

Playground Consultation - Points raised	Answers
Themes	
Need	
We've never had one so why now?	<p>A safe place for kids to play – It gives children somewhere secure and close to home to have fun.</p> <p>A new park can bring a common space for the community, making Withersfield a more desirable location for families to move to.</p> <p>Being able to walk to a park will contribute towards well-being.</p> <p>There is widespread support including from the local church and from the White Horse public house.</p>
I don't want a playground	A valid opinion but outweighed by the evidence of need and support.
People have big back gardens so don't need a playground	See below.
Children can play in their gardens	<p>This is true, but that does not take away from the popularity of playgrounds to young children and the benefits of social interaction and meeting friends.</p> <p>In addition, it is a real benefit to young parents who can be quite isolated within their homes. We have heard from a young parent who found having a baby in the village was quite lonely. They reported that they would often walk down to the church just to get out but would like to have a social space to go to.</p>
Already a playground at the Arboretum	The playground at the Arboretum is not convenient or accessible to village families. By foot it is across a long field footpath and then across a major road. It is designed to serve the needs of some 300 homes, many with young families. It does not constitute a realistic facility for use by village families or their visiting grandchildren.
Parents can take children to a park in a car	Parents told us they want a local park where local children can play together. Local parents/carers wish to meet and make new friends in the village. Not all parents/carers have access to a car or drive.

<p>How many families with young children live in the village?</p>	<p>There is not up to date census information on the actual number of families living in the village. However, our engagement events and questionnaires have established that there are a significant number of young families living within the village, as well as grandchildren regularly visiting. (See table giving breakdown)</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ages</th> <th>Numbers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1yr</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>2yrs</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>3yrs</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>4yrs</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>5yrs</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>6yrs</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>7yrs</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>8yrs</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>9yrs</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>10yrs</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>11yrs</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>12yrs</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>17yrs</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>totals</td><td>83</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Ages	Numbers	1yr	12	2yrs	8	3yrs	12	4yrs	5	5yrs	8	6yrs	14	7yrs	5	8yrs	7	9yrs	0	10yrs	6	11yrs	3	12yrs	2	17yrs	1	totals	83	
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<p>Location</p>																																	
<p>It will spoil the beautiful village</p>	<p>The design has been thought about carefully and will be of a wooden design which is in keeping with the conservation area. Planners from the Council are happy with this.</p>																																
<p>It should be on the other part of the green</p>	<p>This would be closer to houses, and conflict with location for the Village Fete.</p>																																
<p>It should be on Burton Green</p>	<p>Burton Green was ruled out as it is too small and is overlooked on 3 sides by houses in proximity. There is no parking available. It's a quiet oasis rather than a public "recreational" space. More likely to cause a noise disturbance.</p>																																
<p>It should be on the cricket ground</p>	<p>This was considered, but it is felt to be too isolated and inaccessible. There could be an increased risk of vandalism there. It would compromise future use for cricket and football matches.</p>																																
<p>I will be able to see it when I drive out my drive</p>	<p>Careful siting and the use of screening (hedges) can aim to minimise visual impact for any concerned neighbouring residents.</p>																																
<p>Safety + Parking</p>																																	
<p>Attracts vandals</p>	<p>There is no evidence of a risk of vandalism within Withersfield. However, if this were to be considered a significant risk, consideration of security surveillance could be considered e.g. CCTV or lighting. In addition, its location in proximity to the Village Hall reduces any sense of isolation and reduces risk of attention from vandals.</p>																																

<p>Unsupervised children would be at risk</p>	<p>The playground is designed for young children, and it is anticipated that most of the use will be by children supervised by parents and carers.</p> <p>As is the case now, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to keep their children safe and supervised. In addition, signage can be considered to encourage this.</p> <p>The Park will have self-closing mechanisms on the gates.</p>
<p>Volume and speed of traffic on road to and from Hall Farm is a danger to children</p>	<p>This is a long-standing issue which has to date not deterred safe use of the village green, including by countless bookings for children's parties at the Village Hall.</p> <p>However, it is an important point and consideration of the use of traffic management features - "Children Playing " and SLOW markings can be considered and included in the scheme.</p>
<p>Interferes with village hall activities and could compete for parking spaces which were paid for by the Village Hall Committee</p>	<p>It is unlikely that the playground will create a large amount of car traffic or demand for parking. However, the grasscrete block parking area will be useful for those that do come by car - particularly parents/children with disabilities.</p> <p>Much of the Village Hall demand for weekday parking is in the evenings and will be unlikely to compete with playground users. In addition, it should be noted that the grasscrete block project was jointly funded by the VHC and the Parish Council for the benefit of the village including users of the village hall.</p> <p>A playground could also make the village hall even more appealing to hire for family gatherings/birthdays.</p>
<p>Not safe to walk on the streets</p>	<p>Withersfield does not have pavements in many places which always presents some risks to us all when walking in the village. This is not exacerbated by the playground project.</p> <p>We expect that most of the use of the park will be by young children supervised by parents or carers.</p>
<p>Costs</p>	
<p>Parish Council funds shouldn't be used on a playground</p>	<p>This project will only proceed if funding can be raised.</p> <p>The Parish Council has £5000 in its reserves for several years earmarked for a Playground.</p>

	The current estimate is that it will cost around £30 - 40,000 to achieve the playground. This will not be coming out of Parish Council mainstream budgets.
Parish Council funds should be used on other things - like the Village Hall or traffic schemes.	<p>The Parish Council has and continues to spend its resources on maintaining the village environment and on local priorities. It is currently investing a large sum on money on traffic calming measures for the village.</p> <p>We look for information from residents on what they see as priorities for the future. A playground was one item identified in a recent survey.</p>
The village hall would benefit from improvements – the Parish Council should fund these.	The Village Hall is owned by the Parish Council but managed and maintained by the VHMC. They raise funds through bookings for regular and occasional events and activities. They are a charity and can also raise funds from a range of sources. They have reserves which they allocate to priority improvements and maintenance. The Parish council also considers requests for support for village hall projects – for example the Parish Council contributed £3000 towards the parking improvements.
Who will pay for the maintenance costs and insurance?	<p>The company who wins the tender will provide annual inspections for 5 years.</p> <p>The costs for maintenance and insurance cover will come from the PC. The existing insurance covers a village playground.</p>
Size	
The playground is too small, it should be more prominent on the village green with more space, benches, bins and equipment.	The Parish Council has sought to keep its ambitions modest and wants to achieve a facility which is in scale and appropriate for our small village
The playground should be designed to include all age groups of children with more equipment	Whilst focussing on the under 11yr age range it will include accessible equipment to cater for all children including those with disabilities.