

Design and Access statement for a replacement skatepark in Bassett's Close, Wellingborough



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1. Introduction

Good urban design aims to deliver attractive, pleasant, useful and above all, liveable urban environments that support and enhance local communities. This proposal is for the construction of a replacement concrete skatepark in Bassett's Close Park, off Westfield Road, Wellingborough, NN8 4LR to replace the existing skatepark in the south of the Park for the local community. This will comprise of a well-Badesigned, free formed, insitu spray concrete skatepark with steel edge protection and grass bunding. The area currently offers community play facilities, outdoor gym, the existing skatepark, a bandstand and open spaces.

This report will explain how the skatepark development will fit in with the surrounding land and existing facilities, as well as the rationale behind the design process and the public engagement programme undertaken by Wellingborough Council. It also addresses some of the concerns raised by local residents and schools.

The skatepark will replace the existing concrete precast skatepark that is located in the same park behind the bandstand on the south side of the park by St Barnabas primary school. The replacement skatepark is part of the redevelopment of Bassett's Close Park, which has recently had the play area updated.

Consideration has been given to the location of the skatepark so it does not encroach on the main open area of the park, is closer to the other recreational facilities and will be further away from the primary school and housing. The proposed new location is as far away from the nearest residential property as possible and will be sympathetically landscaped with grass bunds, which will help to reduce the visual impact of the skatepark.

2. Design Process

2.1 Contextual Setting

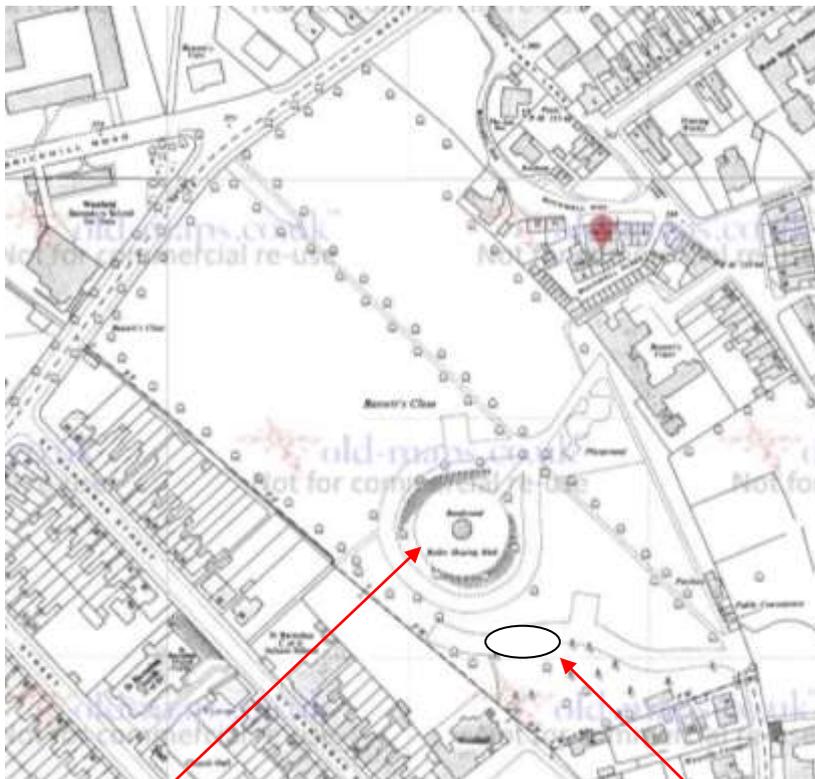
The proposed site for the skatepark is in Bassett's Close Park and the recreation ground covers an area of approximately 39,850m². The new skatepark will occupy 342m² of this, compared to the existing skatepark occupying approximately 240m² of the park. This is a relatively small footprint when taken as a percentage of the whole space of the park. It is viewed as being an appropriate size and will have a low-level impact on anyone else using the park for other purposes. The existing skatepark will be removed and the area made good.

The Park has walking routes within it and links to St Barnabas Street to the south-west, West Villa Road to the east and Westfield Road to the north. The site is located within the Wellingborough urban area and the Park includes mature trees. The Park is identified as Local Green Space in the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough. The Park is located to the west and outside of the Wellingborough Town Centre Conservation Area.

The Park currently has toddler and junior play facilities, an outdoor gym and the existing skatepark. It is adjoined by open land, a network of paths and a bandstand. Residential properties and two schools are located around the park.

There is strong local demand for a new improved skatepark, which will replace a small skatepark on the south side of the park. The project has complete backing from the Borough Council of Wellingborough and many of the local community.

Interestingly the park has a long history of wheeled sports. The 1966-67 OS map shows a roller-skating rink around the bandstand.



Old roller-skating rink

Location of existing skatepark

2.2 Skatepark Location

The Park was selected due to the existence of a skatepark within the park, proximity to existing play facilities and good access from the local community as well as being close to bus links with the surrounding villages. It is also as far away from residential properties as possible and maintains the layout of the recreation area. The new skatepark will complement these facilities and will have a low impact on the rest of the site. It is already well used by the local skating community and by the general public for various play, leisure, and sporting activities. The area has always been used for recreational purposes and wheeled sports in the Park date back to the 1960's. The skatepark looked at relocating the skatepark to other parks but felt that Bassets Park offered an ideal setting for the replacement skatepark. The location of the skatepark within the open space has been selected on the following criteria:

- There is better natural surveillance from other park users and dog walkers than the current location.
- The new location will be more visible from Westfield Road for better surveillance.
- The park is surrounded by fencing on Westfield Road and a number of mature trees are established along the fence line, screening the view from Freeman's Endowed Church of England School.
- Compliments and is nearer to the existing play facilities, keeping all facilities closer together. This is beneficial if a parent has one child at one space and can supervise another child at the skatepark.
- Can be integrated into the existing landscape through the use of mounding and ground modelling – removes the underneath spaces for people to hide under that the existing skatepark suffers from.
- Avoids impacting on the main play area.
- Further away from residential housing than the existing facility and trees and hedging provide a robust screen from the houses on St Barnabas Street with no ground floor windows looking out onto the park.
- Sufficiently located away from the trees to ensure no damage to the trees or root damage to the skatepark.
- Will be quieter in use as the ramps will be solid and bunded. Tree lines may also help to absorb noise.
- Improved design and location will help to reduce anti-social behaviour, particularly to the primary school and residential houses by the existing skatepark.
- Improved design and location will encourage children and adults to participate in the sport. There will be ramps for beginners as well as features for more experienced riders.
- Allows for any future development as access to other areas will not be restricted by the new development.

2.3 Social Impact

Wheeled sports facilities are proving a valuable environment for young people to develop in a higher risk (but controlled) environment. Psychologists and educational thinkers agree that young people need risk to fully develop their potential – a factor denied through risk adverse design and standard playground equipment. The sport encompasses risks where confidence, skill and hazard are calculated before commitment to a move. In towns without skateparks, these skills are often practised in the street where the consequences of a mistake can be life changing.

Participation in community sports encourages and develops activity and fitness. The physical exertion involved in wheeled sports is often under-estimated by observers and does generate a high level of physical fitness.

The installation of a well designed and constructed skatepark will offer an inclusive facility to a multi-generational community. Mental health and lack of physical wellbeing in children and young adults has become a serious issue. A skatepark offers a safe environment for users to learn not only physical skills, but an opportunity to develop life-long friendships, communication skills, and social skills. Traditional and competitive team sports do not suit all people and many give up being physically active as they cannot find an alternative place where their interests are accepted.

Communities sometimes believe that the construction of a skatepark will bring a rapid increase in anti-social behaviour from young people. In fact, many studies have shown that well designed skateparks and skatepark users are not associated with anti-social behaviour. The skatepark provides an environment where users can develop social and physical skills and where respect of the facility and other users is very apparent. A skatepark offers an environment for both young children to adults to learn from each other in a way that few other sporting facilities do. A visit to a well adopted skatepark with a good user group shows the best environment for youth development. Skateboarding has been proved to offer young people an alternative to gang culture and teaches respect, social, physical and communication skills.

Community involvement and community adoption of the project is vital to the success of the skatepark. This process ensures that the group are involved in the whole process, from design consultation, throughout the construction phase, and to ongoing maintenance and improvements. If consistently consulted and involved, users will take pride in the park that they have helped create. This also helps to ensure that the park is looked after by this group and that anti-social behaviour is not tolerated at the park.

The design of the skatepark and the surrounding landscape is critical in helping to deter anti-social behaviour. The skatepark will be set back from the main path accessing and play area, but easily accessible to users, visitors, and emergency services.

2.4 Benefit to the community

The construction of the skatepark will benefit the local community, local shops and other amenities. It will also ensure that the whole park is well used and will become a focal point for a diverse, multi-generational and vibrant local community. This will have a positive impact on not only the local community, but also on real estate, as the area will offer a varied multi-sport/play area that will appeal to a wide cross section of the community.

The new skatepark will also give another option for people to access a new leisure facility, which will improve both physical and mental health. The new skatepark will be located in the vicinity of two local schools and the children will be able to use the facilities both before and after school. All facilities that give the opportunity to increase time spent outdoors and to improve the physical activity of children has to be welcomed. Obesity and inactivity in children is currently a crisis we are facing. The current Covid pandemic has shown the importance of being physically fit and active.

A study by the British Heart Foundation has shown that by age 11, children are doing more than an hour less of physical activity a week than at age 6. This study found that 61 per cent of children in Year 1 did at least an hour of vigorous activity per day, but by Year 6, only 41 per cent achieved the target. The drop was particularly steep for girls, who fell from 54 to 28 per cent by the time they finished primary school. The report went on to recommend that these numbers prove that more

needs be done to ensure children keep active as they approach adolescence. Developing early intervention strategies that help children retain activity levels could include after school physical activity opportunities, focusing on participation and enjoyment in sports – and a greater emphasis on promoting weekend activities. The 2019/20 National Child Measurement Programme shows that 10 per cent of 4-5 year olds in England were obese – doubling to 23.6 per cent for boys 10-11 year olds. While 90 per cent of children who are obese at age 3 remain overweight or obese in adolescence.

There is an increasing awareness that planning and public spaces are dominated by men and that we need to ensure that all spaces are designed to meet everyone's needs. Girls feel that parks are unsafe and offer nothing for them due to their design. Research has shown that from the age of 8 the imbalance between boys and girls was 80/20 and that teenage girls felt ten times more unsafe in public spaces. The current facility exasperates this problem as it is hidden away, unwelcoming, attracts ASB and has no seating area.

2.5 Consultation Process

The Council undertook a consultation process with input from the Skatepark Project (a group helping improve skating facilities in England through improved design and location). The consultation process took place with the local community and with the local skaters in 2019 where the local public was asked to send in their views on revamping their skatepark. A meeting was held to discuss potential design ideas at St Barnabas School in April 2019. From this meeting it was established there were a number of issues with the current location of the skatepark and need to explore the idea of relocating the skatepark within the park arose.

A competitive tender process was carried out by Borough Council of Wellingborough in 2020. After the award of contract, the user group were then involved in further consultation on the design development during Zoom consultations, which was attend by over 20 people, including local residents. Further meetings were held and a final design agreed on. The consultation process also removed the graffiti wall, which was originally requested in the 2019 consultation, as the skatepark users felt it would detract from the aesthetics of the site, particularly to non-skaters.

There is always anxiety around the construction of a new skatepark by the local community. Fears of anti-social behaviour, drugs and noise usually being the top of the agenda. A noise report has been prepared to understand the impact of moving the skatepark to the new location and also the improvement in reducing noise through the construction method of solid ramps set into bunds. Without doubt, moving the skatepark from the existing location will dramatically improve the residents and the primary school's experience in St Barnabas Street.

2.6 The existing skatepark

The existing skatepark, whilst made out of concrete, suffers from a number of issues:

- Lacks flow and is a poorly designed space.
- Suffers from the sloping topography of the site – it was added to the existing infrastructure.
- No street or plaza features so doesn't appeal to all wheeled sports users.
- Not aesthetically appealing to users and visitors and will particularly not appeal to new or younger users.
- Features are not suitable for new or younger users.
- Installed very close to the St Barnabas Primary School and local residents.
- Attracts anti-social behaviour through poor design and location.

- Is tucked away and lacks good sight lines across the park and poor secondary supervision from other park users.
- The open back of ramps allows people to hide under the ramps and cause a nuisance.
- Noisy for locally residents as located in close proximity to residential housing.
- Intimidating for many users and visitors.
- Vandalism of neighbouring resident's property.
- No seating for users or supervising parents.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) already exists within the park and this has included graffitiing the property of a local resident and intimidating behaviour from people near the skatepark. Whilst it is hard to say if all the ASB comes from users or other users of the park generally, it is generally felt by the community that the ASB comes from non-skaters, but happens at the skatepark as it is tucked away in the south of the Park. The new skatepark will help to mitigate some of these issues as the park will:

- Be in a more prominent location.
- Have no areas for people to hide under or behind.
- Be inviting and encourage new users to participate and will therefore change the demographic of the users with younger, newer users.
- Better supervision from the play facilities and outdoor gym.
- Better supervision from the main path through the park from Westfield Road to West Villa Road.

2.7 The Design Brief

The design brief was to provide a modern, inclusive facility to replace the existing skatepark that would be suitable for use by local BMX bikes, skateboards, scooters and skates and would cater for beginners to more experienced riders. The Park was to provide ramp and street features to keep users challenged and engaged, whilst allowing beginners to learn the basic skills. The design was to ensure that the skatepark would be more welcoming and interesting to visitors of the park. The skatepark was designed to accommodate the topography of the site which slopes down towards the bandstand.

2.8 Sustainability in Design

Sustainability can be divided into two areas: (1) the specification of the structure and (2) the design of the park and its ability to maintain long term interest over several generations. In terms of the design, it is important to avoid fashionable quirks that may not have lasting appeal and be expensive to maintain. The core of the design of both the skatepark should incorporate some of the classic features, which develop all-round skills, whilst offering challenges and skills progression. The design should also lend itself to future development by the next generation of users. Sustainability will also be achieved through the quality of construction and choice of construction materials. The facilities will be robust enough to survive with minimal routine maintenance.

2.9 Design Statement

The tendered design was developed through the results of the initial consultation held by Wellingborough Council in the Tender Specification. The design was further developed with the local skating community, looking at many different variations and tweaks until everybody was completely happy with the final design.

The skatepark has been designed to challenge experienced riders, whilst offering beginners lower-level ramps and key features to develop and practise skills on. Experienced riders will also use these features, but the low-level ramps will give younger and inexperienced riders confidence and time to develop the skills before trying the higher and more technical features in the park. The skatepark also ensures excellent vision across the park so that riders will always be aware of where other riders are in the park and help to reduce collisions. The new design will also help to make the park more attractive to girls as it will be open, have a variety of features for different abilities and a seating area.

We have ensured that the design will be:

- Suitable for all ages.
- Suitable for all wheel types.
- Have features for beginners.
- Have flow lines to challenge experienced riders.
- Be bespoke.
- Be accessible.
- Features will be appropriately spaced to enable safe riding.
- Will meet BSEN14974:2019 standard.
- Have a seating area and footpath.

The design creates an organic, flowing skatepark with the potential to be used by a whole range of skill levels and wheel types. There are many street and ramp features which have been designed with a modern, progressive attitude to form and have been carefully positioned and thought out to achieve a good flow with minimum potential for collisions.

The design offers both transition ramps and street features to ensure that all riders are catered for at the park. Transitions offer an array of trick options as well as a tool for directing the flow of traffic around the park and these have been carefully considered. The ramps also allow riders to stay within the ramp area on busy days and not conflict with other riders in the street area. The street area is where you'll find the features that imitate obstacles a rider may find in an urban environment which are: ledges, curbs, hubbas, rails and banks. The range of heights and gaps offers a variety of options for users of different abilities.

The layout of the design lends itself to good flowing lines no matter how busy the skatepark is. Flow is key in any skatepark. Good flow means continual riding and use of multiple features, but also means there is the opportunity for multiple riders riding simultaneously. On quiet days riders will be able to utilise the whole skatepark by carving around ramps transferring from feature to feature. The skatepark has been designed with busier days in mind and a wealth of platform space will accommodate larger groups of riders where they will wait for their turn to ride and socialise. The design ensures that skatepark users will have a clear view of the whole area.

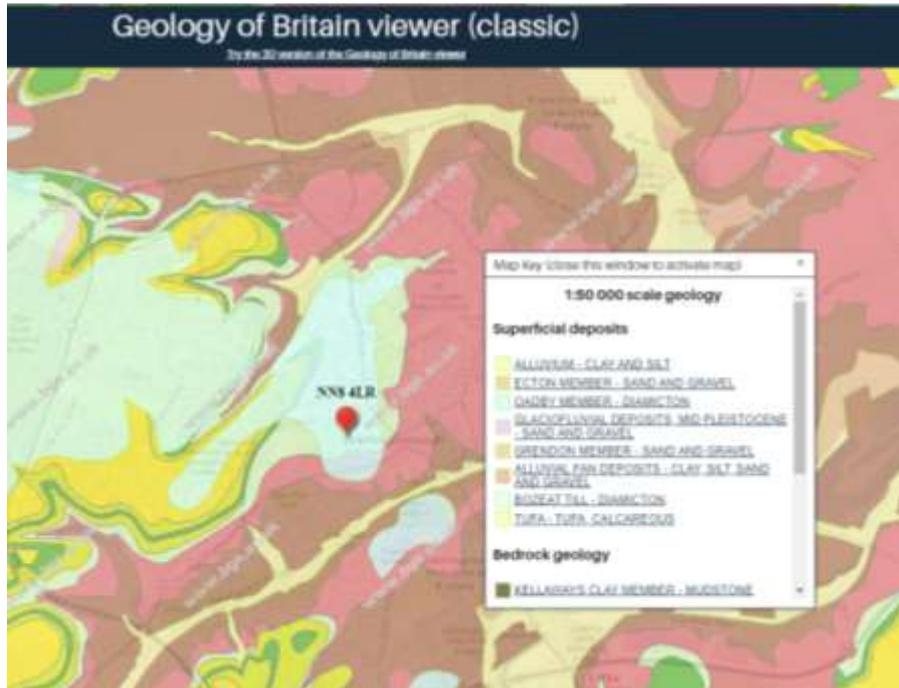
2.10 Construction Statement

The skatepark will be constructed by a specialist skatepark construction company. The skatepark will be constructed from smooth, spray concrete and will have all joints sealed and level. Galvanised steel copings and edgings will protect the edges of the concrete from damage. The skatepark will carry a 20-year guarantee. A concrete skatepark requires very minimal maintenance. The skatepark will be constructed by Bendcrete's in-house construction teams who are highly experienced at building concrete skateparks. The skatepark will be set to falls (1:100) and surface water will be drained off. The skatepark will meet RoSPA and BS EN14974:2019 safety standards.

The Park has always been open land or a recreation ground and there is no evidence of any building from the historic maps to show any previous construction has taken place in the area of the skatepark. We can, therefore, be confident there will be no land contamination, however we will proceed with caution and stop construction if there is any indication of made-up ground.

2.11 Drainage

The topography of the site falls from the north to the south. The geology maps show the area to be made of Diamicton, which has subordinate lenses of sand and gravel, clay and silt. This is supported by local bore hole data. It is therefore unlikely that a soakaway will work and we would propose to set the skatepark to falls of 1:100 and discharge the water to the grass and trees.



SP 86 NE/101
RECORD OF WELL (SHAFT OR BORE)
8860 6842

At: Bowling Club
Town or Village: Wellingborough, County: Northants
Exact site: SP 86 NE 6838

1" N.S.
1" O.S.
1" Ref.
100-inch quarter sheet
212

Level of ground surface above sea-level (f.D.) _____ ft. If well starts below ground surface, state _____ ft.
Shade 19 1/2 ft. diameter _____ ft. Bore _____ ft. Diameter of bore: at top _____ ins.; at bottom _____ ins.
Details of permanent lining tubes (internal diameters preferred) _____

Water struck at depths of (feet) _____
Best-level of water below top of well _____ feet. Suction at _____ feet. Yield on _____ hours' test _____ gallons per hour (with pump of capacity _____ g.p.h.); depressing water level to _____ feet below tap. Time of recovery _____ hrs. Amount normally pumped daily _____ g.p.h. for _____ hours.
Quality (attach copy of analysis if available) _____
Sunk by _____ for Mr. _____ Date of well _____

Information from _____

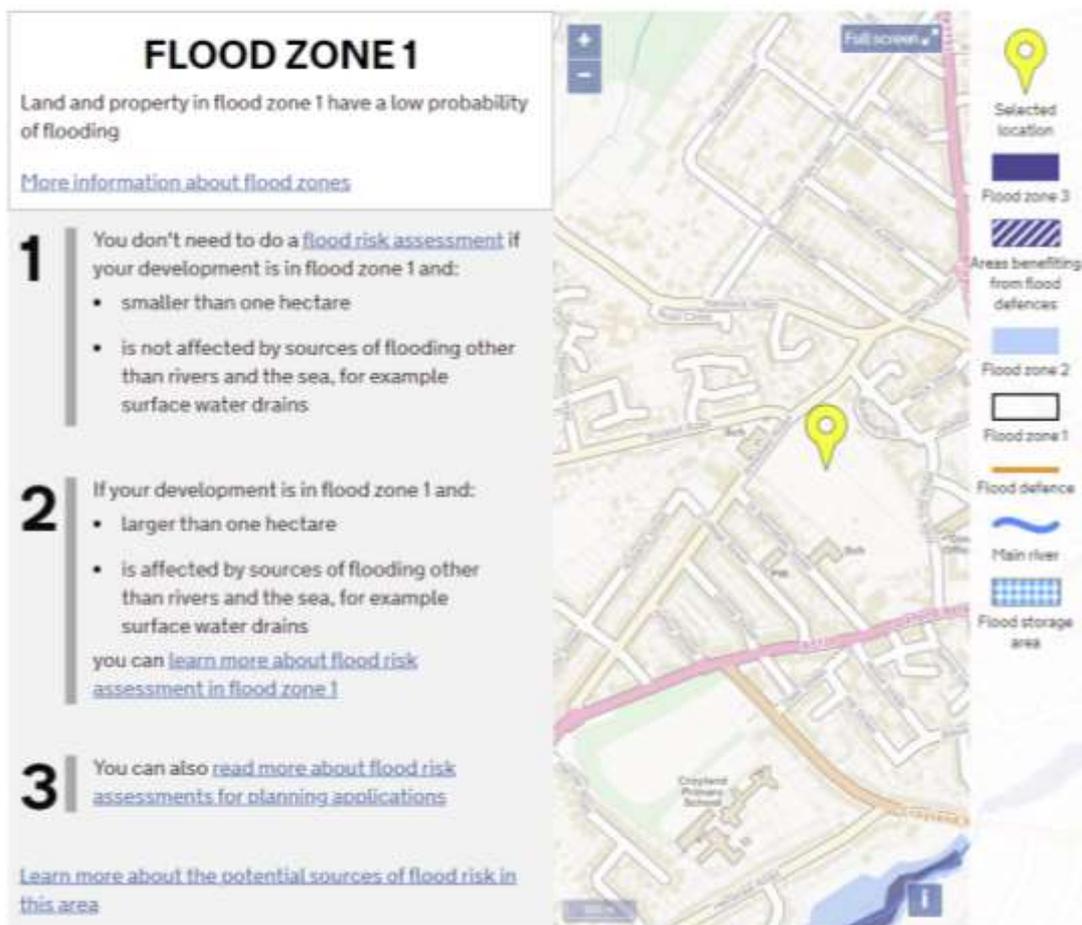
(For Survey use only) GEOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION.	NATURE OF STRATA (and any additional remarks)	THICKNESS		DEPTH	
		Feet	Inches	Feet	Inches
	<u>Silt</u>	1	-	1	-
	<u>loamy clay</u>	22	6	5	6
<u>Northampton Beds</u>	<u>soft Limestone</u>	2	-	7	6
	<u>clay</u>	1	6	9	-
	<u>clay</u>	15	6	12	6
<u>Upper Lias.</u>	<u>ll. h. clay</u>	4	-	19	6
<u>Quartz</u>	<u>Drummed</u>				
<u>S.P. 16</u>					

2.12 Flood Zone

The skatepark is to be constructed on land in flood zone 1 – see map below. The skatepark will be set to falls and water drained off away from the skatepark. Areas deemed to be in flood zone 1 have been shown to be at less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year, this is sometimes known as having a 1:1000-year chance.

Likelihood of flooding in this area

This location is in an area with a low probability of flooding



3. Access

3.1 Means of accessing the site

Bassett's Close, NN8 4LR is located in Wellingborough and access to the park is off Westfield Road, St Barnabas Street and West Villa Road.

The skatepark will be accessed within the park by an existing network of footpaths. Access for pedestrians is shown on the maps below. A new footpath will link from the main footpath to the skatepark.



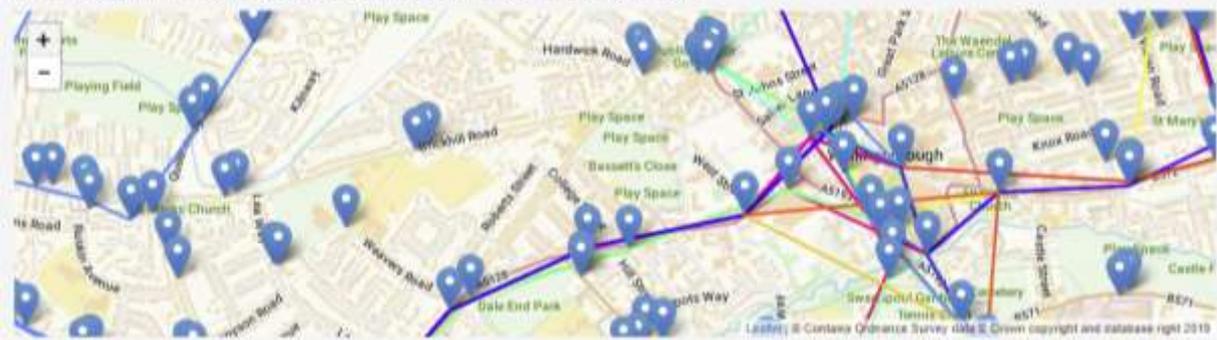
Bassett's Close is located centrally within Wellingborough and has excellent links to all areas of the town. The park is approximately 1.5 miles from the main train station and is located in the close vicinity of a number of bus stops that serve all the surrounding villages.



Location of train station to park.

Interactive Map of Bus Routes and Stops in Wellingborough,

Click on the stop markers for details about the bus stop. Click on lines for details about the bus routes.



Bus routes and stops

3.2 Construction traffic access

Access for construction traffic will be from Westfield Road to cause minimal disturbance to users of the park. The access route will use the existing paths in the park to access the site. If the ground is wet, further ground protection boards will be used. During construction, a banksman will be used at all times to safeguard the general public and users of park to see in deliveries.

4. Contextual setting

4.1 Trees

There are a number of trees surrounding the site and these will be protected from the construction traffic and works. A tree protection fence will protect the trees by the construction site access and appropriate signs will be erected on the fencing.

The Council arborist has been consulted and the statement attached. The skatepark will be approximately 15m from the edge of the existing footpath.



4.4 Landscape amenity

The skatepark will be constructed above ground level and to avoid large expanses of concrete walls and guardrails, the skatepark will be set into the Park with grass bunds formed from the excavated

topsoil and subsoil. These will be as minimal as possible to ensure the flat character of the Park is retained. The bunds will be seeded and will look like the park below once the grass has established.



From Westfield Road and the view from Freeman Junior Academy, the skatepark will seem to fit almost seamlessly into the Park invisible due to the park being raised up from the road by the school and the bunding of the ramps. The topography of the site also falls away from Westfield Road.

The bunds will also help to reduce Anti-social behaviour as people will not be able to sit or hide under the ramps as they are at the existing skatepark.

4.3 Fencing

After consulting with the Built Heritage Consultant and Northamptonshire Police, it is proposed that there will be no fencing around the skatepark. It was felt by the Heritage Consultant that a fence would be detrimental to the visual lines from the Victorian gates and railings on Westfield Road to the bandstand.

Whilst the Northamptonshire Police would have preferred fencing to particularly to contain all the litter within the skatepark area, it was agreed that the Wellingborough Borough Council would install more litter bins to address this issue.

Skaters do not like the parks to be surrounded by fencing as they form a barrier with the rest of the park, feel unsafe and can damage equipment when a board hits it. There is no requirement under BSEN14974:2019 to fence off the skatepark and most skateparks are open within public parks.

4.4 Lighting

The park will include solar lighting to allow the park to be used during the winter months. The lighting will be available from dusk to 10pm on PIR sensors so the lights will only be on when movement is detected and then completely switch off at 10pm. A lighting report is attached. It should be noted that there is existing lighting within the park and photo below shows the amount of ambient light already given off by the footpath lighting. This lighting is on all evening.

The lighting report shows the light spill from the skatepark lights and show that the light is all directed towards the skatepark and away from trees. Therefore, there will be minimal impact to any bats as the existing path lighting already impacts on the trees, as shown in the photo below.



4.5 Noise

The existing play facilities and skatepark already generate some noise in the park. Furthermore, the local infrastructure, schools and roads also generate noise. The new location is much closer to Westfield Road and the traffic noise will help to mask the skatepark noise.

The new skatepark has been designed to be solid in construction and bunded with the excavated material and seeded. This will help to reduce the noise from the use of the skatepark. The features that generate more noise (rails and blocks) have been located nearer the footpath and away from the houses. The ramps and bowl features tend to be quieter in use.

The chatter from users can't be prevented, but by locating the skatepark nearer the play park, the general noise from recreational facilities will be condensed into a smaller area, ensuring all other areas of the park will offer quieter spots for the rest of the community.

Noise generated from the new skatepark will be considerably further away from St Barnabas Primary School and the residential housing.

A noise survey report is attached showing the impact of the new skatepark. The report concludes that whilst the noise of the skatepark will be audible outside of the nearest dwellings at the busiest times, the sound levels at the nearest residential property during peak use are assessed to be less than existing daytime and evening period and maximum environmental noise levels.

4.6 Crime prevention

The Council are committed to ensuring that all new developments seek to design out crime and disorder and reduce the fear of crime. At a site meeting with Northamptonshire Police, the design of the skatepark was discussed in how it would help to reduce crime and the fear of crime. The landscaping of the skatepark was welcomed as it would reduce the problems associated with the existing skatepark in people being able to hide under the hallow existing ramps. The new location of the skatepark was also welcomed as the existing skatepark was hidden away from the main path through the Park and couldn't be seen at all from the north of the Park.

There currently exists anti-social behaviour in Bassett's Close and this is centred around the current skatepark. The current facility is tucked away at the back of the park and suffers from being away from the main areas of the Park. The ramps are open backed, which allow people to congregate under them. It should be noted that not all the ASB is related to skaters, but this area has become known for being a problem area as it has little secondary surveillance and can't be seen from the road. Most skaters are at skateparks to participate in the sport and to enjoy the community spirit of skateparks.

The existing ramps will be removed and the area made good. The Council proposes that the community will be consulted on how to use this area in the future. The ramps that sit in the grass areas will be returned to grass.

The new skatepark has been designed to be a welcoming and inclusive skatepark. The skatepark will be of solid construction and the back of the ramps will be bunded and seeded to ensure the new skatepark sits cohesively into the landscape. The skatepark will be located by the park's other recreational facilities and will be accessed off the main footpath. The landscaping and new location of the park was welcomed by the Police as it will help to resolve some of the issues associated with the old park's design and location.

There will be good visibility from all areas of the park and all these measures will help to reduce ASB. Tucking skateparks away has always created problems for users and the community. Furthermore, the facility will attract new multi-generational users and this will further inhibit ASB as this is not accepted by the skating community. In most areas it has been shown that a well designed skatepark will bring communities together and provide a safe environment for skaters.

4.7 Location

The Council have considered whether the skatepark would be better in another park, however it decided that based on the heritage of wheeled sports in Bassett's Park, it would be the best location.

The skatepark will be set 35m off the fence line along Westfield Road and not directly opposite the school. The Park is raised up from the road where the school faces. The school and park are separated by a busy road and the park is lined with trees. Most skateparks aren't that busy during the school day as users are either in school or at work. From the school, the children will only be able to see users standing on top of the end quarterpipe as the school is lower than the park with higher windows and the park will be bunded. Many of the windows of the school had blinds down on the day of visiting the site and one was frosted.



Photo taken from outside of Freeman's Endowed School



View from the skatepark location to Freeman's Endowed School.



View of Freeman's Endowed School with trees in leaf.

Anti-social behaviour exists in the park. It exists by the existing skatepark. It is not clear if the ASB is caused by the skaters or by other users of the park using the skatepark area. That said, the new location is open and well looked over by other park users. It will be well designed with a seating area for visitors and parents. Additional litter bins will be installed by the Council. The new skatepark will develop into a positive and inclusive community.

The new location will be further away from all residential housing. It will be lit by solar powered lights for both the users and safety of others using the park. The skatepark will be around 60m from the nearest houses on St Barnabas Street.



View of skatepark location from residential housing on St Barnabas Street (note figure for edge of skatepark).



View from skatepark location towards residential housing on St Barnabas Street and St Barnabas School.

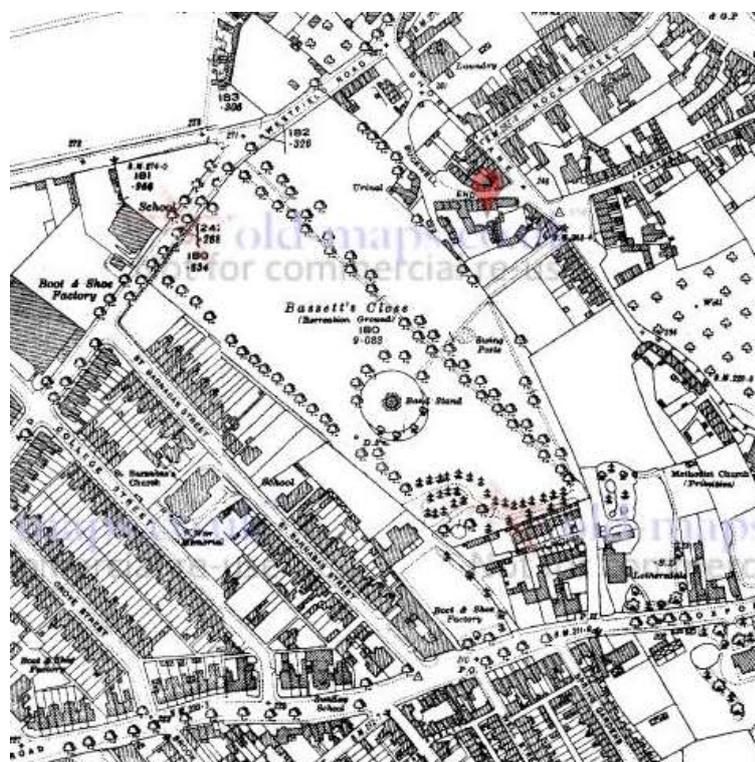
4.8 Heritage Status

The Park is outside of the Wellingborough Town Centre Conservation Area, but forms part of its setting. The Council have confirmed that they will be repairing and improving the park railings and gates along Westfield Road. The existing bandstand, park railings and gates form part of the visual and historic landscape of the Park. Looking at the OS map of 1900, there is little evidence of a formal park at this time. The bandstand appears on the 1925 map but could have been built between 1900 and 1925 as there is a gap in the maps. The bandstand is not on historic list of buildings.

In the 1960's there is evidence of a roller-skating rink around the bandstand and this is also on the 1976 OS map and the later 1976. Later maps don't show the level of detail to see when this was removed. The bandstand has been in the park since at least 1925.



1900



1925



966

Following a meeting with the Heritage consultant it was agreed that we would look at alternative locations for the skatepark, look at the requirement for fencing the skatepark, colours used in the skatepark, additional facilities at the skatepark and how the skatepark would be set into the Park.

It was agreed with the Heritage consultant that the proposed sympathetic landscaping of the skatepark will minimise the conflict between the Park's heritage assets and the skatepark. The skatepark will be landscaped with grass bunds and will have an access path from the main path with seating and bins. The design of the skatepark reflects the topography of the site which is falling from the north (Westfield Road) down to the band stand. We looked at putting the skatepark below ground level to help maintain the flat nature of the park, but the geology of the park would have made this very difficult to drain. It is felt that the skatepark will have a low level of impact on the Park and the site lines from the park railings to the bandstand. The Park has many mature trees that will help to reduce the impact of the skatepark.

The Council have considered all locations within the Park for the skatepark, but in order to keep the park as far away from the houses and schools, this has proved to be the best location. Furthermore, moving the skatepark to another park may simply be moving the problem to another park and will not necessarily move the ASB issues relating to Bassett's Park. The park has also had a heritage of wheeled sports since at least the 1960s. It is also thought to be a good idea to spread the different recreational and sporting facilities between all the parks, rather than putting them all in one park.

The new skatepark location is away from the area used for events and will therefore not impact the area used for the annual funfair. Furthermore, there will be more space in the events area once the existing skatepark is removed and the site reinstated back to open grass and tarmac paths.

The Heritage Consultant confirmed he was happy with the proposed measures to reduce the impact on the Heritage Assets weighed against the increased community amenity benefit the skatepark would bring.