

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON SITE OF THE FORMER SILVERDALE COLLIERY
Reference 17/00258/207C2

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update, in accordance with the resolution of Planning Committee at its meeting of 28th April 2020, of the progress in relation to a breach of planning control at this location.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be received.

Following refusal of a planning application to vary condition B8 of outline planning permission 06/00337/OUT which would have removed the requirement to provide a second Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) on this development, Committee resolved that Legal Services be authorised to issue enforcement to secure, within six months, the provision of a second LEAP as required by condition.

Details of a revised play area were subsequently received which Landscape Development Services advised were acceptable. Information regarding when the play area would be installed was provided and works were undertaken in the first week of October 2018.

A site visit was undertaken some time ago which established that all the approved equipment has been provided within the second LEAP but not the benches. The developer was contacted and correspondence was received in January 2020 indicating that a site visit was to be carried out to determine what works remained outstanding. However correspondence in April stated that the visit didn't take place and that due to the lockdown situation and the restrictions in place at that time they were unable to carry out such a visit. The developer gave assurances that this will be rectified as soon as normal working conditions return. More recently the developer has acknowledged/accepted that the benches are required and have not been installed in accordance with the approved plans and has indicated that the benches.

Members should note that Silverdale Parish Council has approached the Council and the developer to raise awareness of issues of anti-social behaviour that were frequently occurring when the play area was open for use (access to the play equipment is currently prevented in response to the Covid-18 pandemic). The information provided in writing, and at a site meeting recently held, is that groups of youths are congregating around one particular piece of play equipment, a basket swing, and are causing disturbance. Concern has been expressed that the installation of the benches would exacerbate the problems that have been experienced and are expected to recommence once the play area is open for use.

The Council has adopted the Fields in Trust (FIT) standards for the design of outdoor play facilities. The FIT standards for a LEAP include seating for accompanying adults, carers and siblings. The provision of the benches are therefore required to meet such standards and would be beneficial to those using the LEAP for its intended purposes. It does not appear that an acceptance that the benches do not need to be provided would resolve the issue of antisocial behaviour as the bucket swing would remain. Your Officer would not, therefore, recommend that it is no longer necessary to provide such benches.

The replacement of the bucket swing with another piece of play equipment, that is less attractive and capable of use by older children/young adults, is being explored, as is the possible reduction in the number of benches to be provided from the six approved. The benches will not be installed until such amendments to the play area have been fully explored and a conclusion reached.

An update on progress will be provided before the meeting if any progress has been made.

Date report prepared: 9th July 2020