed metal archway with flowering climbers, it is considered that this will help to create a formal entrance space for Radnor Park.
- 8.8 Overall, it is considered that the new play areas and landscaping have been designed in a positive and inclusive manner, with a variety of play equipment for a range of ages and level access to ensure that it is accessible to all, whilst improving the entrance to Radnor Park and enhancing the character of the immediate area.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 8.9 Due to the nature of the proposal for a new formal entrance and play space, and given its relatively low scale and bulk, it is considered that the proposal will not create any significant or detrimental overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing/enclosing impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 8.10 With regard to noise disturbance, the use of this area of Radnor Park will not change under this proposal, with the emphasis instead on refurbishing the disused fountain and the improvement and extension of the play area. The application site is separated from the nearest residential occupiers by Cheriton Road and Radnor Park Road, busy main roads, which would be more significant in terms of noise generation. No lighting is proposed which may have the effect of encouraging the use of the area outside of daylight hours.
- 8.11 Overall, although the new equipment will encourage a more intensive use, this is an existing use next to a main road and as a result, it is considered that the proposal would have no significant impact upon neighbouring amenity.

Archaeology

- 8.12 The application site is within an area of archaeological potential due to the historic park and KCC Archaeology were consulted on the application. At the time of writing a response has not been received, however it is considered that the proposal predominantly falls on previously disturbed land closest to

Radnor Park Lodge and given the level of disturbance to ground conditions may not require further controls. Subject to the receipt of views from KCC Archaeology, a planning condition could be attached to ensure that remains of archaeological interest are recorded and preserved.

Human Rights

8.13 In reaching a decision on a planning application the European Convention on Human Rights must be considered. The Convention Rights that are relevant are Article 8 and Article 1 of the first protocol. The proposed course of action is in accordance with domestic law. As the rights in these two articles are qualified, the Council needs to balance the rights of the individual against the interests of society and must be satisfied that any interference with an individual's rights is no more than necessary. Having regard to the previous paragraphs of this report, it is not considered that there is any infringement of the relevant Convention rights.

8.14 This application is reported to Committee as Shepway District Council is the applicant

9.0 SUMMARY

9.1 As set out above, it is considered that the proposal is a positively and inclusively designed upgrade and extension to existing poor quality play and landscaping areas in Radnor Park. The proposal will provide play equipment for a wide range of ages and will create an open and interconnected entrance space and play areas to compliment the recently refurbished Radnor Park Lodge Café, without creating any unacceptable impact for neighbouring occupiers.

10.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 The consultation responses set out at Section 4.0 and any representations at Section 6.0 are background documents for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

RECOMMENDATION – That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions, following receipt of comments from KCC Archaeology:

1. Standard Three Year Condition
2. Submitted Plans
3. Materials as specified in the application
4. Landscaping schedule and maintenance plan

5. Archaeological watching brief (subject to KCC Archaeology's consultation response)

Decision of Committee

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