

My name is Ian Chatt. I am chair of the WRWRA an organisation that has been trying, without ~~any~~ success, to influence the scope and resultant impact of the Madley Park Playing Field project to take account of, and thus benefit, the needs of all sections of the community.

I am also a volunteer with the Lower Windrush Valley project, the RSPB and the BTO, so I admit to having an interest in maintaining and increasing the green environment and wildlife habitat. That said I have also run football teams, athletics club teams and given hundreds, and possibly thousands of hours as a volunteer in support of children and teenager activities as well as the ecology and environment.

I also served as a school governor when I lived in Kent.

I want to bring to this committee's attention an opportunity which I fear will be missed if someone doesn't facilitate some joined up thinking between this committee and the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny committee's (and the Cabinet's) decision regarding the MP playing field project.

I was encouraged when I read the Minutes of the ~~last~~ EO&S meeting on 30 March 2017. You will recall that Mr Coles reported back to the committee about the Oxfordshire State of Nature report. Clearly it has been recognised that trees, hedges which provide joined up corridors for wildlife etc. are a huge benefit to the well being of society, especially on estates and in suburban areas.

If the Madley Park Playing fields project goes ahead without the mitigation measures that the WRWRA has suggested, there will be a loss of valuable habitat, especially for birds, hedgehogs and even bats etc.

Notwithstanding the negative (and I believe false) reasons given in the Head of Leisure Services paper to cabinet yesterday, we believe that it is both desirable and extremely simple to replace that lost habitat by planting a realigned length of hedge and trees, thereby achieving the following benefits;

- Replacement and improvement of habitat,
- Retain the 'feeling' of a green space for those simply using the field for informal recreation.
- Provide noise and visual screening for nearby (including elderly) residents,
- Segregate the teenzone from other sports.
- Segregate the numerous dog walkers from the teenzone and playground.
- Stop the migration of litter across the field. Containing it makes it easier to keep clean and 'in keeping' with the desired environment for Madley Park residents.
- Create a 'buffer zone' as recommended in the National Playing Fields Association Standard.
- Meet the aspirations of the WODC Environmental Local Plan.

We hope that this committee can take up this suggestion, bring influence to bear elsewhere in the Council so that harmonisation and compromise between the various sections of the community can be thrashed out. The MPPF steering group and the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny committee has so far failed to have the necessary vision beyond promoting a playground and teenzone.

The Council can easily do the right thing, so please take this opportunity to demonstrate joined up thinking and leadership such that the final design of the play areas includes a surrounding green mitigation buffer zone which complies with its own stated policies and provides benefits for all.

I urge you to get involved and intervene to facilitate what would be a win / win outcome instead of accepting that the Cabinet has approved a scheme which would or could leave a poor legacy, as well as a sense of frustration and anger for the many tens (and hundreds) of local residents who will be directly and indirectly affected, negatively or positively by this project.

I ask for you support.