

WORKING TOGETHER



BOURNEMOUTH
PARKS
FOUNDATION

FPA Pilot Parks Watermans Park Masterplan FOR CONSULTATION

Doc. No. Wa-MPD-01

1a. Site Constraints

Access and Circulation

- The park is widely known because of it's visibility from the Christchurch By-Pass. The only (hard to find) entrance is 1 mile away on Dorset Road meaning its users are from the surrounding estate and neighbouring St Josephs primary school.
- Two ungated pedestrian entrances; the main central path with an arch is signed as shared use, the second is a gap in the fence near the school boundary. One maintenance gate aligned with the southern boundary path with a horizontal locked barrier.
- Pedestrian entrances are narrow and low key. The wider maintenance entrance draws the pedestrian to it, to find a barrier.
- The tarmac paths do not form a network or pleasurable routes.
- Mixed boundaries, mesh fencing to north west, north east and south and variable garden fencing. The eastern edge has shrubby willows on the banks of the river.
- Car parking limited to one side of Dorset Road, off site.



Land Use and Constraints

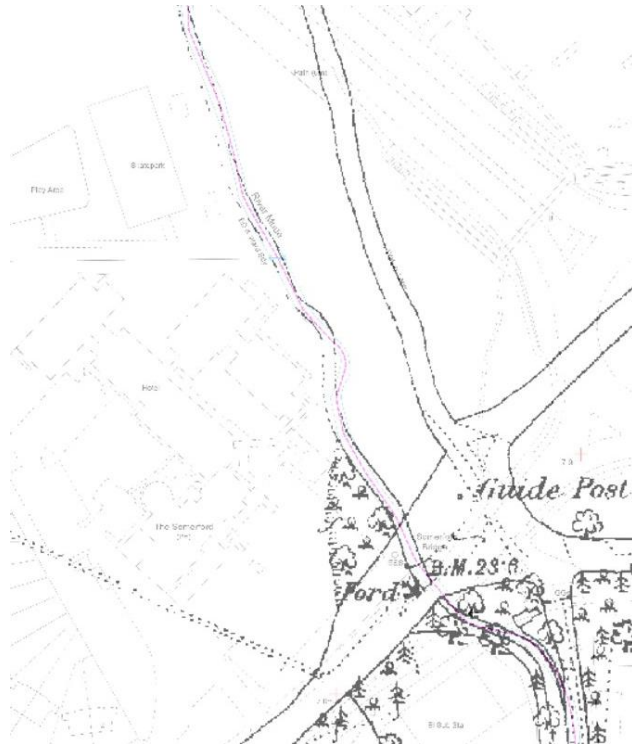
- Pavilion building with changing rooms, toilets only open during football matches. Poor condition. Blocks views into the site. Poor welcome.
- Close mown grass monoculture. Poor ecological value, low species recordings.
- Flat site with no geographical features except the hidden river banks.
- School boundary fence is a positive element as it increases the experience of open space.
- Large mature pine trees to north eastern boundary provide interest but little visual screening of the dual carriageway. Young infill planting.
- The Mude is screened from view by shrubby willows though the rare damselfly prefers open water. Bats have limited flight routes confined to boundaries.
- Extension area land has widespread dense deciduous shrub/bramble layer, with reasonable wildlife value. The roundabout/Somerford Road boundary edge has poor visual quality into the site. Watery Lane is no longer passable.



1b. Site Constraints

Site History

- The Recreation Ground now known as Watermans Park came into being in the 1950's when The Somerford Estate was built on open fields.
- The name Somerford, first used in AD1140, comes from the fording place of the river Mude being only passable in the summer months. This crossing point of the Mude is now barely noticeable, only indicated by the road bridge railings, the water concealed by shrubs.
- The land was bought from the Meyrick Estate who still own the parcel of land to the South West of Somerford Roundabout.
- The building of Christchurch By-Pass in 1958 obliterated the north south route of the river Mude and Watery Lane. These two hidden landscape elements, concealed in the extension area, are key to the transformation of the park.



EP1 – 1843 – 1893 showing Watery Lane and the fording place of the river Mude. The river and route continue today south of Somerford Road as a shared path to Mudeford.



View of the fording place looking south west. Today the only indication of a river is the bridge railings.

1c. Site Constraints

Existing Views 1 - 10



V1 – View of minor entrance next to the school



V2 – View of main entrance and younger play area



V3 – View to main entrance on Dorset Road from Edward Road approach



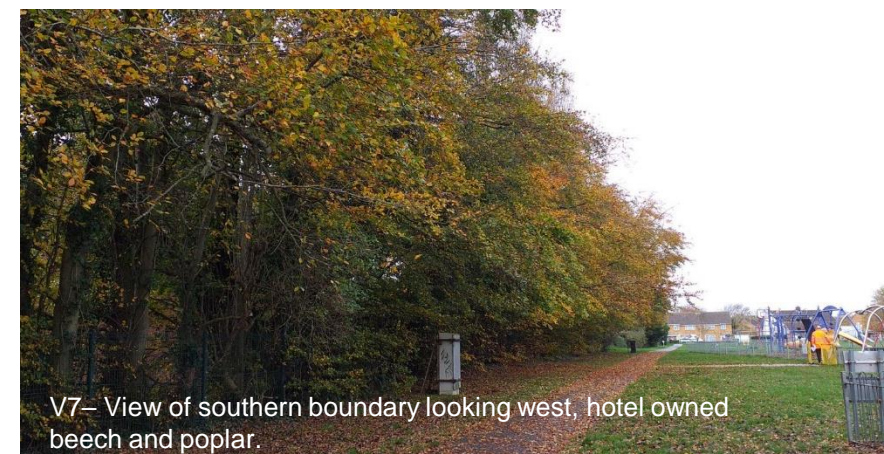
V4 – View looking to southern boundary of gardens along Edward Road



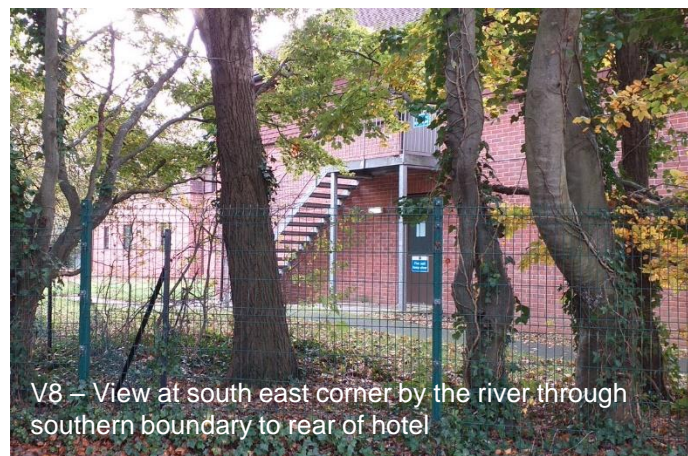
V5 – View of pavilion from Dorset Road



V6 – View of pavilion from park



V7 – View of southern boundary looking west, hotel owned beech and poplar.



V8 – View at south east corner by the river through southern boundary to rear of hotel



V9 – View from park to the east bank at the park extension area



V10 – View towards bypass of shrubby willows screening the river

1d. Site Constraints

Existing Views 11 - 19



V11 – View of large play area and wheel park



V12 – View to south showing standing water on ramp plateau and ramp decor



V13 – view from the park of Mude culvert looking north



V14 – View over 4 traffic lanes to the Mude river



V15 – View south from school playground



V16 – View northwest of bridge ramp



V17 – View northwest of footpath to nowhere



V18 – View south from bridge ramp along desire line to Somerford Road



V19 – View from Somerford Road to trees along Watery Lane route, desire line to bridge ramp bears right

2. Initial Engagement Phase - Feedback

177 responses to the online surveys were received with emails from Edward road residents and the Scout Leaders. Eight year 6 students of neighbouring St Joseph’s school were interviewed in an hour long park visit.

Vision	Most respondents liked and used Watermans Park because it is local and they like the open space. The future vision for the park was generally for a clean, safe, pleasing, relaxing place. They want to see its future as a community and socialising space for families and children. More than half liked the idea of a bridge over the river and could see various benefits for it. A food kiosk/cafe was mentioned by adults and children as a welcome addition.	
Anti-social behaviour	Anti-social behaviour was mentioned in the playground with graffiti on the pavilion, play kit and skate ramps. The need for more lighting of the path was highlighted by some, along with a request for CCTV.	A place for the community
Dogs	The park is well used for dog walking, though dog mess and out of control dogs is a reason not to visit the park more. An online respondents and a school child requested a dog play park.	Improved facilities
Play for all	Although the play areas are well used and the main reason to visit the park, respondents wanted improved equipment, a water play area and more accessible play facilities. A lack of equipment for the younger ages was mentioned on line and by the school children. The wheel park is used by a very small portion of older survey respondents, more by school age children but most would go to 2rivers meet skate facility if this was removed here. Skate facility improvements were requested on line. The children wanted a longer, faster zip wire, large trampoline, tennis court, combined football and rugby pitch, full size basketball court, an obstacle course/fitness trail and a BMX/pump track. They play informal football but think the pitch is too big and say if it was smaller it would make space for other activities.	Healthy activities
Space to relax	People felt there was generally a lack of seating around the park. More benches were requested and one respondent said they had no reason to visit the park as they didn’t play sport or have a dog, suggesting it does not attract people to come and relax.	Wildlife value
		Top 3 ideas for improvement
		Community was mentioned frequently and the local events held in the park were well liked and the space for these should be kept. The local Scout group use the park frequently for team games. Respondents mentioned protecting the park as an open space and not letting it be built on.
		Poor and lack of facilities was a common reason not to visit the park, experienced as rundown, old and outdated. The pavilion facilities were seen as poor and inadequate. There were many requests for toilets/toilets open more often.
		At the moment the only exercise facility is the football pitch and single basket hoop. An outdoor fitness trail was requested and the children also saw them as an exciting activity. A form of bike track would encourage the children to cycle to school.
		Wildlife was not mentioned as a reason to visit the park or in its future vision, though it was suggested in the ideas for improvement.
		The most popular request for improvement (17%) were BMX/skating facilities. Better sports areas, toilets, better play areas and a café had equal responses (13%).

3. Masterplan Plan – long term vision

A community space for all offering more activities, facilities and visual interest that encourage more people to visit and stay longer. More visible entrances that offer a 'Welcome to Watermans' moment. Connect the park to the wider community through two new entrances. A park extension that provides more textures and interest allowing daily connections with nature. Create a destination for more members of the community by creating through and circular routes with places to go to and spaces to meet your neighbours.

Younger play area

- Move play to a new setting adjacent to kiosk terrace and anchored to boundary edge and on a route
- New items provide for all abilities
- Tree grove provides a setting and shade

Revitalised frontage

- Set back fencing for spacious softer frontage with fence in flower meadows, bulbs, lavender & climbs on entrance arch
- New tree avenue advertises park entrance from Edward Road and starts tree grove grid
- Hello Watermans feature
- Adjoins terrace for maximum visibility

Tree Grove

- Tree grove provides a landmark entrance feature to pass through to park activities and routes or to picnic under

New pavilion with terrace

- Relocate to the side to open up views
- A new meeting point for the community
- Accessible toilet with timer and pay to open door lock
- Food kiosk serving drinks and snacks for outside consumption
- Picnic tables with board game tops
- Tree grove provides shade
- Table tennis
- Kiosk to loan bats and balls, bike mending kit, rounders bats etc
- Consider incorporating changing rooms if required
- Storage for loose play items for play workers and park volunteers kit

Adventurous play area

- Move play to a new setting away from hotel and houses
- On a route for social control
- New items provide for all abilities, incorporate existing rock climbing, extended zip wire and basket swing
- Use sound barrier to introduce land modelling for interest and add height for equipment to launch off

Sports

- Improve quality and realign 11-a-side pitch, consider permanent goals
- Fitness zone
- New mini's wheel park for learners
- Multi Use Games Area for informal football, basket ball, tennis lessons etc on old wheel park

New Edward Road entrance

- Create new route through: annex half the land for new social housing plot, Agree 12m route with Hotel Owners
- Welcome to Watermans signage
- Allow hotel access gate onto the new route

Increase Bio-diversity

- Wildflower meadow edges with bulbs.
- Native tree and shrubs as screening to bypass, gardens and hotel
- Fenced pond with wildlife friendly planting

By-Pass boundary

- **Sound barrier from stone gabions and earth with native planting** for screening improve bio-diversity and bat routes
- Clear screen over Mude culvert to experience the northern continuation of the river corridor from the new park bridge

Watermans Way

- New 3m wide shared route brings life into the park and takes you across the Mude to the extended park areas, the by-pass bridge or to Mudeford via Watery Lane
- Part of the new park footpath network for circular dry route options when wet underfoot

Discovery trail

- Info posts tell a story of the landscape as you gather facts on the history and nature of the site

Woodland extension area

- Clearance of bramble and lifting some tree branches opens views and improves bio-diversity
- Open areas provide meadow flower areas
- Selected trees are left for climbing
- Story telling area
- Path loop to river platform and Watery Lane to add interest
- River platform and information board to be safely close to the water without eroding banks
- Native planting screens by-pass

Watery Lane

- New route to Watermans Park
- Cut back vegetation along route and verges
- Raise tree branches
- Scrape back path to road surface
- Litter bin near entrance

Entrance improvements Somerford Road

- Welcome to Watery Lane corridor
- Better furniture
- Information board for SNCI, river Mude, path history, route finding to Mudeford

Improvements Somerford Road and Mude bridge

- Add foot bridge to widen shared route and cover service ducts
- Information board for SNCI, river Mude, ford history, route finding to Mudeford

3b. Plan – short-medium term goals

What can we achieve in the short-medium term?

Sports

- Consult on need for football changing rooms in a new park building. Ask what storage needed.
- Consult on exchanging the wheel park for Multi use Games Area and providing a smaller learners wheel park later when older playground is moved

Tree Grove

- Plant the tree grove to provide a landmark entrance feature to pass through to park activities and routes or to picnic in its shade

Revitalised frontage

- Remove thorn bushes, add flower meadows and bulbs
- Create entrance arch for climbers lined with lavender
- Plant tree avenue and meadow along Edward Road
- Create Hello Watermans feature that can be moved to future new building

Circular route

- Install circular route with new benches

Pavilion, food kiosk and terrace

- Cost effective refurbishment of existing building exterior as community art project
- Create base for a mobile food kiosk serving drinks and snacks for outside consumption
- Install phase 1 of terrace for picnic tables with board game tops
- Plant tree grove for shade and interest
- Install outdoor table tennis
- Kiosk to loan bats and balls, bike mending kit, rounders bats etc
- Provide storage in existing pavilion for loose play items for play workers and park volunteers kit
- Acquire quotes for new pavilion

Increase Bio-diversity

- Wildflower meadow edges with bulbs.
- Native tree and shrubs as screening to bypass, gardens and hotel
- Fenced pond with wildlife friendly planting
- Create corridors to garden habitats

By-Pass boundary

- Plant native trees for screening and improve bio-diversity, wildlife corridors and bat routes

Watermans Way

- New 3m wide shared route brings life into the park and takes you across the Mude to the extended park areas, the by-pass bridge or to Mudeford via Watery Lane
- Community art project to work with Mude bridge designers
- Part of the new park footpath network for circular dry route options when wet underfoot

Discovery trail

- Info posts tell a story of the landscape as you gather facts on the history and nature of the site

Extension area

- Clearance of bramble and lifting some tree branches opens views and improves bio-diversity
- Open areas provide meadow flower areas
- Selected trees are left for climbing
- Story telling area
- Path loop to river platform and Watery Lane to add interest
- River platform and information board to be safely close to the water without eroding banks
- Native planting screens sound barrier to by-pass

Watery Lane

- Cut back vegetation along route and verges
- Raise tree branches
- Scrape back path to road surface
- Litter bin near entrance

Entrance improvements Somerford Road

- Welcome to Watery Lane feature
- Install better furniture
- Information board for SNCI, river Mude, path history, route finding to Mudeford

Improvements Somerford Road and Mude bridge

- Add highways foot bridge to widen shared route and cover service ducts
- Information board for endangered Southern Damselfly habitat, river Mude corridor to north and south, ford history

Older play area

- Arrange workshops with youths to design new play to provide for all abilities
- Apply for grants to install this

Younger play area

- Consult on design and new items to provide for all abilities
- Plant tree grove where possible to provide shade

New Edward Road entrance

- Work with housing and hotel owners regarding land to create new route through and to annex half the land for new social housing plot

4a. Goals

Short term goals – towards Phase 1 plan

- Change grass cutting regime to park edges to create long grassland/meadow margins
- Improve Dorset Road entrance; clear thorn bushes, sow meadow seeds, plant bulbs, move fence back to make generous entrance and grow climbers on it, paint fence with the community in new park colour scheme, install climbing arch behind Watermans Park sign. Plant lavender and climbers.
- Replace green maintenance barrier to make secure, more open access for separate cycle route
- Plant entrance tree grove and avenue along Dorset Road
- Place making with new message benches and trees in clearings within longer grass areas
- Screen by-pass, hotel and garden boundaries with native planting (helped by Scouts?)
- Install cycle stands/hoops and new message benches
- Decorate existing pavilion as a community art project. Commission Hello Watermans moveable art work for pavilion
- Install wildlife pond, wildlife planting with natural fencing
- Lift willow branches to open up the river side, remove some ivy to increase habitat
- Install signage to communicate reasons for new changes
- Put Masterplan poster in park noticeboard for consultation
- Put Masterplan and images on social media for consultation
- Consult on Mude bridge design
- Consult on new pavilion requirements
- Consult on new play areas



Flower turf



Community art examples



Joe and Joan Waterman



Tree and native shrub screening planting



Longer areas of grass and new trees



Planting for birds, bees & butterflies



Bulb planting below trees

4b. Goals

Short – medium term goals

- Create terrace and base for mobile food kiosk
- Install bridge over Mude
- Install phase 1 of Watermans Way from bridge to bridge
- Build platform to waters edge
- Expose road surface to create walking surface along Watery Lane
- Create Somerford Road entrance feature to Watery Lane
- Install discovery trail posts along Watery Lane



Terrace furniture with chess board



Outdoor games in addition to table tennis



Terrace with tree grove planting and furniture



River platform

Watery Lane information panel



Discovery trail boards



Light weight foot/cycle bridge over the Mude

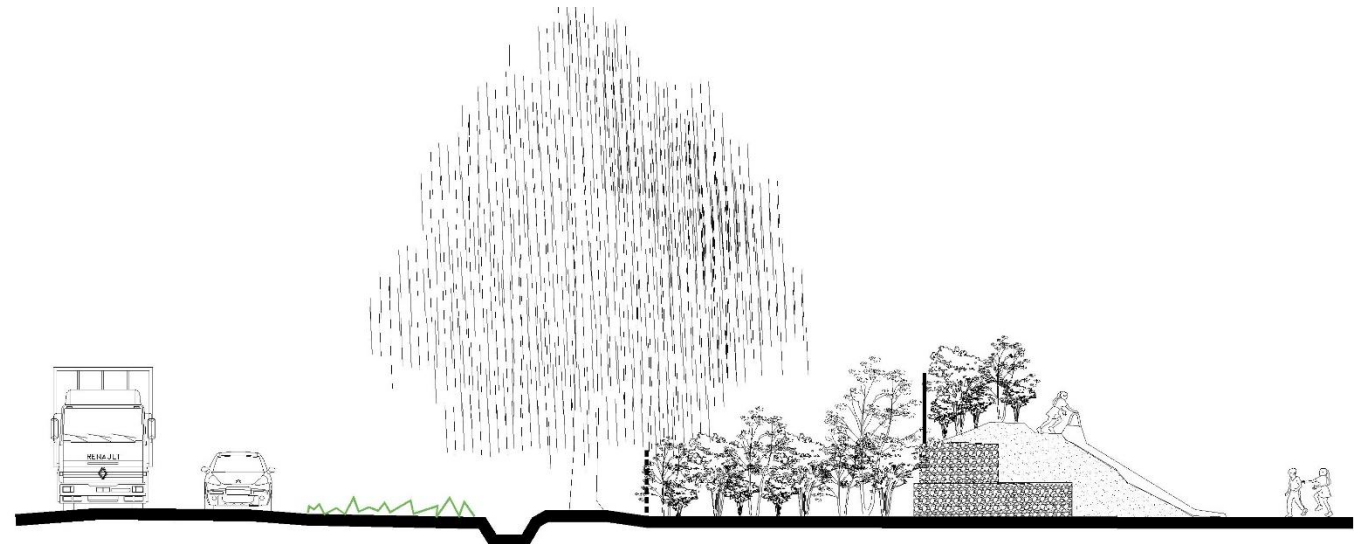
4c. Goals

Medium – long term goals

- Build sound barrier
- Build adventurous play area against sound barrier
- Install younger play area
- Install Watermans Way
- Build/install new structure for food kiosk/toilet/storage
- Install Multi Use Games Area and Fitness Zone
- Install beginners wheel park and/or bike track
- Install pitch and goals in new location
- Create new entrance on Edward Road



Play wish list



Multi ability themed younger play



Replacement building style



Fitness zone

5 Appendices

- Demographic info to follow
- Ecological info to follow
- **Stakeholders:**
 - Somerford residents and immediate neighbours
 - Ward & Town Councillors
 - St Josephs' School
 - The Grange School
 - Somerford Primary School
 - The Arc Community Centre
 - Somerford Youth & Community Centre
 - Parks maintenance team
 - Highways department
 - The Meyrick Estate
 - Somerford Scouts, guides etc
 - Football teams
 - High Cross Church URC
 - Sovereign Housing
 - Premier inn