

BURY LANE COMMUNITY FIELD



A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON THE USE OF THE COMMUNITY FIELD IN BURY LANE

February 2019 v.3

Introduction

The community field off Bury Lane has been available to residents since around the end of the '90's. Back in 2016 the land was dedicated to Fields in Trust thereby protecting this valuable community asset from unwanted development.

The field is approx. 4 acres in size and currently houses an unused football pitch and a children's play area

A hard standing for cars was provided by the parish council in 2015

Previously in 2013 a proposal was developed by residents to provide a mix of recreational facilities for residents, however, an application for funding was unfortunately unsuccessful.

Since then the parish council has maintained the field by grass cutting and maintenance/ inspection of the play equipment. During 2016 a resident offered to take on the football pitch, upgrade the pitch and manage its use. However once again this proposal failed to achieve appropriate funding.

During 2018 a local resident put forward proposals to develop the field and include extensive facilities for all residents groups, however this proposal was not carried forward despite support in principle from the parish council.

In late 2018 a group of younger people offered to adapt an existing earth mound into a "pump track" - this was accepted by the parish council and work was successfully undertaken by the group and monitored by the parish council.

In early 2019 the parish council nominated a number of councillors together with a local resident to examine possibilities for the field and produce a business plan for the councils consideration. The parish council is holding some £7k for use on recreational facilities which arose from a prior deal with the Kings Meadow developers and the closure of the committee overseeing recreational facilities and play equipment.

Current members of the group looking at this development include:

- Chris Reeves—resident
- Chris Thomas—parish councillor
- Helena Leclezio—resident
- Bryan Casbourne—parish councillor

Any resident, of any age, who is interested in participating in this working group should contact:

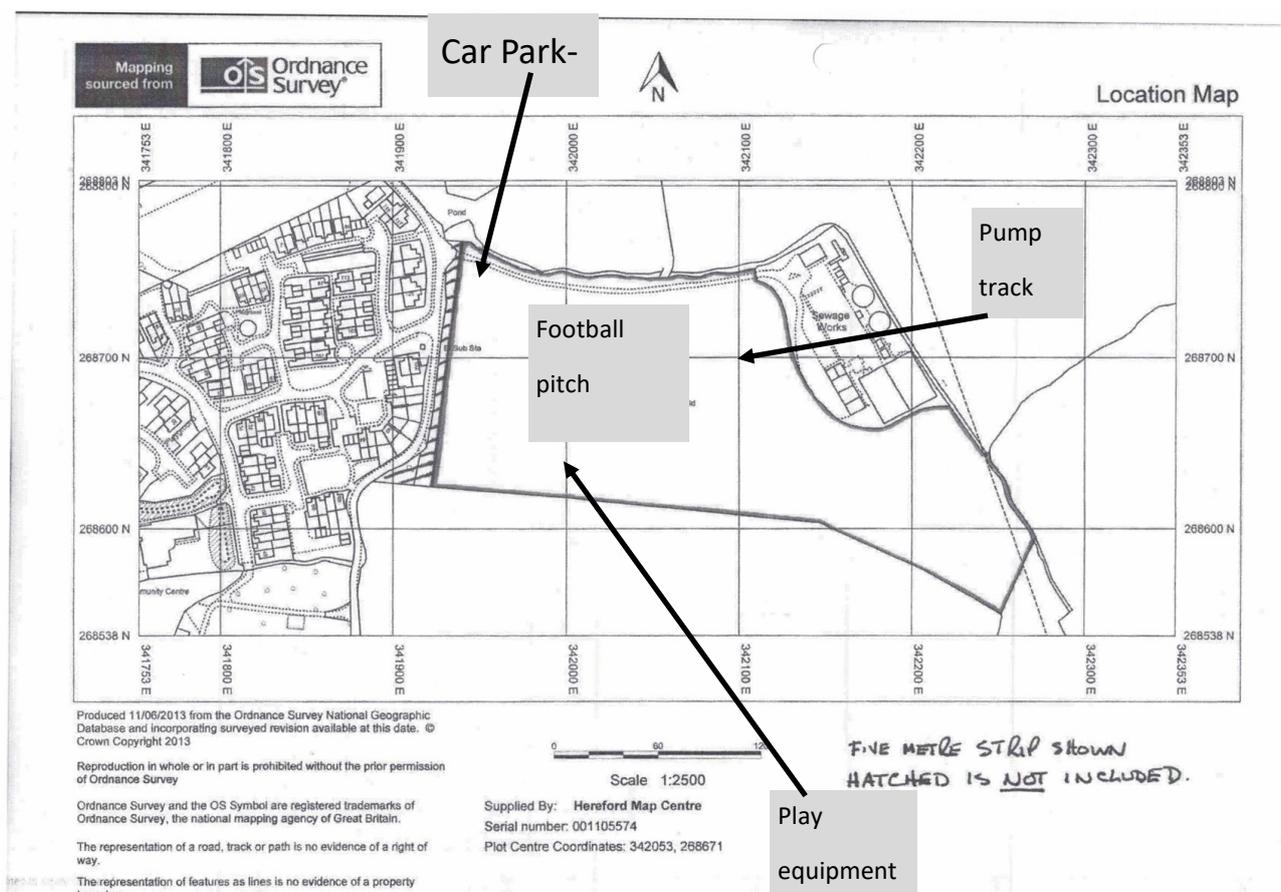
casbourne@btinternet.com

Current usage

Bury Lane community field tends to be significantly affected by the water table and for much of the year the ground is very soft. The land is adjacent to Kings Meadow, a housing estate mainly built on piles due to the nature of the land. The community field is bordered by a stream to the north and west, and various nearby culverts which have an influence on the ground state under certain weather conditions.

The field is very popular with walkers and their dogs and is actively used every day. The field includes an access road along its northern boundary to provide vehicle access to the local water treatment site at the western end of the land. Adjacent to the water treatment plant is a new Vodafone mobile comms mast.

Over the past decade occasional use has been made of the field for activities such as car boot sales and other displays. During the early part of 2000 a then active junior Wigmore football team used the pitch every weekend.



Map showing the Bury Lane community field

A proposal

Following discussions with a number of residents and councillors a working group was formed and a number of possible facilities discussed. These included:

- A perimeter walking track with occasional seats
- Picnic area with benches and tables
- Car parking with restricted height barriers
- Younger children play area with seating and fencing
- Older children area eg pump track with seating/shelter
- Shrubberies/wildlife/planting areas along walking track
- Football pitch

Once a level of agreement within the working group and the parish council has been achieved, a village wide survey would be undertaken to confirm that such a proposal meets the wishes and needs of residents. Such information would be useful as evidence of need in support of a grant application.

A possible layout for the community field is shown a Appendix A.

Revenue costs

The running costs of the upgraded community field include:

- Insurance
- Weekly checks on facilities
- Annual inspections and reports on equipment
- Repairs to facilities
- Management
- Publicity and promotional material
- Grass cutting

It is estimated that some £8/10,000 may be required to cover all the above annual requirements. There are grant providers who will contribute to annual running costs over a 3 to 5 year period.

It would be expected that the parish council and others also make a contribution to these operational costs.

A part time paid manager costs have been included. It is unreasonable to expect a volunteer manager to take on such tasks every week.

Evidence of the need for a level of part time paid management can be seen in the community shop (approx. 25 hrs week) and in the now withdrawn proposal for developing St James, a part time paid manager was included.

Income

Capital income will be from a range of trust funds and grant providers and will cover the provision of all equipment for the community field. It is possible that 100% of funding needs could be obtained. However if a level of matching funding were available it could enhance the chances of a successful grant application.

A number of grant providers have been identified and work will be required to examine the terms offered and the preparation of applications.

A small grant of approx. £2000 has been acquired in order to carry out a detailed feasibility study of the community field project and produce specs for the work required. Such a process was undertaken for the community shop and the St James project.

The question of ongoing revenue costs will need to be discussed with the parish council. There are some funders who will provide funds for “core” costs (eg utilities and remuneration) over periods between 3 and 5 years.

Management

The overall management of the community field will require a named person to oversee the use and maintenance of the area.

This is likely to be a paid part time job and would report to the parish council.

It would be possible to establish a separate legal entity for the management of the community field , however this needs consideration alongside other community initiatives within the village and separate discussions are proposed on such matters.

Appendix A—Possible layout for the Bury Lane community field

