
Report To:	Planning & Environment Committee	Date:	14 July 2025
Contact Officer:	Paula Harrison		
Subject:	Shaw Ridge Play Area Feedback		

1. Shaw Ridge Play Area

- 1.1 Following the resolution of Full Council on 16th June 2025, to commission a new play area at Shaw Ridge, a number of comments were submitted to the Parish Council office. All comments have been acknowledged and advised that these would be shared with Councillors. Comments are listed in **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 Ongoing dialogue with a representative of Shaw FAB has established that around one fifth of the existing meadow will be used by the new play area. Additional meadow will be created with the input of Shaw FAB on the grassed area opposite.

Cost Implications

- 1.3 The budget for the new Shaw Ridge Play area is contained within the budget allocation for play renewal. The creation of a new meadow will be progressed over the summer period.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That this Committee notes the comments and instructs the Parish Team accordingly.

Appendix A

Comments submitted 16th June onwards:

Moving a children's play area onto a wildflower meadow brought about by volunteers doesn't send a very good message to the general public...
Please please please do not relocate the children's play area on shaw ridge to the meadow. There are so many reasons. It's the best view. A place I have sat, to think, to smile, to have a cry, and I see people pray here too, in peace! You only have to visit on a pleasant day to know how popular it is. Many locals sit and chat here in the peace, many take photos of this area, the flowers the new growth that is appearing in the meadow. I walk around this small area, my dogs loves to run and roll in the long grass, like so many others. It is such a cherished peaceful area, please locate it anywhere but here. It will be devastating to the local community.
Please find an alternative location for the play area and leave the valuable wildflower meadows alone. We should be protecting the insects, small mammals, reptiles and birds now, habitats take time to evolve and this one is well established, it would be criminal to bulldoze it.
I am writing to express my grave concerns and those of many other local residents, regarding the proposed location for a new play park that would involve the destruction of the established wildflower meadow located on Shaw Ridge. For many years, dedicated volunteers have poured countless hours of work into cultivating this wildflower meadow. It is not merely an undeveloped patch of land; it is a thriving, biodiverse ecosystem that is teeming with life and attracts a significant amount of local wildlife. We regularly observe many types of bees, butterflies and beetles flourishing within this vital habitat. This meadow serves as a crucial green space for the community, offering both beauty and a valuable educational resource, demonstrating the power of nature within an urban environment. The destruction of this invaluable natural asset would be a devastating blow to our local environment and a profound waste of the immense effort invested by volunteers. The destruction of this meadow would have a serious effect to the habitat and food chain of various flora and fauna that we are so lucky to have in our beautiful parish. It would also directly contradict any stated commitments the council has to biodiversity, ecological preservation and community engagement. I urge you West Swindon Parish Council to immediately reconsider this proposed location and explore alternative sites for the new play park. Surely, there are other suitable areas within West Swindon that do not require the sacrifice of such a well-established and ecologically rich habitat. We are not opposed to a new play park for the community; however, it must not come at the expense of our precious natural spaces. We implore you to prioritize environmental responsibility, the tireless work of our volunteers and most importantly the consider the wildlife who are already facing endangerment, such as the hedgehogs (who I have personally seen in this meadow). We look forward to a prompt and positive response, confirming your commitment to protecting the West Swindon - Shaw Ridge wildflower meadow. Sincerely,
Please do not destroy the Meadow or path in front of the wooded area for a playground on Shaw Ridge in West Swindon. There are other areas that could be considered rather than wreck a carefully planned and cultivated field by local volunteers (over many years) that adds value for people and local wildlife. These areas are cherished by the community especially us dog walkers. I ask you to reconsider these plans.
Dear Sirs, I am told that you are planning to destroy the wild flower meadow on Shawridge by relocating the play equipment to that site. Why? I am interested to know the benefits of doing this and at what cost? Why spend precious taxpayers money doing something which appears to be totally unnecessary. An explanation would be appreciated before the meeting on Monday
I don't agree that the FAB field on Shaw Ridge is a suitable location for a play area and think an alternative site should be provided. This is due in part to the potential destruction of the established wildlife area and also the potential for it to become a meeting point at night for people who won't respect the area, as it is quite remote. I do support play areas for children in West Swindon.

I am a resident and a member of West Swindon FAB. I will be at tonight's council meeting but want to state my objections to the the proposed new park on the area known as the wildflower meadow at Shaw Ridge. There are plenty of parks locally already in very close proximity but there are no other wildflower areas in the vicinity. Volunteers have been involved in creating and maintaining this project for 8 years, myself almost 5, and this is showing a lack of appreciation of the dedication and work that was involved in this creation. This meadow in a peaceful and tranquil area where birds & crickets can be heard and is so good for our wellbeing being and mental health. I walk this area constantly in the flowering period and I know others do too. Please re-consider this proposal and value our input

I've just heard that it's being considered to move the children's playground along Shaw Ridge to where the flower meadow is. This would be very detrimental to the local wildlife, flora and fauna which has taken years to be created. It's a beautiful area along the ridge and an absolute delight that uplifts our spirits and wellbeing on our runs. Why is the playground being moved? If that is necessary, can you please find another location. Many thanks,

I understand you feel the need to relocate the childrens play area along the ridge to the flower meadow. Please don't! The meadow is important to our environment and wildlife. It's beautiful when the flowers come out. Surely, it makes sense to update the play area where it is already. The children are in the shade there in the summer and love climbing the slopes, which improves their motor skills. We also need to be able to teach children about nature too and gwhats better than our meadow on their doorstep.

Re: Proposed play area on Shaw Ridge I've been reading the posts on social media regarding the plans for a play area on Shaw Ridge, and wish to register my concern over the consideration of the wild meadow area for this project. As a very local resident to this (Packington Close), I believe that the ridge has a lot to offer young people by showing the value of nature and conservation. It is enjoyed by people of all ages, rather than a playground which is considerably more limited in appeal. There are other areas on the ridge that would not be so devastating to the local wildlife to build on, and I would appeal to the council to consider all the alternative options. There are numerous play areas already around West Swindon, with a couple within very close proximity to this location, and I do not think that this valuable site is the right one for this proposal. With kind regards

I would like to record my objection to siting play area in Shaw Ridge wildlife meadow. We have had notice boards wrecked twice, present play area vandalised, ebike ridden at speed repeatedly on Saturday. Muggings at rubbish bin, drug dealing at top of cinema etc car park. No convenient disabled, easy access toilets. No housing overseeing play area, chance of bullying, mugging. Historic flasher twice reported in area. Several cycle thefts by threats. Drug taking in copse. I agree the need for play areas with access for all, like Coate Waters mums on a mission but think it would need parking, similar changing room, disabled toilets close by.

Please note that I would like to Parish Council to note my objection to the proposal to locate a children's play park on the Shaw Ridge Flower Meadow, to be discussed at this evening's Parish Council meeting. There are already parks in the vicinity, one within 100 metres (Shaw Ridge), one in close proximity to Shaw Ridge School (Eastleaze Field), another at the rear of the Bramptons (Tumpy Field), not to mention the park on Cartwright Drive.

Hello, This is regarding the proposed play area on Shaw Ridge that involves destroying the meadow that West Swindon FAB have been cultivating/preserving for years. I do not think that would be a good idea and stand behind the proposal that a different place be found. I am a mother to two children still in primary school and I would much rather them experience nature in its intended form, cultivating a natural play and exploration. Many thanks

Hello, my name's ***** , I'm a botanist and I'm writing as I've just heard that a beautiful meadow in Swindon that I was introduced to last year is earmarked to have a play area relocated onto it. I certainly appreciate the need for good, safe play areas for children - especially in such lovely green spaces as you have in Swindon. But for nearly a decade members of the local community have been working with the local farmer (Chris Rummig) to look after this precious piece of grassland. I'm confused as to why the play area needs to be relocated to this specific area, when there is a large amount of mown grassland surrounding it that would be just as good, but would have a significantly lower ecological impact. It's taken years of work to nurture this meadow into the species-rich area it is today, and to wipe it out on a whim is heart-breaking. Given we're in a nature crisis, parish councils such as yours have a big responsibility to care for the local environment and the species we share our homes with. I strongly urge you to reconsider and relocate the play area to another similar area that is home to fewer species. Thanks for your consideration,

I love the idea of a new play ground but not the FAB site that seems really unfair to nature and those volunteers. How about expanding tumpy playground? Or the field across from tregoz school?

Hi I am writing in connection with the report that you are planning to build a play area on the Shaw Ridge wildflower meadow. I am aghast that you are even considering this. You have been happy to take some credit for the benefits from the hours of voluntary work that have gone into creating this wildflower and wildlife haven but are now, it seems, prepared to DESTROY all of that and for what reason? The play area is well used in its current location and you have done a great job in providing numerous play areas across West Swindon. THERE IS NO NEED TO MOVE THIS ONE TO THE SPOT YOU PROPOSE. As a body you are held in good esteem - I can say that because of the full support you have given to a litter picking group I formed and lead for some years. The provision of bins and other services is all good. YOU NOW RISK LOSING THAT REPUTATION AT A STROKE. Please cancel these plans and protect the meadow forthwith.

Good morning, this is to formally object to the plans to relocate the play park at Shaw Ridge on to the wild flower meadow as proposed. It takes so much time and effort to establish a wildflower meadow and to encroach on this space is unnecessary - firstly, for those involved in the establishment of this wildflower meadow, but also for the detrimental environmental impact that you would be causing through the loss of this habitat. There are many less important areas which would be considered, without encroaching on this space. Please consider relocating this park elsewhere. It seems extremely unfair to create such devastation, just for another park to be frequented by teenagers and antisocial behaviour

Hi, I've heard you're planning to move the children's play area to the wildflower meadow. Please don't do this. Leave the space for important pollinators and other creatures. This site has taken years to establish. Don't be the reason for it's destruction. Leave the space for all to enjoy please.

Please register this objection against the proposal to relocate the shaw ridge play area onto the wild flower meadow nearby. The meadow is an important and cherished area which should remain protected. I see no advantage in relocating the existing play area which functions well and with appropriate investment, over time can continue to do so

I'm writing to register my concern about the relocation of the Shaw Ridge play area to the area of the flower meadow. I am the local farmer who originally carried out the annual cutting of the meadow. The meadow is a long term project and is being to become an important island of biodiversity in a sea of mown grass. I showed the area to a Plantlife ambassador last year who was impressed with the progress at the site. With all the space across Shaw Ridge and the surrounding area I fail to believe an alternative suitable site can't be found. We are in a biodiversity crisis and this is completely at odd with what we should be doing.

Dear Councillors - I was made aware just today of plans to relocate a play area at Shaw Ridge into an area which has been nurtured by for nearly a decade as a wild flower meadow. As the country has lost all but a few percent of its precious meadows I urge you to reconsider and to select a different location. This would preserve this important habitat both for the flowers there and for our severely declining insects for which they are a food source. Thank you,

Please seek an alternative location for play area and do not destroy wildlife haven at Shaw Ridge at a time when we need to value biodiversity. Very short sighted to destroy this area
I would like to register my protest to the movement of the play area in shaw ridge to the flower meadow. Wildlife meadows are so important to bio diversity and supporting our wildlife is so important to the survival of so many species and this piece of land has been successfully rewilded over the past 10 years. There are so many spaces in and around swindon which could accommodate this without destroying our few remaining wild areas.
I have just become aware that there are plans to move the play area to the wild flower meadow on Shaw Ridge! This would be a travesty as there is now an abundance wild flower and insects here and has taken 10 years to become established. We are supposed to be supporting wild life and green spaces, there has been no consultation of those that live in the surrounding area. Leave nature alone! The bees and us as humans need this space
Please do not make Shaw Ridge meadow into a play area. There must be more suitable areas you could use. The preservation of wildlife and wild flowers in this piece of land already falls short of what's needed to support the bees. I moved to be more rural to see areas like this so seeing I covered in tarmac would be hugely disappointing
It is upsetting to hear that West Swindon Council has arbitrarily decided to destroy the wildflower meadow created and tended by dedicated volunteers to relocate the nearby play area. Why? Surely there must be an alternative site that won't destroy this biodiverse area which volunteers have given so much time and effort to creating/maintaining. I urge the council to rethink this plan and find an alternative site to relocate the play area to.
I am writing to express my sadness at proposals to destroy the meadow at Shaw Ridge to re-locate the children's playpark. I would ask that you take more time to consider this plan. I'm sure a playpark could be sited elsewhere (what's wrong with its present location). However, the meadow has taken 10 years to establish. Could the Tumpy playpark not be extended and improved or whatever is hoped to be achieved with a new playpark just a short walk away? This seems to be a such a sacrifice when council's everywhere else are seeking to develop areas such as this beautiful area. Kind regards,
Am I correct in believing the Shaw Ridge play area may be moved to an area that is currently a wildflower field. Being there is a lot of open space can it not be moved to an area that has been set up in an area that is so important to insect life.
Hi. I would like to record my dismay at the news regarding the possibility of a play area being installed in the shaw ridge meadow. Lynne and west Swindon FAB have worked this area for 10 years and I've volunteered on occasions, raking grass which is back breaking work, to destroy it would not only be a slap in the face for everyone who has poured their heart and soul into this project, it will also destroy the biodiversity going on there. Has anyone been up there to see what they've managed to achieve? Please, please do not destroy this beautiful meadow.
I have just heard that you are thinking of moving the Shaw Ridge children's play area on to the wildflower area. Please do not do this. Volunteers have done a wonderful job making this a beautiful place for wildlife and for people to enjoy.
So utterly disappointed and disgusted you are tearing up the wildflower meadow for a kds play park. Should be ashamed of yourselves.
The decision is a big mistake. 10 years it's taken to get the meadow where it is now. 10 years of sweat and tears from VOLUNTEERS who have spent their own money and time transforming this area into a wildlife haven and you take it away in 5 minutes. Shameful. West Swindon has a plethora of play parks - do we really need another one and why choose an area dedicated to wildlife. It's a very sad day and a decision made by people who don't understand.

Just to support the FAB group that have spent a decade rewilding the portion of Shaw Ridge that has apparently now been earmarked for the play area which currently lies just opposite. It seems like the cost benefit ratio for the parish wouldn't make sense and more importantly would destroy a wildlife habitat which, given the current decline of insects becoming quite a serious concern, seems to contravene the Parish's own goals.

I am very sorry to hear that the wild flower meadow that has taken the volunteers so much time and love to create is going to be destroyed. Why? Why are we so unwilling to make space for nature in our lives?

I am against moving the smallplay area at Shaw fields to the area that has been lovingly cared for and tended for many years for wildlife by the local Westlea community. This would be an unnessasary waste of Parish Councils money, that could be better spent elsewhere or move the play area to another area down the footpath.

For nearly a decade a tremendous amount of voluntary work has gone towards changing a small piece of Shaw Ridge into a wildlife haven. And this has been successful with wild flowers everywhere. Unfortunately, West Swindon Parish Council are recommending that the children's play area, currently located 100m away, be relocated to the flower meadow. There are other locations available. Why on earth would you want to do this.? You clearly have no respect, or care for biodiversity, the environment or all the voluntary work. Appalling decision. This will not be hidden from the public if it goes ahead. Please explain why you would want to do this.

Re shaw ridge wildlife haven. Establishing such wildlife havens is a long and delicate process to ensure diversity and they are vital to biodiversity, already under pressure. If options are available to not destroy any established green spaces (not just this one) this should always be a priority. The idea that a park, where we want children to be outside in nature, to be the cause of nature destruction seems flawed

I would like to oppose the planned location for a childrens play area in support of the current meadow. We all need wildlife so that children have a healthier future in Swindon. Listen to the people on Monday, look after the environment

With the Shaw ridge play park being rebuilt can I request that existing slide (which looks to still be in good working order) be relocated to the Clay Pits park?
There are some good slopes around it which I think would be perfect for the slide and it could also serve as a fun entrance into the park for the kids!! I grew up playing at clay pits park from when it was first built so I have many fond memories of it and now im still very close so my son plays there regularly, so we would love to see the long slide located there for the children who are growing out of the toddler park, but not quite ready for the older child equipment in the big park.
Kind regards, from a long time resident!