

Chorleywood Wonder Wood Proposal Consultation Results

August 2018

Background and review

Chorleywood Parish Councillors agreed to relook at play space provision in Chorleywood, which had been reviewed and discussed in previous years' Council meetings. The results of the investigative work of the Three Rivers District Council working group were presented to Chorleywood Parish Council. Chorleywood Parish Council (CWPC) rejected the Common as a potential play site and recommended Chorleywood House Grounds. Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) formally rejected Chorleywood House Grounds and agreed that Officers would formally apply for planning permission to site a new place space on Chorleywood Common.

Officers then commissioned a full Ecological Impact Assessment and Tree Survey report. Meetings were held in August 2017 between CWPC and TRDC to discuss the project and TRDC were informed about the Wildwood Dens installed on the Common, commissioned by CWPC.

District Councillors agreed for officers to work in partnership with CWPC, local school children and their families to produce a natural play space, titled "Chorleywood Wonder Wood" which compliments the existing play elements on the Common. The Chorleywood Wonder Wood was procured, and the contract awarded to Wildwood UK who had installed the previous Wildwood Dens on the Common

Objectives

To ascertain from the local Chorleywood Parish community:

- Their views on the proposed locations and designs of the Wonder Wood
- How they intend to access the Wonder Wood, if at all
- Any concerns or support for the proposals

Executive Summary

Below are detailed the headlines from the **on-line survey and focus group** conducted for the Wonder Wood Consultation. **For the full detail, please see page 10 onwards.**

ON-LINE SURVEY HEADLINES

THE SITES

- **Just over half of respondents (58%)** were in **agreement with the Location A site** for the Wonder Wood. However, a **significant minority disagreed (42%)**, with **32% strongly disagreeing**.
 - Feedback saw many stating **Location A as accessible and encouraging Common exploration**. **Concerns** surrounded **traffic and railway dangers, access, anti-social behaviour, parking, ecological issues** and a **desire for the Common to be left unaltered**.
- **Just over half of respondents (55%)** were in **agreement with the Location B site** for the Wonder Wood. However, a **significant minority disagreed (45%)**, with **30% strongly disagreeing**
- In summary, **both Location A and B sites had majority agreement**, however there was **significant strong opposition**. **Location A had more 'strongly agree' ratings, than Location B (39% vs 26% respectively)**
 - Feedback saw many stating that **Location B** would make use of the existing Nature Trail space, that **parking would be better** (than at Location A), it would **encourage Common exploration**, was **more accessible and safer**. However, there were **concerns regarding too many locations – lack of a meeting point, too far for some to walk and ecological concern** (e.g. no ecological impact assessment having been conducted)

THE DESIGNS

- **Two thirds (65%)** of respondents **found Option 1 designs appealing** (Original designs at Location A: near car park), with a **half (51%) finding them very appealing (51%)**
- **Two fifths (42%)** of respondents **found Option 2 designs appealing** (Scaled back version at Location A: near car park), with only **4% saying very appealing**
- **Just over half (53%)** of respondents **found Option 3 designs appealing** (Original designs spread over Location B sites: Parish Council Nature trail), with a **quarter (26%) saying very appealing**
- **Option 1** (Original designs at Location A: near car park) was chosen as the **preferred design** by **43%** of respondents, whilst **Option 3** (Original designs spread over Location B sites: Parish Council Nature trail) achieved **30%** of the votes. However, **approaching a quarter (23%)** stated 'none on the designs' were a preference.
 - There was **praise for the how the equipment was in keeping with the surroundings**, but also **concern regarding wildlife disruption and provision of equipment for younger children**

SAFETY

- **Just over half of respondents (54%)** felt that the inclusion of a **pedestrian crossing point** (across the station road), would mean that they would be able to **get to the Wonder Wood safely**
 - **Some respondents stated that the car park road and Wonder Wood usage would not coincide**, thus not causing undo problems. However, others had **real concerns about car speeding and a blind spot around Location A**. Suggestions were made for **traffic calming measures and signage**.

LEVELS OF SUPPORT FOR THE WONDER WOOD

- Approaching **two thirds (64%)** of respondents were in **agreement with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common**, although there was a **significant minority of respondents who strongly disagreed to it (29%)**
 - **The majority of 154 respondents who had children living at home agreed with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood (78%), with 66% strongly agreeing**
 - **The majority of 125 respondents who did NOT have children living at home disagreed with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood (51%), with 39% strongly agreeing**
 - Breaking the results down a little further, from the 74 respondents who said that **no-one they knew would use the Wonder Wood**, the **vast majority disagreed with the Wonder Wood (91%)**, with **78% strongly disagreeing**
 - **Just over half (51%)** of respondents said that the **inclusion of the Wonder Wood** would encourage them to visit **Chorleywood Common more often (with 32% saying much more)**
- Those in favour of a Wonder Wood simply felt that Chorleywood needed a central playground
- Those against the Wonder Wood were keen for the Common to be left untouched and for their ecological concerns to be heard. The majority were still in favour of a play area, but just not on the Common – some suggested **Chorleywood House Estate**. A minority felt that another play area in Chorleywood was not necessary at all.

FOCUS GROUP HEADLINES

LOCATION A

Conservation

Animals

- **Slow worms** present at the site – **concern around their protection**
 - Concerns that the habitat of the grassland will be removed for the slow worms
 - Increase the distance between the railway fence line and the boundary of the play zones for the slow worms
 - Can the experts be clear about where the slow worms are living exactly within site 15a?
 - Will the slow worms be moved and placed elsewhere? How will they be specifically protected during this process?

Concerns

"I think one of the reasons that site 15A is so heavily populated with slow worms is it's proximity to the railway line, because being a lizard, being cold blooded, they require heat to get their body temperature up. They go and bask on the banks of the railway and then they hunt in the trees there"

Response to concerns

"We do say that these will be protected during the process, so if we're asking them about their habitat, we can also ask, as they they're protected – how can we make sure they are. Once we clear that up, that will hopefully get rid of that point"

• **Other visiting animals' concerns**

- **Badgers, foxes, deer** – filmed by a local resident
- **Concerns** that there are **bats at the site**

Concerns

"We do see the same badgers. The foxes and slow worms are definitely in residence up there and I'm pretty sure there are bats roosting in the trees there. I did get some pick up from a bat listening device"

Response to concerns

"I've got all those things [slow worms, deer etc.] in my back garden too. And I've got a big play thing in my back garden and they still come. And I guess we've had reports from people saying it's okay and it won't disrupt slow worms. Are we questioning the experts?" Answer from fellow attendee: 'Yes'

Flora and Fauna

- Lots of existing flora and fauna at this site
- Wishes for the **unmanaged nature** of the site to continue
- **Tree removal** concerns

Concerns

"It's one of the few areas [on the Common] where it's unmanaged. You're bound to have different species living there because wildlife that couldn't survive in the managed area, could quite easily survive in something that's unmanaged"

Response to concerns

"The ranger walked us round and showed us a large area of the centre of the Common that's unmanaged"

Safety

Traffic concerns

- Concerned about **how people drive in and out of the car park**, particularly during peak commute times

"We are very concerned about the traffic in the evening rush hour"

- **Traffic calming** needed along the station access road
- **Signage** would be needed – coming out of the car park and as you enter the access the road.

"If there's enough signage – potentially in and out of the car park, they're positive additions"

- **Tree stumps** laying down along the edge of the site as used elsewhere on the Common would be **useful to prevent children running out**
- **Currently campaigning for traffic calming methods on Chorleywood Bottom** – dangerous area: blind bend (separate issue to the play space)

"It's a blind bend and the pavement disappears on either side of the road"

- **Railway bridge** – pedestrians crossing concern debate

Concern: "The nearest place people park is across the bridge and you do need to consider the safety aspect of coming across the railway bridge"

Response: "That was an existing danger"

Safety reassurances

*"I'd say with **traffic calming measures and the signage**, the walking around the area – the natural barriers you have around the area, the scrub there at the moment, I think it is **unlikely that you've have a child running into that road** at those access points to the area"*

"In terms of walking access to this site vs. getting the other sites, you have less busy roads to cross to get to this one. It's a far faster road outside Memorial Hall"

Railway line concerns

- Concern regarding **people throwing rubbish over the fence – engage TfL**

*"You need to **engage with TfL properly** because if you do get youngsters in there at night, you know what the temptation is, a train going past, 'Ooh I wonder what happens if I lobe this over'. And that's why a boundary, trees in between, would make that a lot harder to do"*

- **Children accessing the railway line**
 - Ensure TFL are properly engaged around **the fence line** – what height will the fence be?

*"We're concerned about people **throwing things over onto the railway** and creating danger. If you left a boundary of trees there, then that would obviously prevent"*

ASB

- Has seen **evidence of drug use at site 15A (canisters)**
 - Counter statement: there is drug use everywhere – the play space won't increase this

"I do see evidence of inhaling little bottles of gas. There is drug use up there, but it hasn't been mentioned [in the report] for 15A"

- **PCSOs will need to be involved**

" " I think the PCSOs will just have to go around and remind the older kids that it's not for them"

- **No additional concerns**

"I was walking there the other night and there were hordes of teenagers there the other night and I don't think this would make it any worse. They weren't causing any problems"

"There's a load on Dog Kennel Lane and they're hardly nice to hang out in. If they're going to do it, they're going to do it"

Sight Lines

- **No major issues** raised regarding sight lines

"There's enough oversight, from a personal perspective, if I was there"

Access

- Need to make it **clear the walking access routes** from other areas of the Parish of Chorleywood
- **Disabled access needs confirming**

"If you were disabled, I don't think it would be an ideal site to access, but having said that it's Chorleywood and there are steep hills everywhere"

"The more accessible pieces of equipment are closer to the access point"

Parking

- **Engage with TfL in potential parking issue** on road up to car park e.g. clamping cars

"There is parking on that access road. At one time, there were people parking right down there because the car park was full. TfL clamped down really hard on it. You will have to get TfL to agree to clamp down really hard on it because I hate to say, parents will just park up there"

Maintenance / Refuse

- Concern regarding **ownership of maintenance** and keeping the site clean
- **Reassurance requested that site will be cleaned**, as well as bin emptied (e.g. dog fouling, bottles etc.)

LOCATION B

Ecology

- **Impact assessment required to ensure that the reasons cited previously by the Parish Council as to why the Wonder Wood could not be built on the site were the Nature Trail now stands, are now no longer an issue**

Exploration of Common benefit

"This does encourage people using it to walk round the whole Common and explore the nature around the Common, which is a positive for me"

Safety and parking points

*"The huge advantage here, is that they are in **easy distance of existing car parking** areas and therefore direct access is satisfied here"*

*"There was **heavy objection from the golf club** against anything going on the main body of the Common. They **cited safety, golf balls hitting children**"*

ASB

*"It reduces the chances of people **congregating and spreads that risk out**"*

Community Engagement

- **Smaller items spread out in 4 locations, loses the appeal for groups of children playing together.**
Suggestion for perhaps **2 locations, with each site having 2 items per location**

"And just children playing with each other and getting along together and learning social skills, if we become more siloed there is less opportunity for this. I'm not totally against it and I do like the idea of walking around the Common"

- **Concern that this loses the 'meeting point' aspect** – social interaction (disparate play experience)

"One of the big positives - It's that opportunity to bump into somebody when you're having a particularly down day and that conversation makes a massive difference"

Questions

- Need a lot more **detail on the third option** – where would they be, what would they include, access points to the locations, considerations of the golf course (health and safety previously cited)
- How about splitting the **equipment between Site 15A and the Nature trail?**

THE PLAY EQUIPMENT

*"The **basket swing** should be close to the car park so that accessibility to it would be most easily accomplished"*

*"I think it's a valid point about the **toddlers.... but that said, I would put my toddler in a basket swing**"*

*"There is no provision for a **toddler swing**"*

"I think it would be lovely to have all those things and not scale that back, from a community perspective"



FULL DETAIL

Methodology

ON-LINE SURVEY

An on-line survey was open from **18th June to midday 20th July 2018**. The survey was promoted in the following ways:

- Three Rivers website
- Three Rivers Times
- Social media
- Via Members
- Emails to local schools and Children's Centres

Only residents within **the Parish of Chorleywood** were eligible to complete the survey

Sample size

320 respondents completed the survey. See the Profile information at the end of the report for more detail regarding who completed the survey.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

Public consultations were held on **11th, 12th, 13th July 2018** at Chorleywood Library. Residents were able to drop in to have their **queries answered by Three Rivers District Council Officers**, find out more about the proposals and access support in **completing the on-line survey**.

FOCUS GROUP

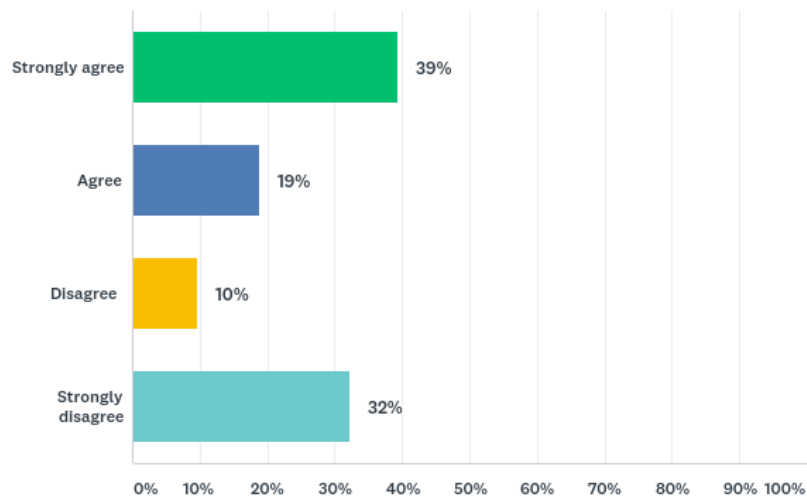
A focus group was conducted on **5th July 2018**, with attendees from the following interest groups: **Chorleywood Residents Association, Loudwater Resident Association, Friends of Chorleywood Common, Chorleywood Mums and Chorleywood residents**. The focus group was **facilitated by Officers from Three Rivers District Council**.

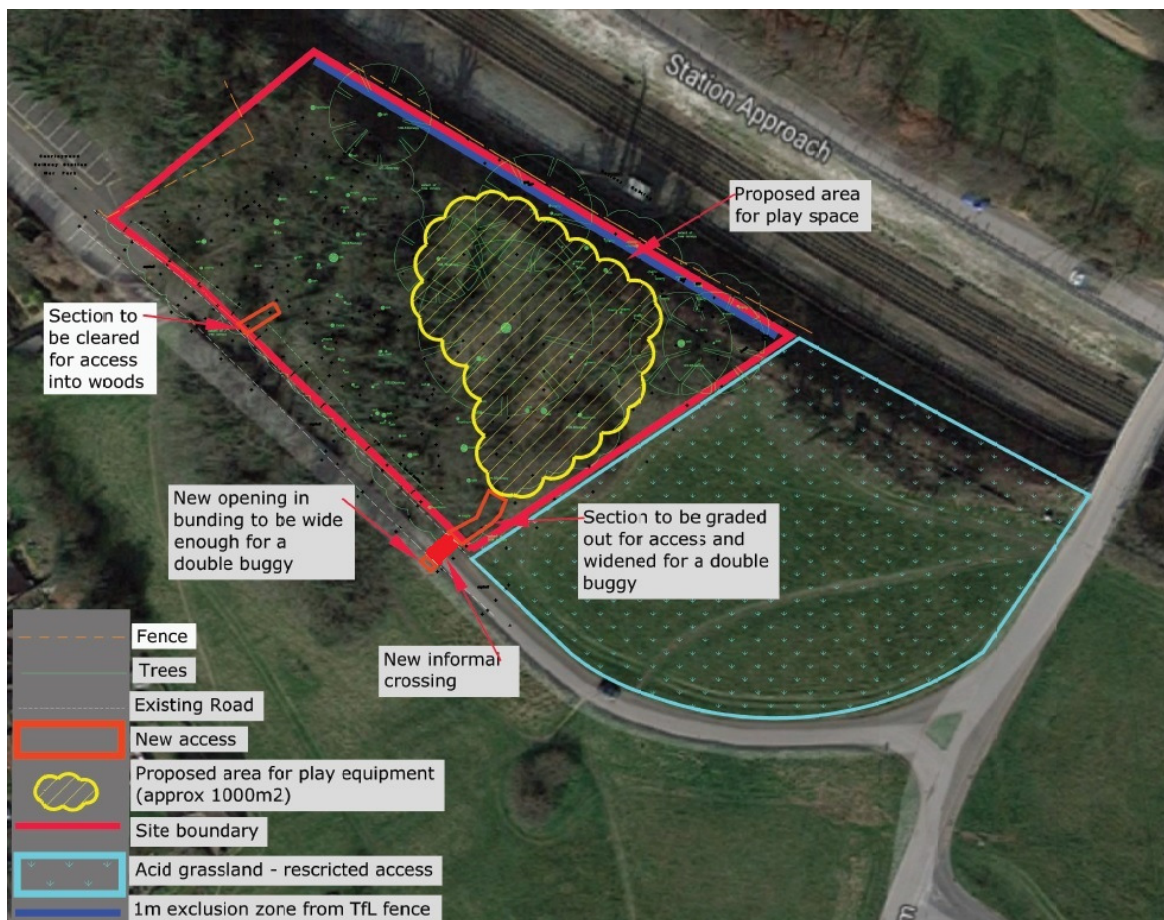
ON-LINE SURVEY

Location A site (near the station car park)

Just over half of respondents (58%) were in agreement with the Location A site for the Wonder Wood. However, a **significant minority disagreed (42%), with 32% strongly disagreeing.**

Q1 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed LOCATION A for the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common, near the station car park (see the map below)?





Respondent feedback

SUPPORT

Accessible – 47 mentions

“Easy to walk to from the village”

“It would be good to have a more centrally based play area and the design is fitting for the Common”

“I think this is an ideal location close to the village, walking distance for a large number of families. It is not an area heavily used at the moment”

Encourages exploring of Common – 22 mentions

“Underused area of the Common”

“This is an area not used by golfers and a little off the usual dog walker tracks”

“Kids love train spotting so that's an added bonus”

Playground is needed – 3 mentions

“The site is not ideal, but a number of alternatives have been considered and none is perfect. Chorleywood needs a proper children's play area”

“We desperately need a high-quality play area within easy reach of Chorleywood village for children. This is long overdue”

“It would be a game changer for the children of Chorleywood to have a play area on the Common. We have waited years”

“A new playground is long overdue and after a long torturous process. Location A has emerged as the best compromise. Time to stop prevaricating and get it built, so our children, not grandchildren, can benefit from it”

“Having one main play area will mean it is a focal point for children and families to meet, making it safer and more sociable. It will also be more fun for children to have more play structures in one place rather than having them dotted around. It is also easier for people with small children/buggies/accessibility issues to visit”

“It can be quite isolating as a young mum and an outdoor play area always helps with this”

CONCERNS

ASB - 33 mentions

"Would be a focal point for anti-social behaviour, near to residents' homes"

"I have already seen empty nitrous oxide canisters in area"

Car dangers – 31 mentions

"A potentially dangerous mix of car and foot traffic, particularly around the time of evening rush-hour in summer"

"There would be a blind spot as you go around the bend for the crossing closest to the railway"

"This is not a safe location for an unfenced play area. It is too close to the station access road and young children will be able to run out on to the road"

"It is too close to the driveway into the car park and there cannot be any fencing. There is no pavement along Chorleywood Bottom through the Common and the speed limit is 60mph. Shepherds bridge is designated by the rail authorities as a non pedestrian bridge. It has a blind bend and has been the location of numerous accidents"

Access - 30 mentions

"Potentially dangerous and difficult access via steps and car park"

"This location is difficult to access on foot from the main residential areas of Chorleywood"

"There is no safe walkable access to this site. Mothers, small children are expected to walk round the blind bend on Chorleywood Bottom where there is no pavement"

"The site is virtually inaccessible. No pavements, footpath from North Road is steep, narrow – extremely user 'unfriendly' as are the steps leading to the car park"

Parking - 30 mentions

"There is no near, safe, accessible car park"

Ecology – 21 mentions

"Bulldozing location A is environmentally irresponsible...when this is the only remaining area of the Common which has not been 'managed'. There are good trees, acid grass and natural shrubs and wild flowers and other plants which would be destroyed for good, putting to further danger the vanishing sites for our endangered butterflies, bees, small birds and wild mammals"

"The proposed area is irreplaceable and important habitat for slow worms and bats, both protected species. The woodland adjoins extremely important unimproved grassland that is the habitat for rare plants and butterflies"

"The Common should be protected and no man-made structures should be added"

Not on the Common – 6 mentions

“The Common is a unique and special place already with all sorts of natural options for imaginative play”

“As a parent of young children, I do not think the Wonder Wood is necessary – I think the existing Wild Wood dens...are more than adequate and believe children can enjoy the remainder of the Common in its natural state”

“This is actually the nearest part of the Common for a disabled person like me to get to. If there are families and kids in that enclosed space it will mean that I can no longer use the area...The Common should have quiet areas for adults and people with disabilities who need space and quiet”

“Common means Common. I do not want this or any other interested party or pressure group to destroy that which should be ‘common’”

“Three Rivers DC can impose this on the PC then how long will it be before they decide to build houses on the Common?”

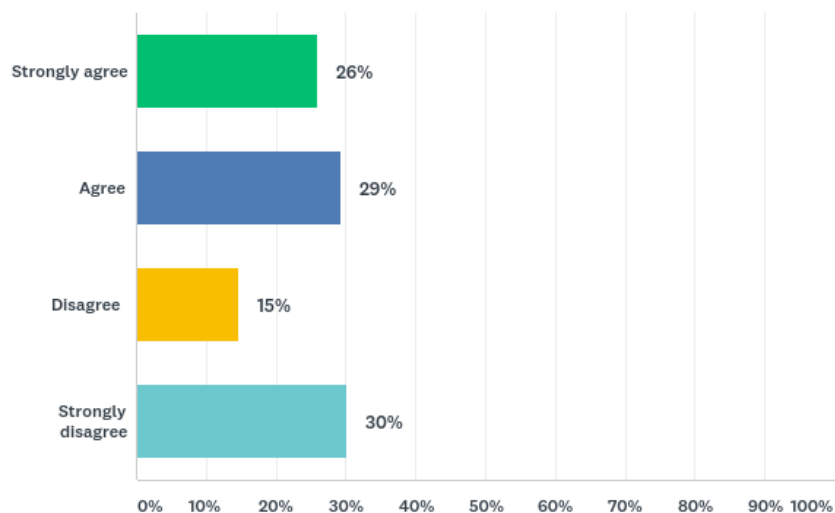
Railway danger – 6 mentions

“It is near the train line and a very steep bank. If any of the children are not supervised and decide to climb this fence or around onto the bridge it would be extremely dangerous”

Location B site (at the Parish Council existing Nature Trail sites across the Common)

Just over half of respondents (55%) were in agreement with the Location B site for the Wonder Wood. However, a significant minority disagreed (45%), with 30% strongly disagreeing.

Q2 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed LOCATION B sites for the Wonder Wood at 4 different locations on Chorleywood Common, within the Parish Council's existing Nature Trail area (the exact locations to be determined)? See the map below.





Chorleywood Common Nature Trail

Chorleywood Common Circular Walk



Sculptures

Holly Alley and animal sculptures

Woodland Trail

Wildwood Den 2

Noticeboard

WW1 artillery position with sculptures

Fallen Oak tree – Sculpture

Noticeboard

Wildwood Den 1

Fairy Ring and story telling area and Gnome Homes

Owls in the woodland

Den Building & Xylophone

Noticeboard

Climbing frame or Wild Wood Den 3

In summary, **both Location A and B sites had majority agreement**, however there was **significant strong opposition**. **Location A** had more 'strongly agreement' ratings, than **Location B** (39% vs 26% respectively)

Respondent feedback

SUPPORT – for Location B over Location A

Makes use of existing play/exploration facilities on Common

"Makes use of existing play/exploration facilities on Common and these are more generally accessible"

Parking better – 12 mentions

"Why not be content with using the main part of the Common with the existing car parks?"

"Spreads the parking load"

Encouraged to use more of the Common - 12 mentions

"Families to make use of the whole of the Common"

"Greater potential for adventure and nature discovery"

"This will encourage children to utilise the Common more and require more exercise to travel around the Common"

"This is preferable; it encourages people to use the whole of the Common"

More accessible – 8 mentions

"Access to children from different corners of the Common"

"Greater usage by more children"

Safer – 8 mentions

"A much more sensible option allowing people to access the trail safely at many different points and use the available car parks at Christchurch"

CONCERNS

Too many locations – no meeting point – 11 mentions

"I think it is better for families and children to interact in one play area"

"Parents with more than one child would find it impossible, as they would inevitably want to be in 2 or more of the locations simultaneously"

"I don't think splitting the playground up and spreading it out across the Common would work. Kids enjoy switching back and forth between different play areas"

"There is no way I can take my five-year-old and 1.5 year old grandchild to this site easily. 4 different locations!"

Too far to walk/not accessible – 7 mentions

"Not easily accessible by foot"

"Simply won't be used as much"

"Have you ever tried to push a buggy over the Common? I have about 100 times and it is a struggle, especially if it has rained"

Ecology – 1 mention

"No surveys have been conducted on the sites from an ecological point of view"

The designs

The designs below were presented on the on-line survey:

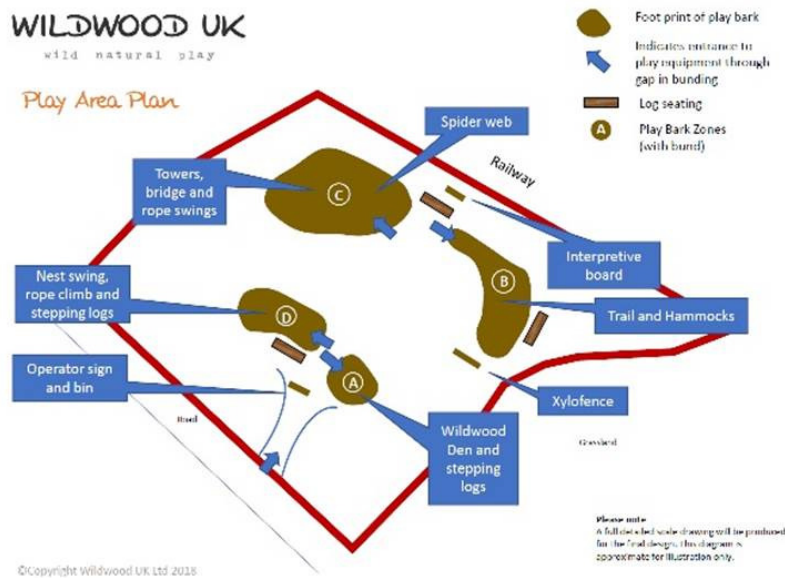
Option 1: The **original design** at **Location A site**, near the **station car park**

Option 2: Scaled back version at **Location A site**, near the **station car park**: a smaller area with fewer play features compared to Option 1

Option 3: Original design to be spread over 4 '**Location B**' sites across the **Parish Council's existing Nature Trail on the Common**

Option 1: Original design at Location A, near the station car park

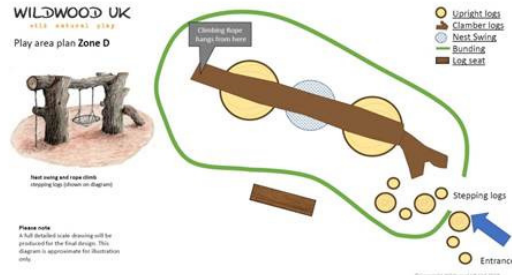
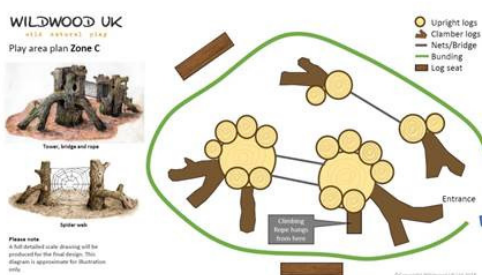
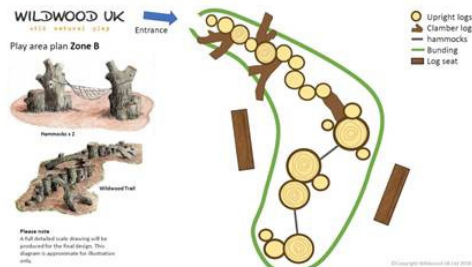
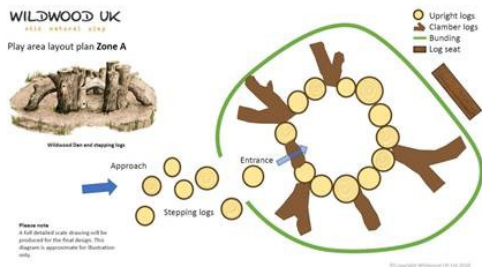
How could it look?



Original Design



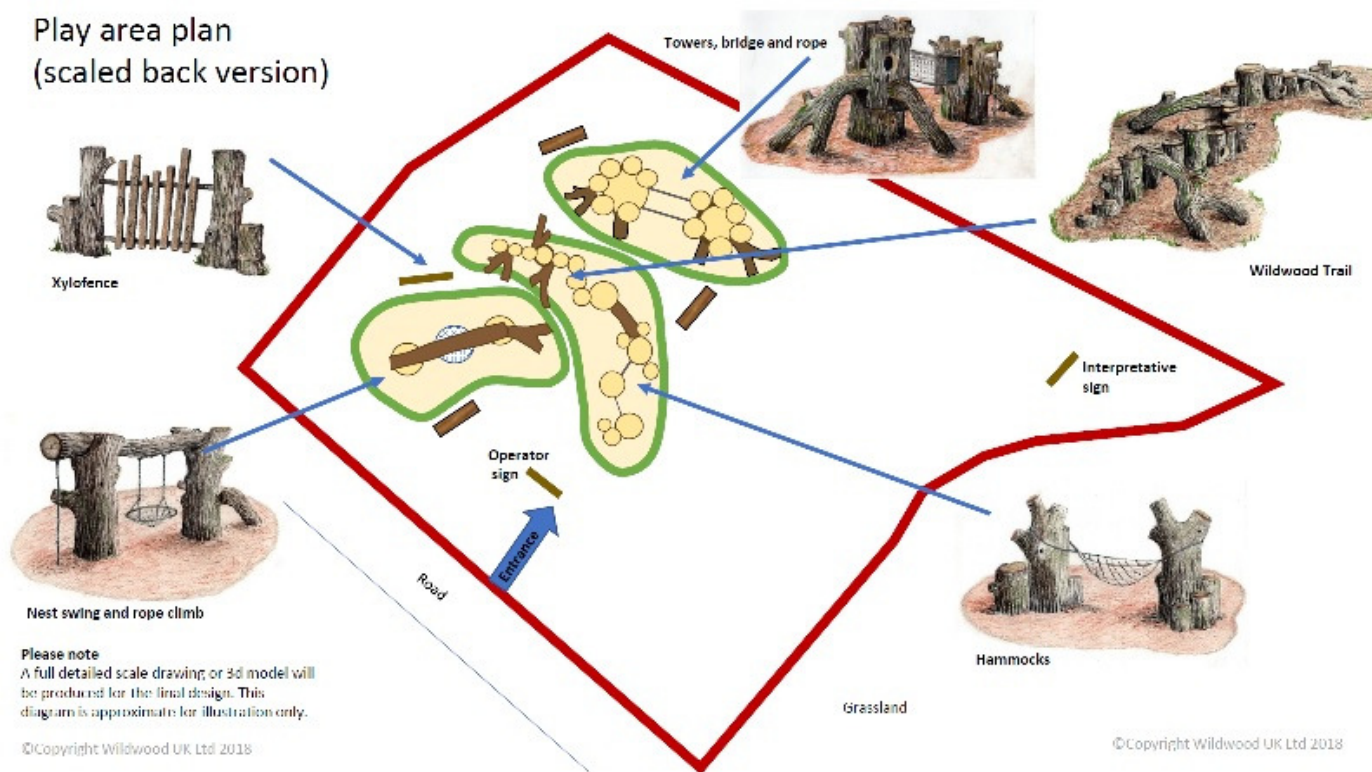
How could it look?



Original Design

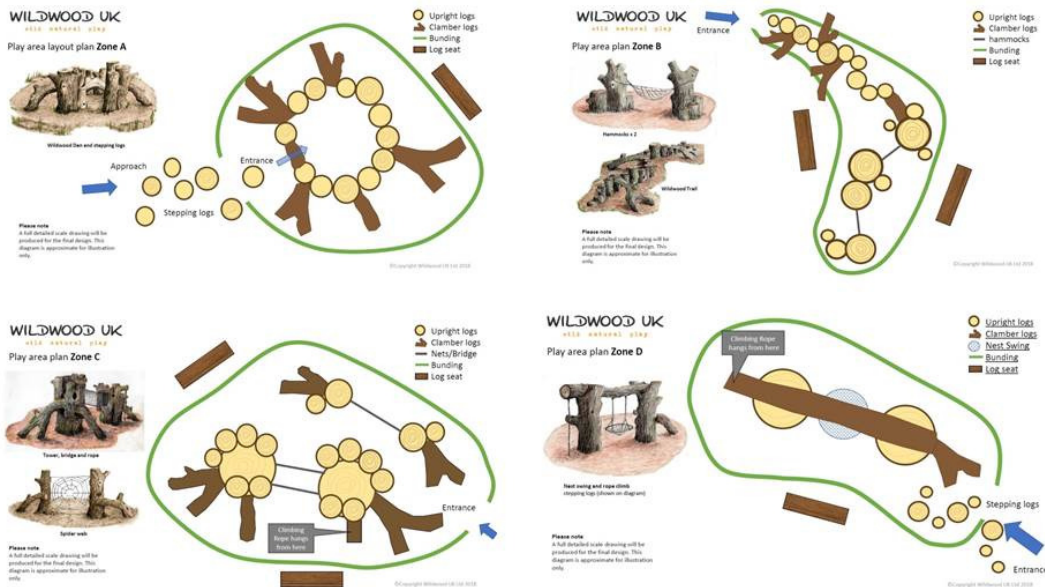


Option 2: Scaled back version at Location A, near the station car park: a smaller area with fewer play features



Option 3: Original design to be spread over 4 ‘Location B’ sites across the Parish Council’s existing Nature Trail on the Common

How could it look?



Original Design



Design preferences

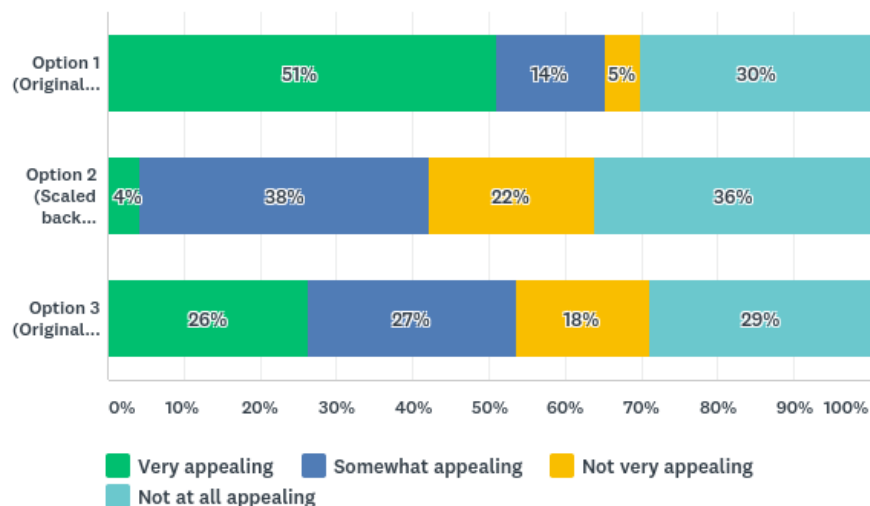
Two thirds (65%) of respondents found Option 1 designs appealing (Original designs at Location A: near car park), with a **half (51%) finding them very appealing (51%)**

Two fifths (42%) of respondents found Option 2 designs appealing (Scaled back version at Location A: near car park), with only **4% saying very appealing**

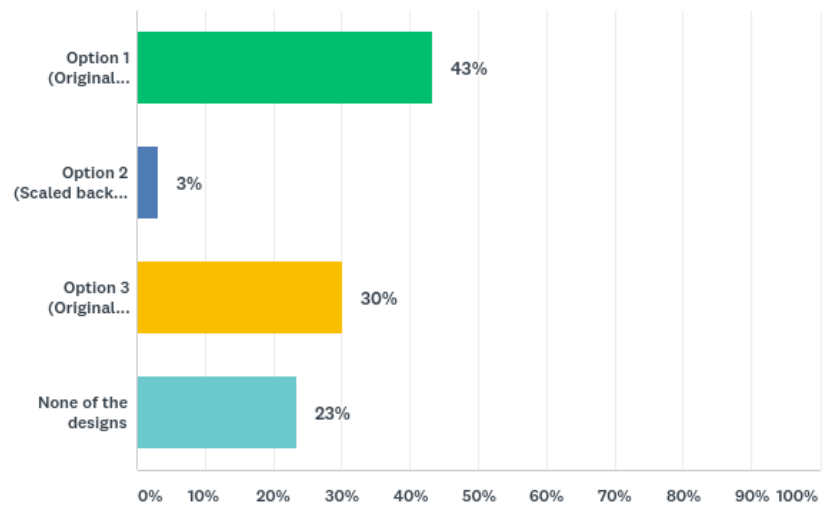
Just over half (53%) of respondents found Option 3 designs appealing (Original designs spread over Location B sites: Parish Council Nature trail), with a **quarter (26%) saying very appealing**

Option 1 (Original designs at Location A: near car park) was chosen as the **preferred design** by **43%** of respondents, whilst **Option 3** (Original designs spread over Location B sites: Parish Council Nature trail) achieved **30%** of the votes. However, **approaching a quarter (23%)** stated 'none on the designs' were a preference.

Q3 How appealing do you find the DESIGNS for the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common (see pictures above)?



Q4 Which design is your preference?



Respondent feedback

Designs in keeping with Common - 11 mentions

"I think they're excellent, well thought out and very much in keeping with the area"

"The natural element is good"

"This is very in-keeping with the natural theme"

Concerns - wildlife disruption and lack of provision for young children

"I'm concerned that the flooring around the facilities will disrupt the wildlife, including slow worms, that live and breed there"

"I have concerns that the 'Spiders Web' could possibly trap the deer and perhaps the badgers"

"Where are the activities for toddlers? There is only 1 swing"

"None of the designs appear to cater for very young children who need safe swings and other suitable equipment"

Option 1: The original design at Location A site, near the station car park

"Option 1 provides a good variety of play opportunities"

"The original objective was to have a children's play area. Option 1 is the only option that meets that need. A variety of play equipment with plenty of room for the children of variety of ages to use it all, and all in one place"

"This is the most suitable for younger children who would be the ones to make most use of the area at all times during the day"

"They look amazing and great fun"

"It needs to offer adventure, fun and challenge which option 1 offers"

"In reality, this facility will be used by younger children (age range 2 to 8). Tired parents and small children won't want to be traversing the Common between lots of sites. Also, children will become bored if there's only one thing to play on at each site"

"I like the variety which will appeal to different ages and encourage children to go from one skill to another. If I, as a grumpy old woman, do not want to be surrounded by noisy lively children, I can avoid that bit of the Common without losing delight in walking around the Common"

Option 2: Scaled back version at Location A site, near the station car park: a smaller area with fewer play features compared to Option 1

Praise

"Fantastic opportunity to create a 'walk and play' facility across the Common. This will expose a lot of families to the local natural amenities who perhaps wouldn't otherwise access it"

"Spreading the sites across the Common will mean the structures won't be so obvious and can get lost within the trees etc."

Concerns

"Option 2 seems a bit small if there are lots of kids at the same time"

"I don't like the scaled back version as it doesn't offer much"

"Option 2 would be satisfactory, but it seems a wasted opportunity if we do not utilise the area to the fullest"

"There is zero point in doing anything half-measure"

Option 3: Original design to be spread over 4 'Location B' sites across the Parish Council's existing Nature Trail on the Common

"Enhancing the Nature Trail is the best solution"

"The sense of adventure created by the third option would be magical for children and the fact the site is scattered would both encourage exercise and exploring to reach each section and make the area less distinct or conspicuous to those who may be less keen on such development. The design of the equipment itself is tactile and weathers in well, not detracting at all from the woodland context"

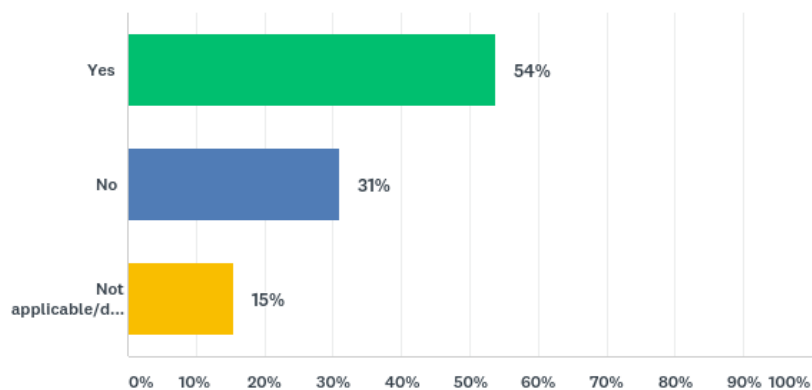
Concern

"Option 3 is disparate"

Pedestrian crossing point safety

Just over half of respondents (54%) felt that the inclusion of a **pedestrian crossing point** (across the station road), would mean that they would be able to **get to the Wonder Wood safely**

Q5 With the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing point (across the station road), do you feel you would be able to get to the Wonder Wood safely at Location A (near the station car park)?



Respondent feedback

SUPPORT

Commuter and playground times don't align – 2 mentions

"This road is busiest very early on weekday morning and again early evening, as commuters use the car park. These will not be the most popular times for use of the play area."

Will improve safety – 1 mention

"I think this will greatly improve safety"

CONCERNS

Safety concerns – 16 mentions

"Cars come in and out of the station car park at sometimes quite alarming speeds. Would they even respect a crossing there?"

Blind spot – 4 mentions

"You need to address that there is a blind spot on the station car park approach road"

"There is a dangerous bend on the road that makes it difficult to see anyone crossing until you are almost on them"

SUGGESTIONS

Traffic calming measures – 3 mentions

"A safe crossing will require extensive traffic calming measures too"

"You need to consider traffic calming, a raised crossing platform"

"I use this road every working day and the visibility is not optimum. There is no street lighting either on this section of road. Also, the terrain is not flat, so a zebra crossing is rather pointless as one can not access the other side easily"

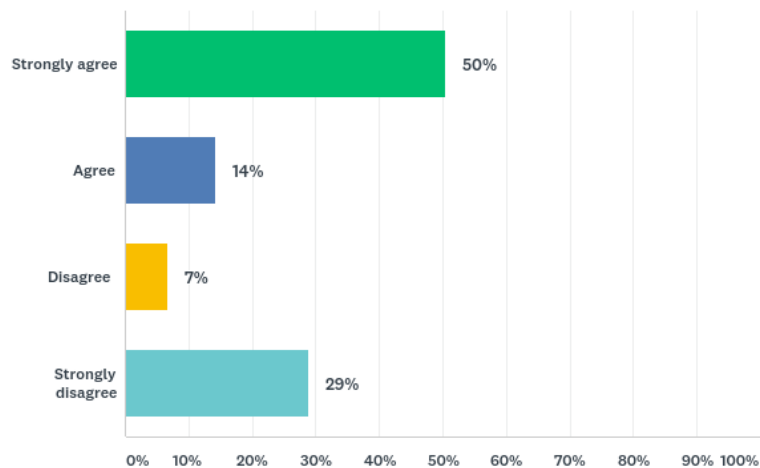
Signage – 2 mentions

"Suitable safety measures of a crossing and notices for car users should ensure that the road is safe for crossing"

Support for the Wonder Wood

Approaching **two thirds (64%)** of respondents were in **agreement with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common**, although there was a **significant minority of respondents who strongly disagreed to it (29%)**

Q6 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common?

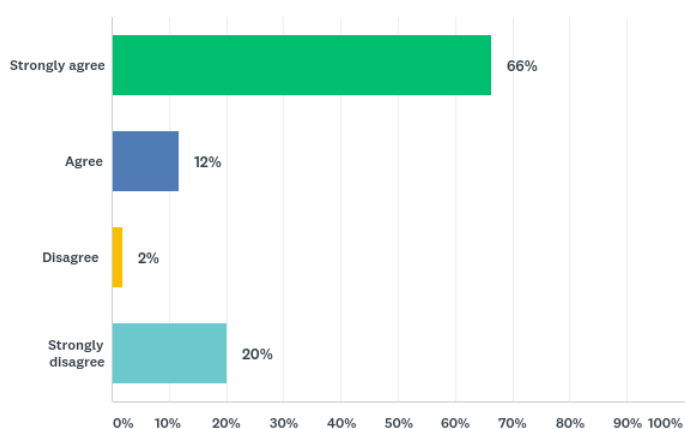


Breakdown of Question 6 results

Respondents with children living at home

The majority of 154 respondents who had children living at home agreed with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood (78%), with 66% strongly agreeing.

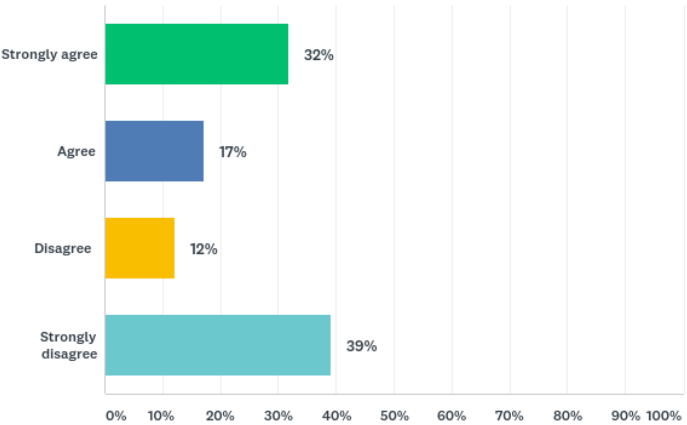
Q6 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common?



Respondents with NO children living at home

The majority of 125 respondents who **did NOT** have children living at home **disagreed** with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood (51%), with 39% strongly agreeing.

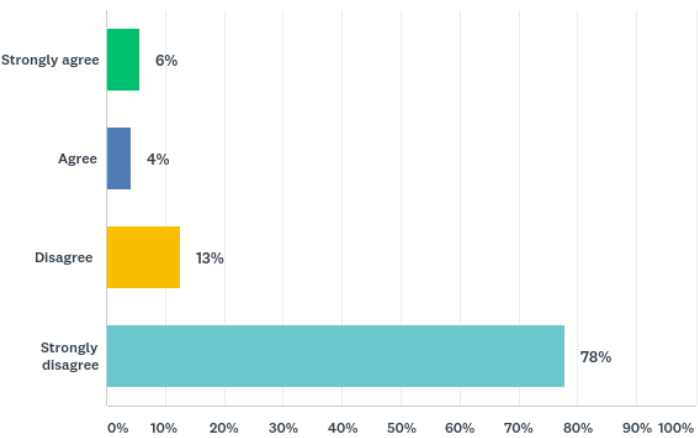
Q6 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common?



Respondents who knew no-one who would use the Wonder Wood (see Q10)

Breaking the results down a little further, from the 74 respondents who said that **no-one they knew would use the Wonder Wood**, the **vast majority disagreed with the Wonder Wood (91%)**, with 78% strongly disagreeing

Q6 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed development of the Wonder Wood on Chorleywood Common?



Respondent feedback

PRO WONDER WOOD

Chorleywood needs it – 55 mentions

“Chorleywood needs a well-equipped children’s play area”

“My children were babies when I first heard about the proposal. They are now 9. It has taken too long to complete but would be good for future generations”

“I strongly agree with the proposed development as if we are to encourage children to go to the Common we need to have something on the Common they particularly enjoy, particularly younger children. The open spaces, wildlife, discussions about habitat can all be part of the journey to and from the Common. A safe, designated play area for children in Chorleywood is desperately needed. What better place to have it than in an area that is so beautiful and can teach the children so much”

“The proposals are great for young children and encourage them to use the Common”

“So sick, bored and tired of the children in this area being at the bottom of the priority list. Isn’t it about time we invest in the future generations? We have three primary schools in this area yet the least amount of play facilities/areas for young people in the whole of Three Rivers”

“It is long overdue. The Common should be for everyone and we have a golf course for older people, cricket club for adults and older children, plenty of paths for runners, dog walkers, but very little for young children. I think it will be a great asset to the village”

“The Common is very beautiful, but it would be more usable and open to the local children if the Wonder Wood was built. The scheme looks to be sustainable and not a load of plastic rubbish or things that require lots of maintenance”

“We must move with the times. I understand that some people are resistant to change”

“We must move with the times. I understand that some people are resistant to change. but we need to be all encompassing, offering plenty for all age groups. This helps parents with young children and grandparents who are often babysitting”

“Kids of all ages need to play together in a play area like this”

“More children in Chorleywood means more play space is needed”

“Chorleywood would benefit from having a centrally located playground. It would not diminish the beauty of the Common in any way and it would be an enhancement to the Community”

“The small climbing additions to the Common have proved very popular. Also the carvings. They have proved that by harnessing what the Common already offers and improving on it we can make the space even more enjoyable for everyone”

“Anything that gets young people out and about is a good thing in a time when society is concerned with obesity and mental health of children”

“The children deserve a good playground within walking distance of Lower Road. The anti-children sentiment during the discussions over the last 15-20 years has been disgusting”

"As a disabled father, manoeuvring around the Common is exceptionally difficult. I like Option A as it provides a means in which I can take my children to play safely with enough variance to keep them occupied"

"I find it really regretful that this funding has been available for almost a decade and not yet used to provide the community amenity it is meant for"

"The Edwardian CHorleywoodian had rides, wooden swing boats etc. along that bit of the Common. People used to come out on the train to them. Donkey rides too I think. We should all wear boaters and long skirts during the Summer and make our fortunes selling ice creams"

AGAINST WONDER WOOD

Leave Common alone – 30 mentions

"The Common is not a suitable site. Chorleywood needs a playground that is in a safe area with parking by the site, that can be used all year round on an all-weather surface"

"Leave the Common to nature. There is already a playground in Chorleywood"

"The Common is fantastic as it is. I love the wood carvings, but my children have had endless fun creating their own games without the restriction of a play area"

"Chorleywood Common is Common Land protected from development by the Commons Act 2006. This should be adhered to"

"The stewardship of common land is for future generations not yet born. Ugly and unnecessary vanity projects like this should be resisted and the taxpayer earned money spent where it is actually needed"

Yes, to play space, but not on Common – 10 mentions

"I think it is a great idea. You just need to find the right location"

"I am not against the provision of a new play area for the village's children at all – in fact I support it. But not on Chorleywood Common"

Chorleywood House site would be better – 9 mentions

"Put the children's playground in Chorleywood House. We need to think of the children and save the natural environment for them and future generations"

"Our family would use new playground, and we would love it, if built in an appropriate place, like Chorleywood House Estate"

"The locations are wrong and should be on the other side of the road i.e. near Chorleywood House, where it is safer and does not spoil the Common"

Play space is not needed – 9 mentions

"There is absolutely no need for a playground. The whole Common is a playground. Do yourselves and your children a favour by getting them in touch with nature – take them onto the Common and climb trees with them and play hide and seek"

"It's not needed. It's not going to be used by many people and there are far better things to do with public money"

"Not needed. We are very lucky in Chorleywood to have plenty of play areas and many of the properties have large gardens"

Ecology concerns – 7 mentions

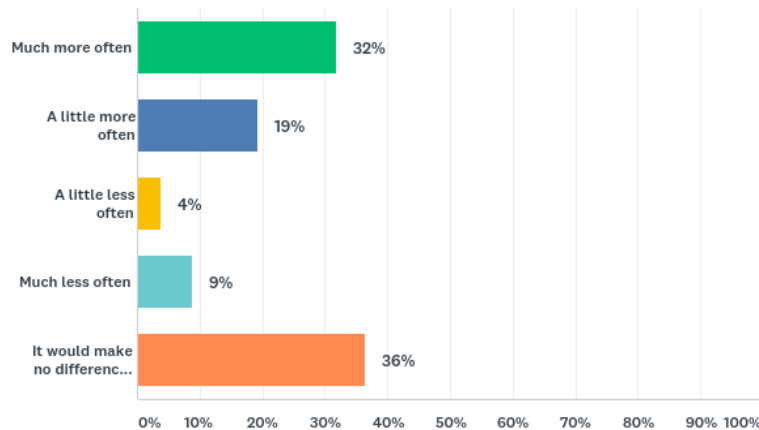
"I don't think the slow work issue has been adequately addressed"

"It is on a single site of wildlife value and would mean destroying the site"

Wonder Wood Pull to Chorleywood Common

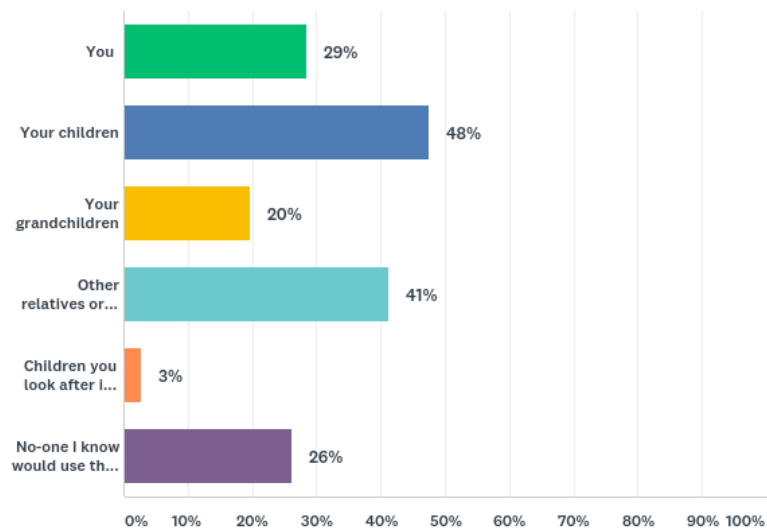
Just over half (51%) of respondents said that the inclusion of the Wonder Wood would encourage them to visit Chorleywood Common more often (with 32% saying much more)

Q9 Would the inclusion of the Wonder Wood encourage you to visit Chorleywood Common...?



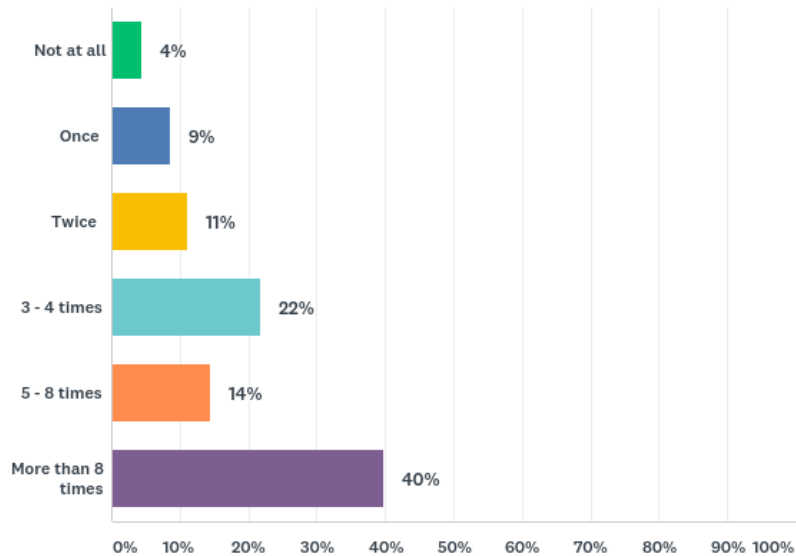
Profile of potential Wonder Wood Users

Q10 Who, that you know, would potentially use the Wonder Wood (tick all that apply)?

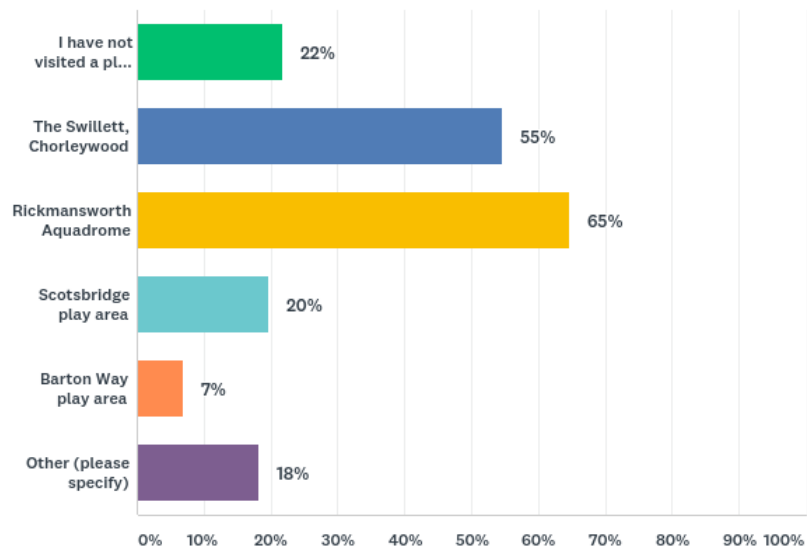


PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

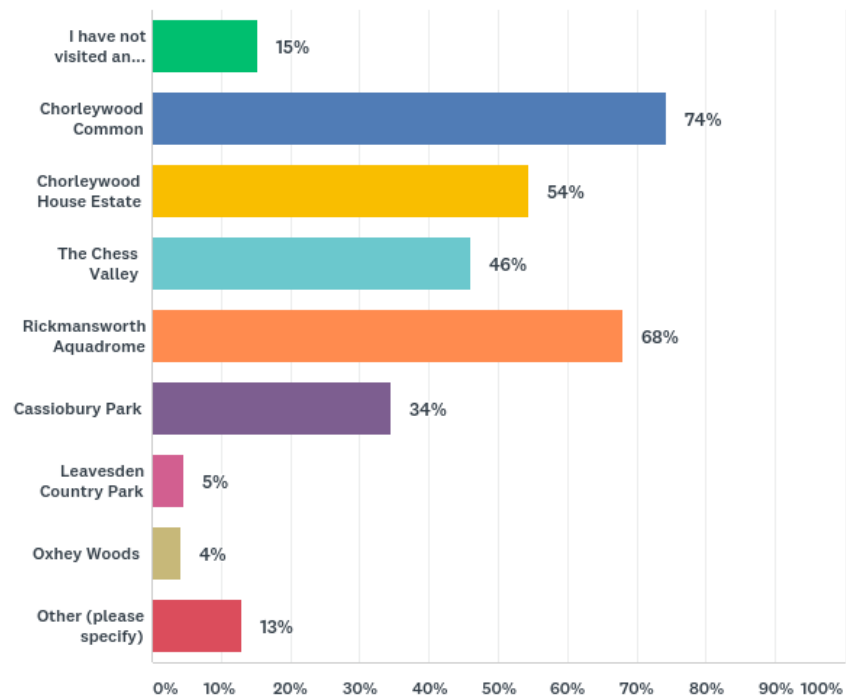
Q8 In the last month, how often have you visited Chorleywood Common?



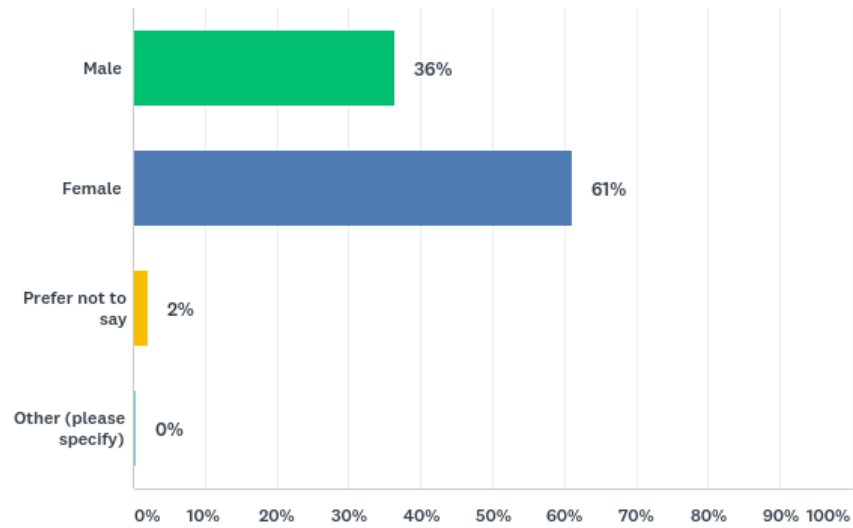
Q11 Which local play spaces have you visited in the last 12 months (tick all that apply)?



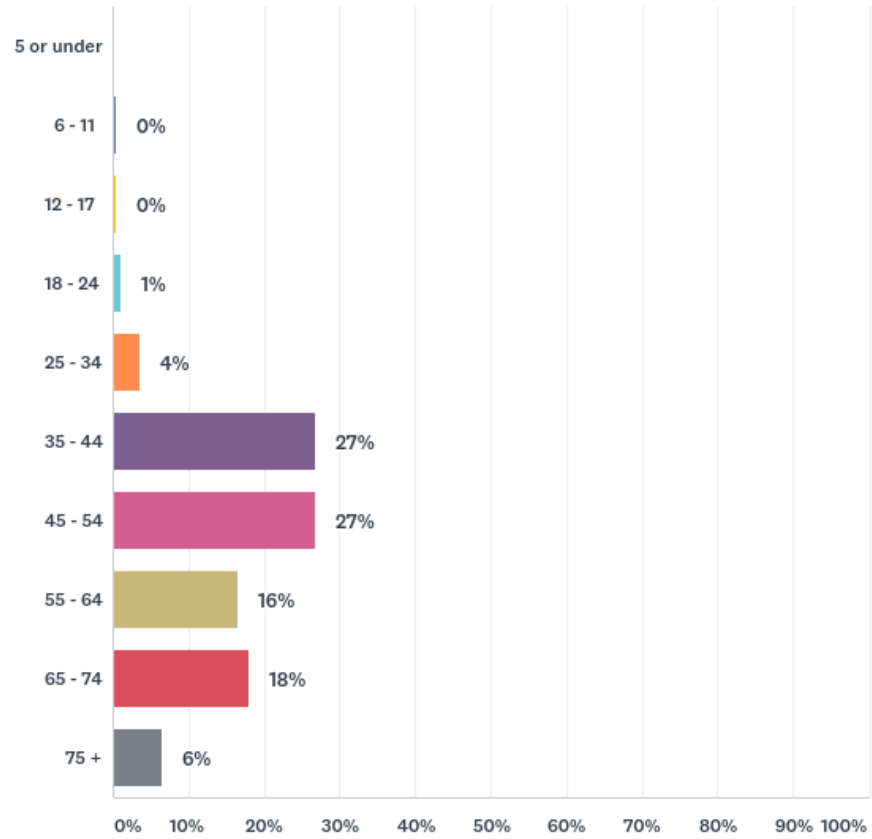
Q12 Which of the following outdoor spaces have you visited with children in the last 12 months (tick all that apply)?



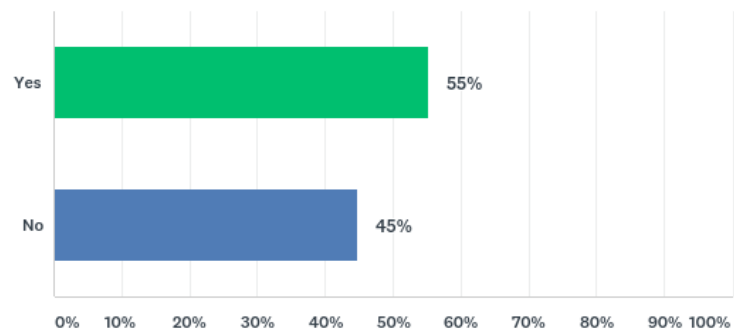
Q13 Are you, or do you identify as



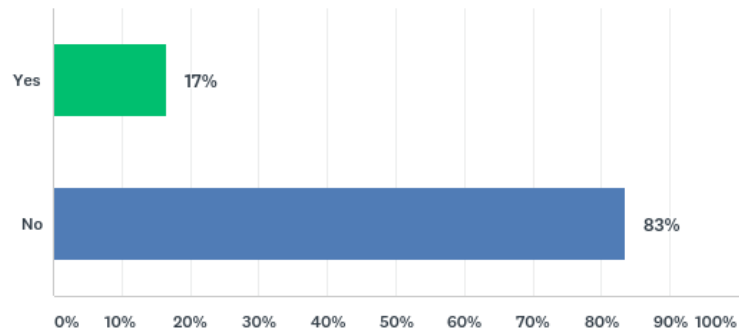
Q14 What is your age?



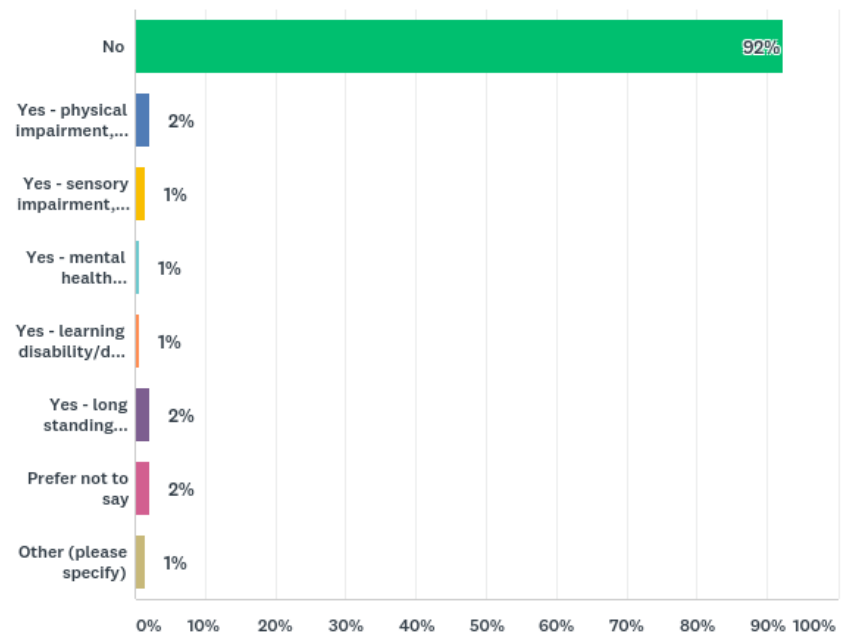
Q15 Do you have children under 18 living in your house?



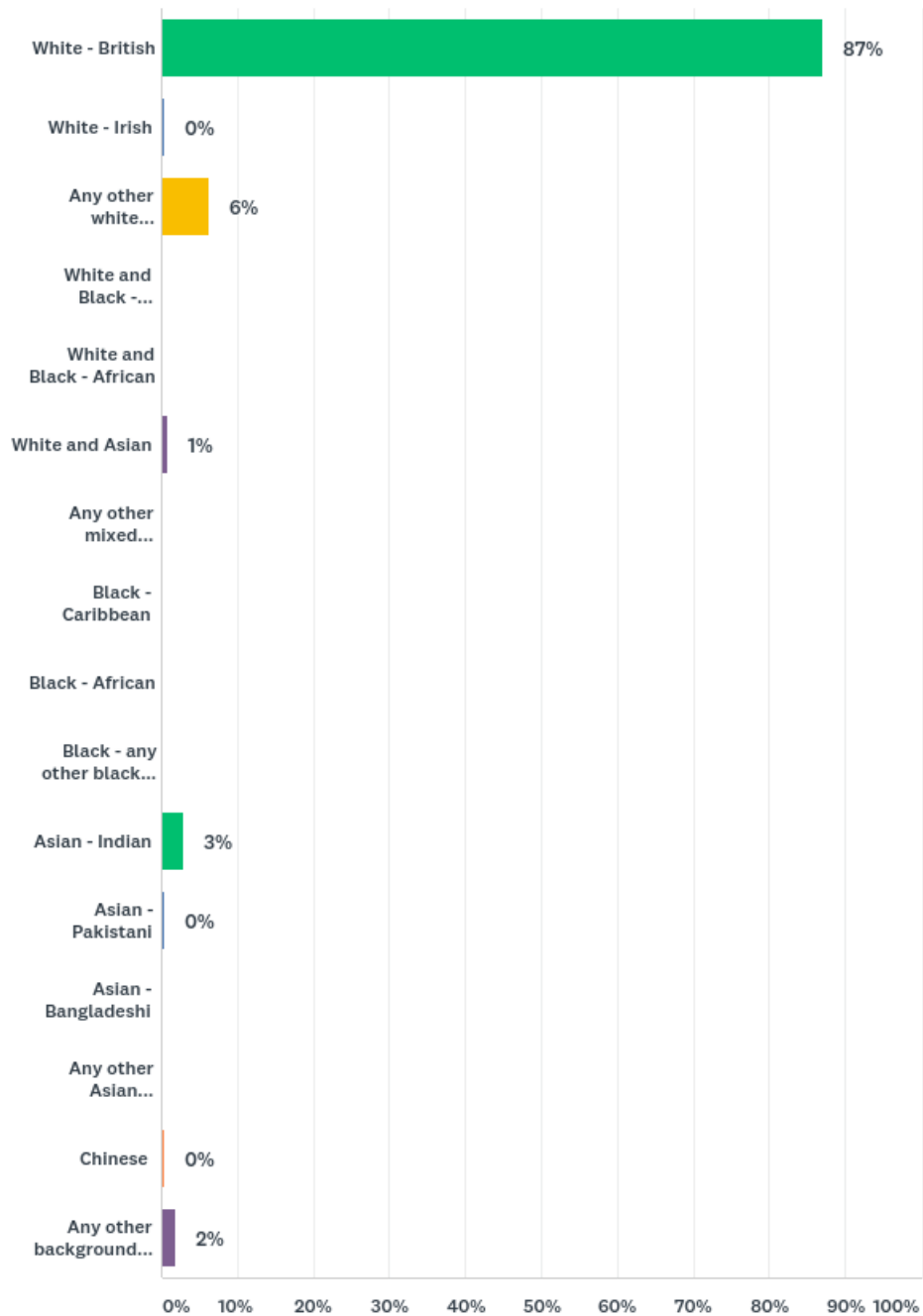
Q16 Do you regularly (at least once a week) care for children that are not your own?



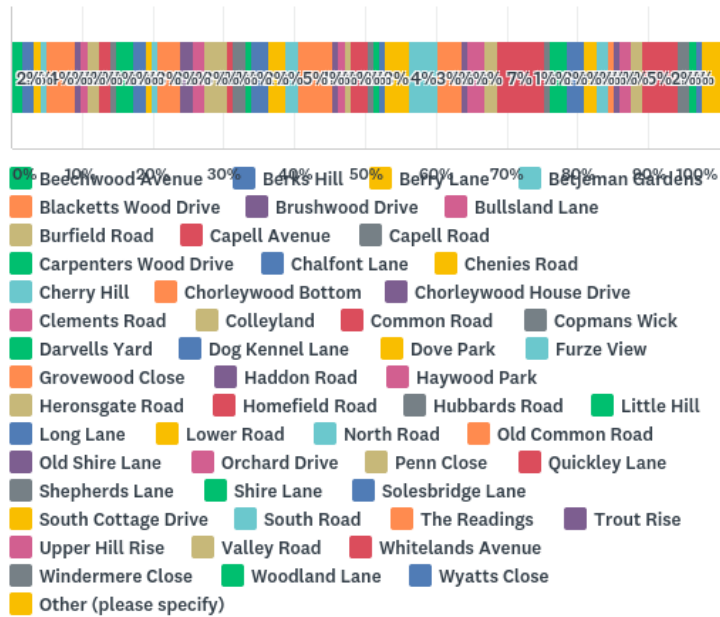
Q17 Do you consider yourself to have a disability (tick all that apply)?



Q18 To which group do you consider you belong?



Q19 Please state which road you live on in Chorleywood



FOCUS GROUP 5TH JULY 2018

Topline benefits and concerns

Not against play area but **against site 15a** for various reasons

- Aware that there are split views but agree that additional play facilities are needed

"I'm not against play facilities. I am against site 15a. Safety, accessibility, how many people will use it. I think there are much better locations which have been dismissed in the past. And I'm not necessarily against play facilities on the Common itself. I think it's a hell of a lot of money for not many people"

"The Common is already a playground"

Feel that **site 15A** is the **right location** and the Common is the best place for this.

- Ability to be able to walk to the locations – also happy with the location

"This is the only site and the right site to use"

"I support something to be on the Common, in terms of having something to walk to"

Like the **equipment** – feel it **is in keeping** with the Common

"I am wholly in agreement with the type of equipment proposed; its scale and its nature and materials are clearly very sympathetically considered and represent a lot of change to TRDC's previous approach which is clearly very welcome. And the opportunities that it creates for children"

LOCATION A

Conservation

Animals

- **Slow worms** present at the site – **concern around their protection**
 - Concerns that the habitat of the grassland will be removed for the slow worms
 - Increase the distance between the railway fence line and the boundary of the play zones for the slow worms
 - Can the experts be clear about where the slow worms are living exactly within site 15a?
 - Will the slow worms be moved and placed elsewhere? How will they be specifically protected during this process?

Concerns

"I think one of the reasons that site 15A is so heavily populated with slow worms is it's proximity to the railway line, because being a lizard, being cold blooded, they require heat to get their body temperature up. They go and bask on the banks of the railway and then they hunt in the trees there"

"The mitigation measures proposed services proposed will destroy that population [slow worms]. This may be acceptable in terms of planning regulations, but it is not acceptable to us on the ground and especially in a local nature reserve. Preservation of this protected species and its habitat should be the aim"

"The area of grassland that exists within that yellow area [see page 5] ...it's what's called unimproved grassland, which the report draws attention to in coming to its conclusion that it is of no significant ecological value, but I said those words were carefully chosen. What it does represent the habitat for the slow worms.... The aim should be to protect that habitat from being destroyed"

Response to concerns

"Is it worth, is it possible to get the experts to look at exactly where the slow worms are because from my experience of lizards, they won't like grassland in woods because it's shaded?"

"I'm surprised they are appearing in woodland. I do think there's something about managing the boundary between the railway and the play area, if you were to use 15A. Your current plans don't separate the railway enough from the play area"

"We do say that these will be protected during the process, so if we're asking them about their habitat, we can also ask, as they they're protected – how can we make sure they are. Once we clear that up, that will hopefully get rid of that point"

- **Other visiting animals' concerns**

- **Badgers, foxes, deer** – filmed by a local resident
- **Concerns** that there are **bats at the site**

Concerns

"We do see the same badgers. The foxes and slow worms are definitely in residence up there and I'm pretty sure there are bats roosting in the trees there. I did get some pick up from a bat listening device"

"I think that at a site that is wild, overgrown, lots of trees - it's a unique part of the Common"

Response to concerns

*"I've got all those things [slow worms, deer etc.] in my back garden too. And I've got a big play thing in my back garden and they still come. And I guess we've had reports from people saying it's okay and it won't disrupt slow worms. Are we questioning the experts?" **Answer from fellow attendee: 'Yes'***

Flora and Fauna

- Lots of existing flora and fauna at this site
- Wishes for the **unmanaged nature** of the site to continue
- **Tree removal** concerns

Concerns

"Taking the trees off is not an option"

"It's one of the few areas [on the Common] where it's unmanaged. You're bound to have different species living there because wildlife that couldn't survive in the managed area, could quite easily survive in something that's unmanaged"

Response to concerns

"The ranger walked us round and showed us a large area of the centre of the Common that's unmanaged"

Safety

Traffic concerns

- Concerned about **how people drive in and out of the car park**, particularly during peak commute times

"Installing a play area adjacent to a road, with limited access and limited surveillance, encouraging people to run that risk. The recent car crash in Chorleywood Bottom only serves to emphasise that accidents close to home do happen. Direct access from a car park would be advantageous. It is the District Councillors who would be responsible for assessing this risk"

"We are very concerned about the traffic in the evening rush hour"

- **Traffic calming** needed along the station access road

"I've seen the way cars drive out of there, you're going to have to mitigate somehow, slow the traffic down – road calming measures"

- **Signage** would be needed – coming out of the car park and as you enter the access the road.

"If there's enough signage – potentially in and out of the car park, they're positive additions"

- **Crossing point:** concerns that it is unsafe for people to cross the station access car park road.
- **Tree stumps** laying down along the edge of the site as used elsewhere on the Common would be **useful to prevent children running out**

"I think one thing that would be quite useful, in the same way as you have in other parts of the Common by the Cricket Club and Wildwood dens, where fallen trees have been laid down, stopping someone from running at pace, might be a useful addition"

- **Currently campaigning for traffic calming methods on Chorleywood Bottom** – dangerous area : blind bend(separate issue to the play space)

"It's a blind bend and the pavement disappears on either side of the road. You have to cross on a blind bend when the pavement runs out. Currently cars are allowed to park on this road, which puts cars on a single lane and that's what caused the accident"

- **Railway bridge** – pedestrians crossing concern debate

"The nearest place people park is across the bridge and you do need to consider the safety aspect of coming across the railway bridge"

"That was an existing danger"

"I'm not sure of the legality of that – there's no footpaths"

"There is a subway on the other side"

Safety reassurances

"I'd say with traffic calming measures and the signage, the walking around the area – the natural barriers you have around the area, the scrub there at the moment, I think it is unlikely that you've have a child running into that road at those access points to the area"

"In terms of walking access to this site vs. getting the other sites, you have less busy roads to cross to get to this one. It's a far faster road outside Memorial Hall"

Railway line concerns

- Concern regarding **people throwing rubbish over the fence – engage TfL**

"You need to engage with TfL properly because if you do get youngsters in there at night, you know what the temptation is, a train going past, 'Ooh I wonder what happens if I lobe this over'. And that's why a boundary, trees in between, would make that a lot harder to do"

- **Children accessing the railway line**

- Ensure TfL are properly engaged around the fence line – what height will the fence be?

"We're concerned about people throwing things over onto the railway and creating danger. If you left a boundary of trees there, then that would obviously prevent"

"What size of railway fence will there be?"

ASB

- Has seen **evidence of drug use at site 15A (canisters)**
 - Counter: there is drug use everywhere – the play space won't increase this

"I do see evidence of inhaling little bottles of gas. There is drug use up there, but it hasn't been mentioned [in the report] for 15A"

- **PCSOs will need to be involved**

"I think the PCSOs will just have to go round and remind the older kids that it's not for them"

- **No additional concerns**

"I was walking there the other night and there were hoards of teenagers there the other night and I don't think this would make it any worse. They weren't causing any problems"

"There's a load on Dog Kennel Lane and they're hardly nice to hang out in. If they're going to do it, they're going to do it"

Sight Lines

- No major issues raised regarding sight lines

"There's enough oversight, from a personal perspective, if I was there"

Access

- Need to make it **clear the walking access routes** from other areas of the Parish of Chorleywood
- **Disabled access needs confirming**

"If you were disabled, I don't think it would be an ideal site to access, but having said that it's Chorleywood and there are steep hills everywhere"

"The more accessible pieces of equipment are closer to the access point"

Parking

- **Engage with TfL in potential parking issue on road up to car park** e.g. clamping cars

"There is parking on that access road. At one time, there were people parking right down there because the car park was full. TfL actually clamped down really hard on it. You will have to get TfL to agree to clamp down really hard on it because I hate to say, parents will just park up there"

Maintenance / Refuse

- Concern regarding **ownership of maintenance** and keeping the site clean
- **Reassurance requested that site will be cleaned**, as well as bin emptied (e.g. dog fouling, bottles etc.)

"What would be done about litter bins?"

LOCATION B

Ecology

- **Impact assessment required to ensure that the reasons cited previously by the Parish Council as to why the Wonder Wood could not be built on the site were the Nature Trail now stands, are now no longer an issue**

Discussion flow

"Are the locations they talked about going to have the same issues regarding distances from ponds [for newts]?"

"We were drawing 200 metre circles around every location and being told we couldn't do it within those 200 metres and there are now two Wild Wood dens within those circles, which I'm not going to question, because I think they're brilliant, but it just raises a flag and a question for me"

"Maybe it's the scale of things you can do in those circles"

"[In previous play space investigations], locations were discounted for a number of reasons to do with water and glass and a plethora of other things, many of the locations which now happen to be on the Nature Trail. So, it's just, are we comfortable that all of the reasons cited previously as to why we couldn't do things are now no longer an issue?"

"To me it suggests there's no significant ecological damage about animals that could be affected. On there are proposals, by those that own it, to put installations in certain places. It would unthinkable...that they were unsuitable. It's not really worth pursuing as a likely draw back. However, confirmation would be advisable"

Exploration of Common benefit

"This does encourage people using it to walk round the whole Common and explore the nature around the Common, which is a positive for me"

Safety and parking points

*"The huge advantage here, is that they are in **easy distance of existing car parking** areas and therefore direct access is satisfied here"*

*"There was **heavy objection from the golf club** against anything going on the main body of the Common"*

*"They **cited safety, golf balls hitting children**"*

ASB

"It reduces the chances of people congregating and spreads that risk out"

Community Engagement

- **Smaller items spread out in 4 locations, loses the appeal for groups of children playing together.** Would rather see perhaps 2 locations, with each site having 2 items per location

"The concern for me would be if each of those items only caters to one child at a time, then you have siblings and multiple groups of kids, then you end up causing fights between kids as everyone wants to go on the same bit of kit at the same time. Or would it be better that it was located with one other items, instead of having four separate locations?"

"And just children playing with each other and getting along together and learning social skills, if we become more siloed there is less opportunity for this. I'm not totally against it and I do like the idea of walking around the Common"

- **Does this lose the 'meeting point' aspect** – social interaction (disparate play experience)

"One of the big positives that was talked about before and a lot and I know a lot of the parents have spoken to us about this before is the 'meeting point' side of things. And if you do spread things out completely then you do lose an aspect of that meeting point side, which for new parents, who are potentially new to the area or have been working full time, suddenly emerge into the world – I'm a Mum or Dad at home and I don't know anyone here. It's that opportunity to bump into somebody when you're having a particularly down day and that conversation makes a massive difference"

Questions

- Need a lot more **detail on the third option** – where would they be, what would they include, access points to the locations, considerations of the golf course (health and safety previously cited)
- How about splitting the **equipment between Site 15A and the Nature trail?**

THE PLAY EQUIPMENT

*"The **basket swing** should be close to the car park so that accessibility to it would be most easily accomplished"*

*"I think it's a valid point about the **toddlers....but that said, I would put my toddler in a basket swing**"*

*"There is no provision for a **toddler swing**"*

"I think it would be lovely to have all those things and not scale that back, from a community perspective"

"If you asked the kids and if they're excited by it, then that's great"