

Save Newlands Corner Campaign Group

Surrey County Council application to erect six large play structures at Newlands Corner

As anticipated, Surrey County Council (SCC) has submitted proposals to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), under section 38 of the Commons Act 2006, to carry out the following works on the Newlands Corner site:

- erect six large, artificial play structures in cleared areas of the woodland along what is currently the all-ability trail - to be called the 'Family Play Trail';
- place eight magnifying/brass rubbing posts along the trail;
- re-surface the trail (which we support)
- erect temporary security fencing and, perhaps, temporarily close the trail.

The second and third items do not require PINS consent. SCC has included them in the application to illustrate a complete picture of its intentions.

Five of the play structures will be in new locations in the woods which will require the clearance of currently-natural areas. The wording of the application implies that some trees will need to be removed though not, to use SCC's word, "significant" ones. The sixth will replace the existing structure near to the café. All documents relating to the application can be found here [\[link to documents on website\]](#)

The Save Newlands Corner Campaign Group is totally opposed to the introduction of the play structures into the woods. However, the overarching issue is that these proposals would change Newlands Corner from a place in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that people love to visit for its natural, uncommercialised environment, into a "visitor attraction".

In the last 21 months we have discussed the proposal for play structures with hundreds, if not thousands, of people in local meetings, at Newlands Corner and on the doorstep. Virtually everyone has said that these structures are not needed and not wanted. Time and time again we have been told that children do not need them as an incentive to enjoy or be interested in the countryside.

The current arrangements at Newlands Corner have created a balance and harmony between what people want and what nature needs. These play structures would punch a hole through those arrangements. No matter what spin SCC puts on this, it has not properly consulted or listened to the public, it has not responded to public concerns and desires and it is carrying out a cynical exercise in destroying part of our natural environment in order to make money from the car park.

We ask you to consider opposing this application. SCC has, disgracefully, in our view, received approval for parking charge equipment, which will profoundly change Newlands Corner. The proposed play structures would cause a much greater, and irreversible, adverse change on the physical landscape as well as the very nature of Newlands Corner.

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June 2017