

Meeting	Parks & Open Spaces Committee
Date	2 nd September 2025
Report Title	Proposal to Investigate the Installation of a Multi-Use Games Area in Moredon Park
Agenda Reference	11
Proposer:	Councillor S Heyes
Second:	Councillor J Jackson

Recommendations

1. To approve the investigation of the proposal.
2. To conduct a public consultation to gather resident feedback.
3. To consider a budget aspiration of £60,000.00 for 2026/2027 and to explore funding options available for the project.
4. To seek permission from Swindon Borough Council for a proposed MUGA on its land.

Introduction

Moredon Park is a green space that has long served as a focal point for informal recreation within the local community. However, its current usage has led to an ongoing issue: local teenagers frequently gather to play football, and as a result, balls are regularly hit into nearby residential areas, occasionally causing minor damage to residents' cars. This situation has raised legitimate concerns among residents about property safety while also highlighting the popularity and need for sports facilities among young people in the area.

This proposal advocates for a thorough investigation into the installation of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Moredon Park. The aim is to resolve the recurring issue, provide a safe and dedicated space for sports, and unlock broader opportunities for community engagement and investment in Morden—an area previously underserved by parish projects.

Background and Context

Moredon Park is currently an open green space, accessible to all and regularly used by teenagers for impromptu football matches. The informal nature of play means there are no designated boundaries, which often results in footballs being kicked beyond the play area and into nearby properties. Residents have reported instances of minor damage to vehicles, ranging from scratches to the occasional broken wing mirror. These incidents, while not severe, have nevertheless created tension between residents and young people, diminishing the sense of safety and community enjoyment.

Initial attempts to address this issue have considered the installation of a boundary fence. However, after careful investigation, it was determined that fencing would be impractical due to the size of the green space and the anticipated high costs and maintenance requirements associated with such a solution. A fence could be visually intrusive and likely to deteriorate quickly, necessitating frequent repairs and replacements.

An alternative, more sustainable solution is the creation of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). Unlike ad hoc open play, a MUGA provides an enclosed, purpose-built space for a variety of sports, including football and netball, with sturdy surfaces and perimeter fencing designed specifically to contain play. Though more costly than a simple fence, a well-constructed MUGA offers greater long-term value, improved community safety, and enhanced recreational opportunities.



Benefits of a MUGA

- **Enclosed Play Area:** A MUGA would restrict ball games to a designated area, minimizing the risk of balls straying into residential zones and reducing property damage.
- **Multi-Sport Use:** The facility can be designed to accommodate football, netball, basketball, and other games, catering to diverse interests and age groups.
- **Community Engagement:** Installing a MUGA would provide a safe and appealing space for young people, encouraging positive social interaction and physical activity.
- **Parish Investment:** Moredon has not previously benefited from significant parish investments, making this an opportunity to address historic underfunding and demonstrate commitment to equitable development.
- **Long-Term Value:** While the initial cost of a substantial MUGA is estimated at around £60,000, the durable construction and hard surface would reduce ongoing maintenance costs compared to a conventional fence, offering better longevity and community return.

Considerations and Challenges

While the merits of a MUGA are clear, several considerations must be addressed before proceeding to formal planning and budgeting:

- **Noise:** MUGAs can be noisy, especially during peak hours or when popular sports are being played. Noise levels may impact nearby residents
- **Cost:** A substantial, long-lasting MUGA with a hard surface would require an estimated investment of £60,000. This figure encompasses construction, surfacing, fencing, and CCTV. It is imperative to ensure that the project delivers value for money and aligns with parish priorities.
- **Land Ownership and Permissions:** The green space at Moredon Park is owned by Swindon Borough Council (SBC). Any modification or installation will require explicit permission from SBC, necessitating early engagement and formal application procedures.
- **Community Support:** Resident opinion is critical to the success of the project. It is essential to establish whether there is broad support for the installation of a MUGA, particularly from those who may be most affected by increased activity or noise.
- **Funding Opportunities:** There may be external funding sources available to support the capital costs of the MUGA. Exploring grants from sports agencies, local businesses, and charitable foundations should be prioritized to offset the parish's financial commitment.

Recommended Next Steps

To ensure that the proposal is pursued with due diligence, community sensitivity, and fiscal responsibility, the following steps are recommended:

1. **Council Approval to Pursue Proposal:** The Council should formally approve the investigation of the proposal, acknowledging that a successful outcome could require a budget bid of up to £60,000.
2. **Resident Survey:** Conduct a comprehensive survey of residents to gauge their views on the proposed MUGA. This should cover attitudes toward noise, anticipated benefits, potential concerns, and willingness to support the project.
3. **Seek Permission from SBC:** Initiate contact with Swindon Borough Council to secure permission for the installation of a MUGA on their land. This process should include submitting preliminary plans and addressing any environmental or planning requirements.



4. Explore Funding Opportunities: Actively seek out grant opportunities, sponsorship, and other funding sources to help cover installation costs. Particular attention should be paid to schemes targeting youth engagement, community wellbeing, and sports development in areas of historic underinvestment.

Conclusion

The installation of a Multi-Use Games Area at Moredon Park represents a strategic opportunity to improve community safety, enhance recreational provision, and invest in an area previously overlooked for parish projects. By containing sports activities within a dedicated space, the MUGA would help prevent property damage, foster positive youth engagement, and encourage active lifestyles. The challenges of noise and cost are real but manageable, provided that the council, community, and external partners work together to ensure an outcome that reflects shared priorities and values.

It is recommended that Haydon Wick Parish Council move forward by approving the investigation into installing a MUGA at Morden Park, with a view to submitting a formal budget bid and engaging with the community and SBC. This initiative promises to deliver lasting benefits, address persistent concerns, and signal a new chapter of investment in Morden.