

Liskeard Town Council – Facilities Committee
Open Spaces and Parks Working Party
Rapson's Park
Revised Strategy – Nov 2021



Rapson's park named after John Rapson a former Mayor, has an extent of 0.33 ha and was originally gifted to Caradon District Council.

This park is currently home to Liskeard's skate park. Built in 2005 this is now showing signs that it has nearly reached the end of its economic life and will probably need dismantling and or replacing over the next 5 years. Adjacent to the Skate park is a multi-use games area suitable for informal games of football and the like, built as a package with the Skate Park and completing the complex is the adjacent Rapson's Field which is widely used for recreation and dog walking, but is controlled by Cornwall Council. It is the main open space for the south of the town and some of the remnant hedgerows also provide a good habitat for wildlife.

There are no public toilets in the vicinity and no other public services nearby.

At the front of the Park is a lorry park and car park operated by Cornwall Council which is sparsely used. There is a further Cornwall Council car park across the road, which is more regularly used. We require clarification on whether that car park is also included in the

devolution package.; we believe both were originally controlled by Caradon District Council and thus should both be returned to Liskeard Town Council.

The Games complex is leased by Liskeard Town Council from Cornwall Council, though the lease expired around 6 years ago, and the Council are currently holding over.

The Town Council needs to adopt a strategy for the future use of Rapsons Field, the adjacent grassed field, currently under Cornwall Council's control, also considering the future of the Skate Park and MUGA, and ideally incorporating the Car and Lorry parking area as a source of revenue.

Cost to Revenue Budget

Operating costs are as follows:

	20/21 Budget		20/22 Budget
Repairs & Renewals	2,500		1,000
Ground Maintenance	1,500		1,500
Staff Time	2,500		2,500
CCTV		To be quantified	

Notes:

Some fencing to be replaced in 20/21 budget year

Staff Time is not budgeted but based on 2-3 hours per week attendance

Ground maintenance, part of a contract for all parks

There will be additional costs associated with the grassed area currently controlled by Cornwall Council, cutting tree and hedge maintenance, and occasional repairs to the car parks surface. We are uncertain if the street lights would also become the responsibility of the Town Council or would remain with Cornwall Council Highways.

Current Usage

The Skate Park is reasonably well used, the MUGA rarely used, though recently a Church group has taken to using for games on some evenings, and though some local young people gave the skate park a face lift and painted out the graffiti last year, it is looking tired, starting to delaminate and the surface is showing signs of deterioration. The grassed area under control of Cornwall Council is mainly used by dog walkers and leisure strolling.



The MUGA will also require refurbishment in the next few years.

The facility is also hidden behind a lorry park and not well overlooked. This can give rise to some occasional anti-social behaviour.

Temporary CCTV has now been fitted to a lamp post which provides a good view of the skate park and surrounding areas and we wait to see if this reduces incidences of vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Future proposals

The Skate park will require reconstruction in 2- 4 years time (Council Estimates) and the Council must decide if it is to be replaced and then where it is best placed – in the same location or on another Council open space.

The Parks and Open spaces working party currently considers and recommends to Facilities Committee that a new Skate Park on this site, located over the existing park and the MUGA would be the best solution.

Reasons include, the availability of car parking, the existing use on the site, space to install a state of the art skate park, within but not too close to residential areas. There would also be the opportunity to license traders to provide coffee, ice-cream and snacks on the car park areas. This could encourage more people to use the facilities and then migrate to the town centre whilst in Liskeard for some shopping.

Consultation with the users, including the Youth Council will be essential to determine the best design of Skate Park. The best parks are now manufactured from concrete which gives

the most resilient surface. We also need to consult with current users of the field and investigate the amount of car parking use and consult with users.

It would be logical to combine all areas in one devolution package and operate them as one park, with the Car parks and Lorry Park providing revenue support.

The adjacent field can continue to be used by the community, as a dog walking area, or developed as a play space, to be determined after consultations.

In conclusion the Parks and Open Spaces working party recommends the adoption of this strategy and to seek the devolution of this asset to the Town Council.

NEXT ACTIONS

- **Propose a recommendation to Facilities Committee to approve and adopt this strategy.**
- If approved advise Cornwall Council of the Councils proposals
- Prepare budget for acquisition, operation and future investment.
- Cost replacement of skate park
- Arrange consultations on use and replacement of Skate Park
- Agree the devolution package with Cornwall Council and set timetable
- Seek and obtain Full Council approval to accept the devolvement of Rapson's parks and Car Parks on terms agreed with Cornwall Council
- Execute the devolution process and take control and ownership of the park and car park complex.
- Implement the development strategy.

Cllr Julian Smith

Chair – Parks and Open Spaces Working party

4/2/2020 Updated 04/03/2020; 11/11/2021/: 12/11/2021 – post Parks Working party approval

Appendix 1 – Plan of Rapsons Field:

