

**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

**ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT &
SUSTAINABILITY CABINET MEMBERS
MEETING
ADDENDUM**

**Item 11 The Level – Heritage Lottery
Bid and Master Plan**

2.00PM, TUESDAY, 5 JULY 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

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ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY	
11. The Level – Heritage Lottery Bid and Master Plan Report of the Strategic Director, Place (copy attached).	1 - 90

Subject:	The Level - Heritage Lottery Bid and Masterplan		
Date of Meeting:	5 July 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director, Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Jan Jonker	Tel: 29-4722
	Email:	jan.jonker@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: ENVCMM22254	
Ward(s) affected:	Hanover & Elm Grove; St Peters & North Laine		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Level is an important historical park in the city centre which is well used by residents. It includes a children's play area, a skate park, an area used for ball games and expanses of green space used for recreation. However parts of the park are in a state of disrepair, the skate park will need to be removed or replaced in the next few years and some of the children's play facilities also need upgrading. Many of the general and historic features of the park including buildings, walls, and walk-ways are also in a poor condition and the park has a reputation for anti-social behaviour.
- 1.2 In the Parks & Green Spaces Strategy Plan 2006 The Level received a quality index score of -40; it was the only major park in the city with a negative rating. In March 2011 the park was judged against the Green Flag judging criteria. Out of 26 categories, only 3 received a good rating with the remaining 8 a fair and 11 a poor rating. None were very good or excellent.
- 1.3 The Level has a wide and diverse catchment which includes a Super Output Area in the top 10% most deprived areas in England. It provides much needed recreation and outdoor space in a very densely populated area. It is important to the heritage of the city and is a gateway close to the city centre.
- 1.4 Proposals to improve The Level and redevelop the skatepark have been discussed for some time, and various consultations have taken place prior to 2009, however funding was never secured to progress plans any further.
- 1.5 Wide scale consultation since 2009 has shown that The Level is very popular with residents and there is consensus that it suffers from a range of issues relating to community safety and maintenance. Over 50% of people surveyed feel The Level is unsafe, with half of those considering it very unsafe. Concerns relate to high numbers of street drinkers, drug dealing and taking, vandalism and other crime. There is widespread support for its improvement.
- 1.6 For these reasons it is considered to be a priority for redevelopment.

- 1.7 Funding sources for projects of this scale are very limited, but in 2009 the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' grant was identified as a potential source. A pre-application enquiry and initial meetings with them confirmed that The Level did meet its minimum criteria.
- 1.8 The skatepark on The Level falls outside of the HLF funding bid. Therefore in parallel with the development of the bid, options and funding to replace the existing skatepark have been explored.
- 1.9 In July 2009 the Cabinet Member for Environment endorsed the preparation of a 'Parks for People' funding bid which has been progressed successfully. The application process consists of two stages. Our application was successful at Stage 1 and the council was awarded £106,000 to prepare detailed plans including a Masterplan for its redevelopment. This work has now nearly been completed and will be ready for final submission by the 31st August 2011.
- 1.10 The value of the bid is £2.8 million which will fund a complete transformation of the park including a new café, new toilets, a new water feature as well as significant improvements to the park's fabric including planting, footpaths, seating and lighting and improved accessibility for a wider range of users. A new playground will be built with funding received via agreements made under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This has already been secured. A decision on whether the bid has been successful is expected by the 1st January 2012. If the bid is unsuccessful the improvements that can be carried out with existing resources will be very limited. The park will continue to decline, suffer from anti-social behaviour and many people will be put off from going to it.
- 1.11 Development of the skatepark to its maximum size as set out in the Masterplan requires capital investment of up to £400,000. £97,000 s106 money has been allocated to the skatepark, and this report recommends a further £53,000 from existing budgets is allocated to the project. Further grant funding and sponsorship is being pursued and the actual size of the skatepark will depend on the amount of additional funding secured.
- 1.12 The proposals for The Level are based on extensive and thorough consultation the details of which are presented in this report.
- 1.13 An overview of the proposed Masterplan is attached as Appendix 1, and set out in more detail in this report and the appendices.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability endorses the Masterplan for The Level and notes the extensive consultation undertaken.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability endorses the match funding requirements for the HLF bid from existing budgets to a maximum value of £200,000.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability endorses the allocation of funding for the skatepark from existing budgets to a maximum of £53,000.

- 2.4 That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability delegates authority to the Strategic Director, Place to oversee the completion of the final details of the bid ready for submission by 31st August 2011.
- 2.5 That the Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability agrees that, in the event of the bid being unsuccessful, the Masterplan be used to inform the long term development of the park, and notes that delivery would be dependent on funding.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The funding awarded as part of our successful Stage 1 bid has been used to progress the Masterplan and the final Stage 2 bid.
- 3.2 An extensive robust evidence base has been produced including:
- Consultation reports
 - A Masterplan prepared to RIBA (Royal Institute for Built Architecture) Stage D level (Summary presented in Appendix 1)
 - A ten year fully costed Management & Maintenance Plan
 - A Conservation Management Plan setting out how conservation issues will be addressed in the park.
 - An Activity Plan which sets out detailed proposals to increase the range and number of people using the park
 - A Community Safety Plan developed with partners with clear actions to address community safety issues
 - Background information including noise, environmental and geophysical surveys
- 3.3 The main documents are in the process of being finalised in preparation for the 31st August deadline. Draft copies of key reports listed at the end of this report are available in Members' Rooms and will be available on-line as and when they are finalised.
- 3.4 The design work has been led by Land Use Consultants, landscape architects with a good track record in restoring heritage parks and working with local authorities to submit successful 'Parks for People' bids.
- 3.5 The plans have been subject to extensive consultation and engagement. The approach to the consultation and engagement is set out below; the remainder of the report gives an indication as to how the consultation and engagement informed the development of the plans. The various consultation reports are available in Member's Rooms and on line.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation for the 'Parks for People' bid commenced in 2009, and the main elements of the consultation are summarised below:

2009 Consultation (October & November)
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand people's wishes and requirements for The Level. • To understand people's concerns and aspirations. • Gain views on two concept designs, one with the skatepark in the existing location and one with it in the north end of the park. • Gain views on whether there was support for the restoration of the 1920's design.
<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data was gathered from consultees through questionnaires. • Six consultation events were held in October/November 2009 where members of the public could meet with members of the project team to talk through the proposals. • The events were advertised by a mail drop to 13,456 households within a half mile radius of The Level and through 300 posters, the council web site, City News and The Argus. • Information and questionnaires were also sent out to residents in response phone and email requests. • Workshops were held with stakeholders with an interest in The Level (e.g. police, conservation officers, rangers, community safety workers, etc.).
<p>Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 378 questionnaires were completed and the data analysed by the council's Research Team. • Valuable data was gathered on peoples views of The Level and what they would like to see changed. • The response indicated there was an overall preference to move the skatepark out of the southern half. • Under represented people and groups were identified who were targeted in the next stage of consultation.

- 4.2 Based on the consultation designs were amended and a period of targeted, detailed information sharing, consultation and engagement took place between January 2010 and January 2011.

2010 Targeted Engagement, Consultation & Information Sharing
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain more detailed views from specific stakeholders, in particular underrepresented groups to help develop the proposals regarding access, activities, design, conservation, safety, history and education. • To further explore options surrounding the location of the skatepark.
<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the development funding received from the Stage 1 application an officer was recruited on a temporary basis to lead this work and to develop a clear plan of activities and ways in which the park could be more accessible. • Five focus groups were held between June 2010 and January 2011 looking at design options. The focus groups were mainly attended by local residents, representatives of community groups including the Friends of The Level and skate representatives. • Over 75 meetings were held with community groups, schools and

minority groups. These included older people, people with disabilities and their carers, children, parents, residents associations and representatives from black and minority ethnic groups. A full list of groups consulted is detailed in the Consultation Report. At each meeting people were given the opportunity to discuss how they felt about the park, any key barriers to using the park and what people felt would make it better. Groups were then shown the proposals for the new plans and given an opportunity to discuss and comment. Some of the meetings took place on site so that specific issues could be looked at on the ground. An Access Audit was completed with the Federation of Disabled People.

- Numerous meetings were held with stakeholders including conservation groups (The Brighton Society and The Regency Society), the Play Service, the Police, the Substance Misuse Service.

Results

- A significant evidence base was produced which has had a strong influence on the design of the park, the proposed activities and the volunteer, learning and education plans. The evidence of the extent by which this work informed the plans is evident from reading them.
- Two final design options were produced for the final consultation carried out in March 2011.

2011 Consultation (March)

Objectives:

- Identify which of two designs (with the skatepark location being the main difference) people prefer and why.
- To find out which aspects of the proposals people will appreciate.
- To inform the final proposals for the Masterplan.

Methodology

- In December 2010 information leaflets were sent to 28,000 households within a 15 minute walk of The Level summarising the proposals and informing residents of the forthcoming consultation and other ways they could become involved. This distance is based on the council's adopted accessibility standards for parks and open space in the city's Local Development Framework, which was informed by the findings of a public consultation carried out for the Citywide Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study in 2008/9. This study determined that 15 minutes was the maximum time people were willing to walk to their local park. It is also the standard adopted by the Department for Children Schools and Families (now Department of Education) Design for Play Guidance where 15 minutes walk is the catchment for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- In March 2011 the same households were sent details of public consultation exhibitions, detailed plans of the two draft designs and a questionnaire.
- The consultation was advertised on the council's website and residents could complete the consultation on line if they wished.
- The consultation was advertised in The Argus, with posters and with signs on The Level.
- Eight public exhibitions were held to give people the opportunity to come and find out more about the plans.

Results

- Approximately 3300 questionnaires were returned (>11%) of which 2735 responses came from within the 15 minute walk catchment (people from outside the catchment could also respond). This response is significantly better than the response to the 2009 consultation.
- The response to the main question in relation to the skatepark location was that there was an overall preference to move the skatepark out of the southern half. The percentages were very similar to the 2009 consultation.

- 4.3 The response to the consultation demonstrates The Level's popularity and value to the local community and citywide residents. The consultation results are discussed in the sections below. Copies of the consultation reports are available.

5. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The aims of the 'Parks for People' grant and its required funding outcomes are very well suited to The Level. Restoring heritage is essential to the bid, but of equal importance is increasing the number and range of park users, having a robust and funded management and maintenance plan and providing activities, volunteering and learning opportunities, particularly relating to the history of the park. All these criteria have to be met if the bid is to be successful.
- 5.2 The five essential project outcomes and their applicability to The Level are summarised below as well as other improvements the proposals will deliver.

HLF Outcome 1: Increasing the range of park users

- 5.3 One of the main focuses of the consultation has been to gain people's views of The Level, what they like about it, what they don't and it has involved both people who use The Level and those who avoid it in order to find out what will make more people use the park.
- 5.4 Feedback has been obtained from a very wide range of groups including:
- six schools;
 - eight community groups; and
 - nine minority groups (including groups representing the elderly, people with disabilities and black and minority ethnic groups).
- 5.5 Feedback has also been obtained from specialist stakeholders, local residents and park users as well as from the two consultation exercises from which a total of 3600 response were received.
- 5.6 An Access Audit has been carried out with the Federation of Disabled People and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposals.
- 5.7 The results show that while The Level is well used by certain groups (eg young people and families. students, office workers and dog walkers) many people feel:
- It is unsafe;
 - They are not welcome;
 - It is not accessible for them; and

- There is nothing for them to do or nowhere for them to sit.
- 5.8 These points are particularly relevant to older people and people with disabilities.
- 5.9 Based on the feedback the proposals seek to make The Level more welcoming by restoring and improving facilities making it very welcoming and accessible for visitors year round. Increasing park users, surveillance by on site staff and improved lighting will help reduce anti social behaviour.
- 5.10 A detailed Community Safety Plan for The Level has been produced with community safety partners. It will be submitted as part of the bid and implemented with our partners. It will partly be resourced by the funding bid (eg providing dog free areas, opening the park up and improving its general condition) and partly through existing resources (eg better partnership working between key organisations).
- 5.11 New features which will draw in a wide range of audiences (and reduce anti social behaviour) include:
- A new interactive water feature on the former foot print of the boating pond;
 - A new accessible café which will be open all year and in the evenings;
 - A sensory garden and grassed areas and seating;
 - Facilities for community groups, residents and schools to use; and
 - Events, volunteer and learning opportunities detailed below;
 - New DDA accessible toilets
 - Provision has also been made for a 'Changing Places' toilet which provides facilities for severely disabled people and their carers. Funding for a toilet attendant has yet to be secured.
- 5.12 The Level is already used for a range of events including the travelling fair and various festivals. The Masterplan will ensure that the existing events can continue to take place and opportunities for additional events requested by respondents to the consultation (e.g. markets, music, etc) will also be created attracting a wider range of people to the park.
- 5.13 Details of the types of activities which will be organised to attract more visitors to The Level are set out in the Activity Plan.

HLF Outcome 2: Conserving and improving the heritage value

- 5.14 The current layout and design of The Level dates back to the 1800's. Important features include:
- The shape of the park, the stone wall along the northern boundary and the alignment of the main pathways dating back to 1877. The stone wall is in a state of disrepair as are the pathways, lighting and seating.
 - The avenue of elms planted along the outer walkway planted in 1845.
 - The layout of the southern part of The Level which was designed in the 1920's with the aim of opening up vistas and creating a boulevard style park for central Brighton. The design, which was symmetrical, included shelters, pergolas, an ornamental boating pond and bridges which were all intended to disguise play equipment and create a garden setting for other users.

- 5.15 The Masterplan design has been led by Land Use Consultants who have considerable expertise in restoring heritage parks and in developing successful 'Parks for People' funding bids. Other specialists who have been consulted as part of the design process include the council's Conservation and Planning Officer and Virginia Hinze who has completed a dissertation on the history of The Level. Feedback has also been obtained from two conservation groups, The Regency Society and The Brighton Society.
- 5.16 Feedback from the consultation has also strongly influenced the proposals for conserving and enhancing the heritage on site (for example in relation to the uses of the two pavilions).
- 5.17 As a result the Masterplan includes maintaining, enhancing and restoring key heritage features such as:
- The original semicircular shelters, pergolas, columns, bridges and paved areas
 - Rose Walk and its flower beds
 - The southern entrance and dolphin lights
 - The original layout of pathways
- 5.18 Signage and interpretation boards will be installed to help explain the importance of the heritage of The Level.
- 5.19 The boating pond, which was very prominent in the 1920's layout will be replaced with the water feature which will be the same shape as the original pond.

HLF Outcome 3: Increasing the range of volunteers involved

- 5.20 Volunteer opportunities provide a mechanism for local residents to play an active role in their park and provide learning and social opportunities. Volunteers can also be of significant support to the council, a good local example being the Pavilion Gardens Volunteer Gardeners.
- 5.21 The consultation and engagement work has shown that there is a strong desire from parts of the community for opportunities on The Level. For example SCOPE (a charity for people who suffer from cerebral palsy) is interested in organising accessible garden sessions.
- 5.22 We will work with and support residents and community groups keen to get involved in The Level.
- 5.23 Volunteer opportunities will include:
- A gardening club to help maintain bedding displays to a high standard, a similar scheme operates successfully in Pavilion Gardens;
 - Delivering heritage and nature guided walks talks and exhibitions;
 - Volunteer play and activity workers; and
 - Health Walks training which would attract volunteers who are interested in promoting the Healthy Living agenda.
- 5.24 Volunteer activities will be coordinated and supported by a dedicated officer funded through the bid for a period of three years. Funding has also been included in the bid to help establish volunteering opportunities and for training.

5.25 Details of volunteering proposals are set out in the Activity Plan.

HLF Outcome 4: Improving skills and knowledge through learning & training

5.26 The consultation has identified that a range of organisations are keen to explore learning opportunities on The Level. Schools are keen to have opportunities for learning outside of the class room, Rangers will provide a range of activities year round and Brighton Technical College would like to work in partnership, for example to provide students with volunteering opportunities to repair and maintain the perimeter stone wall.

5.27 Learning and training activities are set out in the Activities Plan.

5.28 There will be learning and training activities in areas such as:

- Horticulture
- Wildlife and biodiversity monitoring
- Coaching and play worker skills
- Legislative requirements for volunteers

5.29 The training will be targeted at a wide range of people including minority groups, children and young people and people looking for work experience. It will play a key part in making The Level welcoming for a wider range of people.

HLF Outcome 5: Improving management & maintenance

5.30 The current poor state of the park is the result of lack of any significant investment since the 1970's which makes maintaining the infrastructure to the right standard on the existing revenue budget impossible. The improvements to the park will mean key infrastructure will need less maintenance for years to come (e.g. paths, lighting, benches and planting will be replaced and key buildings restored) and the park will be maintained to the highest standard within existing budgets. (HLF require successful bids to achieve and maintain Green Flag status for at least seven years).

5.31 A Garden Manager will be based on The Level, working closely with the Rangers and other service providers and community groups.

5.32 A ten year fully costed management and maintenance plan will be submitted as part of the bid.

Environmental Improvements

5.33 The council's ecologist has fed in to the development of the Master Plan, and the site has been subject to an ecological appraisal. The proposals provide opportunities for improving the environment including:

- Increasing biodiversity, for example as a result of improving and extending planting with native species;
- Preserving the habitat of the White Letter Hairstreak butterfly which depends on the elm trees for its survival;
- Reducing hard surfacing and therefore improving flood capacity

- 5.34 There will also be opportunities to help people learn more about the environment and how to protect it.
- 5.35 The café building will have a low carbon footprint; it will be energy efficient and include a ground source heat system.

6. SKATEPARK

Consultation on Skatepark Location

- 6.1 The existing skatepark is in a state of disrepair and will have to be replaced in the short to medium term.
- 6.2 Throughout the consultation a number of different designs have been developed and considered, the main difference between them being the location of the skatepark.
- 6.3 The 2009 consultation, which had 387 responses showed that 57% of respondents preferred moving the skatepark north of Rose Walk to a new location along the northern boundary, 31% preferred it in its current location and 12% didn't have a particular preference.
- 6.4 However some nearby residents, including representatives from Friends of The Level, were very strongly against the proposals as a result of which further engagement and design work was undertaken to try and come up with a design that would better meet the criteria of the different groups.
- 6.5 Five focus groups were held as well as numerous meetings with Friends of The Level and Park Crescent residents, primarily to look at options surrounding the skatepark. The meetings were attended by between eight and 28 residents and park users. Most, but not all people who attended these meetings were against having a skatepark located in the northern part of The Level. Representatives of Park Crescent residents have stated they would prefer the bid to be unsuccessful rather than having the skatepark moved, and in their consultation response Friends of The Level have stated they will only support a bid with the skatepark south of Rose Walk. They have started a campaign to keep the skatepark in the southern part of The Level.
- 6.6 The final designs were amended as a result of this. However given the response to the initial consultation in favour of moving the skatepark it was not appropriate to rule it out at the request of The Friends of The Level and Park Crescent representatives without testing these views through further consultation with the wider community. Prior to the consultation feedback was obtained from the Friends of The Level and Park Crescent regarding the consultation documents and where possible their suggestions were addressed in the final version of the document.
- 6.7 The March 2011 consultation asked respondents which of two designs they preferred, one with the skatepark in the existing location, the other with it located just north of Rose Walk. 3,330 people responded to the consultation:
- 55% preferred moving the skatepark north of Rose Walk,

- 33% preferred it in its current location and
- 12% had no particular preference.

The two designs are set out in the consultation document (Appendix 2).

6.8 The above results include all consultation responses, The table below breaks it down into three catchments:

- All responses including those from outside the 15 minute catchment
- Only responses from within the 15 minute catchment
- Only responses from roads immediately adjacent to The Level.

6.9 The results show that the response is similar whether all results are analysed, or whether only those in the 15 minute catchment are assessed. Of the 138 residents closest to The Level (most of which were from Park Crescent and Hanover Crescent) most prefer to keep the skatepark in the existing location.

Summary of Consultation Responses

Option	All responses (within 15 minute walk and beyond)	Results from within 15 minute walk catchment only	Results from streets immediately surrounding The Level
Number of responses	3,330	2,735	138
Option 1- Skatepark in existing location	34	33%	61%
Option 2 - Skatepark north of Rose Walk	55	54%	35%
No preference / don't know	11%	13%	4%

6.10 The overall results are very similar to the 2009 consultation. The most recurring six comments for both options are summarised with comments below. All the comments are available in the Consultation Report.

Most Frequent Comments Supporting Option 1: Keep Skatepark in Existing Location
<p><i>Want to keep the area north of Rose Walk green/ open (309 respondents)</i></p> <p>Moving the skatepark to the north will change the look and feel of the area, and whether this is preferred to keeping it in its existing location is subjective.</p> <p>Moving the skatepark will not result in a net loss of green space. The hard surfaced area will be restored to grass, and is larger than the area given over to the proposed skate park.</p> <p>The aim is to still keep the area to the north open, with the skatepark being sunken. Appropriate barrier planting will be introduced to separate the skatepark and the grassed area.</p>
<p><i>Concerns about noise from the skatepark (47 respondents)</i></p>

Concerns about noise were raised by respondents both for and against moving the skatepark.

The skatepark will generate some noise as it does at present.

There have been no recorded noise complaints from the skatepark in the existing location and there is no evidence to suggest moving it will change this.

The new skatepark will be of concrete construction which will be less noisy than the current timber construction.

The north area should be kept free for events (34 respondents)

Maintaining existing events and establishing new ones is one of the objectives of the bid.

The open area that will be retained in the north will provide sufficient space for events including the Fun Fair. This has been confirmed both by the council's Events Manager and the Manager of the Fun Fair.

The changes to the south of the park provide new opportunities for events. The flower garden area will be dog free and suitable for fitness sessions, art classes and tai-chi. The water fountains can be switched off providing a space which can be used for music and other performances.

Easier to supervise children if all activities in one area (33 respondents)

Keeping the skatepark where it is will mean it is in closer proximity to the play areas. Whether this is an advantage or disadvantage is subjective, 95 respondents want bikers and skaters to be separated from small children's play areas (see below).

Concerned about alcohol use in the park (33 respondents)

Alcohol abuse has been raised as a concern by respondents in relation to both options. There is no evidence to suggest the location of the skatepark will have any effect on alcohol use.

Addressing alcohol use is a priority, together with addressing anti-social behaviour irrespective of skatepark location.

Anti social behaviour would increase if skatepark in north area (24 respondents)

The majority of anti-social behaviour happens in the south end of the park and is rarely associated with skate park or skatepark users. The data suggests the main perpetrators are drug users, underage drinkers and young people gathering before a night out.

The Brighton & Hove Skateparks Association would like the skatepark to be graffiti free and will be promoting this amongst their members.

Addressing anti-social behaviour and safety throughout the park has been identified as the priority through the consultation. The Masterplan and Community Safety Plan seek to address this through a range of measures and there is no evidence to suggest that skatepark location will have a significant impact on antisocial behaviour.

<p>Most Frequent Comments Supporting Option 2: Move Skatepark North of Rose Walk</p>
<p><i>The southern area will be more restful (397 respondents)</i></p> <p>Moving the skatepark will free up more space in the southern area. It will still accommodate the playground, water fountain and café which are all likely to be popular and busy.</p> <p>The total number of people using the area may increase as a result, but it is likely to be a more diverse range of people and there will be an increase green space for relaxation.</p> <p>If the skatepark is not moved the southern area will be more crowded and there will be no significant additional green space for relaxation.</p>
<p><i>Concerns about noise from the skatepark, north is best position for skatepark (111 respondents)</i></p> <p>Concerns about noise were raised by respondents both for and against moving the skatepark.</p> <p>The skatepark will generate some noise as it does at present.</p> <p>There have been no recorded noise complaints from the skatepark in the existing location and there is no evidence to suggest moving it will change this.</p> <p>The new skatepark will be of concrete construction which will be less noisy than the current timber construction.</p>
<p><i>Want skaters and bikes to be separated from small children's areas (95 respondents)</i></p> <p>Moving the skatepark will separate the children's play area from the skatepark. In contrast 33 respondents wanted to keep the skatepark closer to the play area to be able to supervise children in both areas.</p>
<p><i>Antisocial behaviour would decrease if skatepark in the north area (79 respondents)</i></p> <p>The majority of anti-social behaviour happens in the south end of the park but is rarely associated with skate park or skatepark users. The data suggests the main perpetrators are drug users, underage drinkers and young people gathering before a night out.</p> <p>The Brighton & Hove Skateparks Association would like the skatepark to be graffiti free and will be promoting this amongst their members.</p> <p>Addressing anti-social behaviour and safety throughout the park has been identified as the priority through the consultation. The Masterplan and Community Safety Plan seek to address this through a range of measures and there is no evidence to suggest that skatepark location will have a significant impact on antisocial behaviour.</p>
<p><i>Concerns about alcohol consumption in the park (69)</i></p> <p>Alcohol abuse has been raised as a concern by respondents in relation to both options. There is no evidence to suggest the location of the skatepark will have any effect on alcohol use.</p>

Addressing alcohol use is a priority, together with addressing anti-social behaviour irrespective of skatepark location.

- 6.11 Based on the outcome of all the consultation and engagement work, it is recommended that the skatepark is relocated as set in Option 2, just to the north of Rose Walk.
- 6.12 A new skate-park will require planning permission and pre-application advice has been sought on both options. Based on the information available, officer advice at this stage is that no in principle objection would be raised. A copy of the pre-application advice letter will be submitted as part of the 'Parks for People HLF bid.
- 6.13 The HLF as well as council's Design and Conservation Manager have also confirmed they have no objections to the skatepark moving to the north of Rose Walk.

Skatepark Design & Development

- 6.14 The skatepark is very well used and is generally considered to be an integral part of The Level. The HLF fully support a Masterplan which includes the skatepark. It has not been included in the bid and therefore separate funding is being pursued.
- 6.15 In the Masterplan, a maximum area of 1600 m² (including approximately 200m² of buffer space) has been allocated for a new, sunken concrete skatepark immediately to the north of Rose Walk. The concrete sunken construction will be lower maintenance than the current wooden structure, it will provide a better skate surface and by being sunken it will have a lower visual impact. It will also be less noisy than the current timber structure.
- 6.16 The cost of a new skatepark as set out in the Masterplan is anticipated to be approximately £400,000, which will be confirmed when a detailed design has been completed.
- 6.17 The current funding available is:
- £97,000 s106 funding
 - £53,000 proposed funding from existing parks budget.
- 6.18 This is £250,000 short of the amount required to build the maximum size skatepark.
- 6.19 Other sources of funding being pursued include:
- Viridor grant funding (£30,000 - £50,000)
 - Veolia grant funding (£40,000 - £100,000)
 - Sponsorship £100,000
- 6.20 These avenues will be pursued further in partnership with the Brighton & Hove Skateparks Association who will also be closely involved in the detailed design once a decision on skatepark location has been finalised. It is anticipated that all existing viable external funding routes will have been exhausted by January

2012. At this stage the available budget will determine the maximum size and complexity of the skatepark, and it may be smaller than shown on the Masterplan.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CITY

- 7.1 The bid will provide great benefits to the local community; it will also provide benefits to the city as a whole. It will create a high quality green space in an area of high deprivation where outdoor recreational space is very limited.
- 7.2 If successful it will bring in around £2.1 million worth of extra funding in to the city and create a park which will also be a destination for other residents in the city and visitors. It is easily accessible from the city centre and the North Laine area which is very popular with tourists. It will also complement the plans to transform the London Road area, including the Open Market.
- 7.3 The Level is situated between two main routes in to the city centre and its redevelopment will improve the gateway into the city.
- 7.4 It is located at the north end of Valley Gardens and completion of the bid will be a significant first step towards improving all the green spaces that make up this area.

8. WHAT IF THE BID IS UNSUCCESSFUL?

- 8.1 Because of its poor state of repair The Level requires significant funding to be brought up to standard.
- 8.2 The funding available if the bid is unsuccessful will only realise marginal improvements to certain aspects of the park:
 - S106 money will be used to improve the playground
 - The skatepark will be replaced as per the Master Plan (size being dependent on funding) and the foot print of the existing skatepark will have to be made good and grassed over.
- 8.3 The council would have the option of still allocating the match funding elements to The Level (£200,000) over two years for essential maintenance, but it would not have the added benefit of securing £2.1 million of external funding.
- 8.4 Improvements would have to be prioritised on the reduced budget but elements of the project which would definitely not be funded include:
 - The new café
 - New toilets
 - The water feature
 - New infrastructure (walkways, lighting)
- 8.5 The Level would not be transformed into the welcoming accessible park as set out in the Masterplan and the benefits associated with this (reducing anti-social behaviour, increasing the range and number of people using the park, volunteering and learning opportunities, a deliverable maintenance plan and obtaining a Green Flag Award) would not be realised.

- 8.6 An important first step in realising the vision of Valley Gardens will have been missed.

9. FUNDING

- 9.1 The overall value of the bid is summarised in tables below. The grant application is for 86% of the total project value, the remainder being made up by match funding. The total value finally submitted may vary slightly as details are finalised but the cost to the council, through its match funding will not increase above the figures detailed below.
- 9.2 The bid includes funding for a temporary Project Manager and Project Officer to oversee the delivery of the scheme.

Summary of Total Bid

Total Value of Bid	£2,810,000
HLF Grant Requested	£2,177,000
Match Funding Requirement	£633,000

Summary of Match Funding Elements

Source of Funding	Value	Notes
Existing Parks Budgets	£200,000	<p>Funding from existing budgets spread over two years.</p> <p>If bid were unsuccessful investment from existing budgets would be needed to carry out essential repairs. The bid has the advantage that this same money can be used to leverage in £2.1 million of external funding.</p> <p>The impact on the overall City Parks budget will be similar whether the bid is successful or not (because of some of the essential works that will need to be funded either way). Funding will still be available to deliver front line improvements in other parts of the city.</p>
Developers Contributions (s106)	£134,000	£288,000 of s106 funding has been secured with £71,000 expected to be allocated by the end of 2011. Of this £97,000 is earmarked for the skatepark and £128,000 for the playground. The remainder will be used to matchfund the bid.
Increased maintenance over a period of five years	£162,000	These costs reflect the cost of employing a full time Garden Manager for a period of five years. The Garden Manager will be employed by reorganising existing staff resources.

		<p>The financial value of this resource is included in the costs to demonstrate the council's commitment to maintaining the park to the high standards required for Green Flag and to satisfy the funding terms and conditions. However, it can also be used as part of our matched funding so overall balances out and does not impact our budgets.</p> <p>Under the terms of the grant this funding has to be ring fenced to the parks and will go towards off setting increased maintenance and any increases in utility costs.</p>
Volunteer Time	£137,000	Under the terms of the bid, volunteer time contributes to match funding. The volunteer contribution is made up of a range of activities including the gardening club.
Total	£633,000	

10. TIME-SCALES

HLF Bid

10.1 The main time-scales for the HLF bid are summarised below.

Approval of Masterplan at Cabinet Member Meeting	5 th July 2011
Completion of final details of bid	5 th July – 30 th August 2011
Submission of HLF Bid	31 st August 2011
Decision by HLF	1 st January 2012
Project planning, tendering	January 2012 Onwards
Start build	Winter 2012/13
Complete main aspects of build	Summer 2013

Skatepark

10.2 The main time-scales for the development of the skatepark are summarised below.

Approval of skatepark location Cabinet Member Meeting	5 th July 2011
Detailed design of skatepark to support external funding bids	July 2011 – September 2011
Submission of planning permission for skatepark	September 2011
Completion/ submission of funding applications	October 2011
Decision on funding bids	January 2012
Finalise design	March 2012
Start build	March 2012 onwards

11. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 11.1 The cost of producing the Masterplan has been met from existing Parks revenue budgets. The estimated value of The Level capital project is £2.810 million, of which £2.177 million is being sought via the Heritage Lottery Fund. In order to meet match funding requirements, there will need to be a future contribution from revenue budgets of £0.200 million and from Section106 capital receipts of £0.134 million. These are the only direct financial implications. In addition however, the Heritage Lottery Fund values the provision of an on site manager, created through a restructuring process, and maintenance costs as £0.162 million, and attaches a value of £0.137 million to volunteer staff.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 27/05/11

Legal Implications:

- 11.2 No legal implications arise directly from the Report. However, any infrastructure to be provided as a result of funding received will be subject to the relevant planning and procurement regulations. In addition any funding received will be subject to stringent terms and conditions to which the Council must adhere.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward Date: 02/06/11

Equalities Implications:

- 11.3 Many people, groups of people do not currently use The Level. Extensive consultation has taken place with underrepresented groups to address these issues. An Access Audit has been carried out with the Federation of Disabled People to inform the Masterplan, and it has also been subject to a full Equalities Impact Assessment. The EIA will be available on line.

Sustainability Implications:

- 11.4 Physical sustainability implications are summarised in paragraphs 5.38 – 5.41. The proposals will help to create a more sustainable community by providing opportunities for people to become involved with The Level, organise and attend events, learning and volunteering opportunities. A significant part of the proposals is to address anti social behaviour.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 11.5 Crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour have been identified as significant issues preventing people from using The Level or affecting their enjoyment of The Level. The Masterplan and the bid seek to transform the park to address these issues and make the park welcoming for everyone.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 11.6 The main risks associated with the next stages of the project are summarised below.

Description & Consequence (C)	Control measures
<p>All or part of match funding fails to materialise</p> <p>C: Unable to proceed forward with the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All matched funding is being secured through council revenue budget, s106 and value in kind from volunteer contributions increased management and maintenance costs. - Secured matched funding will be seen as strength in our bid.
<p>Unsuccessful HLF bid</p> <p>C: Limited improvements will be made with existing budget. Overall park will remain in poor condition and is likely to continue to deteriorate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bid preparation has been thorough to maximise chance of success. - Alternative sources of funding will be explored.
<p>Failure to obtain necessary planning permission for buildings and skatepark</p> <p>C: Delay and alternation to proposed buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worked with Planning from the start of the programme to ensure we address any planning issues. - Confirmed Planning do not have any issues with the proposals.
<p>Rising costs/inflation</p> <p>C: Reduction in works if extra funding is not sought</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QS have prepared fully costed proposals and specialist work checked with relevant professionals. - Contingency and inflation costs built in to budgets. - Strong budget controls will be in place as part of Project Management
<p>Rising costs to maintenance activities/utilities/resource</p> <p>C: Unable to keep in budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Careful consideration has been given to quality of build - Careful consideration has been given to sustainable solutions during build - Income from Café will be ring-fenced for park - Management and Maintenance plan to be regularly reviewed
<p>Failure to upkeep standards and lose Green Flag award</p> <p>C: Quality of park deteriorates and council in breach of funding terms and conditions.</p> <p>C. Worse case scenario is that funding body requests repayment of funding bid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fully costed 10 year Management and Maintenance Plan has been prepared - Site based Garden Manager will be appointed - Regular review of training requirements to be carried out - Continual development for staff

	<p>already in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continual development for volunteers to be put in place
<p>Failure to manage anti-social behaviour</p> <p>C: People will feel unsafe at the park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worked with various community safety partners including the police to identify issues and develop action plan to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour - Dedicated on-site Garden Manager and Ranger will provide natural surveillance

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

11.7 These are outlined in section 7.

12. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

12.1 Throughout the development of the Master Plan and the development of the bid various design options have been considered. Submission of the bid was delayed to allow alternative options to be explored in further detail. The final consultation considered two final design options, and the preferred option has been recommended in light of this consultation, previous consultation and engagement work.

13. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out throughout the report. The Level is in a very poor state of repair, suffers from antisocial behaviour and is not considered to be a safe place by many residents. It is in an area of high housing density where open space is limited. Without significant funding it will continue to deteriorate.
- 13.2 This funding bid provides a potential opportunity to transform The Level leveraging in £2.17 million worth of external funding. The requested match funding from existing budgets will strengthen the bid.
- 13.3 The skatepark redevelopment is not included in the bid. Current funding is not sufficient to build the skatepark to the size set out in the Masterplan and further funding is being pursued. The funding requested from existing budgets will help contribute to the funding shortfall.
- 13.4 The deadline for the submission of the bid is the 31st of August. Most of the evidence base for the bid has been completed, but some detail has yet to be finalised, and it is requested that the Director of Place has the authority to sign off the final bid. There will be no changes significant changes to the Master Plan and no increases to the council's proposed financial contribution through match funding.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of Master Plan
2. March 2011 Consultation Document

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. 2009 Consultation Report
2. Activity Plan (Draft)
3. Community Safety Plan (Draft)
4. Management & Maintenance Plan (Draft)

Background Documents

None

THE LEVEL Brighton & Hove City Council

Stage D Report (Third Draft)

Working document to be completed in August 2011

Prepared by
Land Use Consultants

20th June 2011





Environmental Planning

Landscape Design

Landscape Management

Masterplanning

Landscape Planning

Ecology

Environmental Assessment

Rural Futures

Digital Design

Urban Regeneration

Urban Design

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Status:		Version Details:	Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
Ver:	Date:				
1	27-05-11	Initial Draft	BS	BS	AW
2	15-06-11	Second Draft	BS	BS	AW

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Overview

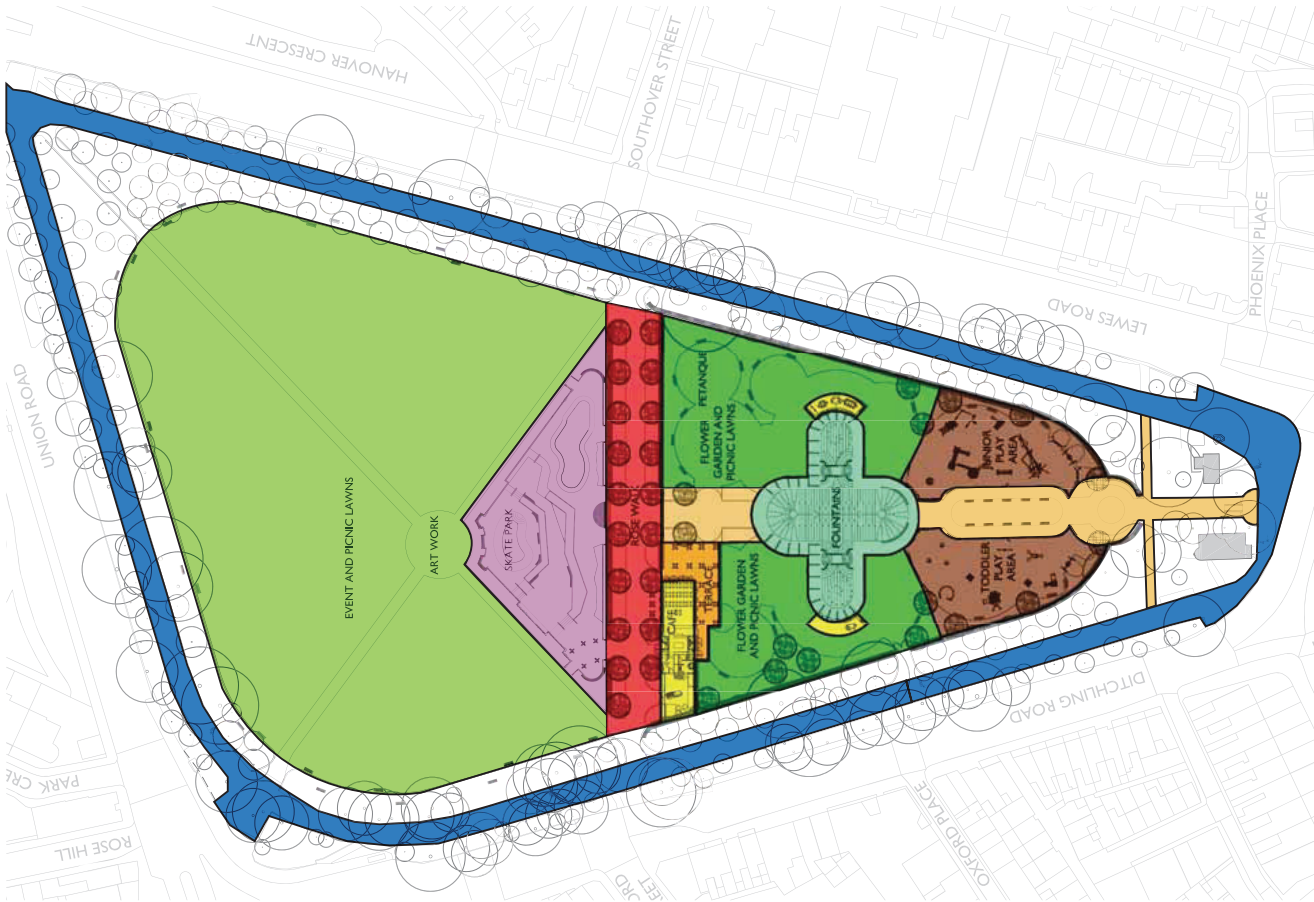
Two masterplans were prepared for a public consultation in March 2011 which presented different layout options, primarily focusing on the location of the skatepark. The current masterplan is shown on the previous page (based on the northern skatepark location). Plans are at a 1:500 scale (at A1), with some areas designed in more detail and most equipment and features specified.

The application for funding is through the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' programme. The Stage II cost plan is now in its second draft.

The enhancements to The Level have been thoughtfully designed as a whole and are accurately based on the Stage 1 funding application documents; they can be broken down into the following elements which are highlighted on the plan and described in more detail in this report:

- Rose Walk
- Cafe & Pavilions
- Cafe Terrace
- Fountains & Pergolas
- Skatepark
- Playground
- Picnic Lawns & Flower Garden
- Southern Entrance and North-South Axis
- Northern Event and Picnic Lawns
- Perimeter Path and Cycle Route

The level of detail in this document is appropriate for RIBA Stage D which is required for the 'Parks for People' Stage II application. Illustrations are used to demonstrate aspects of the design but the detailed specification of materials, planting and park furniture will not be carried out until the next RIBA Stage which is not required until a successful decision on the Stage II funding application is received.

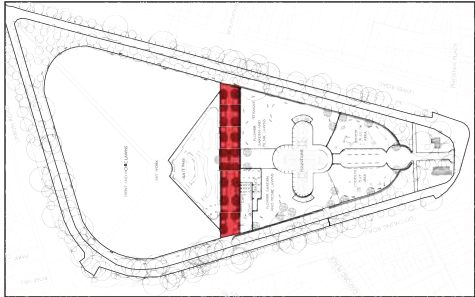


Rose Walk

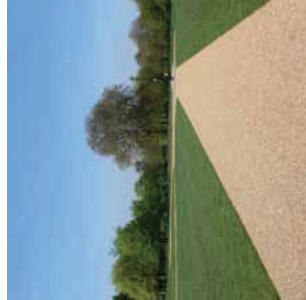
Rose Walk is a popular east-west short cut through the centre of The Level with views to the northern and southern areas of the park. New paving and planting will visually upgrade Rose Walk, while the repositioning of lamp columns will ensure the path is well lit and kept free from obstructions.

Carefully positioned tree planting along Rose Walk will create an avenue while still allowing views to the north and south, and framing the central axis. The existing hedges will be replaced with new pre-formed hedging for an instant impact, and a green back drop to the new colourful herbaceous and perennial shrub planting.

- Paving: Fibredek or Tarmac
- Lighting: New DH Windsor Ely Lamp with Swan Neck 4m
- Planting: Shrub / herbaceous with hedge behind
- Trees: Single species extra heavy standard street tree, Carpinus betulus 'Columnaris'



Location Plan



Fibredek surface to paths



Tarmac - alternative path option



DH Windsor Ely Swan Neck Lamp



DH Windsor Ely Swan Neck Lamp



Herbaceous & shrub planting mixture



Planting to create soft edge



Hedge creates backdrop to planting



Planting to include Roses



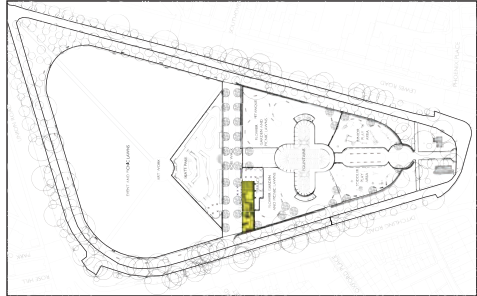
Carpinus betulus 'Columnaris'

Cafe

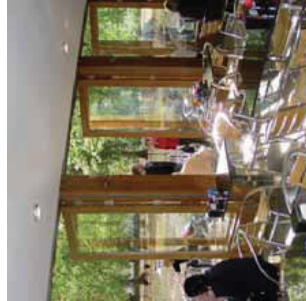
The Café is located between Rose Walk and the children's playground It has been designed to open up to three directions, north, south and east and has the potential to be used in the evening as well as during the day. It is enclosed by large double French doors which open fully so that in good weather the inside and outside terrace become one open space. The overhangs provide protection from the weather and allow more flexible use of the outside space. On the south side the overhangs take the form of a planted pergola with a glazed canopy to the north. The long glazed roof light along the spine of the cafe allows natural light to flood into the centre of the building. It also gives a view of the sky in all weathers and at all times of day. The roof will be planted on one side and fitted with solar panels on the other (subject to separate funding being raised).

A south-facing hatch will serve drinks, ice creams and snacks so you don't have to come into the café to get refreshments. Internal seating is provided for 156 covers with the same again outside, with kitchen provisions to suit.

A ground source installation will heat the building using a network of pipes laid, deep in the ground in the existing redgra area. Separate café and public toilets which including wheelchair accessible and enlarged disabled toilets and a Changing Places toilet facility have been provided on both sides of the building. The back of house area also accommodates a mess room, wash facilities and office space for the rangers and garden managers. The shared service yard provides space for deliveries and general storage for the café, children's play equipment and garden equipment.



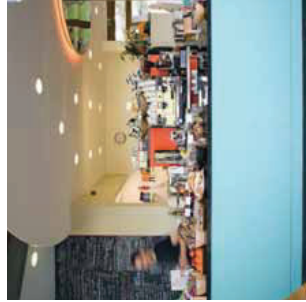
Location Plan



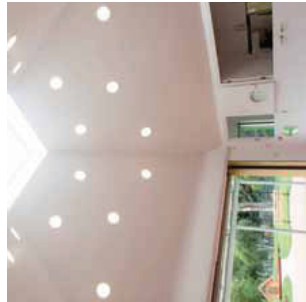
Double French doors



Interior design



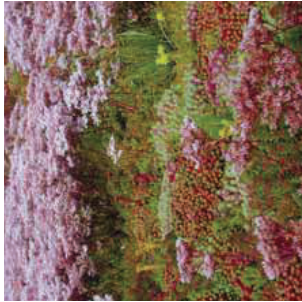
Serving counter



Natural lighting



Canopy around building



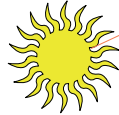
Green roof - drought tollerant



Green roof - with glazing



Solar panels - subject to funding



ply formed lead gutters & upstand

solar shading on south side of building

50 x 50 european oak slats fixed to galvanized steel frame

120mm CHS steel supporting poles

ply formed lead gutters & upstand

PV or solar panels

continuous opening roof light

ply formed lead gutters & upstand

planted roof

glass canopy allows light through on north side of building

See Myatts Field Park glass canopy 1625 sqm

European oak double doors double glazed with espagnolette bolts and hold open devices.

from inside to outside

from inside to outside

york stone

from inside to outside

york stone

Early sketch section showing features of the cafe including the protective overhangs to the north and south

Cafe Terrace

The Cafe Terrace will provide ample space for alfresco drinking and dining and will wrap around 3 sides of the cafe to maximise sun exposure. Shade will also be provided by adjacent trees and building sun screen.

- Paving: Specialist concrete to complement cafe flooring
- Lighting: Ambient lighting from the cafe and bollard lights (Woodscape - square timber) to provide low level illumination
- Planting: See adjacent Rose Walk and Flower Gardens
- Furniture: To match / complement cafe seating



Doors opening out to terrace



Canopy to provide shade & shelter



Seating in a pleasant green setting

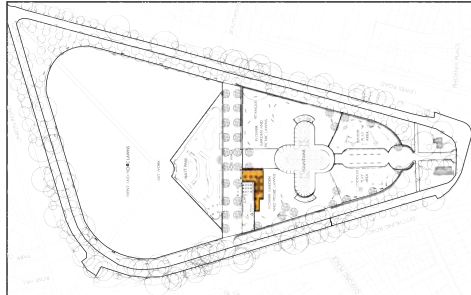


Furniture to match interior



Possible concrete paving

Sketch section to add of terrace



Location Plan



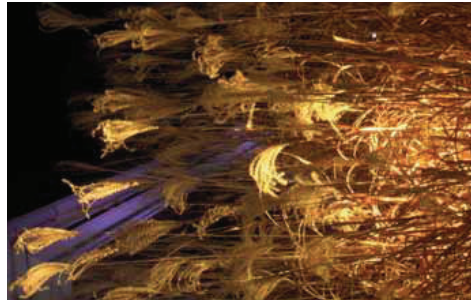
Woodscape square timber lighting bollard



Lighting bollards in-situ



Uplighters - adding atmosphere



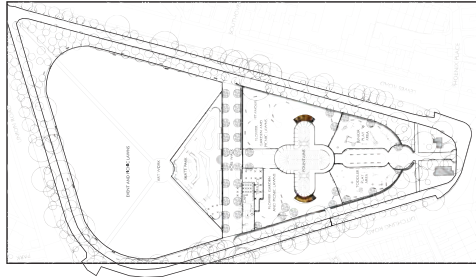
Uplighters - adding atmosphere

Pavilions

The two pavilions form part of MacLaren's original overall design and are still largely intact although in a poor state of repair and badly converted. At the moment the western pavilion is a kiosk and the eastern pavilion rather uninviting public wc's. These pavilions with their associated pergolas, located as they are on either side of MacLaren's original water feature, the proposed new fountain, form important elements in the overall landscape setting.

The proposals include:

- Both pavilions to be repaired and restored.
- Restoration will include overall repair building works such as the roof, columns and general construction.
- The original gable end circular windows will be reinstated
- The bricked up recesses between the columns are to be unblocked and glazed to return the pavilions to their original open cloister form with usable light, airy spaces protected from the elements.
- The western pavilion will be stripped out and re-planned to accommodate the existing kiosk and remaining space for use as additional storage or a gardeners/rangers office.
- This will allow the kiosk to be easily converted to another use in the future if needed.
- The eastern western pavilion will be divided into two equally sized spaces available for community use with some shared storage and a wc between.
- The renovation of these two buildings will be carried out in careful consultation with the landscape architects to ensure that the essence of MacLaren's design is respected.



Location Plan

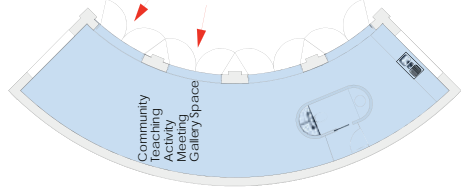


Community meeting room

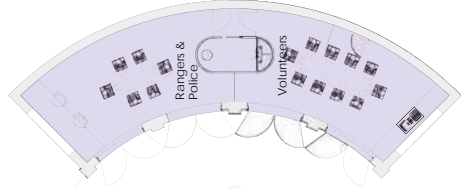
Improvement images to follow

Improvement images to follow

Final pavilion layouts to follow



West pavilion: rangers office



East pavilion: community space

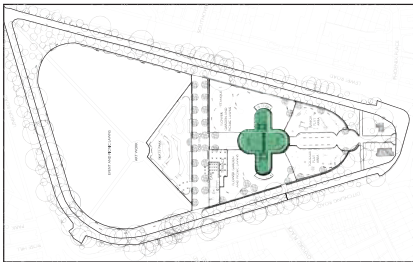
Fountains & Pergolas

The design of the new fountains aims to integrate the retained MacLaren features and re-introduce the previous footprint of the model boating pond. Located centrally in the park the fountains will provide a major focal point, creating a visually stunning display that will also be great fun to play in. A combination of jets types and performance settings will allow the fountains to create a sense of place with grander displays on special occasions and lighting for night-time appreciation. This will maximise the potential use of the fountains with day-time play and as a night-time backdrop for the cafe users. Separate, smaller scale fountains will be included to the outside of the central display for younger children to play in.

The fountains will be set in feature paving, drained to the centre with water filtered and recycled. Underground tanks will allow the water to be stored overnight or during periods of inactivity. The flat, level surface will be safe, easy to clean and allow for flexible usage of the area. It is proposed to keep the areas between the fountains and bridges free from water to maximise pedestrian circulation options.

The original pillars will be reinstalled with new horizontal timbers to recreate the original pergolas. With the addition of flowering climbers the pergolas will establish an attractive backdrop around the northern perimeter of the fountains.

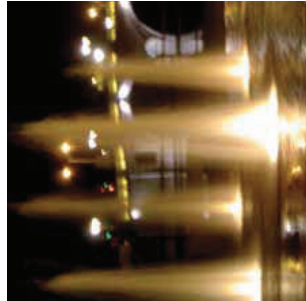
- Paving: Natural stone / in-situ concrete with a decorative finish around fountains with PCC slabs to adjacent paths
- Water jets: High quality adjustable water jets
- Lighting: Up-lighters to fountain jets, bridges and pergolas
- Furniture: Custom radius benches to edge of fountain
- Pergola planting: Aristolochia tomentosa, Akebia quinata
Rosa - Rambling Rector, New Dawn & Alister Spencer
Gray, Clematis Etoile Violette, Wisteria sinensis alba



Location Plan



Fountains



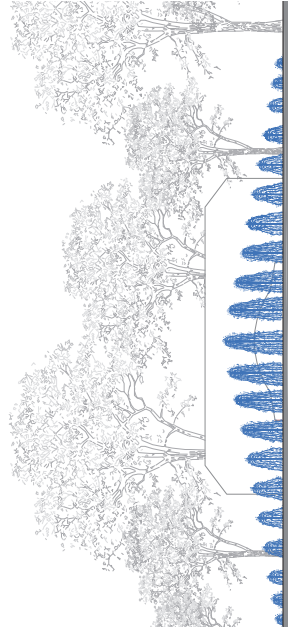
Fountains lit at night



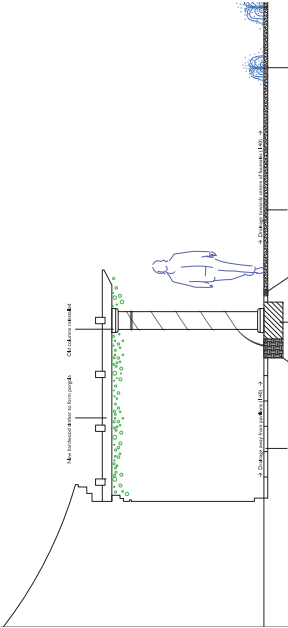
Pergola with climbing plants



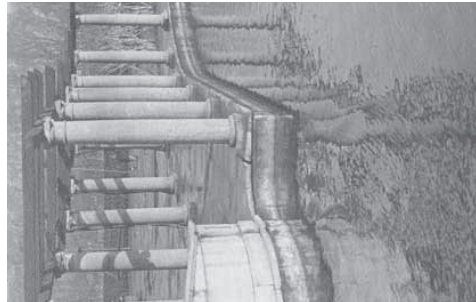
Climbers - Clematis Etoile Violette



Section through central fountains with outline of bridge and pavilion beyond



Section through pergola



The original layout



Original pergolas with climbers

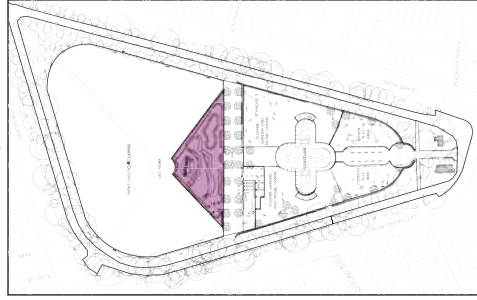
Skatepark

The position of the skatepark has been the subject of several public consultations but a decision is expected shortly. Either way the skatepark will be an important aspect of the improvement works to The Level (funding for the skatepark is not included in the 'Parks for People' bid and is subject to separate funding being raised). The existing facility will be brought up to date and designed to have a minimal visual impact. By combining bowls and streetscape style features the new skatepark will appeal to skaters of all ages, abilities and interests.

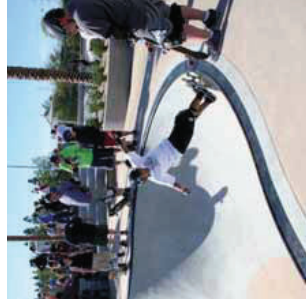
The stake park has been carefully designed to maximise its skating value within a set area while integrating internal and external planting to soften it visually. The proposed layout will ensure that the majority of the skating area is at grade or below to minimise intrusion on views across the park.

Materials used will be specific to skating, with specialist concrete predominating. Timber and metal will be used for specific features, selected to ensure long-term durability. Planted areas will soften the edge of the stake park and will be raised to protect planting and viewing areas provided for non-skaters at a safe distance from the action.

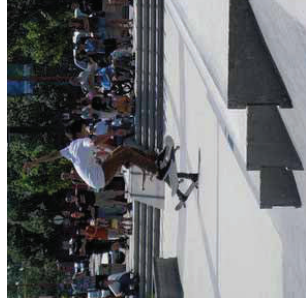
- Paving: specialist concrete surface
- Other features & furniture: Timber and stainless steel
- Lighting: New WRTL Indal Stela LED lamp
- Raised planting beds: rendered concrete block walls
- Planting: dry Mediterranean style planting to include:
Cistus, Rosmarinus, Lavandula and Helichrysium italicum with tall grasses to provide occasional height.



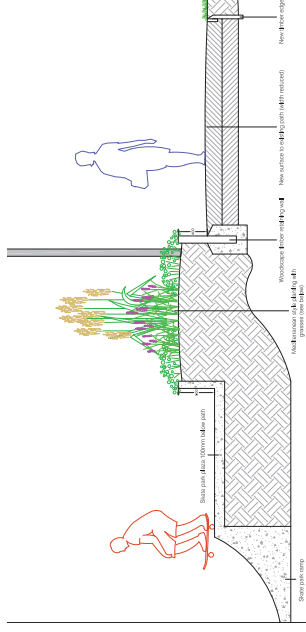
Location Plan



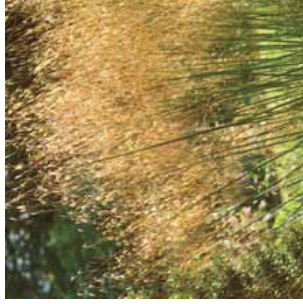
Skatepark bowls



Stakepark 'street' features



Skatepark edge and planting detail



Grasses to include Stipa gigantea



Plants to include Cistus x corbariensis



Plants to include Helichrysium italicum



Plants to include Lavender



Artists sketch showing indicative of skatepark layout softened with planting (to be replaced with revised illustrations)

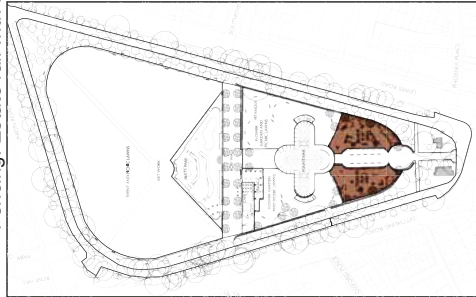
Playground

The playground has been designed with the aim of minimising 'hard' landscape features and including more natural play elements. Equipment will be predominately timber in order to complement the setting and will provide challenge and excitement for children of all ages and abilities. There will be some which are more accessible to children with disabilities.

Broadly following the concept and layout of the 1920's MacLaren design, the playground will be divided into toddler and junior areas with a roughly symmetrical arrangement and a central walkway with flower beds which can be used by all members of the public. The final design of the playground will be subject to more detailed consultation with children and their parents and guardians, and will be funded separately.

Materials will be selected to provide the required combination of safety, durability and aesthetic qualities. Sand will be included in specific areas, with sand-play equipment and equipment-free areas. The main surfacing will be a safety grass matt which provides the required fall protection and allows for a greener 'grassy' setting. Estate rail fencing will be installed to ensure children are contained within the play areas, but with the minimum amount of visual segregation.

- Equipment: Timber equipment & other accessible equipment
- Surfacing: GrassLok Rubber Safety Surfacing / Play Sand
- Paving to adjacent path & playground access: PCC slabs
- Planting: shrubs and grasses to add interest
- Trees: selected species for shade and structure
- Furniture: Quality timber / timber and metal seating
- Fencing: Estate rail with safety auto close gates



Location Plan



Rubber safety surface with grass



Concrete paving for central walk way



Play equipment



Wheelchair accessible equipment



Play huts for younger children



Sand play building site



Swings



Planting



Estate rail fence with dog mesh



Hexagon huts with bridge links



Sand play



Trees for shade

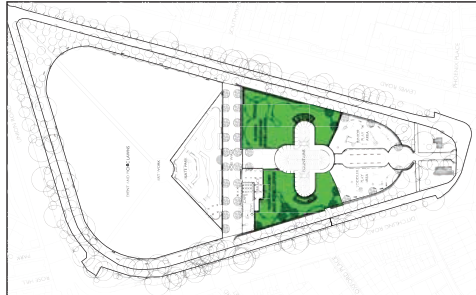
Picnic Lawns & Flower Garden

Located between the activity hubs of the fountains and the playground, areas of lawn will be ideally placed for family gatherings and picnics. It is not envisioned to include picnic tables as the lawns provide an important separation and area of open space between the other elements.

Planting will be an important aspect of the entire park improvements; however horticultural impact will be particularly focused along Rose Walk and in the Flower Garden which is expected to be an area of passive recreation. Species have been selected to provide a year-round display with an emphasis on colour through the summer when the park will receive its peak usage.

Seating will be placed to make the most of views over the Flower Garden and towards other features such as the fountains. Users of the cafe will also benefit from the backdrop of planting. Petanque will be integrated in the Flower Garden in the form of a gravel circle which could also be used for other events. There will be raised flower beds edging the petanque area along with some tables which can be used for playing board games. Space for outdoor gym equipment has been allowed for; this will be subject to separate funding being raised.

- Paving: Surfacing to Petanque area: 200mm loose gravel (10mm to dust)
- Lighting: New WRTL Indal Stela LED lamp
- Planting: shrubs, herbaceous and grasses
- Furniture: Quality timber / timber and metal seating



Location Plan



Lawns for picnics



Colourful planting



Herbaceous planting



Grasses



Plants for White-letter Hairstreak butterfly



Seating



Petanque with gravel surface



Board games tables



LED Lighting



Raised beds for public gardening



Outdoor gym equipment



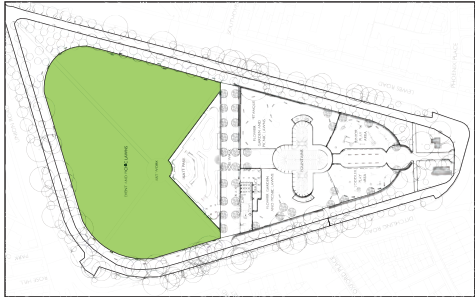
Trees for shade

Northern Event and Picnic Lawns

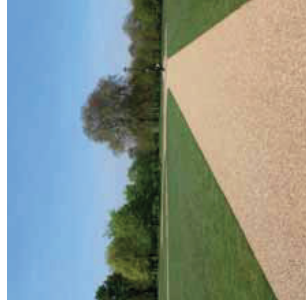
The Northern area of the park is frequently used for fairgrounds, other events and general usage during fine weather. It will be upgraded and re-seeded with path widths reduced to a more suitable pedestrian friendly scale. The central meeting point of the two paths will feature art work or text of local / historical interest, subject to separate funding being raised. The lighting in this area will also be scaled down, incorporating LEDs to reduce energy usage. Seating will be incorporated around the perimeter of this area, a place for those who prefer an open outlook rather than the more inward looking Flower Garden seating. The existing redgira area will be replaced with grass which will improve the setting of this area.

The existing walls will be rebuilt. The area will continue to be used for events, sporting activities, general relaxation and dog walking.

- Paving: Fibredec to paths, stone paving to central cross roads
- Lighting: New WRTL Indal Stela LED lamp
- Furniture: Quality timber / timber and metal seating
- Wall: Existing wall repaired as required



Location Plan



Fibredec paving



Lawn for picnics



Space for sports or children's events



Occasional fun fair



Sculptural seat



Mosaic artwork option



Space for dog walking



Seating



Possible paving design



Walls to be rebuilt where required



LED Lighting - in-situ



LED Lighting - detail

Summary of Sustainability Features

The proposals for The Level aim to make the park a more pleasant, interesting and diverse place. There will be additional and improved facilities that can be used by local communities and visitors, set in a landscape of new planting and trees.

Facilities

New / improved facilities including the skatepark, fountains, playground, cafe, community meeting room, petanque court, exercise equipment, seating and picnic lawns will help to establish a greater sense of community both formally and informally. These will be used by those living locally (some of whom currently travel to other parks) and other residents of Brighton along with visitors to the city.

The design of each of these facilities has been considered in terms of their environmental impact, suitability for the location, aesthetic qualities and implementation / running costs.

Cafe

Whilst the final design and features have yet to be agreed, the cafe will have a minimal visual and environmental impact by utilising the latest technology and sustainable features. These should include, a green roof, solar panels, ground-source heat pump, solar gain and specific north-south orientation, which will minimise energy usage. Materials and construction methods will be sustainable and the new cafe will incorporate other facilities that are currently located in a poor quality building. Also the cafe will create employment within the local area and help to support other local businesses.

Pavilions

The original pavilions will be brought up to date, allowing them to be used for community meetings and as a base for park rangers. In this way they will provide a positive base for community activities in the park.

Fountains

The proposed fountains will use advanced systems of water treatment and recirculation to ensure they deliver grand displays with minimal energy and water usage. With the addition of uplighters the fountains will retain their presence at night which will help make The Level a destination into the evening, increasing safety and versatility of use.

Skatepark

The skatepark has been designed in consultation with the local skaters to ensure that it meets their needs and aspirations. It will be built to a high standard with durable materials and a planted boundary.

Playground

The play equipment will be constructed with FSC accredited timber, which is sustainably sourced and also more environmentally friendly than metal or plastic framed equipment. Rubber grass matting, sourced from the UK and manufactured from recycled materials will avoid the use of 'wetpour' or other nonporous surfaces which can accentuate flooding in urban areas.

Planting

The Level currently has a high quality band of mature trees around the circumference but a lack of planting within the park. This will be remedied with a broad range of shrub and herbaceous planting that will enhance The Level and provide interest for butterflies, insects, bird and other animals. Large areas of wildflower meadow can not be accommodated in such a small park but wildflowers will be incorporated where possible, along with bulb planting to lengthen the season of interest.

Areas of accessible raised planting beds will be included to encourage community groups to learn about horticulture and plant their own vegetable or flower gardens.

Access

While The Level is a flat site with easy access, improvements will be made to legibility and movement through the site. Cross-city pedestrian routes could be directed through The Level and sign posting added to ensure it can be found from the city centre and people in the park can easily find their way towards their next destination. Within the park new surfacing, revised fencing layouts and a clear path hierarchy will ensure that visitors can easily navigate between the various attractions.

Specialist toilet facilities will be provided for disabled visitors along with baby changing rooms and new toilets for all.

The inclusion of a 'trim trail' will give all visitors free access to exercise equipment.

Street furniture and lighting

Benches will be carefully selected to ensure they are comfortable, long lasting and incorporate sustainable sourced materials. Cycle parking will be provided at entrances and destinations such as the skatepark and the cafe to promote green transport. The majority of the new lighting units will use LED bulbs which will minimise energy usage and maintenance requirements. These will be on a pedestrian friendly scale and will provide a safe level of light without contributing to light pollution.

Accessibility

Details to be completed

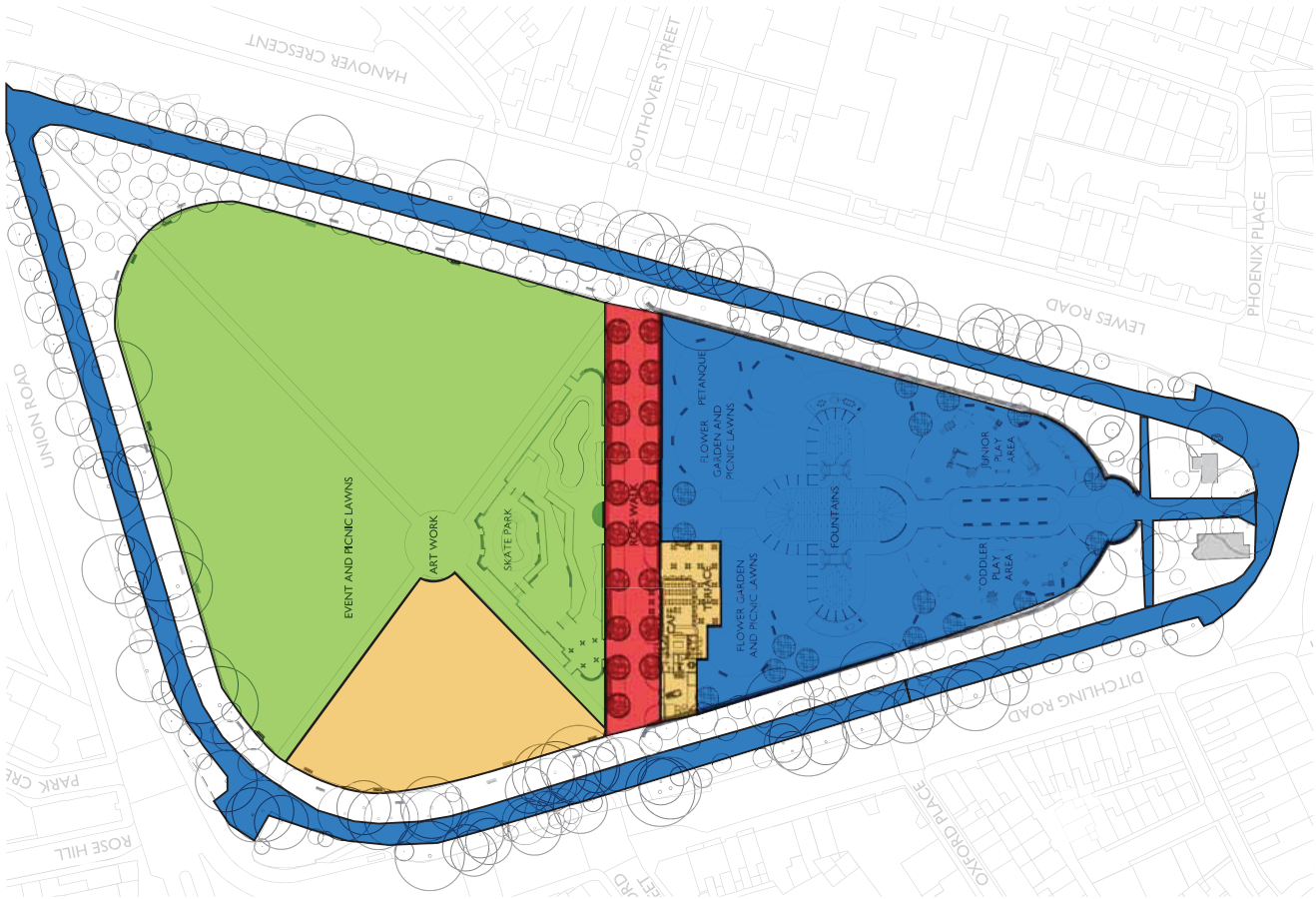
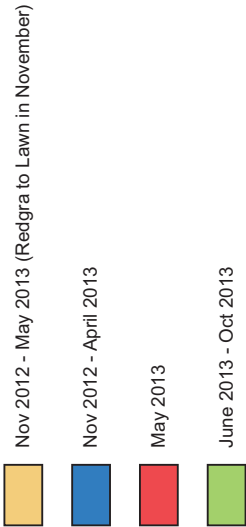
Images to be added

Dogs at The Level

Map of dog free areas is still to be agreed.

Phasing of the works

The works will be phased to ensure that the most disruptive operations take place during the winter. The full programme has not yet been finalised.



The Level

Consultation Report March 2011

For the public consultation carried out on the
restoration proposals for The Level

**Prepared by
Brighton & Hove City Council**

**Version 1
June 2011**

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Brighton & Hove City Council
City Parks Project Team

Version	Date	Details
1.0	22 nd June 2011	Issued

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Project

The Level is one of Brighton & Hove's community and destination parks covering 8.05 hectares. It has a wide and diverse catchment covering three wards, and is a popular venue for active and passive recreation. Under-investment in the 1970's led to a decline of the fabric of the park, and many of the original features were left to deteriorate or were removed, and planting was cut back to keep costs down. The site now suffers a high level of anti-social behaviour, in particular as a hot-spot for drug and alcohol related problems.

In the Parks & Green Spaces Strategy 2006, The Level received a poor quality index scoring of -40, the only major park with a negative rating. It was identified as a priority for re-development and this led to the current work to improve The Level and make it more welcoming for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and to celebrate its cultural heritage.

1.2 Historic significance

The significance of The Level as an open green recreational space commences from mid 18th Century when it was used as a cricket ground for the Prince of Wales.

In 1822 it was formally laid out as a park, and in 1845 a grand avenue of 1,000 Elms were planted along the outer walkway as a gift from the Third Earl of Chichester. Although many were destroyed in the 1987 storm, today it has national importance as possibly the only double avenue of Elms in the country.

Historic records show that the shape of The Level remained unchanged from this period, and the next significant period was in the 1920's when Captain Bertie Hubbard MacLaren, the Superintendent of the Brighton Parks Department developed a scheme for a new playground which was arranged to obtain '*as much of the picturesque as possible*'. His symmetrical layout included features such as shelters, pergolas, ornamental boating pond and bridges intended to disguise the play equipment and create a garden setting for other users.

While some of these features are still evident, the remnants of the scheme appear random and neglected.

1.3 Heritage Lottery Funding

Various consultations have taken place over the past ten years with the aim of improving The Level and the skatepark. While some changes have come about as a result of these consultations, sufficient funding has not been available to bring about any major improvements.

At the start of 2009, the council identified the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' grant as one of the only sources of funding available for a large scale project such as this. An initial enquiry confirmed we were eligible to apply.

Concept designs were then developed with the aim of restoring some of the key heritage features of the park. These designs took into account feedback from previous public consultations and workshops attended by a wide range of service providers including council officers, third-sector organisations and statutory bodies. The proposals included new features such as a new café with indoor and outside seating, toilets, staff offices and a new sunken concrete skatepark.

In 2009 a bid for 'Parks for People' funding was started and consultation events held in October of that year showed a strong degree of support to improve The Level. Included in the proposals were two options for the location of a new sunken skatepark, one in its existing location south of Rose Walk and the other in a new location at the north edge of the park. In total 378 local residents completed questionnaires; a majority of 57% preferred the option to move the skatepark to the north while 31% preferred it in its existing location. The remaining liked neither, didn't have a preference or like both.

A successful first round application was submitted in March 2010 with a decision given in July. A development grant was awarded to enable the full development of the Master Plan, Management and Maintenance Plan, Conservation Management Plan and Activity Plan in preparation for the competitive second and final round application.

During this development phase, local community groups had expressed concerns about moving the skatepark and it was decided to launch a more extensive consultation, with detailed plans, in order to gauge public opinion more conclusively, and to support the second stage 'Parks for People' bid in August 2011.

1.4 Purpose of this report

This report details the results from the public consultation held in March 2011, provides an analysis of the information and makes

recommendations for the way ahead. Where relevant it refers to and compares data from the 2009 consultation.

2 METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

2.1 Methodology

This consultation aimed to get people's preferences on the location of the skatepark within The Level. The survey also asked questions on what kind of events and activities people would be interested in and what elements of the new designs residents would appreciate the most. This differs from the consultation carried out in 2009 which aimed to get people's views and suggestions on different aspects of the park and of two concept designs.

The information gained from this research will be used to support a final decision on the Master Plan and in particular skatepark location.

Other information collated in the build up to this consultation and used to inform the Master Plan includes previous consultation results; data from workshops and meetings held with service providers (council officers, statutory bodies and third sector organisations), local residents, community group representatives and minority groups; historic maps, images and written documents; heritage park design professionals; and parks staff. This information is not included in this report, instead has been incorporated in to the relevant supporting documents, e.g. the Conservation Management Plan, Activity Plan and Community Safety Plan.

The source of this data was gathered from Consultees through questionnaires. They were designed with closed questions in order to provide comparative analysis of responses although there was space for respondents to add comments and clarify certain answers.

Consultation packs which included an information leaflet, questionnaire and a pre-paid envelope were sent to 27,291 households within a 15 minute walking distance catchment of the park.

Consultation packs which included an information leaflet, questionnaire and a pre-paid envelope were sent to 27,291 households within a 15 minute walking distance catchment of the park. Examples of these can be found in appendices A and B.

The 15 minute walk catchment is based on the council's adopted accessibility standards for parks and open space in the city's Local Development Framework, which was informed by the findings of a public consultation carried out for the Citywide Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study in 2008/9. This study determined that 15 minutes was the

maximum time people were willing to walk to their local park. It is also in line with guidance from the Department for Children Schools and Families (now Department of Education) Design for Play Guidance where 15 minutes walk is the catchment area for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).

Questionnaires were also available on the Brighton & Hove City Council's consultation portal and at five staffed consultation exhibitions throughout March. These exhibitions were held at Churchill Square, Phoenix Gallery opposite St Peter's Church and in the old Co-op building on the corner of Baker Street and London Road.

Information was also available at three unstaffed exhibitions during March at the Jubilee Library and at the old Co-op building on the corner of Baker Street and London Road.

At each exhibition displays included the two design options, an artist impression of the two designs, background information on the project, the history of the park and further details of the skatepark, water feature and café layout. Members of the project team were in attendance at the staffed exhibitions to provide information and answer questions.

In order to raise awareness prior to the consultation, the same households within the 15 minutes walk catchment of The Level were sent a newsletter in December 2010 to inform them of the forthcoming consultation and other ways they can become involved. The newsletter told the story so far and gave details of two draft designs. Posters to raise awareness and six A1 sized boards were also put up around The Level at the same time providing similar information.

Web updates, update emails to residents on The Level mailing list and press releases also were used to raise awareness. A double page spread was published in The Argus on 20 January 2011 which provided information on the history of the project, the proposals for the park and information on the forthcoming consultations.

In the weeks leading up the consultation period in March, posters advertising the consultation and exhibitions were distributed by hand to local businesses around the park and mailed out to libraries, council offices, neighbouring resident associations, community groups and were displayed at the park. The consultation dates were advertised on the council's website, on the council's social media sites and in The Argus. The six A1 size information boards around The Level were changed in March to advertise the consultation and give information about the designs being consulted on. Examples of the poster and boards used can be found in appendices C and D.

2.2 Responses

A total of 3,330 completed questionnaires were received. Over 80% (2,735) of these were from respondents who returned the questionnaire they received as part of the direct mail-out to households within a 15 minute walk catchment of the park, 436 questionnaires were completed on the online portal and the remaining 169 were requested or obtained at one of the exhibitions. Almost all (99%) responses were received from households within the boundary of Brighton & Hove.

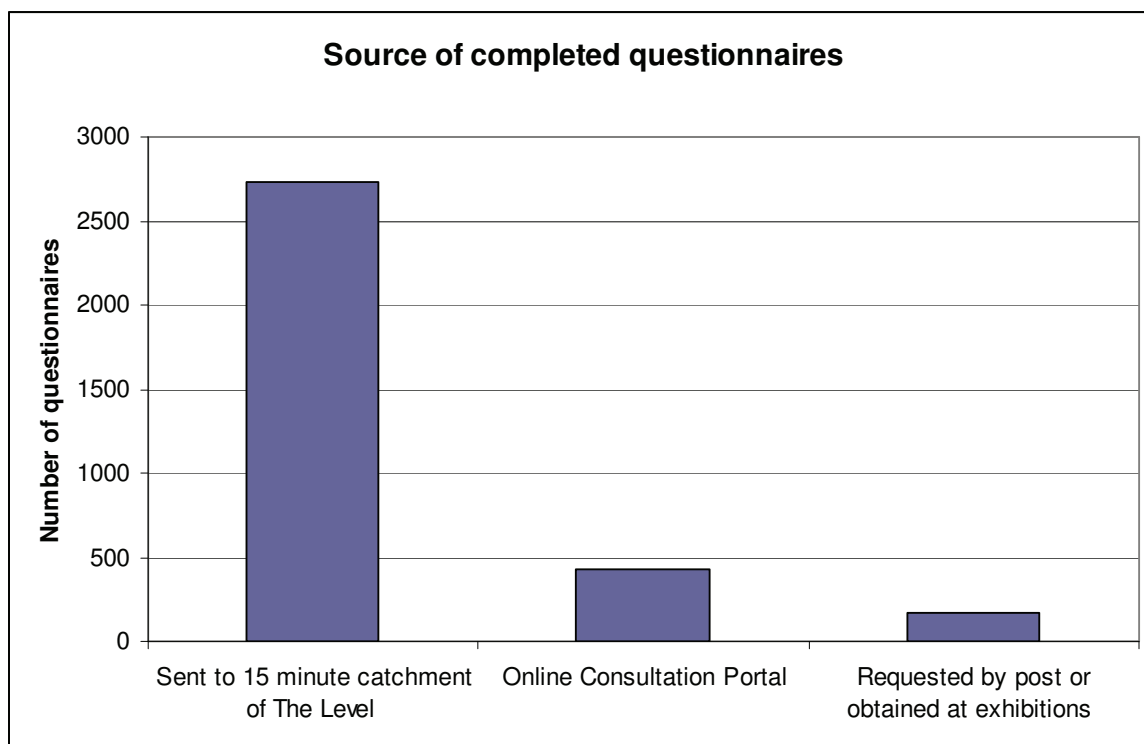


Figure 1 Source of completed questionnaires

Of these, 57% of respondents were female, 38% male, 1% were transgender and 4% did not answer this question. Over a fifth (22%) of respondents in the consultation were aged between 35 and 44 and 12% of the total respondents stated they had a disability.

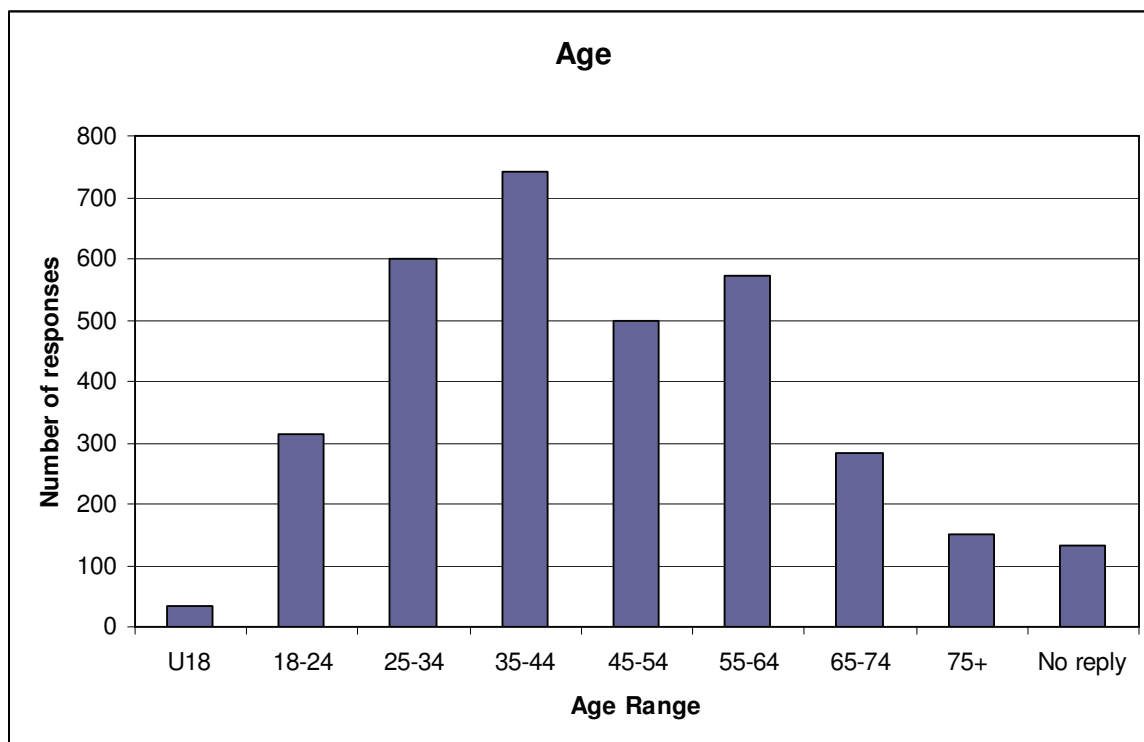


Figure 2 Age range of respondents

In comparison with the respondents in the 2009 consultation double the amount of responses were received from people of 65 years and over and a higher response from people with disabilities. However, over 12% less completed surveys were received from young people under the age of 18.

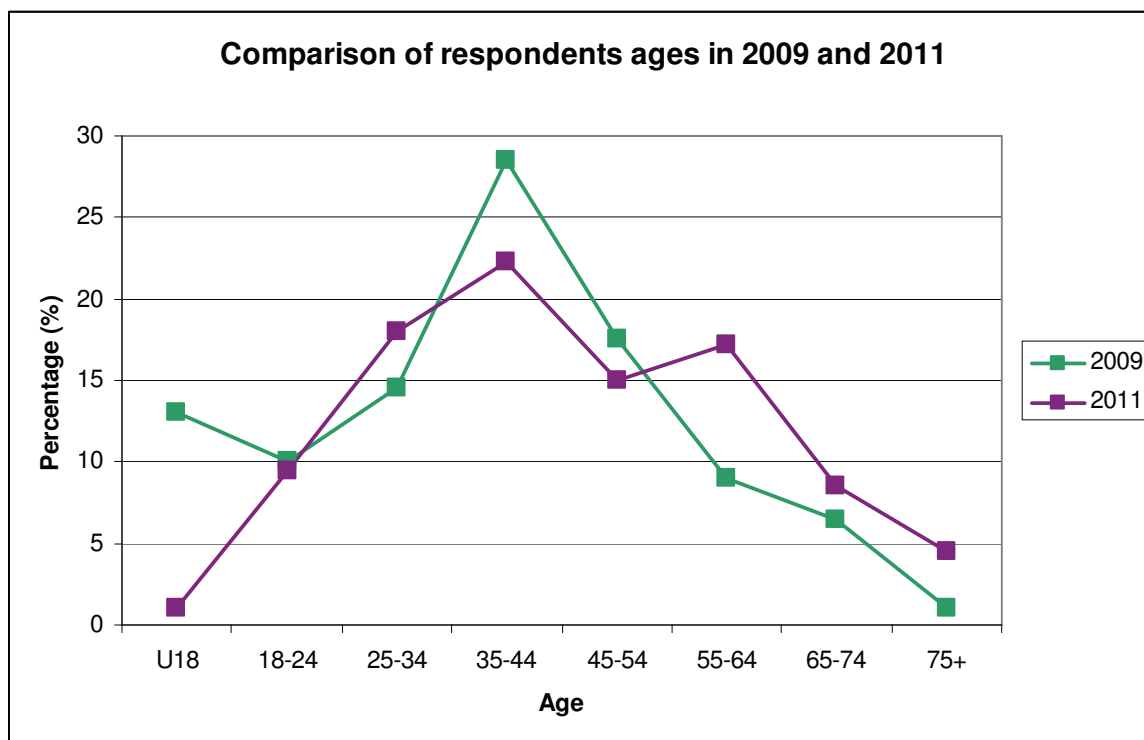


Figure 3 Comparison of respondent ages in 2009 and 2011

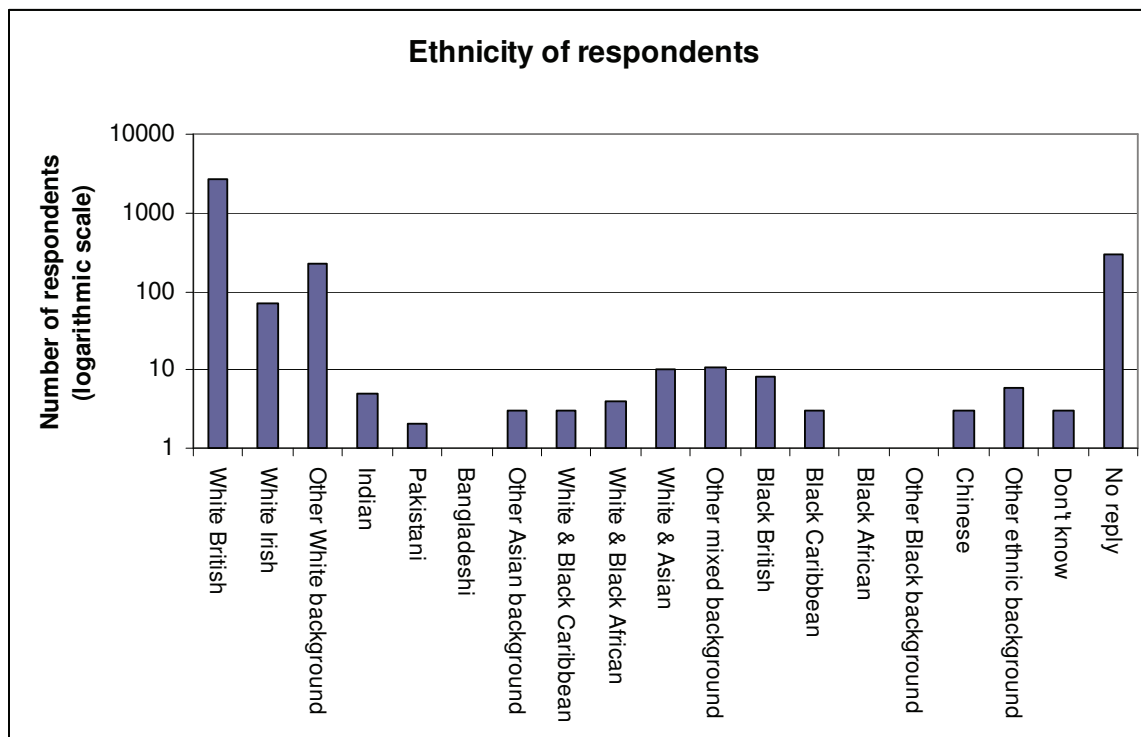


Figure 4 Ethnicity of respondents

The majority of respondents were of White ethnicity. This is similar to the 2009 consultation responses. However, as illustrated in Figure 5 below, a wider range of responses from minority ethnic backgrounds were received in the 2011 consultation.

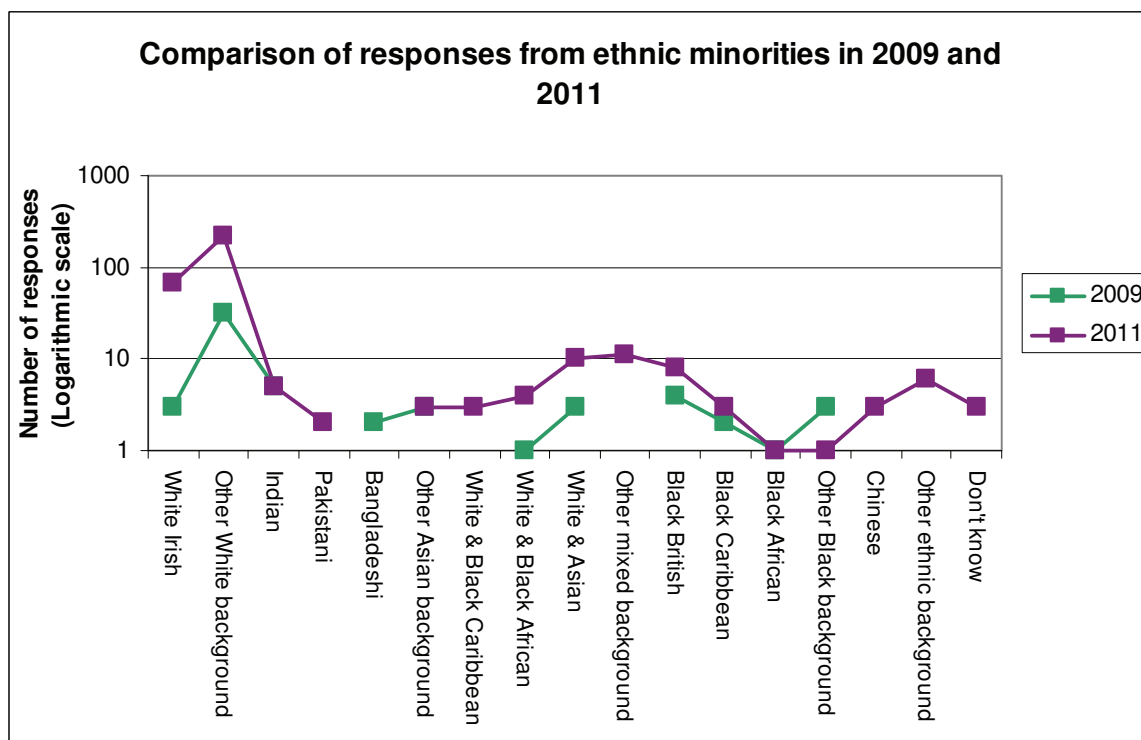


Figure 5 Comparison of responses from ethnic minorities in 2009 and 2011

2.3 Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections. The first section gathered information about the make up of the household and why people use The Level.

The second section gathered views on the park design proposals. Two options were drawn up, with the main difference being the location of the skatepark. This section also gathered information about the areas of the park and activities that respondents would be interested in. The final section gathered demographic information.

3 RESULTS

3.1 About your household

3.1.1 Question 1 - What is the make-up of your household?

The majority of households to complete a questionnaire were made up of couples, couples with children and sole occupants.

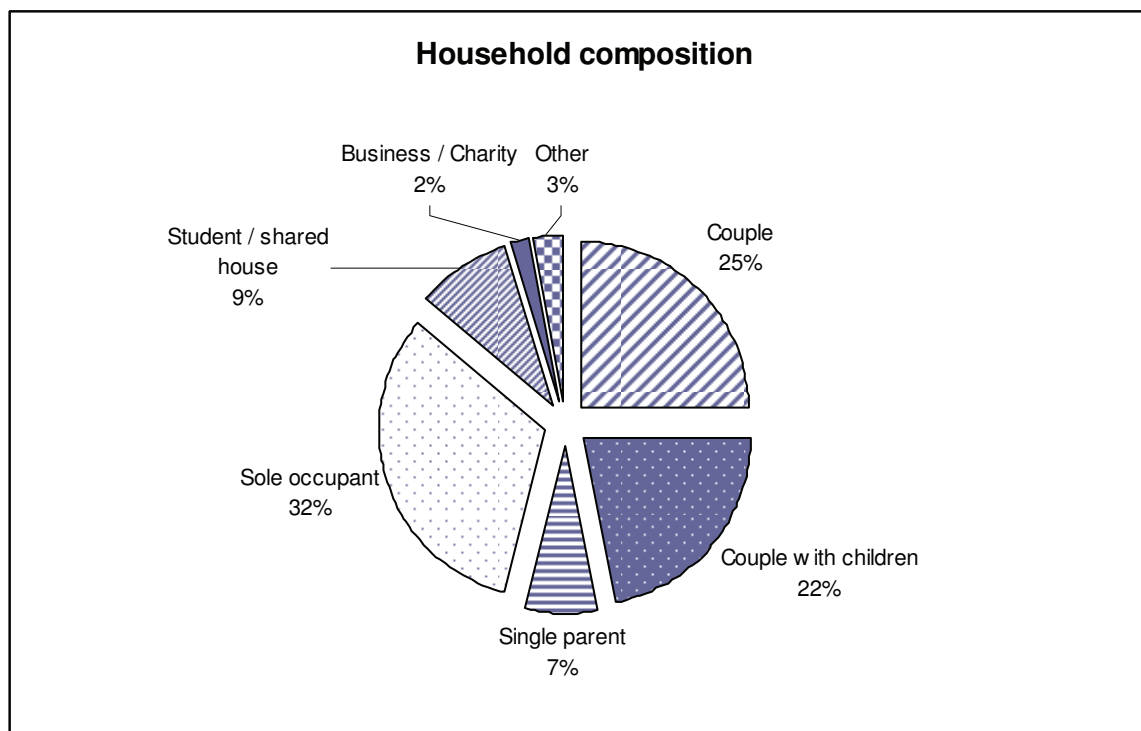


Figure 6 Respondents household make up

3.1.2 Question 2 - For households with children, please indicate age range and number of children?

Over two thirds of households with children who responded have one child, of these respondents 68% of the children were aged 16 and over. Over a third of the households with two children have children aged five and under.

No. of children aged	1	2	3	4	5
under 5	317	101	2	3	0
5 to 11	271	99	15	1	1
12 to 15	190	33	1	0	0
16+	1700	79	12	4	3
Total	2478	312	30	8	4

Table 1 Number and age of children of respondents with children

3.1.3 Question 3 - What are the main reasons members from your household visit The Level?

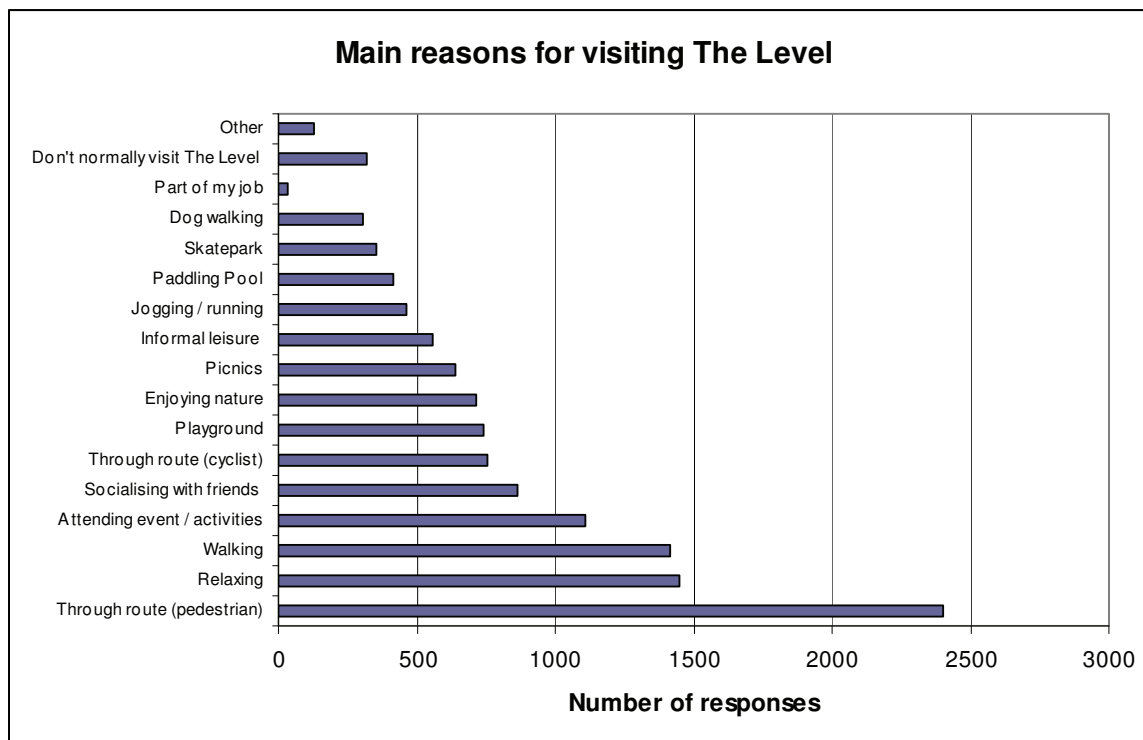


Figure 7 Main reasons respondents use The Level

Respondents could choose more than one option. The majority of respondents said they use The Level as a pedestrian or cycle through-route and many people use it as a place to walk, relax, socialise and attend events and activities. The playground, enjoying nature and picnics were also popular and 320 respondents said they didn't normally use the park.

Respondents also stated they use The Level for the café, Tai Chi, cycling, petanqué and for visiting the funfair, and informal activities such as circus skills and playing music were also mentioned as activities that the park is used for.

3.2 Your views on the park design proposals

3.2.1 Question 4 - Which design option does your household prefer?

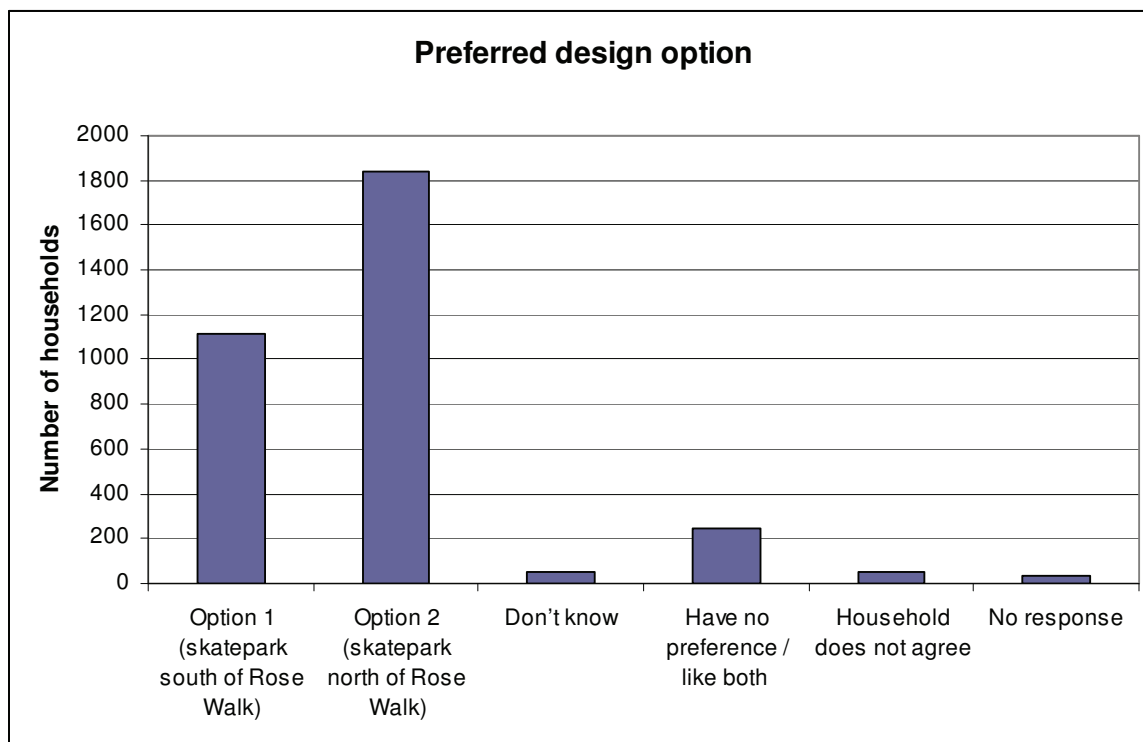


Figure 8 Preferred design option

The most popular choice for the site of the new skatepark by 55% of all respondents is to move it to the north of the Rose Walk. 33.5% preferred it to remain where it was and the remaining 11.5% did not have a preference.

Of those households who made a choice, 62% would like it to be moved to north of the Rose Walk and 38% keep it to the south of Rose Walk.

Of the respondents who preferred to relocate the skatepark to the north of the Rose Walk, nearly 400 people commented on how *'it would be good to keep the area south of The Level as a tranquil space and the north area a space for all activities including the skate park'* whereas option 1 was felt to be *'too congested with too many things in a small space'*.

Of the respondents that chose option 1, over 300 comments were received on keeping the green area in the north of the park green including *'prefer to have a clear green space rather than option 2. Glad for improvements though'* and *'we like the fact that The Level has a big open green space'*. With the northern end of the park open, it was felt that there would be more space *'for flexible provision of a wide range of*

occasional/short term activities and events' and that 'locating the skatepark here (north of the Rose Walk) will limit this.'

The noise generated from the skatepark was also one of the main concerns respondents had about relocating the skatepark to north of the Rose Walk, one respondent felt that *'(skateparks) are loud - the continual noise of boards landing is best tucked away behind high hedges, as in option 1'*. In opposition to this, some respondents felt that by moving the skatepark the noise would be lesser than in the current location. It was felt that if located to the north of the Rose Walk *'users of skatepark should be able to make a noise without disturbing others'* and it *'would be better placed north of Rose Walk in terms of noise for local residents'*.

For both of the preferred locations of the skatepark, concerns were raised about the use of alcohol and drug use at The Level; respondents have said they would *'like to see all public drinking of alcohol banned in all areas'*. Reservations were also made about the park improvements and *'how renovating it (rather than addressing the drug/alcohol problem) will change this (the drug and alcohol problems)?'*.

A summary of the kind of comments respondents made to support their choice can be found in appendix F.

3.2.2 Question 5 - Which areas you think individuals in your household would appreciate?

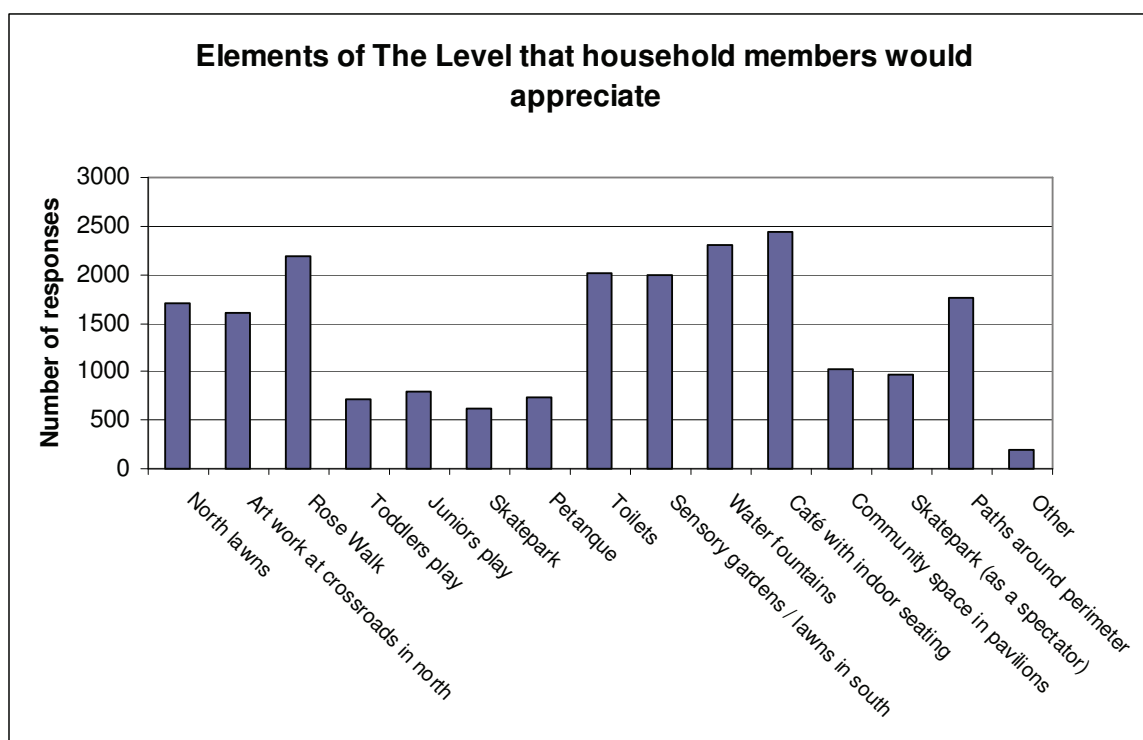


Figure 9 Elements of the park respondents would appreciate

Respondents could choose more than one option and the majority said they would appreciate the new proposed café with indoor seating, public toilets, water fountains and Rose Walk elements within the park. There was significant interest in all the features.

Other suggestions included designated dog walking area, dog free areas, Tai Chi area and cycle paths; there was not a high demand for any one suggestion.

3.2.3 Question 6 - What activities individuals in your household would appreciate?

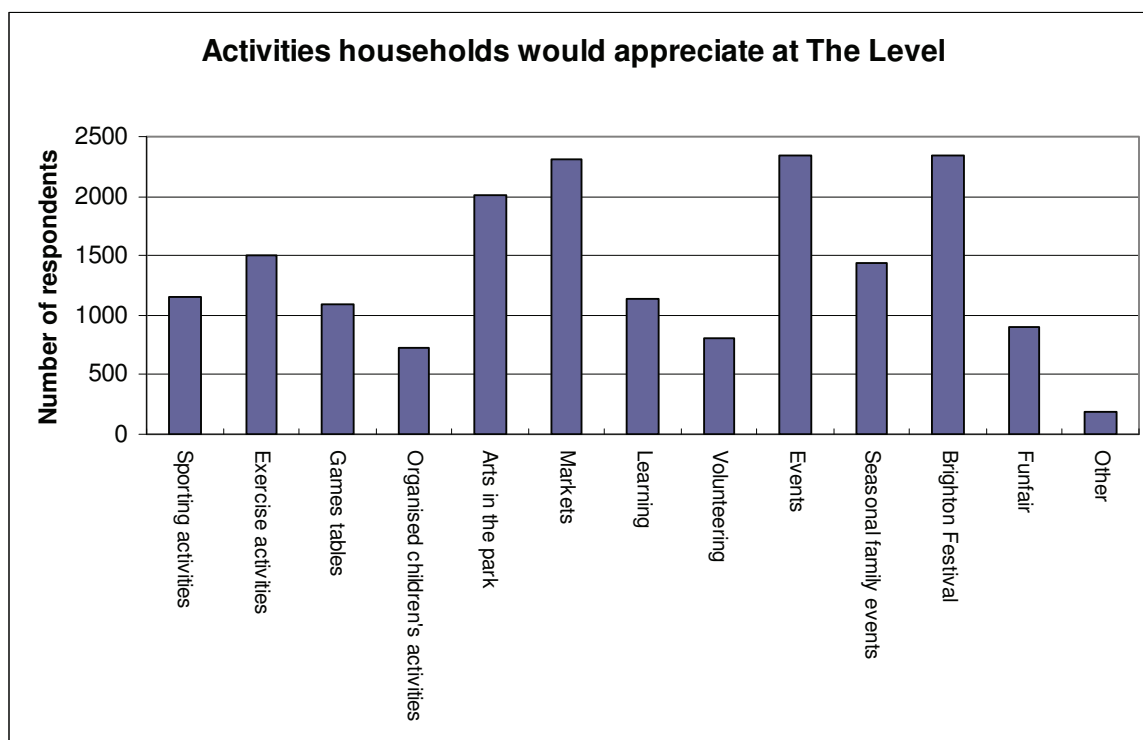


Figure 10 What respondents would like to see held at The Level

Many respondents were interested in events (e.g. music in the park, dog shows) being held in the park along with markets and events linked to the Brighton Festival. Other activities that people were interested in were art in the park (e.g. exhibition and classes), sporting activities such as football and Frisbee and seasonal family events including Halloween and Christmas events. There was significant interest in all other activities.

Other suggestions included holding activities to encourage people to get involved with nature, outdoor gym equipment similar to the facilities in Hove Park and Vale Park and a place where people can hold political rallies.

Although nearly 900 respondents said they would like the funfair to continue to be held at The Level, opposition was also put forward against

it with one respondent stating that '*(the funfair) is a horrible time for users of the Level. It is ugly, messy, smelly & noisy. Please STOP funfair coming to The Level*'. Responses also included '*I hate the funfair*' and '*Funfair – No!*'.

3.3 Breakdown of choice of design options

3.3.1 Households within 15 minutes walk x whole sample

Postcodes had to be provided to validate the completed questionnaires. From this data it is possible to identify the locations of the respondents around the city, including the numbers of completed surveys from households within the 15 minute walking catchment area.

The percentages of respondents within the 15 minute catchment were very similar to overall percentage of respondents choosing option 1 or option 2 as shown in the graph below. The geographic spread of respondents' preferences can be seen in appendices E.

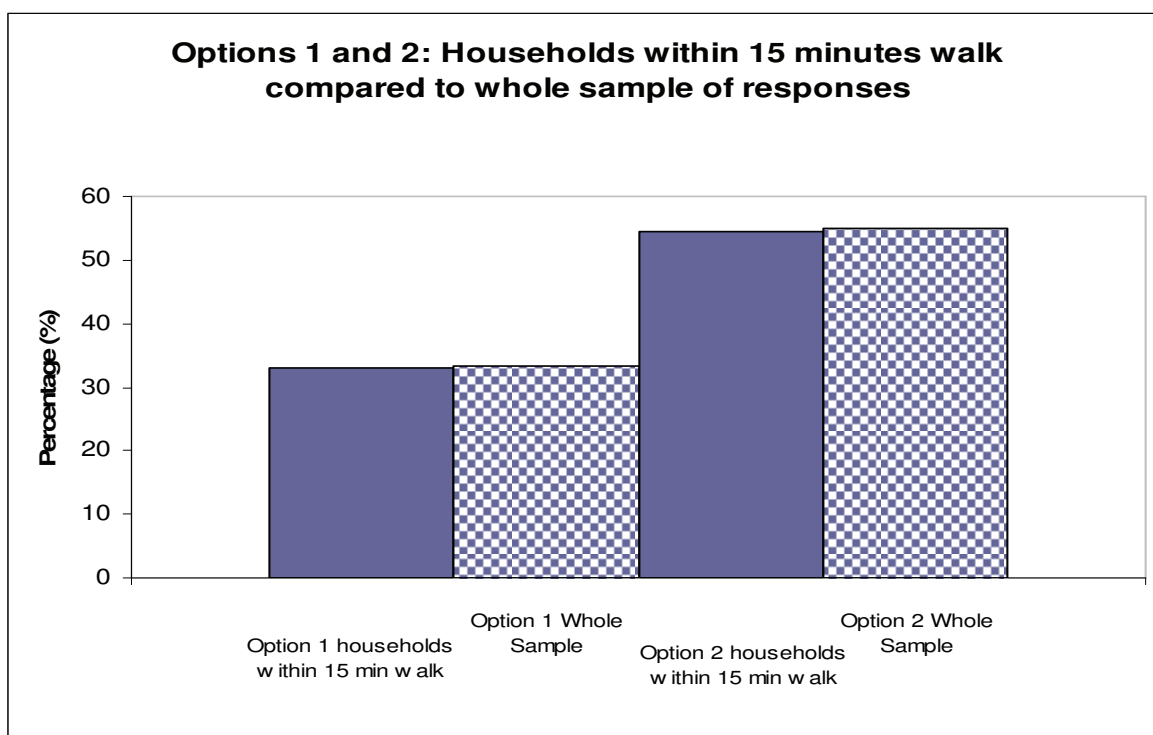


Figure 11 Design options for respondents within 15 minute catchment against whole sample

3.3.2 Household type x choice of park design

The data indicates that the highest percentages of respondents in favour of moving the skatepark to the north of the Rose Walk are households with children. Those who prefer the option to keep it south of Rose Walk include couples, shared occupancy and sole occupants.

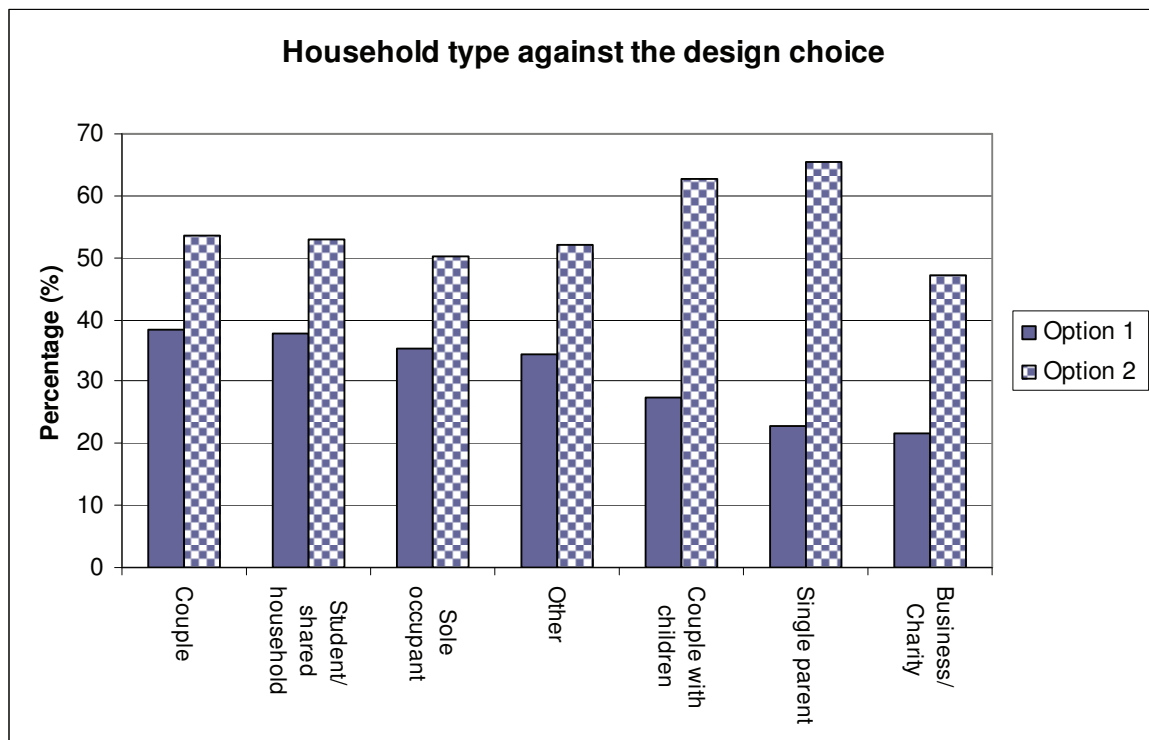


Figure 12 Design choice against household type

3.3.3 Main reason to visit The Level x choice of park design

Those in favour of keeping the skatepark at the southern end of the park currently use it for tranquil activities such as relaxing and enjoying nature but also include those who use the northern end of the park for activities like Frisbee, running and walking.

Households who currently use the southern end of the park e.g. skatepark users, users of the paddling pool and playground are those who want to see the skatepark moved out of this area.

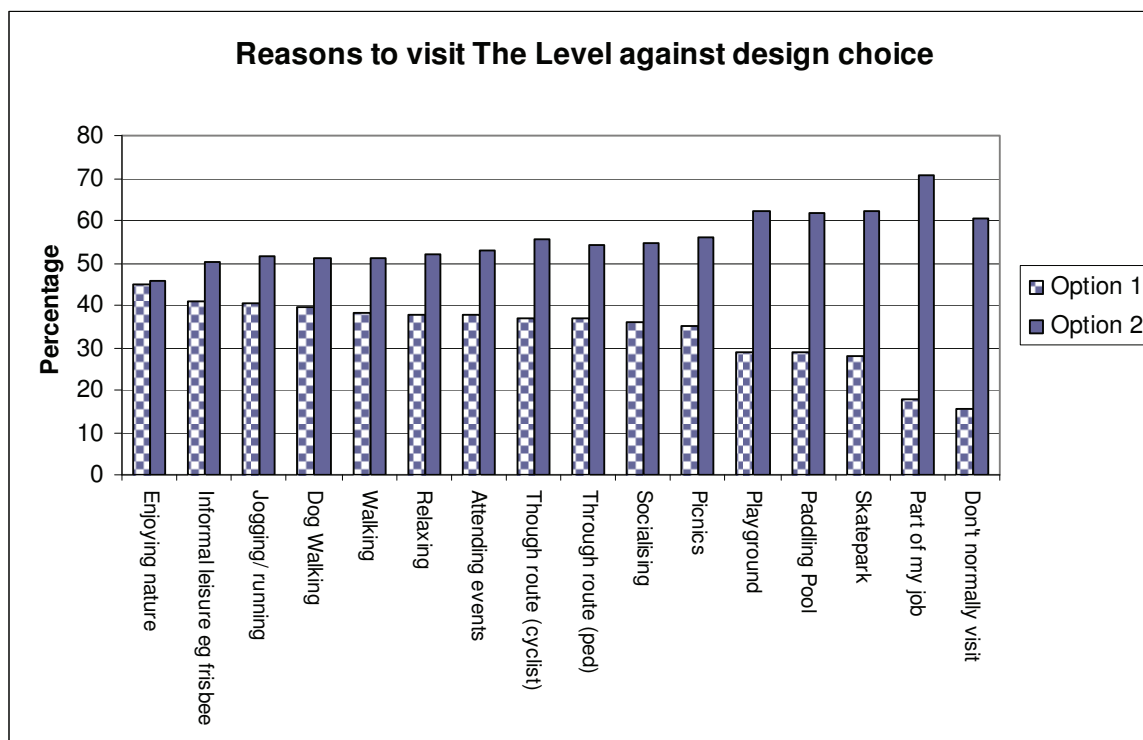


Figure 13 Design choice against the respondents reasons to visit The Level

3.3.4 Areas you would appreciate x choice of park design

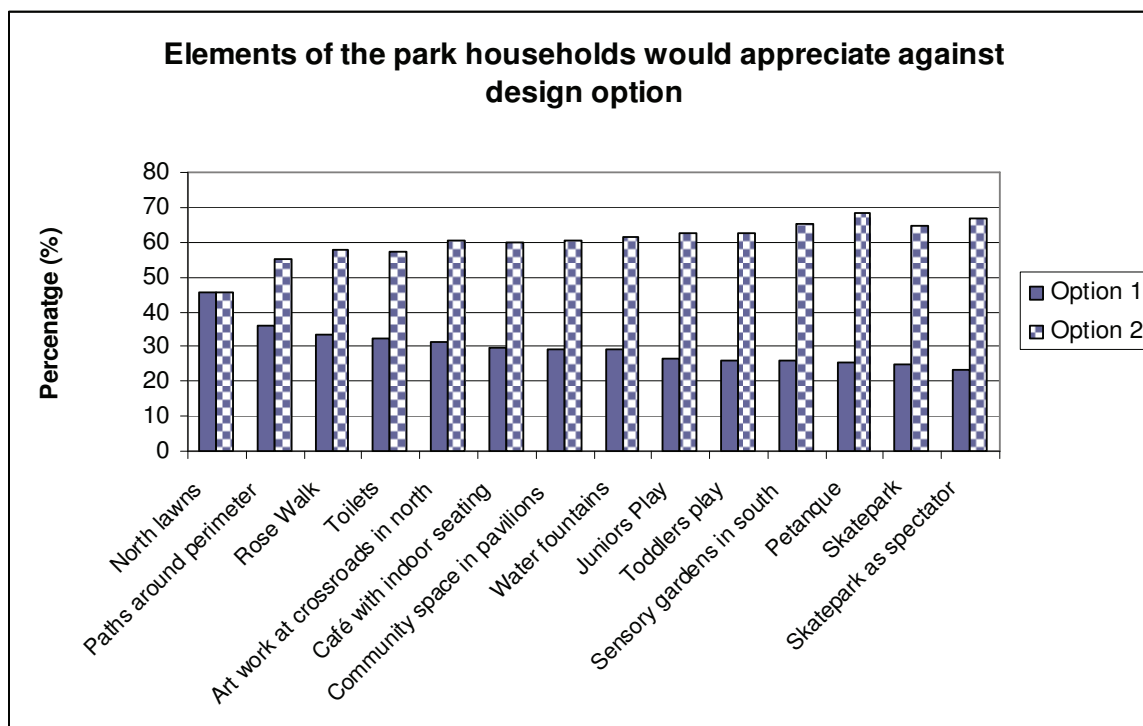


Figure 14 Design choice against the elements of the park respondents would appreciate

This question asked people about the physical layout of the park. 45% of households who prefer that the skatepark stay in the southern end of the park say they would appreciate the north lawns. The play areas and skatepark are further down in their list of priorities.

Conversely those who want the skatepark to the north of the rose gardens see the north lawns area as lower on their wish list and chose areas which are more action-packed such as petanque, skatepark and play areas and also the sensory areas such as the fountains and sensory garden.

3.3.5 Activities your household would appreciate x choice of park design

The most popular activity for those who chose option 1 is the funfair which takes place on the north lawns of The Level. Households who choose option 1 tend not to prioritise family type activities whereas the converse is true for households who choose option 2 who prioritised organised children's activities, games tables and seasonal family events.

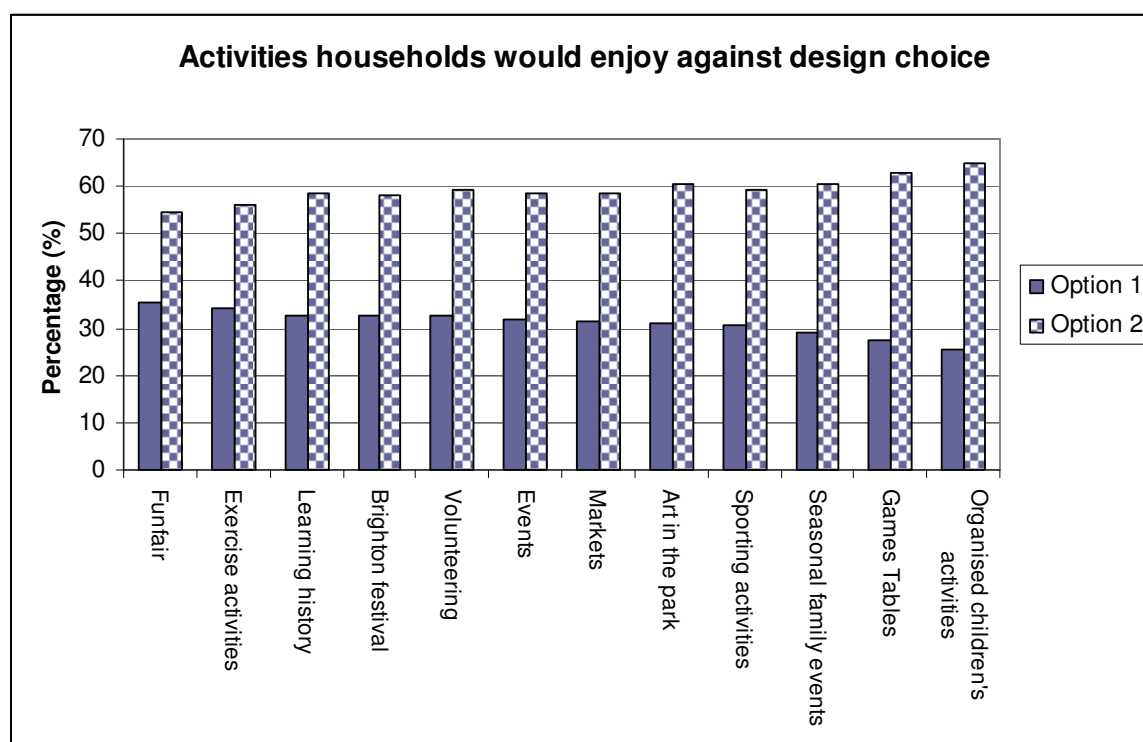


Figure 15 Design choice against the activities respondents would enjoy

3.3.6 Age of respondent x choice of park design

Where respondents selected option 1, a higher percentage were of older age ranges while those who selected option 2 were made up of younger age ranges. The aged 75+ group have a much high proportion of people who have no preference or like both designs (23%) compared to the whole sample (11.5%).

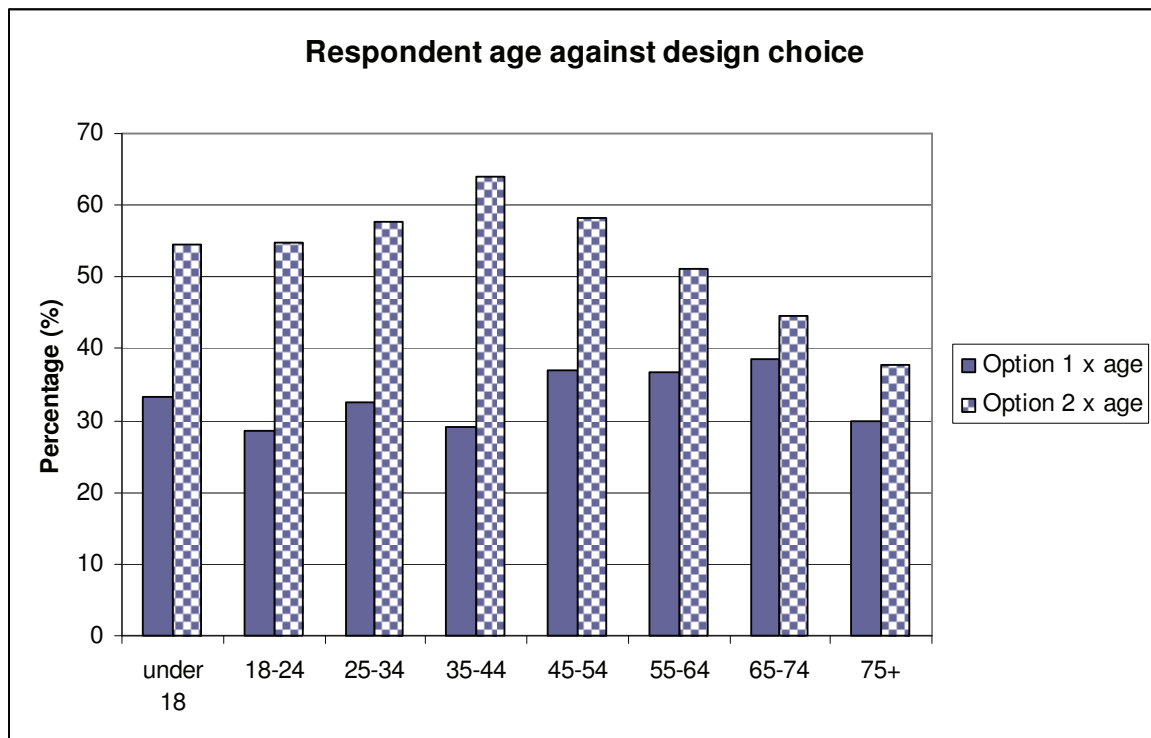


Figure 16 Design choice against the age of the respondent

3.3.7 Gender x choice of park design

A higher proportion of the sample choosing option 2 is women.

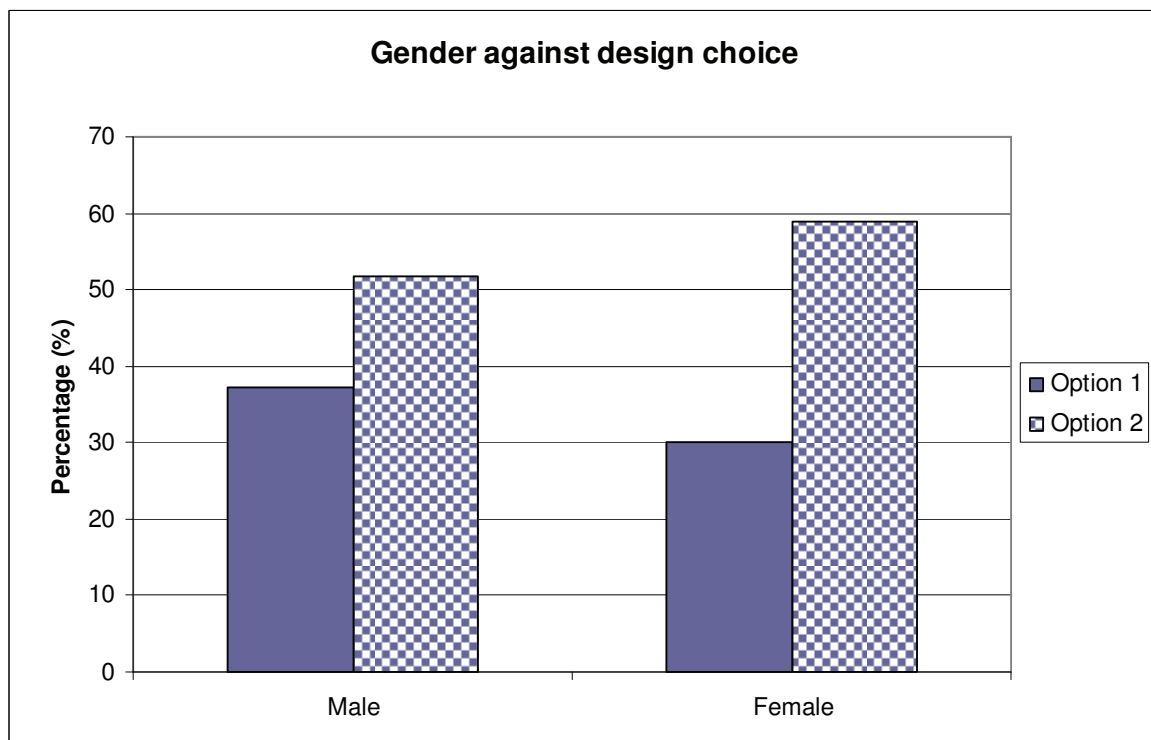


Figure 17 Design choice against gender

3.3.8 Disability x choice of park design

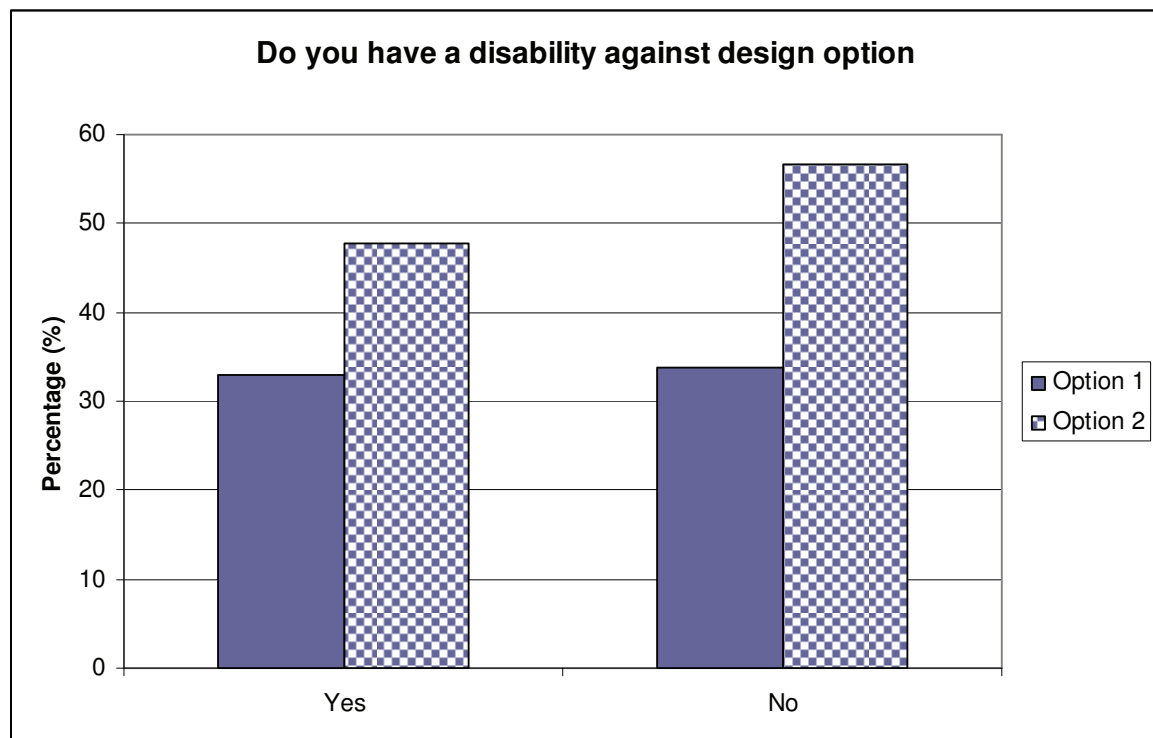


Figure 18 Design choice against disability

The percentage of people who say that they have a disability and choose option 1 is only 0.8% less than the whole sample who choose option 1, whereas for option 2 the percentage is 7.5% less. This group have a much high proportion of people who have no preference or like both designs (19%) compared to the whole sample (11.5%).

4 SUMMARY

4.1 Response to the questionnaire

A total of 3,330 questionnaires were completed, considerably more than the consultation carried out in autumn 2009 when 379 questionnaires were completed. The majority of respondents were from households within the 15 minute catchment who were sent questionnaires by direct mail. Of the 27,291 sent out, 2735 questionnaires were returned from this mail out, a 10% return rate. The overall majority of respondents used the paper questionnaires even though they were encouraged to submit using the on-line portal.

The data for this survey identify that over 50% of respondents were female, in comparison with the consultation in 2009 where over 50% of the respondents were male. A higher percentage of respondents (12% compared to 10% in 2009) stated they had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.

Responses to this consultation were received from a wider spread of people from different ethnic backgrounds and a higher response from LGBT groups compared to the responses received in 2009.

4.2 Use of the park

In comparison with the previous consultation that have been carried out on the project (2006 and 2009), this consultation focussed on primarily identifying respondents preferred skatepark location and what areas and activities the household would appreciate.

The data from the completed surveys indicated that the park is a popular place for people to meet, relax and socialise and attending events/activities that are held in the park. As previously identified in past consultation, the majority of respondents use the park as a walking or cycling through route. A visitor count held in March 2011 reflects this where 70% of people counted at the park were traversing through the area. However, the summer count in August 2010 identified more people stationary within the park (54%).

10% (328) of the respondents do not currently use The Level which is twice the amount of non-park users sampled in the 2009 consultation.

The comments received on the questionnaires demonstrate that people have concerns about the noise from the skatepark and anti-social

behaviour at The Level. A need for improved toilet facilities has been identified as a priority improvement for the park and is backed up by 60% of respondents stating that it would be one of the areas that would be appreciated.

In the past there has been much anecdotal evidence that many consider The Level unsafe, especially at night, and also it has a reputation of drug and alcohol abuse. This has been reiterated in this consultation as well as the 2009 consultation as respondents have commented that the park currently feels unsafe.

Along with the toilets, the proposal for a new café with indoor seating, the water fountain and the Rose Walk have been identified as the main elements that would be appreciated at the park. Positive feedback about having a café with indoor and outdoor seating was also received in the 2009 consultation. All other elements of the new designs received significant interest.

The majority of the activities that households have commented that they would enjoy are organised events such as performances as part of the Brighton Festival. Smaller events, similar to those currently organised by the City Parks Rangers and Friends of The Level also received positive feedback, as well as the range of other activities respondents could select.

4.3 Designs

Of the two designs shown at the consultations, the majority of respondents (55%) preferred option 2, which showed the skatepark to the north of the Rose Walk. 48% of the respondents felt that the southern area of the park would be more restful, more family orientated and less congested if the skatepark was moved to the north side of the Rose Walk. The results were very similar for households within the 15 minute walk catchment.

The results from this consultation reflect those from the 2009 consultation where 57% of the households that responded preferred the design with the skatepark in the northern end of the park and 31% preferred the skatepark to remain where it was.

The responses for each option and for areas and activities which would interest them most were polarised showing how different households responded according to how they currently use the park and the activities they enjoying taking part in.

For those who were in favour of the skatepark moving, the highest percentage was households with children, younger age groups (35 – 44)

and females. Their main reason to visit involved using the playground, skatepark and paddling pool. The areas they said they would appreciate most were the sensory garden, petanqué area and skatepark and the activities they were most interested in were children's activities, games tables and seasonal family events.

The highest percentage of respondents who chose this option prioritised family type interests and activities suggesting that they felt this would be better for families. However, contradicting this one of the main reason why households preferred keeping the skatepark in the southern end was that they felt it would be better for families.

For those in favour of keeping the skatepark where is currently is, the highest percentage were couples, shared occupancy and sole occupants, older age ranges (45 – 75) and males. Their main reason to visit was to enjoy nature, playing informal sports and jogging/running. The areas they said they would appreciate most were the north lawns, perimeter path and Rose Walk and they were interested in the funfair, exercise and learning about the history of the park.

Over half of these respondents felt that this design preserved the green space in the north end of the park and some were concerned that anti-social behaviour would increase if the skatepark moved to the northern end of the park.

Respondents aged over 75 years and those with disabilities had a higher proportion of liking both of the designs.

The majority of respondents supported the proposal for a new skatepark facility within the park and only 28 residents stated that they preferred there not to be a skatepark at The Level.

Although there was a small percentage of residents (1%) who were concerned about the cost of the project and felt it could be a waste of money, the overall feeling about improving The Level was positive and supportive.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overall concept

It can be concluded from the past two consultations in October 2009 and March 2011 that there is strong support for improving The Level as a park which people of all ages and abilities can enjoy. In this consultation over 3,000 households took the time to respond to this consultation indicating a high level of interest in the park's future and a desire to have their views taken into consideration.

5.2 Position of skatepark

It can be concluded from the results of the two public consultations held in the past 2 years that the majority of park users have a desire to relocate the skatepark to the northern end of the park. This does not however mean that individuals don't feel strongly about the skatepark moving, which has been apparent from the meetings and workshops held for local residents and representatives from community groups.

During the consultation in 2009, some residents expressed strong concerns about moving the skatepark. During the development stage of the project, workshops and meetings were held with representatives from local community groups, groups who were under-represented in the previous consultation, those with special needs and interests and relevant service providers (council officers, statutory bodies and third-sector organisations) in order to consider alternatives and solutions to mitigate the main concerns and find a compromise.

Some changes were made to the Master Plan as a result of this work and a decision was made to seek the views of a larger number of residents to check whether the views given at the 2009 represented a larger percentage of the local residents.

This consultation carried out in March 2011 has shown that the original consultation did represent the views of the wider community, with both results coming out very similar. This is a consistent response over the two years and reflects anecdotal evidence going back to 2005 when moving the skatepark was first considered.

Although one of the aims was to open up the park so individuals feel they could use elements within the whole park and were not excluded from any one area, the analysis of the choice respondents made indicated that they were primarily influenced by how they currently use The Level.

5.3 Areas people would appreciate

The choices people made showed that the most popular elements in the proposed Master Plan include the new features such as the café with indoor and terrace seating, public toilets, water fountains and sensory gardens. The Rose Walk was also high on the list which along with flower gardens and fountain does indicate that park users would welcome into the park more attractive and sensory elements of floral displays and moving water. All the other elements were well supported with all getting more than 600 households selecting them. There were 187 other suggestions with no one element mentioned more than seven times. Overall the data does suggest that the most important elements have been identified and included into the Master Plan.

5.4 Activities people are interested in

The Level has had a long association as a venue for events and activities and it is not surprising that the activities people were most interested in included local community events, Festival events and Markets. Art in the Park was also popular as a new activity and the learning and volunteering activities which need to be included for the 'Parks for People' bid were well supported. All activities received over 700 responses which overall does indicate that any events and activities planned would be well attended and welcomed by the local community. There were 196 other suggestions with no one element mentioned more than six times; however they give an interesting mix of ideas which would satisfy a diverse range of park users and so should be taken into consideration.

5.5 Balanced representation and response rate

The breakdown of the composition of the respondents for this consultation has demonstrated that a wider demographic sample of people have given their feedback on the proposed plans for The Level than the 2009 consultation.

It was recommended in the 2009 Consultation Report that separate focus groups were set up with minority and under-represented groups and during the development phase this has been undertaken. It is possible that this was partly responsible for the raising the profile of the project to these groups and so encouraging them and their members to take part in the public consultation. It is also likely that the direct mailing of the questionnaires to all the households in the area was more effective in reaching those groups rather than relying on them to come along to a consultation event or responding to posters and advertising alone.

In comparison to the 2009 consultation, this one carried out in March 2011 has been more successful in terms of raising awareness and allowing a significantly higher number of residents to get involved in giving their views and therefore influencing the decision making process. The fact that so many responded does imply that this was appreciated and one of the emails received saying '*... thank you – it's a very clearly written and inclusive document and I welcome the opportunity to have 'my say' re: the two options*' does back this up.

It has also shown that the views gathered in 2009 were of sufficient quantity to represent the wider views. This along with some of the other findings, including that people are often influenced by how they use an existing space and that direct mail outs are more successful, should be considered when developing future park consultations.

6 APPENDICIES

Appendix A – Example of questionnaire information booklet

The Level consultation March 2011

Information booklet Have your say

Brighton & Hove City Council has been working on proposals to improve The Level. We have come up with two designs and we would like your views on what you think is the best option.

Please take time to read this information and complete the questionnaire on-line at <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/> portal or return the enclosed paper questionnaire by 31 March 2011 so that your views can be considered.

Improving The Level

Following a public consultation in 2009, we have been working with a range of different user groups, third-sector organisations, service providers, designers and parks staff to develop proposals for The Level.

These proposals aim to restore The Level as a high quality, well used and vibrant urban city centre park which celebrates its cultural heritage and provides activities and facilities to meet the needs of today's park users.

It includes the restoration of the original 1920s design layout and a new playground, skatepark, café, public toilets and park's staff and volunteer facilities.

You can find out more about the proposals by logging on to our website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevel or by visiting one of our exhibitions:

Staffed exhibitions

Wed 2 March 9am – 6pm
at Churchill Square by H&M Adults

Tue 8 March 11am – 2pm
at Phoenix Gallery opp St Peter's Church

Mon 14 March 9am – 2pm old Co-op Building, Cnr Baker Street & London Road

Thu 24 March 12 noon – 4pm old Co-op Building, Cnr Baker Street & London Road

Tue 29 March 2pm – 5pm at Phoenix Gallery, opp St Peter's Church

Un-staffed exhibitions

Mon 7 March to Fri 11 March
at the Jubilee Library Foyer

Mon 14 March to Sat 26 March old Co-op Building, Cnr Baker Street & London Road

Mon 28 March to Thu 31 March
at the Jubilee Library Foyer



LOTTERY FUNDED







Brighton & Hove
City Council

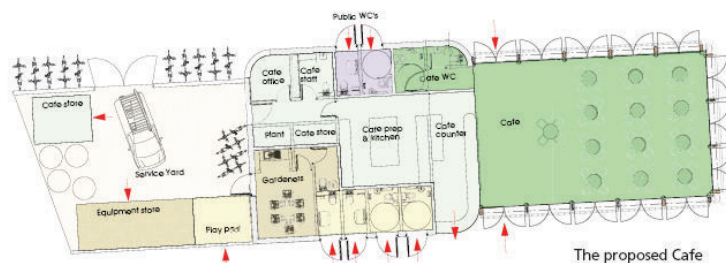
The proposals

The proposals include a new water feature, café building and skatepark. The information below gives an idea of how they would look.

The original boating pond will be restored as a modern water feature using water jets. This will create an attractive focal point for all park users to play in and enjoy.

Two rows of water jets in the central areas will provide fun for all ages while the ones on the outside will be gentler and suitable for younger children. With water on both sides, the bridges will once again have a purpose, although you will still be able to walk through the water feature without getting wet.

The columns and pergolas with climbing flowering plants around the water feature will be restored.



A new building will feature a café, public toilets and staff facilities. It will use new green technologies to make it as carbon-neutral as possible and will be designed to make the best use of natural light. The two pavilions on either side of the water fountain will be restored to provide community space for exhibitions, meetings, events and volunteer activities.



The skatepark will be replaced with a concrete sunken facility of a similar size (dependent on funding), and designed to be integrated with the rest of the park. It will include a multi-use plaza area which other park users will be welcome to enjoy and where younger children can practice with parents or guardians sitting nearby.



This artist impression shows how the new skatepark might look. However it is not the actual design; this will be developed once a decision is reached on the location.

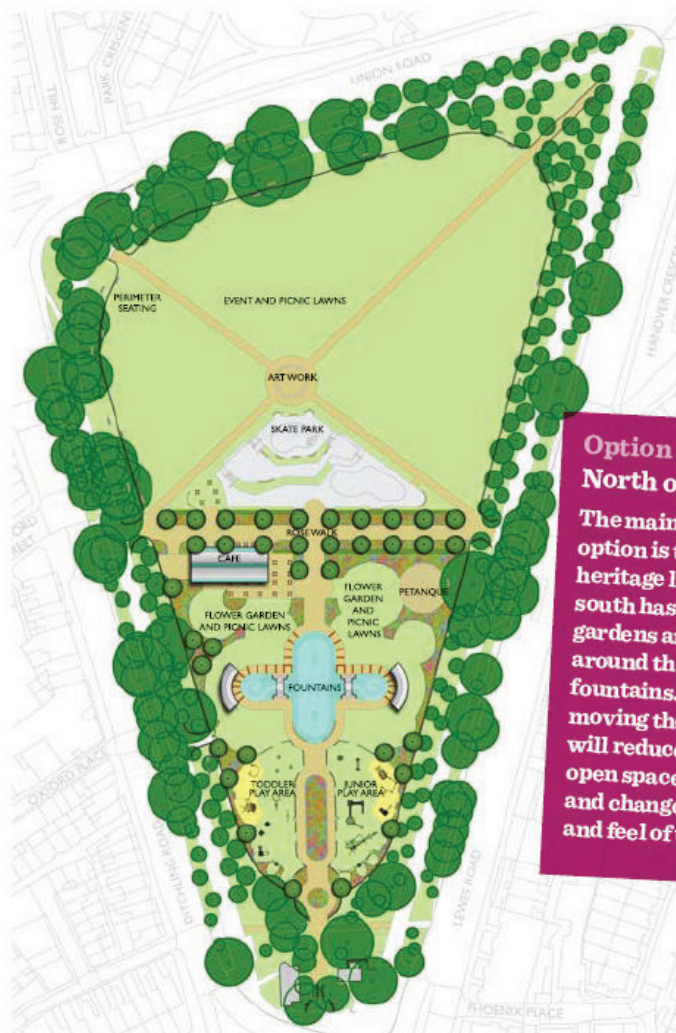
The Rose Walk flower borders will be rejuvenated with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest.

New gardens and lawns in the south will provide an intimate and sensory space. It will have shady areas and will be good for picnics, enjoying flowers and just relaxing near the water fountains.

A combination of sunny open areas in the north and a sensory garden in the south will provide greater variety and help open up the whole park to a

diverse mix of users.

The new playground will use both sand and grass with a range of equipment to provide more challenge and interest for children of all ages and abilities.



Option 2 - Skatepark North of Rose Walk

The main benefit of this option is that the restored heritage layout in the south has larger sensory gardens and picnic lawns around the café and water fountains. However, moving the skatepark will reduce the amount of open space in the north and change the open look and feel of this area.

Funding

We have already secured £256,000 to improve the playground and skatepark. This is not sufficient to carry out all the work needed to improve the rest of the park. So last year we submitted a successful first-round Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' grant application. This meant we were awarded funding to develop detailed proposals which will be used in our second-round application. This second stage is also competitive and therefore the funding is not guaranteed. We are also seeking additional funding for the skatepark, which is not currently included in the 'Parks for People' bid.

Improving management & maintenance

Our proposals include a 10 year Management & Maintenance Plan and the recruitment of a full-time site based Park Manager.

Improving safety

The aim is to create a park which is safe and welcoming. Restoring and maintaining the park to a high standard, better lighting and improved visibility will all help achieve this. The café, increased visitor numbers and the presence of a site based Park Manager will increase the natural surveillance and improve security. Working with various community safety partners, we are also looking at what enforcement and intervention measures are needed.

Increasing users

We will have an Activity Plan which will ensure the park is accessible and inviting to park visitors. This will include improved visitor facilities such as a new café, toilets, seating and information. A programme of activities for visitors to enjoy, get involved through volunteering and increase their learning is also being developed.

What the new park will look like

These two artist impressions give an idea of what the park will look like if we are successful in our 'Parks for People' bid and are able to carry out all the proposed improvements.



Option 1



Option 2

What happens next?

All views received during the consultation will be carefully considered and a final decision on the design will be made by the council in June or July.

After a decision is made, we will work up the finer details for the design. This will include, for example, the location and type of seating, what lighting is needed, what plants will be used and finalising the café layout and how many public toilets to include.

These proposals will be used in preparing our Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' second-stage application which is due to be submitted in August 2011, with a decision expected in January 2012. If successful, it is anticipated that the improvement work will take place between winter 2012 and summer 2013.

We will also be working to secure additional funding for the skatepark and other aspects of the Masterplan not included in the 'Parks for People' bid such as the Art Work at the north end crossroads.

Following the council's decision, the results of this consultation will be published on our website.



Contact us

- Fill out the questionnaire on-line on <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal>
- Find out more by visiting www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevel
- Join the mailing list to get regular updates about the project by emailing us on parkprojects@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- If you do not have access to the internet, please write to us at Brighton & Hove City Council, City Parks Projects, Hollingdean Depot, Upper Hollingdean Road, Brighton, BN1 7GA or call us on 01273 292929.

Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office.

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في المربع وخذها إلى مكتب البلدية.	Arabic <input type="checkbox"/>
অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন দিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান।	Bengali <input type="checkbox"/>
需要翻譯? 請在這方格內加劃, 並送回任何市議會的辦事處。	Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/>
ترجمه؟ لطفاً این مربع را علامتگذاری نموده و آن را به هر یک از دفاتر شهرداری ارائه نمایید.	Farsi <input type="checkbox"/>
Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council.	French <input type="checkbox"/>
需要翻譯? 請在這方格內划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。	Mandarin <input type="checkbox"/>
Tłumaczenie? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregośkolwiek biur samorządu lokalnego (council office).	Polish <input type="checkbox"/>
Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadrícula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (council office).	Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/>
Tercümesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz	Turkish <input type="checkbox"/>
	other (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>

This can also be made available in large print, Braille, or on CD or audio tape

Thank you for your time and don't forget to fill in the on-line questionnaire or complete and return the enclosed paper questionnaire before 31 March 2011.

Appendix B – Example of questionnaire form

The Level consultation March 2011 Questionnaire

Brighton & Hove City Council is proposing changes to improve The Level and we want to make sure we consult widely with residents living near the park. You have received this questionnaire because you live within a 15 minute walk of The Level.

People outside this area are also welcome to have their say and can do so through the council's on-line consultation portal or by requesting a paper copy of the questionnaire.

The information provided in the enclosed leaflet describes the changes and the options for the park.

To make sure your views are considered, please return your completed questionnaire in the Freepost envelope provided by 31 March 2011 at the latest. No stamp is required.

Or you could save time by completing this questionnaire online at <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal>



Artist impression of how
Option 1 might look



Artist impression of how
Option 2 might look



LOTTERY FUNDED



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Your address and post code

In order to prevent multiple submissions of forms by individuals, we will only accept one questionnaire per household. To monitor this, we need to ask for your address and postcode. The information received will be treated in strictest confidence and it will not be used individually or for any other purposes outside this survey.

Your Full Address*

Your Full Post Code*

*These fields are mandatory. If you don't fill them in we won't be able to process your response.

Tell us about your household

1. What is the make up of your household? (tick one box)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple | <input type="checkbox"/> Couple with children | <input type="checkbox"/> Single parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sole occupant | <input type="checkbox"/> Student / shared household | <input type="checkbox"/> Business / Charity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____ | | |

2. For households with children, please indicate age range and number of children?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Number of children under 5 | <input type="text"/> | Number of children 12 to 15 | <input type="text"/> |
| Number of children 5 to 11 | <input type="text"/> | Number of children 16+ | <input type="text"/> |

3. What are the main reasons members from your household visit The Level?

(tick one or more boxes)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxing | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnics | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying nature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Playground | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending events / activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Paddling pool | <input type="checkbox"/> Through route (pedestrian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socialising with friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Skate park | <input type="checkbox"/> Through route (cyclist) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal leisure eg Frisbee | <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging/Running | <input type="checkbox"/> Part of my job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't normally visit The Level | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____ | |

Your views on the park design proposals

Two options are being considered. There are benefits and compromises with each option, and these should be considered before answering this question. **Please read the information provided in the enclosed leaflet which describes these differences.**

4. Overall, which option does your household prefer? (tick one box)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Option 1 (skatepark <u>south</u> of Rose Walk) | <input type="checkbox"/> Option 2 (skatepark <u>north</u> of Rose Walk) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Have no preference / like both |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household does not agree (provide details below) | |

Do you have any further comments about your choice? Please explain.

5. Please indicate which areas you think individuals in your household would appreciate? (tick one or more boxes)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> North lawns | <input type="checkbox"/> Toddlers play | <input type="checkbox"/> Café with indoor seating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art work at crossroads in north | <input type="checkbox"/> Juniors play | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Space in Pavilions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rose Walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Skatepark | <input type="checkbox"/> Skatepark (as a spectator) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory gardens / lawns in south | <input type="checkbox"/> Pétanque | <input type="checkbox"/> Paths around the perimeter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water fountains | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | | |

6. Please indicate what activities individuals in your household would appreciate? (Please tick one or more boxes)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting activities (eg football, frisbee) | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning (eg history trail, conservation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise activities (eg tai chi, health walks) | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering (eg gardening club) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Games tables (eg table tennis, chess) | <input type="checkbox"/> Events (eg music in the park, dog shows) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organised children's activities (eg junior rangers club, games) | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal family events (eg halloween) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art in the park (eg exhibitions, classes) | <input type="checkbox"/> Brighton Festival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Funfair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

Brighton & Hove City Council values and respects the diversity of all people living and working in Brighton & Hove. The council has an equalities policy to ensure that all people are treated fairly when accessing our services, irrespective of race, or sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief or age.

The information contained within this form will be used for monitoring purposes only and no individual will be identifiable. In compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 all details are kept in strict confidence at all times.

Sex (tick one box) ☐ Male ☐ Female If you also identify as transgender please tick here ☐

Age (tick one box) ☐ Under 18 ☐ 25 - 34 ☐ 45 - 54 ☐ 65 - 74
☐ 18 - 24 ☐ 35 - 44 ☐ 55 - 64 ☐ 75+

Disability (tick one box)
 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Ethnicity (tick one box)

Asian & Asian British

☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Other Asian background

Black & Black British

☐ Black British
☐ Black Caribbean
☐ Black African
☐ Other Black background

Chinese or other

☐ South-East Asian
☐ Chinese
☐ Other ethnic background
☐ Don't know

Mixed

☐ White & Black Caribbean
☐ White & Black African
☐ White & Asian
☐ Other mixed background

White

☐ White British
☐ White Irish
☐ Other White background

Religion/faith (tick one box)

☐ None ☐ Christian ☐ Jewish ☐ Hindu ☐ Muslim ☐ Sikh ☐ Buddhist
☐ Other (please state) _____

Are you (tick one box)

☐ Heterosexual ☐ Gay ☐ Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐ Unsure
☐ Other (please state) _____

Thank you for taking your time to complete this questionnaire. Your views will be used to inform the decision on which option is chosen for The Level.

Appendix C – Example of poster

The Level consultation

1 to 31 March 2011

**Final chance to have your say on how
The Level will look in the future**

The proposals include a new water feature, café and public toilets, skatepark and playground. For the whole park there will be an improvement of green space, new paths, lighting, signage and benches will be provided and the stone walls repaired. Two options have been developed for this consultation, the main difference being the location of the skatepark.

Tell us which design you think is best for the future of The Level

You can do this in a number of ways ...

- If you live within 15 minutes walk of The Level you should received a consultation pack through the post
- You can log onto the council's consultation portal <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/> portal to find out more about the proposals and complete the questionnaire
- Call 01273 292929 for a consultation pack
- Come along to one of the exhibitions.

Staffed exhibitions

Wednesday 2 March 9am – 6pm
at Churchill Square by H&M Adults

Tuesday 8 March 11am – 2pm
at Phoenix Gallery opposite St Peter's Church

Monday 14 March 9am – 2pm old Co-op Building, corner Baker Street & London Road

Thursday 24 March 12noon – 4pm old Co-op Building, corner Baker Street & London Road

Tuesday 29 March 2pm – 5pm at Phoenix Gallery, opposite St Peter's Church

Un-staffed exhibitions

Monday 7 March to Fri 11 March
at the Jubilee Library Foyer

Monday 14 March to Sat 26 March old Co-op Building, corner Baker Street & London Road

Monday 28 March to Thu 31 March
at the Jubilee Library Foyer

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/thelevel

LOTTERY FUNDED

**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Appendix D – Example of A1 board

The Level consultation

1 to 31 March 2011

**Final chance to have your say on how
The Level will look in the future**

We are preparing our final round application for a Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' grant and want your views on which design option you think is best for the future of The Level.

You can give your views in a number of ways ...

- If you live within 15 minutes walk of The Level you should receive a consultation pack through the post
- You can log onto the council's consultation portal <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal> to find out more about the proposals and complete the questionnaire
- If you don't have access to the internet you can contact us on 01273 292929 to request a consultation pack

You can also come along to one of our exhibitions

Staffed exhibitions

Wed 2 March 10am – 4pm at Churchill Square by H&M Adults
Tue 8 March 11am – 2pm at Phoenix Gallery opp St Peter's Church
Mon 14 March 10am – 2pm at the old Co-op Building, Off Baker Street & London Road
Thu 24 March 12 noon – 4pm at the old Co-op Building, Off Baker Street & London Road
Tue 29 March 2pm – 5pm at Phoenix Gallery, opp St Peter's Church

Un-staffed exhibitions

Mon 7 to Fri 11 March at the Jubilee Library Foyer
Mon 14 to Sat 26 March at the old Co-op Building, Off Baker Street & London Road
Mon 28 March to Thu 31 March at the Jubilee Library Foyer

Make sure your views are heard by completing your questionnaire by 31 March



Option 1

The proposals include a new water feature, cafe and public toilets, skatepark and playground. For the whole park there will be an improvement of green space, new paths, lighting, signage and benches will be provided and the stone walls repaired. Two options have been developed for the consultation, the main difference being the location of the skatepark.

Option 2

The design will be enclosed with a concrete screen and with the rest of the park. It will include a mud-use plaza area which other park users will be welcome to enjoy and where younger children can play. The new parents or guardians sitting area will be re-invested to grass and the lawn improved to provide a high quality lawn area which can be enjoyed as an event space, for sports such as football, dog walking and games. In both options the new water feature will be a large circular feature with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. New gardens and lawns in the south will provide an intimate and sensory space. It will have shady areas and a large area of grass for children to play in and just relating to the water fountain.

Option 1

The original floating pond will be restored as a water feature and the water feature will be restored as a water feature. This will create an attractive focal point for all park users to play in and enjoy visually. Two rows of water jets in the central area will provide fun for all ages while the ones on the outside will be gentler and suitable for younger children. The water feature will be restored as a water feature and will once again have a purpose, although you will still be able to walk through the water feature without getting wet. The restored columns and pergolas with climbing flowering plants will create a sensory and visual feature. A new building will feature a girls public toilets and staff facilities. It will use new green technologies to make it as carbon-neutral as possible and will be designed to make the best use of the space. The water fountain will be restored to provide community space for exhibitions, meetings, events and volunteer activities.

Option 2

The main benefit of this option is that it retains the cultural heritage value and the open public space of the lawn area. The new water feature will be a large circular feature with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. The Rose Walk flower borders will be enclosed with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. New gardens and lawns in the south will provide an intimate and sensory space. It will have shady areas and a large area of grass for children to play in and just relating to the water fountain.

Option 1 - Skatepark South of Rose Walk

The main benefit of this option is that it retains the cultural heritage value and the open public space of the lawn area. The new water feature will be a large circular feature with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. The Rose Walk flower borders will be enclosed with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. New gardens and lawns in the south will provide an intimate and sensory space. It will have shady areas and a large area of grass for children to play in and just relating to the water fountain.

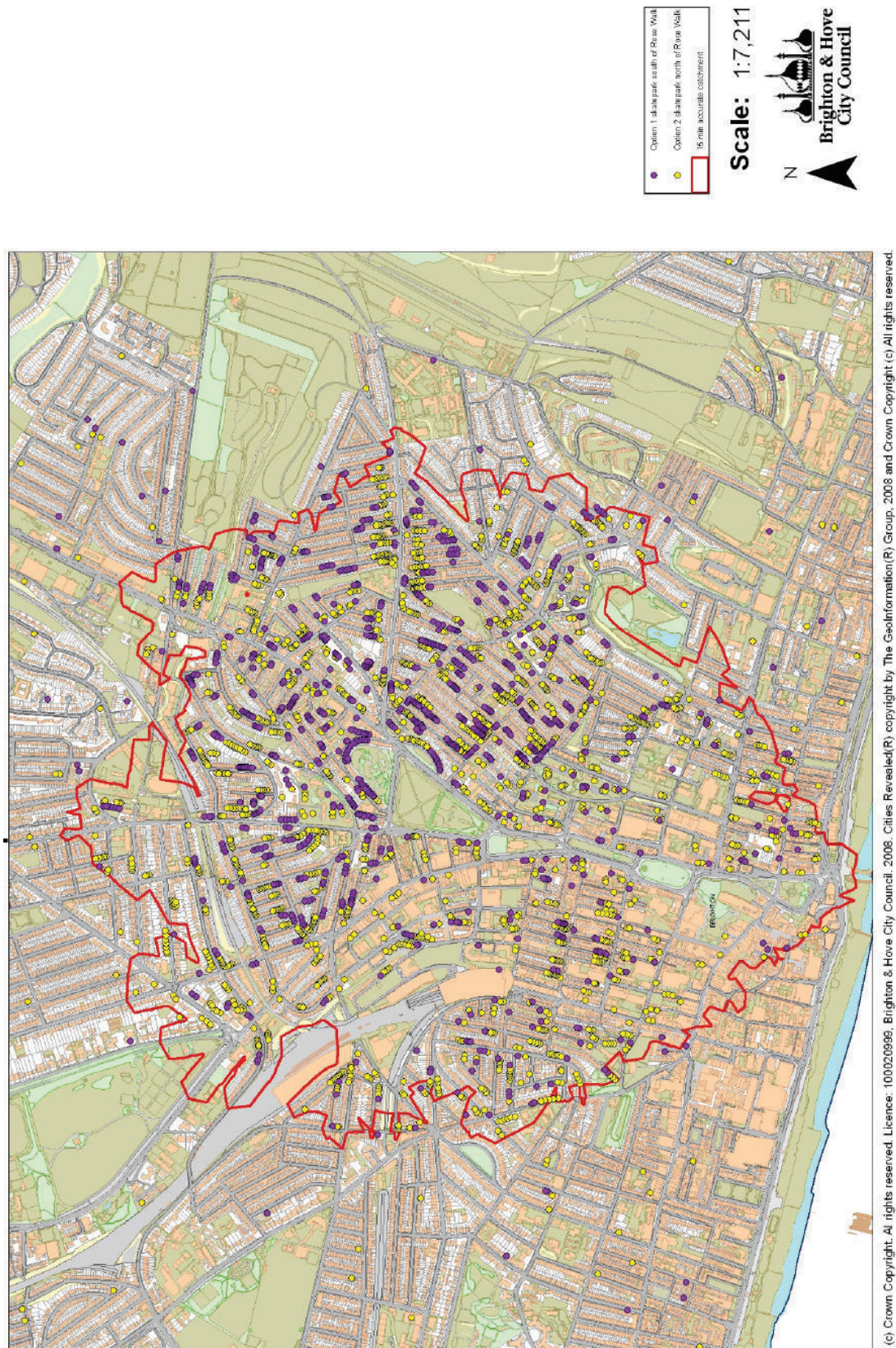
Option 2 - Skatepark North of Rose Walk

The main benefit of this option is that it retains the cultural heritage value and the open public space of the lawn area. The new water feature will be a large circular feature with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. The Rose Walk flower borders will be enclosed with a mix of roses, other perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide year round interest. New gardens and lawns in the south will provide an intimate and sensory space. It will have shady areas and a large area of grass for children to play in and just relating to the water fountain.

Brighton & Hove City Council

LOTTERY FUNDED

Appendix E – 15 minute walking catchment



Appendix F – Comments on Design Choice

When identifying the location of the skatepark they preferred, 1538 (46%) of the respondents made further comments about their decision.

Some people made more than one point in their response, giving a total of 1931 comments in total. Due to the amount received, the comments have been themed and tabulated against those who chose the two different options.

Option 1 – Skatepark to the south of the Rose Walk	No.	%
Want to keep the area north of the rose walk green/ open	309	44
Concerns about noise from the skate park	47	7
Want north area kept free for events	34	5
Easier to supervise children if all activities in one area	33	5
Concerned about alcohol abuse in park	33	5
Anti-social behaviour would increase if skatepark in north area	24	3.5
Don't want the funfair	19	3
This is a waste of money / concerned about costs	19	3
Don't want a skatepark at all	17	2.5
Opposed to Option 2	16	2.5
Need dog free areas, ensure adequate dog waste bins	16	2.5
Level is unsafe at the moment	16	2.5
Concerned about drug use in the park	14	2
Want to keep the pool	10	1.5
The Level needs improved lighting	9	1
Positive comments about this skate park location	9	1
Must have a park keeper	9	1
This is a better option for families	8	1
The park needs a lot of seating	6	1
Concerns about dogs near skateboarding area	3	
Don't want petanque	3	
Want café to be open to dog walkers	3	
Café needs to provide healthy food	3	
Want area for dogs	3	
Need to stop cyclists diagonally crossing The Level	2	
The Level needs better drainage	2	
Want skate park at southern end of park	2	
Need areas for different skating abilities	2	
Toilets are essential	2	
Concerned about Frisbee, footballs, dogs, children walking onto skatepark	2	
Rose Walk/ entrances need to be opened up	2	
Want half pipes	2	
Skatepark needs to be behind screens	1	
Separate bikes and skate boards from small children	1	

Other one-off comments: Animals, wildlife, fauna: want puppy park, Sport and exercise: don't remove football pitch, want adult outdoor gym, cricket pitch, basketball court Art, theatre: stage for live events Skatepark: concerned about higher rates of injury, want skate park to be made of wood, boxes, round grind rails General: I am disabled and am concerned about skate boarders whizzing about, don't need another café, lock central area at night, teenagers need to have an area that is theirs, want café near toddler area, make south end more accessible, rename The Level as Central Park	17	
Total	698	100

Option 2 – Skatepark to the north of the Rose Walk	No.	%
If skatepark in north area the southern area will be more restful/ more traditional/ more family orientated/ less congested	397	32
Concerns about noise, north is the best position for skatepark	111	9
General positive comments about new skatepark	104	8.5
Want skaters and bikes separated from small children's areas	95	8
Less anti-social behaviour if skatepark in the north area	79	6.5
Concerns about alcohol consumption in the park	69	5.5
Concerns about drug use in the park	55	4.4
Want dog free area and/ or dog waste bins	38	3
Will be able to watch the skaters more easily	35	3
Option 2 allows for more features in the park	29	2
The Level is unsafe at the moment	27	2
Don't want the funfair	24	2
Sensory garden will be better	22	2
The Level needs improved lighting	14	1
Must have a park keeper	14	1
Don't want a skatepark at all	11	1
Want to keep the pool	9	1
Screen off skatepark	6	0.5
Want a lot of seating in the Park	6	0.5
Concerns about noise from the skate park	6	0.5
Want north area kept green/ open	4	
The Level needs better drainage	3	
Need areas in the skatepark for different abilities	3	
Toilets are essential	3	
Want outdoor table tennis	3	
It's easier to supervise children if they are all in one area	2	
Want north area kept free for events	2	
This is a waste of money/ concerned about costs	2	
Open up the Rose Walk	2	
Wildfowl lake, duck pond	2	
Like the idea of petanque	2	
Would like outdoor chess	2	
Want disabled access	2	
Want adult outdoor gym	2	
Want bandstand	2	

Other one-off comments: Animals, wildlife, fauna: area for dogs, fish pond, bee hives, fruit trees, more trees Sport and exercise: Tai chi area, cricket nets at north, football pitches, basketball hoops, sprung wooden flooring for dance with removable tent ceiling Art, theatre: fountains to be as art and tendered for by local colleges, sundial, outdoor film screen, keep the surreal trainer tree, lights on trees, graffiti art walls Skatepark: coloured materials for skatepark to blend in with grass, concerned about skate park users territorial behaviour, skate park in NW corner, want unrestricted view of skatepark to keep eye on kids, want skate boarding events, grind rails and steps not just bowls, make sure design is by experienced skatepark designer, skateboarders need to be included in design, need mix of terrain for skateboard, BMX and scooters. Half pipes and concrete bowls in various sizes are essential General: A-board showing activities, markets good, teenage seating/ hangout area, want railing around outside of park, want picnic area in sunny area not shady, join up cycle routes, need more cycle parking, café needs to provide healthy food	34	
Total	1233	100

Don't know

27 comments were received from respondents who did not know which design they preferred.

Comments were focussed on keeping as much green in the park as possible, don't mind where the skatepark goes, it is a waste of money and included 'the most important this is that the improvements are actually done', 'make sure that skaters are involved in the design of the new skatepark' and 'good idea needs more things like this in Brighton'.

Household does not agree

A total of 37 comments were received from households who did not agree on the design they preferred.

Two respondents did not like either of the two designs, four would like to see the skatepark somewhere else in Brighton other than at The Level and many felt that the anti-social behaviour within the park had to be addressed first.

Other comments included 'may have had more opinions had I been younger', 'do not visit the park' and 'please stop the fairgrounds coming and taking over The Level'.

Have no preference / like both of the designs

A total of 97 comments were received from households who did not agree on the design they preferred.

Comments were focussed around having the skatepark at another location in Brighton, leaving The Level as it is, the anti-social behaviour needs to be addressed and included 'The Level needs to be improved so we believe any investment & development will help', 'the ramps look too small for the BMX riders to use so where will they go?' and 'no real preference however it would be good to increase visibility into cafe/play parts'.