

To receive a report on Pillmere Drive Play park and consider any actions and associated expenditure- 12th December 2024

Pillmere Play Park (Pillmere Drive)

This report is to inform Members that the area shown in the diagram below has been in the ownership of Saltash Town Council since the takeover of Pillmere was agreed some years ago. However, Cornwall Council have maintained the area and the play equipment over many years. Cornwall Council have requested that STC take over the responsibility of its land from 1 April 2025.

Cornwall Council have assessed the condition of equipment, most of which (metal Kompan units) are in re-usable condition. The main problem is the rubber safety surfacing is in a poor condition and needs considerable attention. If the Town Council wanted to relocate the main play area for the estate. The main cost would be for the labour and new surfacing. If the Town Council opted for grass matting the surfacing wouldn't be overly expensive. There are a few missing components from these units but are easily replaced should they be relocated.

Here are more detailed notes from Cormac's engineers:

- i. The swing set had new wood posts a couple of years ago, there are two of the five swings missing, but 3 remain....again these are easily replaced if needed.
- ii. The Kompan balance beam is in good condition, would need a new black platform on one end.
- iii. The 3 spinning sticks are in reasonable condition and would be reusable. There are a couple of rope sections that would need renewing on the big Kompan MPU, but these are readily available.
- iv. The metal bow top fencing is all in good condition and can be re-used elsewhere.
- v. The following are in poor condition and are not worth salvaging: -
 - o Wooden climb wall - rotting timbers.
 - o The shelter has suffered a lot of vandalism.

In the meantime, the rubber safety surface has been deemed unfit for further use and the site will need to be closed until works are undertaken.

Cornwall Council are keen to partner with the Town Council assisting with the transition period and by doing so they have asked Members to review the following questions:

- A. **Does Saltash Town Council want to retain the equipment on site?** If so, we can arrange repairs to the surfacing to enable it to be reopened. STC will then inherit the play area usable, but in its current general state.

- B. **Does Saltash Town Council want to relocate the play equipment?** If so we can arrange the disassembling of the play equipment and removal to a STC storage compound. Unwanted equipment would be disposed of. The fencing and surfaces would remain largely in place and the gates would be locked with temporary closure notices displayed. Any significant hazards e.g. holes would be filled with earth. STC would need to store the equipment and obtain its own quotes to reinstall it elsewhere, once the necessary consultations and planning review have been completed. STC would need to determine what it wants done with the current play area and obtain quotes from landscape contractors to implement and dispose of unwanted materials. Cormac can provide quotes for both of these tasks, providing you can set out clearly what it is you want undertaking.

- C. **Does Saltash Town Council want the play equipment removed and disposed of prior to the transfer of the site back to STC?** This would be a shame given the value of some of the units (in financial, recreational and sustainable terms). However, it would be the cheapest and quickest option for us. In doing so it would remove the need to attempt to secure the site after the works and reduce several liability issues. We could then come to an arrangement over how to leave the site e.g. excavation of surfaces, restoring to grass, leaving or removing the railings etc, depending on how much STC are willing to contribute.

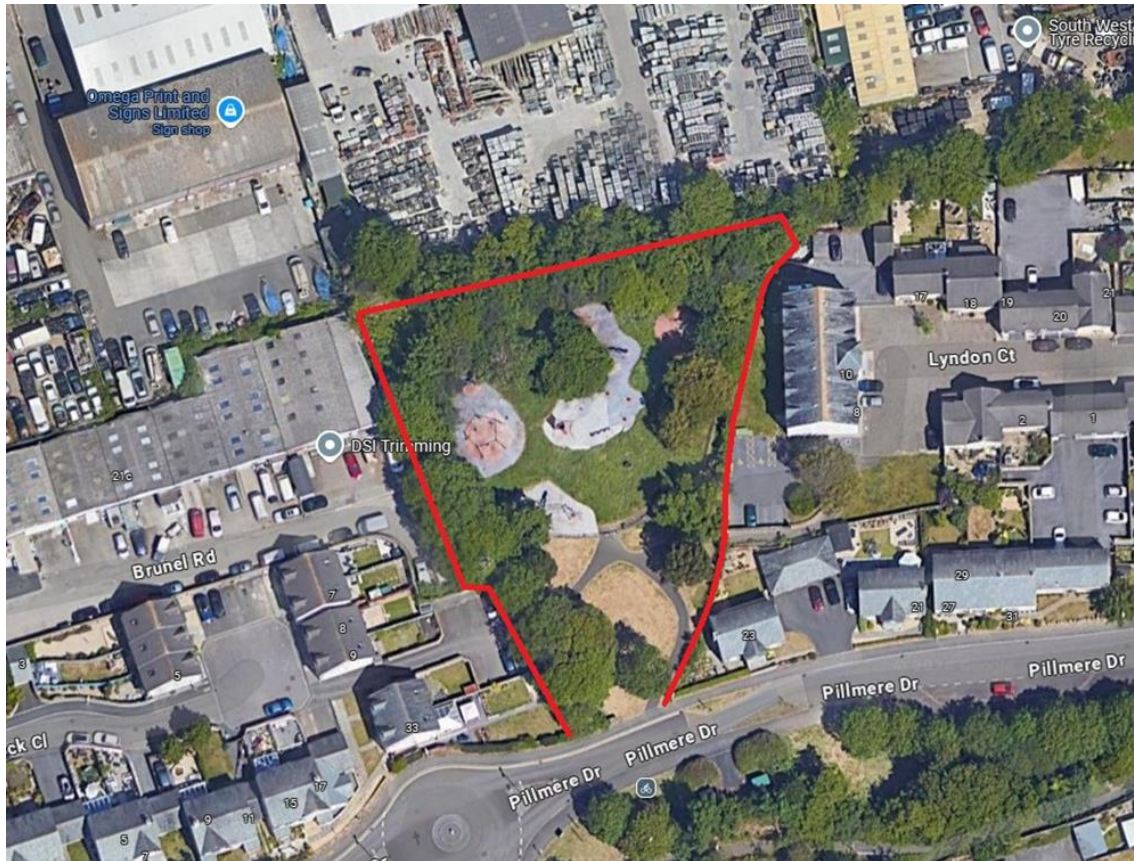
It's quite possible that renting the land out to a private concern could pay for maintenance elsewhere on the Pillmere estate.

Further to the above, the Town Council have maintained and insured Grassmere and Honeysuckle Close (recently refurbished) Play Areas for some time.

Taking over the new area will add to the current Service Delivery workload for the Pillmere estate. This will also include the management of the trees, surrounding grass and play park equipment.

The site is approximately 3,432 m² = 0.8481 acres.

To put this into perspective, a building developer will be able to efficiently fit a minimum of 18 houses within the confines of a single acre of land.





There is a variety of graffitied and broken play equipment, with missing swings, dangerous flooring with holes in the matting, trip hazards around the site, discarded shopping trolleys, rubbish, needles and other items discarded around the park.

Not a great or safe environment for anyone to use.



We have approached the Cornwall Council Community Safety Officer regarding the Anti-Social Behaviour from youths in this area. They are happy to pass this information to the local ASB caseworker who can hopefully do some targeted patrols in the area, and possibly some youth outreach.

Due to the current issues as mentioned above, we have also approached the Pillmere Community Association (PCA) to ask for their suggestions or ideas to what the area could be used for or changed to. Their thoughts are as follows (no estimates of cost for this report):

- A bike/pump track. (BMX Style)
- All weather court/basketball hoops/goals.
- A refresh of the park equipment with some outdoor gym equipment.
- Install some lighting around this area is necessary. So general theme of keeping it as a recreational area of some sort.

Below are two suggestions from the Service Delivery Dept for consideration:

1. Create Sculpture Gardens, which offers an immersive experience, combining art and nature to engage with the public. Part of this would be a walking trail with educational signage, seating, planters with a display of a variety of plants and flowers, plus some outdoor interactive items. This would fit in with the current site due to the trees and pathways which would also be easy access for disabilities.

Additional lighting would be essential for this type of park/garden. This would take some time and organising to create, however when complete would be an attraction to the area for public to visit.

2. Remove the play equipment, matting and railings to create an open green space for dog walkers to use. This would help reduce dog mess around the estate and pathways. Extra dog waste bins and signs can be fitted in this area. The cost of a bin and installation would be approximately **£450** each. The site would need to be made safe for dogs and owners to walk through. A couple of benches could be added around the site.

This would take less time and funds to create, along with being easier to maintain with grass cutting, trees and hedges. Some thicker hedging can be planted around the perimeter fencing to discourage fly tipping. Again, some extra lighting would be required.

Estimated cost to create this open space would be in the range of **£10,000 to £15,000**.

Any large change or upgrade to this area will require additional funding outside of the current Town Council budgets. Funding options would need to be considered for such a project. Quotes for this project would need to be obtained to provide an idea of the level of funding required.

Finance:

Budget Code: EMF 6571 Saltash Recreation Areas

Budget Availability: £53,043

Committed spend: £10,000 (Saltash Waterside Improvements Project)

Next Steps:

Members are asked to consider the information provided in the report and confirm how the committee wish to proceed.

End of Report
Service Delivery Manager