

Report to	Chippenham Area Board
Date of Meeting	10th September 2013
Title of Report	Skatepark Task Group (STG) Report

Purpose of Report

To ask Councillors to consider the options and to decide on the appropriate location, subject to obtaining planning permission, for a Skatepark in the Chippenham area.

The recommendation the Skatepark STG is that Monkton Park next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) area is the most appropriate location of the options considered for a Skatepark in Chippenham for the benefit of the wider community and therefore the Area Board is asked to:

- **Approve proceeding to the next step namely the preparation and lodging of a Planning Application for the installation of a concrete construction Skatepark in Monkton Park, Chippenham next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). A map of the proposed area is attached See Appendix 14**

1. Background

1.1. The provision of a Skatepark in Chippenham has been identified as a priority and requirement for the town by:

- 1.1.1. Chippenham and Villages Community Area Plan 2005
- 1.1.2. The Chippenham Vision draft Strategy Document in 2008 identified the installation of a Skatepark for the town as one of its key objectives
- 1.1.3. Chippenham and Villages Community Area Plan Review 2009
- 1.1.4. Chippenham Youth Strategy 2009
- 1.1.5. Chippenham Area Board meeting 10th May 2010
- 1.1.6. Chippenham Area Board meeting 9th May 2011
- 1.1.7. Chippenham Children's Parliament and the Youth Forum November 2011
- 1.1.8. The Wiltshire Core Strategy document Chippenham Area Strategy

1.2. The Benefits of a Skatepark

- 1.2.1. Wheeled sports and skate based activities are a lot more than a fad or a fashion craze with their popularity increasing each year. Skateboarding has been prominent in the UK since the 1980s with Local Authorities introducing skate based facilities during the 1990's. Recent research concluded that alternative sports such as skateboarding are growing at an express rate over mainstream sports. See Thorpe, H. Understanding 'Alternative' Sport experiences: A Contextual Approach for Sport Psychology. USEF. 7: p.359 -379. A research paper commissioned by Sport England shows the same growth of and desire for alternative sports within the 12 - 24 age range, as well as the contribution it can have to the wider government agenda; engagement with the hard to reach youth, anti social behaviour, social cohesion and inclusion, community safety, community development etc Tomlinson, A, Ravenscroft, N, Wheaton, B and Gilchrist, P (2005) *Lifestyle Sports and National Sport Policy: An Agenda for Research* Sport England, London.
- 1.2.2. Many of the original skate facilities built in the UK during this time are still in use or have been redeveloped, refurbished and improved highlighting that these sports have longevity and that the investment made by local authorities in this type of provision was worthwhile. Skate based activities have a history in the UK spanning 30 years with interest and participation in the sport set to grow long into the future.
- 1.2.3. The benefits of a Skatepark include health and well being; a recreational facility for those not involved in organised team sports, a reduction in street skating, low cost participation makes it accessible to everyone and will bring economic benefit to the town and attract visitors to the town. See Appendix 1 The benefits have been discussed and are recognised by most people within the community area.

1.3. Chippenham Skatepark Task Group (STG)

- 1.3.1. STGs are a recognised process within Wiltshire Council, the STG has no formal decision making authority on operational matters or budget expenditure, but acts as an informal discussion forum making recommendations to the Area Board.

- 1.3.2. The STG was set up by Chippenham Area Board 22nd November 2010 to investigate the options for a location for a Skatepark in Chippenham and to consult with members of the public.
- 1.3.3. The membership of the STG was and is approved by the Area Board and consists of elected Councillors, officers, partners and community representatives. See Appendix 2. The approved Terms of Reference for the STG are attached as Appendix 3.
- 1.3.4. The STG has provided an update or report and the STG Chairman has been available to answer questions at every Chippenham Area Board meeting.
- 1.3.5. The need for a Skatepark facility has increased due to the anticipated closure of the existing Skatepark facility, the Skate Shed. At present the Skate Shed is available two days a week for young people over the age of eleven. The Skate Shed is currently located at the Bridge Centre which is due to close as part of the redevelopment of Bath Road site. Wiltshire Council has signed a Development Agreement with ING Chippenham which is in the process of working up a planning application for submission later this year. If granted it is anticipated that the Skatepark will need to be relocated in summer 2014.
- 1.3.6. The STG when considering the options for a Skatepark had regard to the following items:
- 1.3.6.1. The limited availability to the youth of the current facility.
 - 1.3.6.2. The anticipated closure of the existing Skatepark facility “The Skate Shed”
 - 1.3.6.3. Whether a temporary facility would suffice
 - 1.3.6.4. Whether an indoor facility would suffice
 - 1.3.6.5. Alternative available sites
 - 1.3.6.6. The STG to assist in these considerations had regard to expert technical advice including Wiltshire Councils own officers, Wiltshire Police and other professionals familiar with Skatepark Projects.
 - 1.3.6.7. The STG also sought comments from towns and parishes with existing Skateparks and feedback from the local community.
 - 1.3.6.8. The Skatepark STG contacted Towns and Parishes across Wiltshire to request feedback See Appendix 4

1.4. Initial considerations

1.4.1. Provision of temporary facility

- 1.4.2. The STG considered the advantages and disadvantages of a temporary facility.
- 1.4.3. The advantage is that we would hope to avoid any interruption in provision.

- 1.4.4. The disadvantages are the high ongoing running costs of a temporary facility, the greater insurance risk, the challenge to identify suitable temporary sites and as a temporary facility would be constructed from wood and/or steel, there would be noise attenuation issues associated with a temporary facility.
- 1.4.5. Skateboarding and wheeled sports tend to be casual, spontaneous recreational activities as opposed to structured sport like football. Complying with specific times for participation is antithetic to the nature of the activity.
- 1.4.6. A temporary facility does not usually provide the scope to develop enhanced skills, nor does it encompass the requirements of younger children.
- 1.4.7. The Skate Shed has been a temporary facility and it would be disappointing to replace one temporary facility with another temporary facility.
- 1.4.8. The STG concluded that in the current climate the provision of a temporary facility was not a viable option for the reasons stated above.
- 1.4.9. Provision of an indoor facility**
- 1.4.9.1. The STG considered the advantages and disadvantages of an indoor facility.
- 1.4.9.2. The advantages of an indoor facility are protection from the weather for users, staff on hand in case of accidents and any behaviour issues. It is likely that refreshments will be sold on site and there is likely to be limited external noise.
- 1.4.9.3. The disadvantages are the purchase, refurbishment, adaptation or construction of a building, building maintenance costs, both the fabric of building and the skate surface, building running costs, heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance, staff costs, entrance/session fees, membership fees
- 1.4.9.4. Entrance fees will inevitably exclude some users (a local example of costs is Ramp Nation in Devizes £2.50 for 1 hour, £4.50 for 2 hours, £6.00 for 3 hours, £7.00 for 4hrs, £8.00 for a Day Pass or £50 per month for unlimited use.)
- 1.4.9.5. Usage tends to be session based and therefore profitable sessions will take precedence over casual skating. Indoor facilities are normally operated by an entrepreneur therefore no guarantee of longevity, access is restricted to opening times and the general public and skaters do not get a chance to mix or casually observe the users in action.
- 1.4.9.6. The STG concluded that in the current climate an indoor facility would not be a viable option instead of an outdoor facility. Ideally the STG would wish to see both indoor and outdoor options in Chippenham as is the case in other areas. The STG does not view an outdoor facility as in conflict with an indoor offer, it is viewed as complementary.

1.4.10. Available land or site in and around the town for an outdoor Skatepark facility

1.4.10.1. The STG identified the following for consideration:

1.4.10.1.1. Wiltshire Council Property Services identified land in Wiltshire Council Ownership:

- 1.4.10.1.1.1. Abbeyfield/Hardens Farm
- 1.4.10.1.1.2. Bristol Road
- 1.4.10.1.1.3. Charter Road (2 locations)
- 1.4.10.1.1.4. Derriads Barn
- 1.4.10.1.1.5. Disused road near Chippenham Rugby Club
- 1.4.10.1.1.6. Forest Gate
- 1.4.10.1.1.7. Ivyfields
- 1.4.10.1.1.8. Kingsley Road
- 1.4.10.1.1.9. Long Close
- 1.4.10.1.1.10. Lovers Lane
- 1.4.10.1.1.11. Lowden Yard
- 1.4.10.1.1.12. Monkton Park (various locations within the footprint of the park)
- 1.4.10.1.1.13. Westcroft
- 1.4.10.1.1.14. Wood Lane

1.4.10.1.2. Chippenham Town Council was asked to consider whether any land in their ownership was available:

- 1.4.10.1.3. John Coles Park
- 1.4.10.1.4. Stanley Park

1.4.10.1.5. Land in private ownership was considered and investigated:

- 1.4.10.1.6. Bumpers Farm
- 1.4.10.1.7. Chippenham Rugby Club
- 1.4.10.1.8. Disused Hygrade site
- 1.4.10.1.9. Land adjacent to railway station car park (Cocklebury Road)

1.4.10.2. A map has been produced of all of the sites considered See Appendix 5

1.4.10.3. Land or sites confirmed as not available were not taken forward for further consideration. These were:

- 1.4.10.3.1. Bumpers Farm
- 1.4.10.3.2. Chippenham Rugby Club
- 1.4.10.3.3. Land adjacent to railway station car park (Cocklebury Road)
- 1.4.10.3.4. Stanley Park

1.4.11. Short listing of sites

1.4.11.1. In short listing the sites, the STG considered available land/site, central location, sufficient space (using an average size as a guide), distance from residential and commercial properties, community access, safety for users, informal supervision, environmental issues, territorial issues, supporting infrastructure, economic benefit to the town.

1.4.11.2. Land or sites that did not meet the above criteria were not shortlisted.

1.4.11.3. The STG short listed the following sites:

- 1.4.11.3.1. Charter Road (2 locations)
- 1.4.11.3.2. Disused road near Chippenham Rugby Club
- 1.4.11.3.3. Lovers Lane
- 1.4.11.3.4. Monkton Park (various locations within the footprint of the park)

1.4.11.4. Three independent contractors were invited to visit the short listed sites and all three independently recommended Monkton Park as the best option giving a variety of reasons including: it is a safe widely used park environment, the proximity to leisure centre and other infrastructure for toilets, refreshments, car parking, the proximity to the town, good access for construction and emergency vehicles, overlooked by a staffed centre, safe and easy to monitor.

1.4.11.5. Chippenham & Villages Area Partnership (ChAP) sought views from members of the public attending Chippenham River Festival in August 2011. Views were received from 106 individuals ages ranging from 9 – 76. 55 selected Monkton Park, 5 selected Stanley Park, 4 selected Westmead, 3 selected John Coles Park and 3 selected Cepen Park South, 8 expressed support for a central location. The remaining views suggested a variety of 18 other sites.

1.4.11.6. ChAP sought views from Chippenham Secondary Schools in September 2011. Views were received from 97 individuals ages ranging from 11 – 22. 64 selected Monkton Park, 16 selected John Coles Park, 6 selected the Bridge Centre and 6 selected Pewsham, 5 selected Stanley Park.

1.4.11.7. The STG recognised that some members of the community felt that Stanley Park should be reconsidered. Chippenham Town Council own Stanley Park and formally considered making land available for a Skatepark facility at their meeting on 16th November 2011. The decision was “*Chippenham Town Council rejects the request made by the Chippenham Skatepark STG that land at Stanley Park Sports Ground be made available for the provision of a future Skatepark.*”

1.4.11.8. Following this the STG concluded that Monkton Park was the most suitable location to take forward. Chippenham Area Board agreed to this recommendation on 9th January 2012.

1.4.12. Consultation and Noise Impact Assessments

1.4.12.1. Having regard to the previous history of a Skatepark facility in Monkton Park, it was agreed that it would be prudent to commission a noise assessment. In accordance with the requirement of the Area Board, the Skatepark Terms of Reference and the commitment to be fully informed, the STG began consultation and commissioned a noise impact assessment by an independent contractor.

1.4.12.2. Mach Acoustics was commissioned to provide a noise impact assessment for Monkton Park "River Island" and Monkton Park next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).

1.4.12.3. The STG agreed to proceed with a focus on the River Island area of Monkton Park as it was furthest distance from residential property and logically less noise mitigation would therefore be required.

1.4.12.4. Consultation on River Island Site

1.4.12.4.1. An article was included in Chippenham Town Councils "Talk of the Town" newsletter and an on line survey was created seeking the views of the community on this site.

1.4.12.4.2. 1012 replies were received, 727 on line and 285 by post. 628 supported the site, 376 did not support the site, 8 did not state yes or no but chose to provide comments. It was noted that some of those who did not support River Island suggested instead that the site next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre would be more suitable.

1.4.12.4.3. A public meeting was held on 26th November 2012 to gather views on Monkton Park focussing on the River Island site.

1.4.12.4.4. Comments and feedback from the consultation gave the strong indication that the public view was for the STG to focus on the site next to Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA. This strong indication was reflected both in written comments and feedback to the Talk of the Town survey, at the public meeting and in further written feedback following the meeting.

1.4.12.4.5. Feedback indicated the preference for a central location, accessibility for Skatepark users, proximity to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and other leisure activities, proximity to amenities e.g. toilets and proximity to the High Street for refreshments.

1.4.12.5. Review of other sites

1.4.12.5.1. On 7th January 2013 Chippenham Area Board instructed the STG to carry out a parallel review of other options beyond Monkton Park, such sites to be determined at the discretion of the STG.

1.4.12.5.2. The STG carried out a visit to other sites on 19th February 2013. STG members unable to attend on that date reviewed the sites independently. The sites were:

- 1.4.12.5.2.1. Bristol Road
- 1.4.12.5.2.2. Charter Road
- 1.4.12.5.2.3. Long Close
- 1.4.12.5.2.4. Lovers Lane
- 1.4.12.5.2.5. Stanley Park

1.4.12.5.3. A selection criteria table was used to assist with the site review. The criteria were created by adopting best practice from other Skatepark projects and on line research: available land/site, central location, sufficient space (using an average size of 45m x 25m as a guide), distance from residential and commercial properties, community access, safety for users, informal supervision, environmental issues, territorial issues, supporting infrastructure, economic benefit to the town.

1.4.12.5.4. A summary of review is as follows:

1.4.12.5.5. Bristol Road Open Space

Bristol Road Open Space	Score 926
<p>Good potential location, although not as central as other sites. Noise unlikely to be an issue due to vicinity of main road. Reasonable community access for pedestrians, and parking for cars to drop off. Slightly secluded, a little isolated, feels “hidden”, consider some coppicing, clearance if permitted. Users may be more vulnerable here than in central public park, less informal supervision. Although sometimes deserted it is close to schools e.g. Hardenhuish and Sheldon Schools and well used sports facilities. The area is busy on football match days. Possible territorial issues associated with young people as less central than other sites. Lack of amenities. Would the sports club or football club allow use of their toilets? Would this be limited to hours of club operation? This site less likely to benefit the town centre as approximately 20 minutes from High Street. It is understood that dog walkers objected to the recent building of the footpath, it is anticipated they will object to a Skatepark. Residents in nearest properties are likely to object.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council Countryside Officer has advised that this area is managed in the interests of nature conservation and informal, quiet public recreation. There are some good grassland communities on this site and the area is getting more diverse in terms of flora. The water course that runs through it is of value to biodiversity. There is a badger sett on the site. The Countryside officer has concerns that skateboarders could be tempted to use the smooth paths that run through the site for skateboarding – this would have Health and Safety implications for other users of the Public Open Space, particularly as many of the paths are sloping. Also, the grassland is gently sloping, so skateboarders/rollerbladers could be tempted to use the nearby grassland. Such use could harm the existing grassland communities there.</p>	

1.4.12.5.6. Charter Road

Charter Road	Score 744
<p>Reasonable potential location although not as central as other sites. Noise unlikely to be an issue as adjacent to very busy road. Access for many pedestrians would be across very busy main road, nearest parking across the river Borough Parade. Quite easy to get to but not completely visible, users may be more vulnerable here than in a public park. This site feels quite remote despite the nearby estate. Traffic fumes from very busy main road need to be considered. Informal supervision likely to be limited to nearby residents, not a widely used area. Territorial issues associated with young people are anticipated as this is not currently seen as a neutral space. Nearest amenities Bath Road car park. Some benefit to the town centre but access to High Street is across very busy main road. Residents in nearest properties are likely to object.</p> <p>Independent contractors visited this site and advised that there was reasonable access, adequate distance from housing and the sloping site would allow Skatepark to sit in the landscape. The main issues highlighted were the very busy main road, the remote slightly isolated location and potential social (territorial) issues.</p>	

1.4.12.5.7. Long Close

Long Close	Score 680
<p>This was the fifth choice location. It is not centrally located. Noise would need to be assessed. Access not particularly good, not on main thoroughfare, no parking, but parents could drop off along road across the top of the site. Informal supervision likely to be limited to nearby residents, overlooked by houses but no one in the vicinity when visited. Users may be more vulnerable here than in a public park. Less likely to benefit the town centre as approximately 25 minutes from High Street. Territorial issues associated with young people are anticipated as this is not currently seen as a neutral space. As this is a very open space, wind must be considered. No public amenities, would nearby clubs open up their toilets? Would this only be an option when clubs are in use? Residents in nearest properties are likely to object.</p>	

1.4.12.5.8. Lovers Lane

Lovers Lane	Score 940
<p>Reasonable potential location. This site is fairly central but next to very busy main road. Noise unlikely to be an issue as adjacent to very busy road. Access for some pedestrians would be across very busy main road, nearest parking across the river Borough Parade. Just out of town centre, fairly easy to get to but not completely visible, users may be more vulnerable here than in a public park. Traffic fumes from very busy main road need to be considered. Informal supervision from passing vehicles on busy main road, pedestrians likely to be limited as not near a main thoroughfare or widely used area. Territorial issues associated with young people are thought to be unlikely as fairly central. Nearest amenities Bath Road car park. Reasonable benefit to the town centre as High Street is 5 minutes away. There are restrictions on this site including a water culvert, underground pipes, and the root systems and leaf fall from mature trees overhanging the site.</p> <p>Independent contractors visited this site and highlighted several issues including the small space, proximity to a very busy main road and large, mature overhanging trees covering the proposed space. Tree roots could make the construction of a park very difficult and may cause future problems to any structure as they grow. Further restrictions would be caused by water culvert.</p> <p>Since carrying out the visits the STG has been informed that this site is unlikely to be available due to the reconfiguration of the road network connected with the redevelopment of the Bath Road site.</p>	

1.4.12.5.9. Stanley Park

1.4.12.5.9.1. Chippenham Town Council formally reconsidered Stanley Park as a site for a Skatepark facility on 13th March 2013. The decision was: *“Chippenham Town Council endorses its current policy that land at Stanley Park Sports Ground not to be available for the provision of a Skatepark.”*

1.4.12.5.9.2. The STG did not therefore collate scores for this site.

1.4.12.5.10. Monkton Park next to Olympiad & MUGA

Monkton Park next to Olympiad & MUGA	Score 1285
<p>Excellent central location in well used public park. Noise was an issue with previous facility in 2002. Independent noise consultants commissioned to establish whether this site is viable. Both have confirmed it is viable with the appropriate noise mitigation measures. Assessments scrutinised by Senior Public Protection officers who concur. Very good access for the whole of the community as central. Very good pedestrian access from all directions, car parking at top and bottom of park, also very convenient for buses and trains. High level of informal supervision, well used park, overlooked by leisure centre and next to large offices and police station. Existing leisure and recreation facilities; Pitch & Putt, Olympiad Leisure Centre, MUGA, children's play area. A public space which lends itself well to additional recreational facility for young people, children and families. Sufficient space to enable continued access to the area for other users, events and activities. It is an opportunity to enhance the area which currently has broken play equipment, parked vehicles overflowing from car park and damaged grass. There are no territorial issues associated with young people associated with this space as it is a neutral and central public open space. Very good infrastructure, multiple toilets available in Olympiad, Monkton Park Offices, Emery Gate, near Pitch & Putt pavilion. Multiple cafes and availability of refreshments at Pitch & Putt pavilion, Monkton Park Offices and on the High Street. Town centre is 2 minute walk away. Benefit to both users and parents dropping off children.</p> <p>This location may attract visitors and bring economic benefit to the town centre. Research of Skateparks in other towns shows clearly that there are many successful Skateparks in public parks across the county and indeed nationwide. Residents in nearest houses object to a Skatepark on this site. Young people are concerned about being unwelcome in the park.</p> <p>Notable changes since 2002 include, increase in informal supervision; rear of Olympiad now in regular use by day care for adults with special needs, Integrated Youth Service deliver activities in Olympiad regularly and have now implemented a "Street Based" youth work strategy which sees youth workers engaging with young people on the street rather than confined to a building, NPT now in existence, regular patrol strategies, Police Station is in Monkton Park, DPPO. It would be unfortunate if the previous negative experience prevented the delivery of a much needed and wanted youth facility.</p> <p>Independent contractors visited the shortlisted sites and all selected this area as the best possible location. The following points were highlighted: the central location and proximity to the High Street which encourage young people to feel integrated, a well used public park with existing recreational facilities, overlooked by a staffed leisure centre and plenty of informal supervision. Contractors identified a small risk of users of the Skatepark using the downward footpath on their bikes and Skateboards and suggest the solution would be to install rumble strips or chicanes. The contractors all noted good access and infrastructure, and considered the widely used space to be a safe and easily monitored environment.</p>	

1.4.12.5.11. Following the review, the majority of the STG remained of the opinion that Monkton Park next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA was the preferred site.

1.4.12.6. Consultation on site next to Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA

1.4.12.6.1. It was agreed comments on the preferred site should be invited in a variety of ways:

1.4.12.6.1.1. Two public meetings in July. The first meeting on 10th July was dedicated to residents and those with properties adjacent to the preferred site. A second meeting on 24th July was open to anyone interested in the project.

1.4.12.6.1.2. By e-mail

1.4.12.6.1.3. In writing

1.4.12.6.2. In accordance with the instructions of Chippenham Area Board the STG commissioned a second independent noise consultant Hoare Lea to provide a noise impact assessment and to create a design for a Skatepark that would mitigate against noise.

1.4.12.6.3. A summary of comments, concerns and objections to the preferred site received during the consultation is as follows:

Noise	26 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residents will be able to hear the noise from the Skatepark• The noise impact assessments haven't been carried out properly• The noise assessment reports are too technical and confusing• The noise consultants have reached different conclusions• The Clarke Saunders Associates report identifies concerns• There is no proper noise standard for Skateparks• Why were noise assessments only carried out on Monkton Park?• Skatepark users may be heard on their way to the Skatepark• The impact of tricks being landed must be considered	

Anti social behaviour and community safety	15 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be issues with drugs • There will be problems with the children’s playground, teenagers language and behaviour is disgusting • Police resources have been reduced, they will not be able to deal effectively with anti social behaviour • This area of the park will become a ‘no go’ area for some people. • Elderly have said they will feel intimidated • What precautions are being taken to prevent a repetition of skateboarders using the access paths and hazarding pedestrians as before? 	

Environment/Flooding	16 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to retain the environment; it is highly used for exercise and to walk dogs. A Skatepark would destroy that. • What impact will design have on the environment? • What assessment has been carried on impact on wildlife? • How will flooding be dealt with? • Several trees in the area – will leaf fall affect usage? 	

Youth/Children’s play area	11 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A teenage facility should not be placed next to a small children’s play area • There will be problems with the children’s playground, teenagers language and behaviour is disgusting • The language is appalling; we don’t want it in Monkton Park. • Teenagers like an urban atmosphere; they don't appreciate river views at that age! • Youths now know less discipline than in 2002! • The Skatepark will be predominantly used by boys. Where is the comparable facility for girls? • Do you agree that this facility would benefit mainly males rather than say tennis for both sexes? 	

Health & Safety	6 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If child is hurt what happens? Who pays? • There will be health & safety issues with drugs • Where will the toilet facilities be? • The paths on the park will be used by skateboarders skating. This will create a hazard. 	

Litter	5 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beautiful park will be spoiled by a sea of litter including needles and used condoms • The rubbish, tin, bottles left before the council collection is disgusting, with a Skatepark it will only get worse. • Will the litter be cleared? • The litter from the Skatepark will make its way into the river, destroying wildlife. 	

Budget	5 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Council given any thought to the capital cost of the Skatepark? • Has the Council given any thought to the running costs of the Skatepark? • 106 money should be insisted upon • Should there be no practical option (without excessive cost) or if the best option is the most costly, the group should be required to say so. 	

Design, size, visual impact	11 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impact upon park • Proximity to footpath used by many people of all ages • Why has a visual representation not been commissioned? • The Skatepark will be a barrier 	

Other sites	13 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is Stanley Park not an option? • Why is John Coles Park not an option? • Skaters are obviously prepared to travel so why are peripheral sites non-starters? • Sufficient consideration has not been given to other sites • An indoor site should be considered 	

Strategy for park	14 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was it decided that the Skatepark is a priority? • What is the vision for the park? • Are there are restrictions/covenants on the land? • The building of a structure for a “single sport” surely defeats the object of a park • A Skatepark is not in keeping with the quiet enjoyment expected in a park • Will the Council consult providers of leisure activities and events in and around the park? • Monkton Park is an open space and should not have further erosion to the space and available riverside • Everybody should be considered, not just a minority of Skateboarders • What happens when it goes out of fashion, who pays the bill to get rid of it? • If the Council should proceed with a Skatepark in Monkton Park in spite of all the uncertainties, what will be the fate of the small children’s play area? • You’ve talked about consulting the Chippenham community, what were the consultations? 	

Previous history	10 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past history is very important - security and anti social behaviour are a concern • It’s been tried and failed what is different now? • Monkton Park is not an appropriate location due to past history. 	

General comments	42 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The truth is we just don't want it. • Why was only Monkton Park site presented at the meetings in July? • Monkton Park serves a valuable function for the whole community; there is no doubt whatsoever that other users of the park will lose out. • How is the STG constituted, are the members democratically elected? If not, why not? • The most contentious site has been chosen • The character of the park will change • Other events in the park have a beginning, middle and end • The impact upon current park users, typically young families, should be considered • The quiet enjoyment of the park will be spoilt • There is unlikely to be supervision • Lots of people don't think the park needs to be changed • I would like to see an overall strategy for Monkton Park • If done properly it could be up and running by now • Why was Bridge Centre sold? 	

1.4.12.6.4. A summary of comments in support of the preferred site received during the consultation is as follows:

Noise	12 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise isn't what you can expect from concrete Skateparks, go and visit one • Noise used to be an issue when metal and wood were used • Concrete Skateparks don't make a fraction of the noise that the outdoor swimming pool made. Do you remember the noise from the swimming pool? • Noise can be controlled • It has been proven that it takes a lot for noise to travel more than 50 metres • Concrete facilities reduce noise, there are hundreds of reports to illustrate this • If objectors took the time to look on You Tube they will see that there is not a lot of noise • Technology of today means less noise than before 	

Anti social behaviour and community safety	16 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We feel like we're being bullied out of the town centre (young person) • We feel swept under the rug (young person) • I'm a skater, I don't do drugs, I don't use bad language • There is a perception that young people using Skateparks are poorly behaved, people of all ages can behave in anti social manner in a variety of situations • The association of drug users with a Skatepark is incorrect • When a Skatepark was installed in Sherston there were similar worries and concerns but none of these things have been seen • Anti social behaviour can be overcome with the help of the police. Long Close is a good example • 2 play areas together is a good thing, it discourages bad behaviour 	
Environment/Flooding	2 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many examples of successful facilities installed in what were considered sensitive areas • The Skatepark in Warmley Forest Park had no effect on wildlife in the area 	
Youth/Children's play area	26 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teenagers shouldn't be pushed to the outskirts it leaves them vulnerable • Many Skateparks are next to small children's play areas • There is no evidence that teenagers have a detrimental effect on small children, quite the reverse in fact, shared resources and facilities are encouraged • Monkton Park is for the whole family but some people are trying to exclude teenagers • There should be an area for young people to develop their skills • It's high time we treated our young people with respect • We don't do enough for our teenagers, many are responsible • Skateboarders have been portrayed this evening as socially inept thugs. This is completely wrong. • Why buy a house next to a public park if you don't want to share it with young people? • We volunteer to teach young kids how to Skateboard (young person) • I am angry to hear the stereotypical negative views of young people this evening • What have the young people got to call their own? 	

Health & Safety	5 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I support Monkton Park because there is first aid available at the Olympiad • I support Monkton Park because of security, proximity to the police • There are advantages to a Skatepark – it gets Skateboarders off the streets • Monkton Park is ideal as far as health and safety goes • It's the right location for health and safety 	

Litter	3 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have asked for bins and brooms so we can keep the Skatepark clean (young person) • There is a perception that Skatepark users will generate litter, unfortunately litter is an issue in a lot of places, it is not exclusive to young people skateboarding • It is misconception that the issue of discarded used condoms is related to young people using Skateparks. There are examples of used condoms found in many places including several of the local lay-bys. 	

Design, size, visual impact	6 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The layout can be landscaped • This project will not concrete over the park • This won't be the Great Wall of China • To quote a 14ft wall is misleading, this is just one of the possible options • Many Skateparks are near to houses • The right place for this (decision) is at the Planning Committee 	

Other sites	1 comment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't send users away to the outskirts, keep it in the centre 	

Strategy for park	15 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I support Monkton Park because it's central, accessible in a community park • I live next to Monkton Park, it is an active park, a community park • Monkton Park is a vibrant lively park • Monkton Park is a public open space for every community member • I fully support a Skatepark in Monkton Park • Two play areas next to each other is a good thing, it discourages bad behaviour • Monkton Park is a perfect location as it is a family park • If Monkton Park is for peace, quiet and tranquility we should get rid of all events then! • The park must serve all people and must be inclusive of all groups including teenagers • We have 6000 young people in our community and they deserve a facility • Monkton Park is central for all to reach 	

Previous history	2 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I live next to the park and I regretted it when the last Skatepark was removed • Skateparks have been built in Monkton Park already, this proves it is the best site 	

General comments	30 comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence that this choice of site is the wrong one • I urge the board to recommend Monkton Park and stop 2 ½ years of squabbling • Too many NIMBYs • Watching skateboarding is fun! • Objectors are over reacting • The anti Monkton Park group deliver a lot of misinformation • I wonder if the real issue is an age/youth thing? • People are keen to see the town centre reinvigorated • Huge number of facilities for ball sports but facilities for wheeled sports are really low despite a huge number and range of users • Teenagers typically spend £10 - £25 • Ages 3 – 38 use wheeled sports facilities • Skateboarding is a highly skilled sport • A central Skatepark will bring in revenue and help business • Don't be bullied or intimidated into making the wrong decision, vote in favour 	

1.4.12.6.5. Feedback from providers of leisure activities and events in and around Monkton Park

1.4.12.6.5.1. The STG has invited comment from providers of leisure facilities in and around Monkton Park. To date no objections have been received from any provider.

1.4.12.6.5.2. The Olympiad Leisure Centre and Pitch & Putt have both confirmed they have no objections.

1.4.12.6.5.3. Chippenham Folk Festival Committee has provided the following statement with regard to the preferred site:

“The Chippenham Folk Festival has been made aware that comments about the now preferred site for a skate-park at Monkton Park are being circulated purporting to originate from the Folk Festival. For the avoidance of doubt, the Folk Festival has made no formal or informal comments about this now preferred siting at Monkton Park and any such comments made should be regarded as without the authority of the Chippenham Folk Festival.”

The Folk Festival position is that it is unlikely to comment on proposals if they do not directly affect the running of the Festival. If and when a detailed scheme for this particular site is forthcoming the Folk Festival will make an assessment of the impact. If this site is to be carried forward the Folk Festival would wish to be involved in the design process.'

2. Main considerations

2.1. Noise

- 2.1.1.** Any site with residents adjoining will be subject to noise considerations. It is for this reason that any site selected will have to go through the planning process where affect on local amenity including noise will be considered in detail. The only way to avoid a site with residents adjoining would be to select a rural or industrial site. Is this in the best interests of the young people?
- 2.1.2.** The STG agreed that whilst there was no obligation to carry out a noise impact assessment before a planning application was submitted, it was recognised that due to the historical sensitivity local residents would wish to be reassured that noise issues were being considered very carefully in respect of the Monkton Park location.
- 2.1.3.** A Noise Impact Assessment was therefore commissioned from Mach Acoustics. See Appendix 6. In accordance with Chippenham Area Board instructions on 7th January 2013, a second Noise Impact Assessment was commissioned from Hoare Lea. See Appendix 7
- 2.1.4.** Whilst the Council had experienced some 'focus/service' issues with Mach Acoustics, they were clearly experienced in assessing noise from Skateparks and furthermore had obtained and provided a lot of the core data required in any subsequent site-specific noise assessment. The STG therefore felt that to replace them with another consultant, would have led to further unjustified and disproportionate costs with no guarantee of improved expertise.
- 2.1.5.** Wiltshire Councils Public Protection Team has provided a Non Technical Executive Summary of the Mach Acoustics and Hoare Lea assessments. See Appendix 8
- 2.1.6.** Wiltshire Council's Public Protection Team did not recommend the "auralization" offered by Mach Acoustics was used as it was not considered helpful in this instance. The STG therefore agreed that visits should be arranged to local Skateparks for any local residents with concerns about noise.
- 2.1.7.** The visits to other Skateparks took place on 13th February 2013, 3 individuals from 2 households took up the offer.
- 2.1.8.** The Skateparks visited were Marlborough, Melksham and Corsham. Staff members from Marlborough Town Council and Corsham Town Council were available for questions on site; both confirmed that the facilities were very popular, complaints rare and of a minor nature.
- 2.1.9.** Local residents commissioned Clarke Saunders Associates to comment on the two noise impact assessments. See Appendix 9

2.1.10. Wiltshire Council Public Protection Team has provided observations on the Clarke Saunders report See Appendix 10. Mach Acoustics and Hoare Lea responded to the Clarke Saunders report. See Appendices 10a & 10b

2.1.11. In conclusion, Wiltshire Council's Public Protection Team states the following:

If members wish to site a Skatepark facility in Monkton Park we are satisfied that it can be sited and designed so as to meet stringent noise criteria so as to have no significant impact on amenity.

Should the project proceed the criteria outlined previously should be adopted as design criteria.

We will be recommending that the following data is used in the assessment:

Source data obtained by MACH acoustics (the highest of the source data submitted by Hoare Lea, Clark Saunders and Mach Acoustics) Background levels obtained by Mach Acoustics, with the exception of St Marys Street, where we would recommend using The Dutch Tea Room's background of 38dBLA90 for any assessment at this location and the lower levels of $L_{A90} = 30$ dB, obtained by ourselves for properties at the other end of St Marys Street e.g. The Old Vicarage.

2.2. Anti social behaviour

2.2.1. Anecdotally the STG recognise that there is a concern about anti social behaviour before a youth facility is introduced. The STG therefore asked Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Council Crime and Community Safety Group, the Integrated Youth Service and the Sports Development Team and officer specialising in Alternative Sports to contribute to this report in response to concerns raised.

2.2.2. Unfortunately Skateparks do on occasion attract anti social behaviour, however this is not usually by the skateboarders themselves but other young people or adults. Therefore the skateboarder is burdened with such a stereotype. A good example of how this has been self policed by a Skatepark committee is in Melksham where some of the older skaters have a good relationship with the police alerting them to any anti social behaviour.

2.2.3. The Crime and Disorder Act requires the Police, the NHS, and the Local Authority to work in partnership in tackling crime, the fear of crime and anti social behaviour.

2.2.4. Chippenham Police provided the following comments:

2.2.4.1. Chippenham Police are fully aware of the Skatepark project in Chippenham and the efforts made by many to seek a resolution to this matter. We are aware of the public sensitivities of any proposed location for the Skatepark and the concerns of many regarding potential anti – social behaviour associated with the implementation of such a site.

2.2.4.2. Wiltshire Police welcomes the proposal of any such facility that helps support a reduction in anti – social behaviour yet provides a focal point for younger people to engage in activities which are of interest to them.

2.2.4.3. It is the expectation of the Chief Constable that Police Officers spend as much time as possible out of Police Station patrolling and dealing with matters reported to the Police. Officer who are inside the Police station are usually committed with clerical work. Reports to the police are graded by call takers, for example a call to a serious road collision with injuries would be an immediate response with set time scales, incidents reported to the police where there is no crime being committed for example and or a reduced risk of harm attract a priority response (within the hour) minor incidents reported to the police would be graded as a scheduled response which has no set time scale.

2.2.4.4. Wiltshire Police will continue to deal robustly with any reports of anti social behaviour and will continue to work in partnership looking to deliver safe, satisfied and confident communities. We would like to reassure members of the public that Chippenham Neighbourhood Police Team carries out regular patrols in the centre of Chippenham.

2.2.4.5. There is no evidence to support drugs being only associated with those involved in Skateboarding. Evidence from Public Health that Drug use is in decline nationally and this is also evidenced in Wiltshire.

2.2.5. There have been no reports of anti social behaviour in relation to the small children's play area in Monkton Park to either the Police or Wiltshire Councils Community Safety Team.

2.3. Environment and Flooding

2.3.1. Ecology: In dealing with any planning application Wiltshire Council will, as a matter of course, consult with the Council's Principal Ecologist where concerns have been raised regarding the effect of a proposal upon wildlife/ecology. In general terms the need to consult the ecologist may be flagged up through the sites designation as having some interest, via the planning officers own assessment of the site and proposals or via local concerns regarding such matters.

2.3.2. Flooding: In locations where flooding or drainage are perceived to be a problem (flagged up either through reference to flood risk maps or local knowledge/experience) the Council will seek advice from its own Drainage Engineers and, in appropriate circumstances, from the Environment Agency.

2.3.3. Matters such as Ecology and flooding will be adequately addressed through the planning application process. This is normal planning procedure. In dealing with any planning application Wiltshire Council will, as a matter of course, consider the Conservation Area Appraisal. See Appendices 11 & 12

2.4. Youth & Children

2.4.1. The STG recognised that there were some anxieties regarding the proximity of a Skatepark to a small children's play area. There is no evidence that teenagers have a detrimental effect on small children. Quite the reverse in fact, shared resources and facilities are encouraged.

2.4.2. The majority of young people co-exist appropriately next to younger children; in fact often this proximity means that older young people often act more responsibility. Having facilities next to each other should enhance community relationships between the different age groups; also the facility should appeal to younger children to; there are many 3-10yrs old who currently use the parks with scooters and this should bring added value and benefit to their leisure use within the town and the families.

2.4.3. Shared spaces and facilities are more beneficial to the whole community.

2.4.4. Wiltshire Council Integrated Youth Service is not aware of any evidence to the contrary.

2.5. Health & Safety

2.5.1. Wiltshire Council has a clear and straightforward approach to health and safety. It adopts the principle of 'sensible risk management'. In other words it takes its responsibilities to protect health and safety seriously but does not give credence to the notion that all risk is intolerable or that frivolous restrictions are justifiable.

2.5.2. In the design and management of any council facility, the duty to undertake risk assessment is a core responsibility and proper and proportionate controls are established to either remove significant risk or mitigate to a tolerable level. Similarly environmental impacts are carefully assessed at the design and build stage.

2.5.3. Full and proper preventative maintenance schemes would be expected and the individuals in charge of the site would be expected to have the proper range of H&S awareness and skills.

2.5.4. As with all council facilities a schedule of inspection would be in place to ensure proper standards are being consistently applied.

2.6. Litter

2.6.1. This area of Monkton Park falls within the Chippenham Zone One therefore the bins are emptied and litter picking is completed daily through Wiltshire Council's contractor (Balfour Beatty Living Places).

2.6.2. The grass this side of the river is cut on a 3 week basis by the contractor.

2.6.3. There are 15 bins on this side of the Monkton Park area that are emptied daily.

3. Other considerations

3.1. Budget

3.1.1. Wiltshire Council has an obligation to ensure that best value is achieved for Tax Payers and therefore the cost issue will always be part of each stage of the considerations.

3.1.2. As a result of the Bridge Centre redevelopment alternative locations are being sought for the range of facilities and services currently there. The majority of the costs for relocation will be borne by the developer; this includes the Skatepark facility.

3.1.3. The Wiltshire Core Strategy document Chippenham Area Strategy establishes that the Skatepark is one of a number of facilities that is required in the area: “5.48 Specific issues that should be addressed in planning for the Chippenham Community Area include:

- further infrastructure requirements include improved facilities for the young, including a possible Skatepark for the town”

and each of the “Development templates” for three strategic allocations within the Core Strategy identified in Chippenham (North Chippenham, Rawlings Green/East Chippenham and South West Chippenham refers specifically to the a requirement for the provision and/or financial contributions for children’s play, accessible natural green space, allotments and a Skatepark.”

3.1.4. Funds may also be raised from external funders as is frequently the case with projects which benefit local communities.

3.2. The history relating to the previous facility in Monkton Park

3.2.1. The Skatepark STG researched and considered the previous Skatepark facility that was installed in Monkton Park by North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC). It was recognised that due to the historical sensitivity local residents would wish to be reassured that previous issues were being considered very carefully in respect of the Monkton Park location.

3.2.2. In 2001 North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC) installed a skate-park facility in Monkton Park constructed in steel and was in close proximity to the Olympiad Leisure Centre. Shortly after the facility opened there were noise complaints which resulted in a complaint being made to the Ombudsman about NWDC’s actions. The Ombudsman found: -

3.2.2.1. NWDC’s reliance on the minimum statutory publicity for the planning application fell short of good practice.

3.2.2.2. NWDC had failed to follow the advice of its own Environmental Health Officer in engaging a noise consultant to consider mitigation before seeking planning permission.

3.2.2.3. NWDC had failed to address issues of noise levels and failed to classify the noise as a statutory nuisance.

3.2.2.4. NWDC by keeping the site open while noise mitigation measures or an alternative site was found were allowing a statutory nuisance to continue and there was no justification for its continuation.

3.2.3. The Ombudsman found these actions amounted to maladministration and recommended NWDC take urgent action to ensure that the skate-park did not continue to create a statutory nuisance either through closure or an effective redesign. Therefore the Ombudsman did not indicate that the site was inappropriate in itself.

3.2.4. NWDC chose to close the Skate-park. The option to redesign the Skate-park which the Council had originally approved and had allocated funds to from its 2002/3 capital investment programme was not pursued. Some of the existing equipment was moved to the Bridge Centre where the facility has remained.

3.3. Petitions

3.3.1. Petition from objectors

3.3.1.1. A petition was handed in to Chippenham Area Board on 1st July 2013 and has been considered by the STG. The petition was signed by 1123 individuals and asked “the Council and the Board to NOT consider making a planning application for the erection of a Skatepark in Monkton Park and to look at other already identified sites suitable for this purpose.” It was also noted that the petition had not followed the set petition process as the signatories did not state their addresses. See [Wiltshire Council Petitions Scheme](#) however, the comments in the document were noted.

3.3.1.2. The STG recognise and acknowledge that some members of the community oppose the installation of a Skatepark facility in Monkton Park.

3.3.2. Petitions from supporters

3.3.2.1. The STG has been contacted by different groups of supporters who have chosen to gather support for the Monkton Park site next to the Olympiad via social media rather than traditional petition. The STG has been sent details of two Facebook sites: “All aboard for a Skatepark in Monkton Park” and “A Skatepark for Monkton Park” At the time of writing this report the sites had support from 420 and 566 respectively. It was noted that these sites did not follow the set petition process however; the comments on both sites have been noted.

3.3.2.2. A hard copy petition in support of a concrete Skatepark in Monkton Park adjacent to the Olympiad Leisure Centre was handed in to Monkton Park offices and contained 112 signatures.

3.3.2.3. An on line petition “Please support Chippenham Skatepark” was brought to the attention of the STG. This petition at the time of writing has 101 registered in favour. It was noted that these petitions do not follow the set petition process however, the comments were noted.

3.3.2.4. The STG recognise and acknowledge that some members of the community support the installation of a Skatepark facility in Monkton Park.

3.4. Civic Society Letter

The Civic Society wrote to Chippenham Area Board to raise objection. See Appendix 13. The STG has addressed the points raised in this letter in the body of this report.

3.5. Letter dated 2nd April 2012

3.5.1. A member of the public has raised an issue in respect of a letter dated 2nd April 2012 from the Chairperson of the STG. The member of the public argues that this is a promise by the council not proceed with Monkton Park if any additional noise is created. The STG were and are not the decision makers and therefore this issue needs to be considered by the Area Board.

3.5.2. To assist the Area Board in its consideration the Task Group would make the following comments. It is common sense that any activity in a public park has the potential to create noise and therefore applying an interpretation for a blanket ban on noise for a Skatepark may be considered illogical.

3.5.3. The reference in the letter to “any increase in noise levels for nearby residents” must be read in the context of noise assessments which the letter refers to; namely it appears that the standard that was going to be applied was a stringent 0dB above background noise level (BS4142) criterion. The letter was written in layman’s terms to reassure residents that stringent criterion will be applied in order to protect residents. The STG and Wiltshire Council remain committed to achieving this.

3.5.4. Subsequent to that letter there has been comprehensive consultation and communication with local residents to enable them to understand the process.

3.6. Design

3.6.1. The Skatepark STGs first task was to identify a site. The design of the proposed Skatepark has not yet been defined, awaiting the identification of a specific site/location. These matters will be considered when a planning application is submitted.

3.6.2. The impact of the proposed Skatepark upon the visual amenity of the area (including the impact on private residences and the public park) will be considered at that stage. When any planning application is submitted sufficient details will be required in order that local planning authority can fully assess the proposals.

3.6.3. Indicative designs were on display at the public meetings.

3.6.4. The Planning process considers amenity and amenity includes issues of visual impact, noise, disturbance etc to neighbours. These issues therefore will need to be addressed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the planning committee having regard to planning requirements. There will be full consultation for all affected parties within that process.

3.6.5. Final details as to design, full costings etc will be addressed during this process as those costings need to take into account amongst other things topography, surrounding amenity and skate users needs. These cannot be finalised until a site has been decided upon.

3.7. Public Law Equality Duties

3.7.1. In accordance with Wiltshire Council’s statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, any plans for design should incorporate the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations particularly in regard to disability.

3.8. Other sites suggested

3.8.1. In July and August 2013, suggestions were been received for three further sites and these have been investigated as follows:

- 3.8.1.1. The former Police Station, Wood Lane
The former Police Station and school are owned by Wiltshire Police and is shortly to be marketed for sale as part of their estates strategy.
 - 3.8.1.2. Westmead Primary School, Wood Lane
The former Westmead Primary School is owned by Wiltshire Police and is shortly to be marketed for sale as part of their estates strategy.
 - 3.8.1.3. The Olympiad Hall
The suggestion received was to convert the main sports hall within the Olympiad into an indoor Skatepark facility and rebuild the sports hall over the upper car park in Sadlers Mead. In terms of cost this option would be very expensive; any development on the existing car park would require a replacement parking provision to be identified in the vicinity.
- 3.8.2. The STG is of the opinion that the three suggestions above are not viable at the current time.
- 3.8.3. The STG has carried out a comprehensive consideration of land or sites in and around the town for a Skatepark facility and is of the opinion that it is not reasonable to keep adding new sites.

3.9. Strategy for Monkton Park

- 3.9.1. There are no covenants or restrictions relating to the area being used in respect of a Skatepark facility.
- 3.9.2. The STG has taken into consideration various potential plans for the Monkton Park area including those of Chippenham Vision Board, Chippenham Campus Development Team and Cherish Chippenham. The STG has liaised with these parties throughout the Skatepark Project. In some cases an STG member sits on these other bodies and direct liaison has been possible.
- 3.9.3. There are numerous examples of Skateparks being built within public parks; many local authorities consider Skateparks as amenities that are in keeping with a park environment. See Appendix 4
- 3.9.4. The STG is of the opinion that the installation of a Skatepark will enhance the existing recreational facilities for children, young people and families.
- 3.9.5. The STG recognise that some view Skateparks as “single sport” facility catering only for boys. The STG asked the Sports Development Team, Leisure and Play Strategy Manager and Integrated Youth Service to comment on these concerns:
 - 3.9.5.1. Skateparks are “wheeled sport” facilities and can be used by BMX riders (Olympic Sport), inline skaters, skateboarders and scooters and disabled in wheelchairs so actually caters for 5 very different activities/disciplines. A Skatepark has minimum barriers to participation. There is no cost for use of the facility; it can be enjoyed by males and females. Individuals with disabilities, including wheelchair users also use skate facilities in order to participate in sport.

- 3.9.5.2. Male participation in almost every sport is also higher than that of females. Sports such as football (a traditional male activity) have seen a huge increase in female participation across the last 20 years so no reason why skate participation can't change over a longer period of time.
- 3.9.5.3. The STG has been asked why wheeled sports participants should have access to a free to use facility when other sports incur costs. The STG asked the Sports Development Team, Leisure and Play Strategy Manager and Integrated Youth Service to comment on these concerns:
- 3.9.5.4. Cost of sports participation can vary hugely from activity to activity with some sports requiring very specific facilities or equipment that do have to be paid for and which can be expensive. However, in most sports there is always a cheaper option. For example, football, rugby and cricket can all be played in the park without the need to pay a fee. As with skate based activities the only cost is for the necessary equipment such as a football and rugby ball. Many sports people play a fee to play cricket/football etc as they play for clubs who have associated costs such as insurance or upkeep of a venue.

4. Options

4.1. Option 1 – take no further action

- 4.1.1. As the installation of a Skatepark has been identified as a priority for the community area, the STG does not recommend this option.

4.2. Option 2 – a temporary Skatepark facility

- 4.2.1. The advantage to providing a temporary facility is that we would hope to avoid any interruption in provision.
- 4.2.2. The disadvantages are the high ongoing running costs of a temporary facility, the greater insurance risk and the challenge to identify suitable temporary sites
- 4.2.3. A temporary facility would be constructed from wood and/or steel and there would be noise attenuation issues associated with a temporary facility.
- 4.2.4. Skateboarding and wheeled sports tend to be casual, spontaneous recreational activities as opposed to structured sport like football. Complying with specific times for participation is antithetic to the nature of the activity.
- 4.2.5. A temporary facility does not usually provide the scope to develop enhanced skills, nor does it encompass the requirements of younger children.
- 4.2.6. The Skate shed has been a temporary facility and it would be disappointing to replace one temporary facility with another temporary facility.
- 4.2.7. The STG is of the opinion that a temporary facility is not a viable option in the current climate and does not recommend this option.

4.3. Option 3 – an indoor facility

- 4.3.1. The advantages of an indoor facility are protection from the weather for users, staff on hand in case of accidents and any behaviour issues, it is likely that refreshments will be sold on site and noise is likely to be limited.
- 4.3.2. The disadvantages are the purchase, refurbishment, adaptation or construction of a building, building maintenance costs, both the fabric of building and the skate surface, building running costs, heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance, staff costs, entrance/session fees and membership fees.
- 4.3.3. Entrance fees will inevitably exclude some users (a local example of costs is Ramp Nation in Devizes £2.50 for 1 hour, £4.50 for 2 hours, £6.00 for 3 hours, £7.00 for 4hrs, £8.00 for a Day Pass or £50 per month for unlimited use.)
- 4.3.4. Usage tends to be session based and therefore profitable sessions will take precedence over casual skating.
- 4.3.5. Indoor facilities are normally operated by an entrepreneur therefore no guarantee of longevity, access is restricted to opening times and the general public and skaters do not get a chance to mix or casually observe the users in action.
- 4.3.6. Ideally the STG would wish to see both indoor and outdoor options in Chippenham as is the case in other areas. The STG does not view an outdoor facility as in conflict with an indoor offer, it is viewed as complementary. The STG is of the opinion that in the current climate an indoor facility would not be a viable instead of an outdoor facility and does not recommend this option.

4.4. Option 4 – an outdoor facility

4.4.1. Option 4a – Monkton Park next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA

- 4.4.2. This site is central in a safe, widely used community park. It has good access by public transport (bus and train) and good safe access by foot from all areas. The central location minimises territorial issues related to young people. The proximity of the site to the Police Station, Olympiad Leisure Centre and other recreational facilities in this well used public park provides a good level of informal supervision making it safe for users and reducing the risk of anti social behaviour.
- 4.4.3. This site has the benefit of several amenities nearby and is also close to the High Street; it is anticipated this will bring economic benefit to the town. During the selection process and review, this site scored significantly higher than any of the other sites considered.
- 4.4.4. This site has a negative history and some local residents are concerned about this option. Some young people have also expressed concern about being unwelcome at this site.
- 4.4.5. Young people have expressed a preference for this site. Expert and professional advice has been considered from independent contractors, noise consultants and professional officers within Wiltshire Council.

4.4.6. Feedback from other Towns and Parishes has confirmed that there are many examples across the county and indeed the country of successful Skatepark facilities in public parks. One town stating that their Skatepark was “Very well used. Probably the best youth facility we have.”

4.5. Option 4b – Bristol Road

4.5.1. This site did not score as high as Lovers Lane; however, the STG has been informed that this site is unlikely to be available due to the reconfiguration of the road network connected with the redevelopment of the Bath Road site.

4.5.2. This site did not score as high as Monkton Park and does not have the central location which minimises any risk of territoriality arising between differing youth groups within the wider community, it lacks the amenities and is less likely to bring benefit to the town centre; however, if the Area Board decided that Monkton Park was not appropriate then this site could be considered.

4.5.3. This site has not been the subject of the intense consultation that Monkton Park received due to being identified as the preferred site and its historical sensitivity. However it has always been one of the identified available sites under consideration during the public consultation process and as park land in an urban setting it has similar considerations to the Monkton Park sites which have been set out in detail in this report. As these will have to be addressed by the Council as part of the planning process in which affected residents are part of the statutory consultation process the legal advice is that this site can be considered as an available alternate option.

5. Recommendation to the Area Board

5.1. The STG has carefully considered the various options and has reached the view that the most appropriate location for the Skatepark is Option 4a - Monkton Park next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA. This view is based on the need for a Skatepark and the needs of the youth of Chippenham, the likely type of facility having regard to the current economic climate and the available land.

5.2. The concerns raised by some of the submitters as to noise; anti-social behaviour and litter are likely to be minimal with appropriate design and support and will need to be considered within the planning process for any site situated within the residential precincts.

5.3. On this basis the STG recommends that the Area Board approve the recommendation:

Approve proceeding to the next step namely the preparation and lodging of a Planning Application for the installation of a concrete construction Skatepark in Monkton Park, Chippenham for the benefit of the wider community next to the Olympiad Leisure Centre and MUGA. A map of the proposed area is attached See Appendix 14

Background documents used in the preparation of this Report

- 20th June 2002 Ombudsman report
- 2005 Chippenham & Villages Community Area Plan
- 2008 Chippenham Vision Strategy Document
- 2009 Chippenham and Villages Community Area Plan Review
- 10th May 2010 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 18th November 2010 STG Summary of Actions
- 22nd November 2010 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 17th January 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 28th February 2011 STG Summary of Actions
- 7th March 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 18th April 2011 STG Summary of Actions
- 9th May 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 6th June-2011 STG Summary of Actions
- 4th July 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 12th September 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 14th November 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 16th November 2011 Minutes of Chippenham Town Council Leisure & Amenities Committee
- 17th November 2011 STG Summary of Actions
- 9th January 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 16th January 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 27th February 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 5th March 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 2nd April 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 30th April 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 28th May 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 9th July 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 20th August 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 3rd September 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 3rd October 2012 Notes - Meeting with a member of the public
- 16th October 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 5th November 2012 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 19th November 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 26th November 2012 Summary of public meeting
- 28th November 2012 STG Summary of Actions
- 7th January 2013 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 31st January 2013 STG Summary of Actions
- 19th February 2013 Notes from site reviews
- 4th March 2013 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 13th March 2013 Chippenham Town Council Leisure & Amenities Committee
- 8th April 2013 Notes Chairman's briefing
- 4th June 2013 Notes Chairman's briefing
- 18th June 2013 STG Summary of Actions
- 1st July 2013 Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting
- 27th August 2013 STG Summary of Actions

Appendices:	<p>Appendix 1 - Benefits of a Skatepark</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Skatepark STG Membership</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Skatepark STG Terms of Reference</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Feedback from Town and Parish Councils</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Map of sites</p> <p>Appendix 6 – Noise assessment Mach Acoustics</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Noise Assessment Hoare Lea</p> <p>Appendix 8 - Non Technical Executive Summary</p> <p>Appendix 9 – Clarke Saunders Associates report</p> <p>Appendix 10 – Wiltshire Council observations document on Clarke Saunders report</p> <p>Appendix 10a – Mach Acoustics response to Clarke Saunders report</p> <p>Appendix 10b – Hoare Lea response to Clarke Saunders report</p> <p>Appendix 11 – Planning flowchart</p> <p>Appendix 12 – Planning factsheet</p> <p>Appendix 13 – Civic Society letter</p> <p>Appendix 14 – Map of proposed area</p>
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No unpublished documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.

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