

Land West of Bilsham Road, Yapton

NEAP, LEAP & LAP Landscape Statement_P02

May 2026

Introduction

Rooted in local heritage and shaped by a commitment to inclusivity, the proposed landscape design offers a vibrant and imaginative environment where play, nature, and community come together. Drawing inspiration from the historic Portsmouth and Arundel Canal, the scheme weaves cultural storytelling into dynamic play experiences that are both visually stimulating and developmentally enriching. Through the use of natural materials, varied topography, and thoughtfully selected equipment, the proposals deliver more than just recreational value—they nurture connection, creativity, and a sense of belonging for all ages and abilities.

Overall Play Design

As part of the LAP, LEAPs and NEAP, we've integrated natural play features such as hardwood stepping logs and boulders. These elements are not only visually appealing, but also play a key role in children's cognitive and physical development—encouraging imaginative, active play while improving balance and coordination. Within the LEAPs and NEAP spaces, these features complement the larger play structures as secondary elements, subtly woven into the overall design to create an engaging, cohesive environment that supports diverse play experiences.

Smooth Hardwood Logs – Natural Play



Glacial Boulders – Natural Play



Stepping Logs



Landscape NEAP, LEAP & LAP Proposals

The play area designs take inspiration from the historic, now-defunct Portsmouth and Arundel Canal, once used to transport agricultural supplies and munitions to the military docks in Greenwich, London, through Yapton via the Thames. The circular blue surface patterns symbolise abstract water droplets—evoking imagery of transport across water—while sweeping bands of planting around the site represent undulating waves.

Mounding and soft landscaping are seamlessly woven into the layout, offering both aesthetic and functional benefits. The planted borders form a natural outer buffer, while raised mounds enhance privacy and create a sense of enclosure within the play space. Trees positioned atop the mounds offer an additional layer of screening. The planting scheme features ornamental grasses and shrubs, creating a soft and inviting palette that attracts local wildlife and supports overall site biodiversity.

The northern and eastern edges of the NEAP are planted with native woodland shrubs. This enhances visual screening along the northern site boundary, to the east the nearby residential plots and furthers ecological value.

The play equipment primarily uses timber materials and is carefully selected to encourage social interaction and inclusivity. Recognising that teenage girls are often sidelined in male-dominated sports spaces, the NEAP offers thoughtfully chosen features such as timber-framed hexagonal swings, shelters with seating, loungers, table tennis, dual trampolines, and a combination basketball hoop/goal—each promoting age-appropriate, socially cohesive engagement.

NEAP Design



The following is a selection of play equipment and site furniture featured in the NEAP design:

Nest Swing



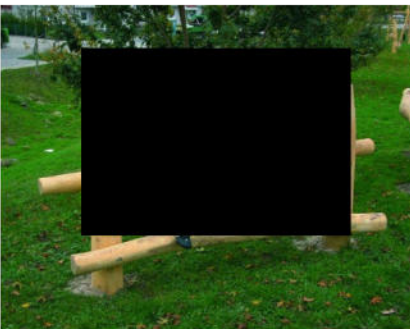
Shelter with Seating



Table Tennis



Hangout Bench



Bench Loungers



Trampolines



Football/Basketball



Hexagonal Social Swing

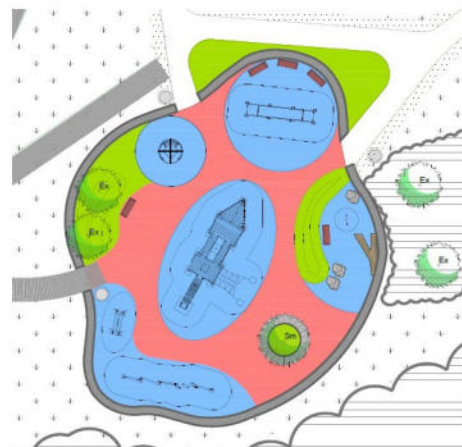


Continuing the canal and munitions theme, the LEAP located in the south-east corner incorporates a timber boat play structure designed to be inclusive and age-appropriate. This feature encourages imaginative play and social interaction among groups of children.

LEAP Design

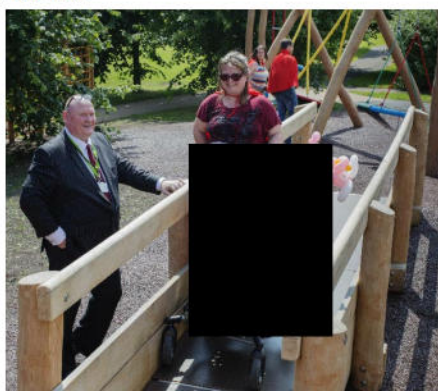
An accessible see-saw is also included, ensuring children of all abilities can participate and connect through shared play experiences. A built-in play timer introduces a fun, competitive edge—inviting children to challenge themselves and one another. This simple feature adds excitement and boosts engagement, especially for older children who thrive on dynamic, fast-paced play.

Complementing these elements, the agility trail offers a playful way to build strength, coordination and confidence—integrating physical fitness into the joyful atmosphere of the space.

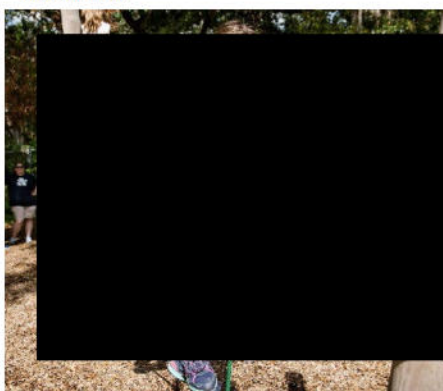


Below are examples of play equipment & furniture that have been included in the LEAP design:

See-saw



Agility Trail



Outdoor Play Timer

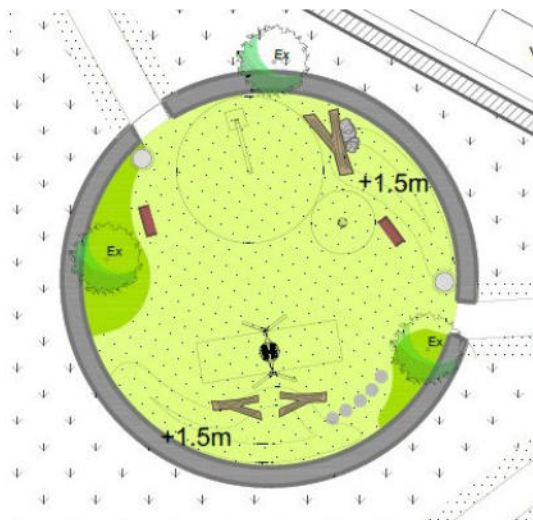


Boat Play Structure



Given the more smaller area of the LAPs, the design adopts a simpler yet cohesive approach that continues the overarching themes of mounding, naturalistic elements, and timber materials. Features such as logs, rocks, and stepping stones are integrated into the landscape, encouraging children to explore and extend their play along the surrounding pathways. The LAPs include more structured play equipment – a timber framed embankment slide and timber swings. These offer a balance between informal, nature-based exploration and traditional play opportunities.

LAP 1



LAP 2



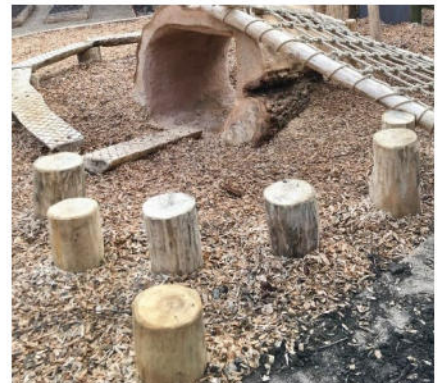
Smooth Hardwood Logs – Natural Play



Glacial Boulders – Natural Play



Stepping Logs



Embankment Slide



Nest Swing



Conclusion

The landscape and play proposals form a cohesive, inclusive, and biodiverse environment that caters to all ages and abilities. By blending natural materials, imaginative theming, and thoughtfully placed features, the design champions holistic child development, social connection, and environmental stewardship. This considered approach not only celebrates the heritage of the local area but also fosters a welcoming, engaging, and resilient public realm—where every visitor, resident, and child feels valued, inspired, and empowered to explore.