



Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Date: MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2018
Time: 11.30 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Chairman)
Peter Bennett
Alderman Sir Roger Gifford
Caroline Haines
Gregory Lawrence
Alderman Gregory Jones QC
Sylvia Moys
Barbara Newman
Graeme Smith (Deputy Chairman)
Jeremy Simons
Oliver Sells QC (Ex-Officio Member)

For consideration of Business Relating to Epping Forest Only

Verderer Peter Adams
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas
Vacancy

Enquiries: Natasha Dogra
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. APOLOGIES

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

3. MINUTES

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 1 – 10)

Epping Forest

4. APPOINTMENT OF VERDERER MARCH 2018

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 11 - 14)

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 15 - 30)

6. EPPING FOREST OPERATIONS PROGRAMME FOR 2018/2019

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 31 - 40)

7. EPPING FOREST BUFFER LANDS - ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS REVIEW

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 41 - 50)

8. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 51 - 82)

Burnham Beeches & The Commons

9. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Information
(Pages 83 - 88)

10. ASHTEAD COMMON CONSULTATIVE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Information
(Pages 89 - 90)

11. MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES THE COMMONS

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 91 - 96)

12. KENLEY AIRFIELD SAFETY FENCE

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 97 - 132)

13. KENLEY REVIVAL PROJECT AT GATEWAY

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 133 - 136)

14. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 137 - 140)

18. BUTLERS RETREAT CAFÉ - LEASE RENEWAL

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 141 - 146)

19. GRANT OF LEASE - CYCLE HIRE

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

For Decision
(Pages 147 - 156)

20. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

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EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE
Monday, 15 January 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at
 Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 15 January 2018 at
 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Chairman)
 Peter Bennett
 Alderman Sir Roger Gifford
 Caroline Haines
 Gregory Lawrence
 Alderman Gregory Jones QC
 Sylvia Moys
 Barbara Newman
 Graeme Smith (Deputy Chairman)
 Verderer Peter Adams
 Verderer Michael Chapman DL
 Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas
 Jeremy Simons
 Oliver Sells QC (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Paul Thomson	-	Superintendent, Epping Forest
Alison Elam	-	Chamberlain's Department
Roger Adams	-	City Surveyor's Department
Natasha Dogra	-	Town Clerk's Department
Andy Barnard	-	Superintendent, The Commons
Colin Buttery	-	Director of Open Spaces & Heritage
Jo Hurst	-	Open Spaces Department
Jacqueline Eggleston	-	Open Spaces Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

Members noted that the Committee would soon receive a report regarding the costs related to fly tipping incidents in Epping Forest.

4. **SCHEDULE OF VISITS 2018**

Resolved – that the schedule of visits be agreed for the ensuing year.

Members discussed the number of visits to the Commons. The Committee agreed that it was helpful for Members of the local groups and consultative committees to visit the relevant areas.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members received a general update on issues across the nine sites within 'The Commons' division that may be of interest to members and is supplementary to the monthly email updates.

The Committee were informed that on 7th January, 38 travellers' units arrived on Burnham Beeches. Eviction notices were served the day after and all units left voluntarily. The Committee agreed that the recording of registration number of the vehicles should be logged centrally so that information could be lawfully shared to track the movement of travellers to and from City Corporation sites.

Members said that the Rotary Club raised and donated £1,000 to the site. The Committee placed on record their thanks to the Club.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

6. **ASHTEAD COMMON TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

The Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2017 for Ashtead Common were presented in the format required by the Charity Commission.

In response to a query, Members noted that there was no legacy policy currently in place but was being investigated by the Fundraising Board to be incorporated across all of the City Corporation's open spaces.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

7. **BURNHAM BEECHES AND STOKE COMMON TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

The Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2017 for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common were presented in the format required by the Charity Commission.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

8. **WEST WICKHAM COMMON AND SPRING PARK WOOD COULSDON AND OTHER COMMONS TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

The Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2017 for West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons were presented in the format required by the Charity Commission. Officers were instructed to keep a close eye on levels of funding available to the Commons post Brexit.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

9. **THE KENLEY FUND**

Members were informed that a fundraising appeal was organised jointly by the Kenley Airfield Friends Group and the City Corporation in 2005 to raise funds for the Coulsdon and Other Commons Charity to acquire the World War II Officer's Mess site that adjoins Kenley Common (the Kenley Fund).

RESOLVED – that Members:

- Agree to credit to the Kenley Fund the interest that would have been accrued to date, debiting the West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons local risk budget by the amount that the City could have attained for this fund, namely £3,315.03 to 31 March 2017.
- Instruct the Superintendent of The Commons to seek a suitable project (or projects) to be funded by the Kenley Fund, in consultation with the Kenley Airfield Friends Group.

10. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members received a summary of progress with the work programme at Epping Forest across October and November 2017.

Of particular note was further progress on the passage of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill; continuing high levels of fly tipping averaging 55% up on the previous year; the completion of the surfacing of the Woodford Green wayleave; continuing Operational works majoring on tree safety and wood pasture restoration, together with a successful series of visitor events and very positive publicity for the 800 year celebrations for the Forest Charter through both national media and the Lord Mayor's Show.

A Member raised a query regarding the pruning of trees as a defensive measure. Officers said this was a difficult topic and individual insurance claims were vigorously challenged. In response to a query regarding Wanstead Flats and the football club Members noted that the public preferred to play on weeknights and on astro-turf pitches. Members were informed that the sweet chestnut infected was situated at The Warren. It had been felled but the area remained under close inspections

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF A VERDERER OF EPPING FOREST**

Members were informed that following the resignation of Richard Morris OBE who has served as a Verderer of Epping Forest since 1998, the Committee is asked to note the vacancy for one northern Forest Parish Verderer and, taking into account that the septennial elections are not scheduled to take place until 2020, approve the commencement of an appointment process to result in the selection of a new Verderer of Epping Forest.

The Committee agreed that the shortlisting should be done by the Superintendent, and the interviews would take place at the Warren. Members agreed that the working party should consist of the Chairman, Deputy

Chairman, Verderer Chapman, Verderer Thomas, Verderer Adams, Mrs Haines, Mrs Newman and the Director of Open Spaces.

RESOLVED – that Members:

1. Noted the vacancy for a Verderer of Epping Forest.
2. Approved the commencement of an appointment process to select a northern Forest Parish Verderer of Epping Forest (in line with the requirements of the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880) for a tenure of Office to conclude in 2020 ahead of the septennial elections of all four Verderers of Epping Forest.
3. Approved the composition of a Working Party to consider applications for the position of a Verderer of Epping Forest.
4. Approved the proposed timetable for the appointment process.

12. **EPPING FOREST TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

The Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2017 for Epping Forest were presented in the format required by the Charity Commission.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

13. **PARTICIPATION IN A TREES OUTSIDE WOODS (TOWS) JOINT PROJECT BID TO HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND**

Members noted that the national trees and woodlands protection charity, the Woodland Trust (WT), is developing a *Trees Outside Woods* (TOWs) Project across England & Wales for a Stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and other funders during 2018.

Members requested information regarding the City Corporation's long term investment in relation to the project, and asked Officers to circulate information regarding the City's commitment to resources.

RESOLVED – that Members approve the joint development, with OneEppingForest and other partners, of a draft project proposal under the Trees Outside Woods umbrella project, for inclusion in WT's Stage 1 bid(s) to the Heritage Lottery Fund, subject to the draft proposal being submitted to Grand Committee for scrutiny prior to any final agreement on submission of a project bid.

14. **COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP GRANT SCHEME APPLICATION**

Since 2008 funding has been received as grants from the government's Entry and Higher Levels within the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS). Over the life of this ESS (2008-2018) these grant monies will have brought in a total of over £1.77 million in revenue, providing vital support for approved habitat conservation work under the Epping Forest Management Plan (EF Plan). This funding been used to support EF Plan prescriptions for undertaking essential maintenance and restoration of the internationally and nationally-important habitats throughout Epping Forest.

The agreement with Natural England under ESS terminates in October 2018. The successor scheme to ESS is the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), which is aimed at continuing to provide similar focused support for essential biodiversity conservation in England.

The preparation of the application would be undertaken until mid-summer 2018, during which period the Management Plan Steering Group would be consulted on the application, for approval by Grand Committee in July 2018. If approved the application would be submitted to Natural England and if accepted the CSS agreement would commence on 1st January 2019.

Members queried the strain on resources including staff time; the Superintendent was satisfied that staff would be available to dedicated time to the project.

RESOLVED – that Members:

- ☐ note the application preparation process ('Proposals' section).
- ☐ give approval for officers to make a formal request to enter the CS Scheme's application process to Natural England by mid-spring 2018.
- ☐ approve the consideration of the CSS application by the Management Plan Steering Group during spring/summer 2018 prior to seeking approval from Grand Committee for its submission to Natural England.

15. COW POND RESTORATION BY FROGLIFE THROUGH BID TO HLF

The charity *Froglife* is proposing a bid the Heritage Lottery Fund for funds to enhance toad and other amphibian habitats around London. In addition to restoring habitats, *Froglife* aims to inform and involve local community and volunteer groups through its project. Working with your officers at Epping Forest, *Froglife* would like to put forward Cow Pond, Leyton Flats, as one of the seven ponds that it is looking to restore as part of its project.

Should the bid be successful this would see a £30,000 contract being awarded for the restoration of Cow Pond, involving its re-excavation and re-shaping within its current area. The funding would ensure that no costs would be incurred by the Epping Forest local risk budgets for achieving this restoration. This would represent a significant enhancement of the Forest ponds network in line with the existing Forest Management Plan vision. This would also help to enhance the favourable condition of the Site of Special Scientific Interest in the Leyton Flats area as well as maintaining an historic pond location. Members noted that maintenance costs and responsibility would remain with the City Corporation.

A Member was concerned regarding the level of pollution in the pond, and the costs that could be incurred by the City going forward. Some Members did not believe that £30,000 would suffice for the project and forecast that the costs would escalate. Members asked Officers to investigate the financial stability of FrogLife; Officers said the project would be scrutinized by the monitoring officer. Members noted that the pond was a gravel pit which may drain the water. Officers said trial holes were currently being investigated and currently

water was moving through the gravels and the pond was receiving a feed of water.

Members noted that all HLF projects would be reported through to the Priorities Board and the Corporate Asset Sub Committee for information.

RESOLVED – that Members:

- ☐ approve and support the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund by Froglife for funds for the restoration of Cow Pond, Leyton Flats for amphibians and other pond wildlife; and
- ☐ Instruct City Solicitors to assist in drawing up or overseeing agreements with Froglife in relation to the proposed works and monitoring on Forest Land.

16. REQUEST FOR HIGHWAY DEDICATION ON FOREST LAND AT GILBERT'S SLADE, WOODFORD NEW ROAD

This Committee, on 20 November 2017, considered a request from the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) for the dedication for highway purposes of approximately 66m² of Forest Land. This report is necessary as your Committee refused the request and asked for additional information which is contained within this Report.

The dedication would enable the relocation of an existing bus-stop on Forest Land at Woodford New Road and the provision of a footway from the bus-stop to connect to a new signalised pedestrian and cyclist crossing.

In response to a query Members noted that the relocation of the bus-stop allows for the reinstatement of 32m² as Forest Land. The resultant net loss from dedication would therefore be 34m² prior to completion of negotiations regarding suitable compensatory land from LBWF which would seek 660m² of land to compensate for this total loss.

The LBWF has emphasized that there is a strong road safety case for the construction of a signalised crossing based upon the accident record, traffic volume and the pedestrian / traffic ratio at this location. The Committee requested Officers to investigate with the highway authority the reduction of the speed limit to 30mph.

RESOLVED - that Members:

- ☐ Approve the dedication to public highway of approximately 66m² of Forest land at Woodford New Road, of which 32m² is already in highway use, in favour of the London Borough of Waltham Forest upon appropriate terms, including the provision of suitable compensatory land, and as further agreed by the Superintendent.
- ☐ Instruct the Comptroller and City Solicitor to undertake any necessary documentation.

17. 'GLAMPING' PROPOSAL FOR EPPING FOREST

To help address future continuing efficiency savings requirements, this report

proposes a feasibility study to consider the introduction of holiday accommodation on Epping Forest 'Buffer Land', in the form of tents, shepherds huts and/or demountable buildings. While the accommodation will be of a temporary nature, supporting infrastructure will need to be installed both below ground such as mains water and sewerage and to provide pedestrian and vehicle access.

A detailed business plan will need to be presented through the Gateway process and a tender process will be necessary. An initial forecast based on the market knowledge of one of the leading 'glamping' operator shows a return on investment within the second year of operation with the potential to produce a surplus for reinvestment in to the management of the Forest estimated as £67,000 net per annum based on a 40% occupancy.

Members agreed that the proposal would require careful management. The Committee were concerned over the inclusion of the Warren. It was agreed that a further report would be submitted to Committee addressing Members' concerns before progressing any proposals. Members agreed that the site of Gaunt's Wood should be omitted from any proposals going forward.

RESOLVED – that Members asked Officers to progress the feasibility studies and to investigate the proposals further with an in-depth report being submitted to a future Committee meeting for decision.

18. CRIPSEY BROOK - THORNWOOD FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

The Cripsey Brook Flood Storage Area includes a Small Raised Reservoir maintained by the Environment Agency using Forest Land at Thornwood Common, within Lower Forest, to site the reservoir embankment, under a licence granted by the City Corporation in March 2000 to the Environment Agency and Epping Forest District Council.

The Environment Agency is requesting permission to increase the width of the crest to 1.5m to bring the flood defence up to the statutory standard.

RESOLVED – that Members:

- ☐ Approve the review of the terms of the licence dated the 20 March 2000 that was granted to the Environment Agency and Epping Forest District Council to enable them to carry out works within the original licenced area to widen the rest of the Cripsey Brook dam to 1.5m but otherwise to retain all other remaining licence terms.
- ☐ Note that the Environment Agency is to contribute up to £2,000 towards legal costs.
- ☐ Instruct the Comptroller & City Solicitor to undertake any necessary documentation.

19. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Superintendent of Epping Forest brought two items to the attention of the Committee, both of which required delegated authority; Epping Forest District Council Local Plan Publication under Regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and London Borough of Waltham Forest New Local Plan Direction of Travel Consultation.

Resolved – that Members agreed to delegate authority in both cases to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

21. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

22. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

23. WOODFORD GOLF CLUB - 2018 LICENCE FEE REVIEW

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces and Heritage concerning the 2018 Licence Fee review (SEF 11/18) of Woodford Golf Club.

24. ORION HARRIERS RUNNING CLUB - LEASE RENEWAL

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces and Heritage concerning the Lease Renewal (SEF 09/18) of Orion Harriers Running Club.

25. BUTLERS RETREAT CAFÉ - LEASE RENEWAL

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces and Heritage concerning the Lease Renewal (SEF 08/18) of Butlers Retreat Café.

26. LEASE RENEWAL - THE ORIGINAL TEA HUT - CROSS ROADS, HIGH BEACH

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces and Heritage concerning the Lease Renewal (SEF 10/18) of the Original Tea Hut - Cross Roads, High Beach.

27. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 1:40pm.

Chairman

Contact Officer: Natasha Dogra
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For decision	12 March 2018
Court of Common Council – For decision	19 April 2018
Subject: Appointment of Verderer of Epping Forest (North)	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision

[Delete above if public report]

Summary

Following the resignation of Richard Morris OBE who served as a Verderer of Epping Forest since 1998, and in accordance with the Epping Forest Act (1878) the Epping Forest and Commons Committee appointed a working party to recruit to this position. The recruitment process is now complete, and the working party are able to recommend one candidate as a unanimous decision.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Endorse the selection of Melissa Murphy QC as Epping Forest Verderer (North) for onward approval by the Court of Common Council.

Main Report

Background

1. In accordance with Section 30(7) of the Epping Forest Act 1878, the Committee must make a recommendation to the Court of Common Council in respect of the appointment of a Verderer of Epping Forest who will serve as such until the septennial elections in 2020 when all four of the Epping Forest Verderers will be elected.
2. In January 2018 the Epping Forest and Commons Committee nominated a working party of Chairman, Deputy Chairman, two Members, three Verderers and Director of Open Spaces to oversee the recruitment process.
3. Advertisements opened online on 18th January with closing date midday on 5th February 2018, with copy in the print editions of City AM and Epping Forest

Guardian. The vacancy was also promoted through social media, and via the Epping Forest Consultative Committee on 24th January.

Current Position

4. Eight applications were received by the closing date. All of the applicants met the criteria laid out in the Epping Forest Act (1878) in that they were all resident in one of the ancient Forest parishes, and were not members of the City of London Court of Common Council.
5. The Working Part agreed a shortlist of three applicants on Thursday 8th February.
6. All three shortlisted candidates were interviewed by the working party on 14th February at The Warren.
7. After structured interviews and application of agreed scoring criteria, all members of the working party unanimously agreed that Melissa Murphy QC should be put forward for approval as the new Verderer of Epping Forest.

Options

8. Endorse the working party selection of Melissa Murphy QC as Verderer of Epping Forest. **This option is recommended**

Corporate & Strategic Implications

9. This process fulfils the obligation on the City of London under Section 30(7) of the Epping Forest Act, namely:

Casual vacancies among the verderers caused by death, resignation, disqualification, or otherwise shall be filled by the Conservators from among persons qualified to be elected verderers; but a person appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall be entitled to hold office so long as the vacating verderer would have been entitled to hold office.

Implications

10. Costs of recruitment advertising have been met by Epping Forest Local Risk.

Conclusion

11. In accordance with the Epping Forest Act, a nominated working party has overseen a full recruitment process, and have unanimously agreed to propose

Melissa Murphy QC to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and Court of Common Council as Verderer of Epping Forest.

Appendices

- None

Background Papers

- Appointment of a Verderer of Epping Forest, Epping Forest & Commons Committee 15th January 2018

Natasha Dogra

Committee and Member Services Officer
T: 020 7332 1434

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons	12 03 2018
Subject: Epping Forest - Superintendent's Update for December 2017 to January 2018	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest (SEF 18/17)	For Information
Report author: Paul Thomson – Epping Forest	

Summary

This purpose of this report is to summarise the Epping Forest Division's activities across December 2017 to January 2018.

Of particular note was the significant progress with the passage of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill; a major response to the Epping Forest District Council on the soundness of the proposed Local Plan, a report on the main modifications to the London Borough of Redbridge's Local Plan recognising comments by the City Corporation and a successful Christmas Event at The View.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Staff and Volunteers

1. Two apprenticeships are currently being advertised for Business Administration and Arboricultural posts. Both roles are funded centrally and recruitment process due for completion by mid-March.
2. Recruitment for the permanent staff at Wanstead Flats and Chingford Golf Course is complete. Three members of staff were assimilated to a new role, two members of staff with short term contracts have been appointed on a permanent basis and one new Green/Grounds Keeper has been appointed.
3. To supplement the permanent staff, three casual caretakers and one casual Green/Grounds Keeper have been appointed.

Budgets

4. Sustained success on income generation, due in the large part to the development of a comprehensive licencing policy, put the Division currently in a slight underspend position. Plans are underway to achieve target expenditure by

year end. At beginning of February, Epping Forest is currently at 81% of target expenditure and 83% through the year, but with significant grant income still to be received.

Weather

5. December 2017 was much wetter than average, with total monthly rainfall 100.8% above the average total rainfall for December since 1979 (52.4 mm). There were 22 days of rainfall in total, the wettest days being 12, 13 and 26 December, which saw 20.2 mm, 14.4 mm, and 15.6 mm of rainfall respectively.
6. This is in contrast to December 2016, which was 72.5% below the average total rainfall for December since 1979 (52.4 mm). January 2018 had just under average rainfall (4.9% below the average total rainfall for January since 1979). There were 21 days of rainfall in total, the wettest days being the 2 and 21 January, which both saw 11.6 mm of rainfall. This is the third January in a row with close to average rainfall.

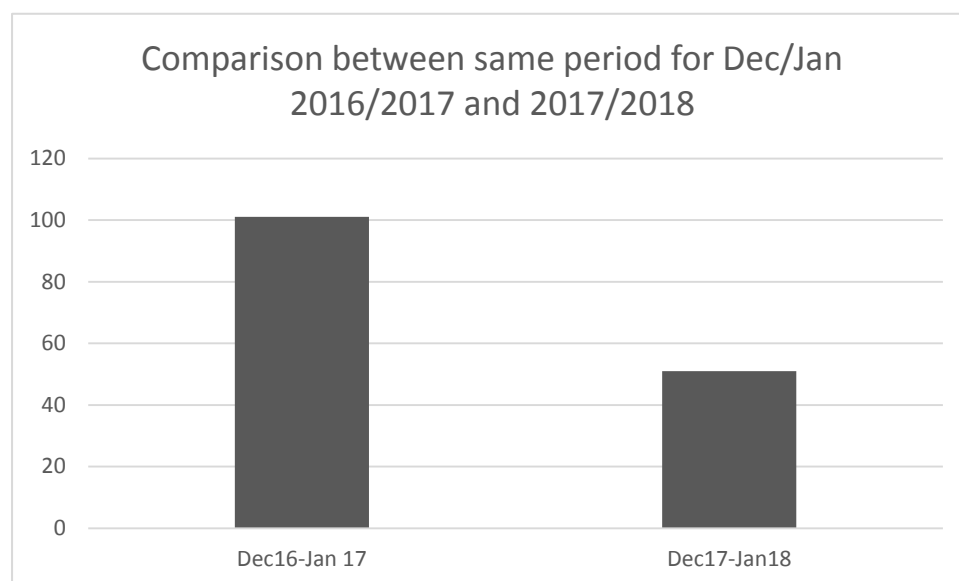
Epping Forest Projects

Open Spaces Bill 2016

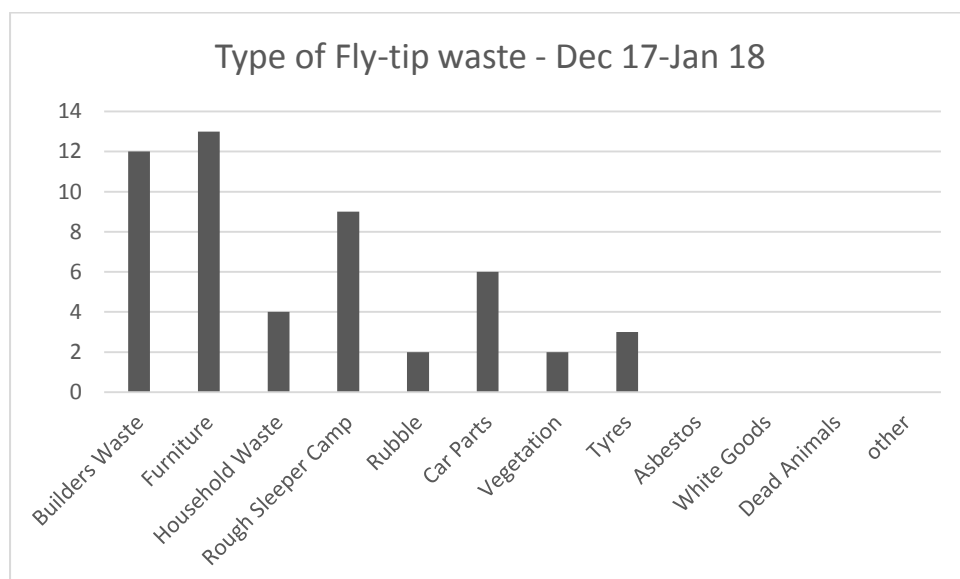
7. The House of Lords Unopposed Bill Committee met on 31st January and after a session of questions, the Chairman, Lord McFall of Alcluith stated he was satisfied with responses and would commend the Bill unchanged to the House. The third reading has a tentative date of 27th February, after which, if unopposed, it will move forward for Royal Assent.

Forest Services

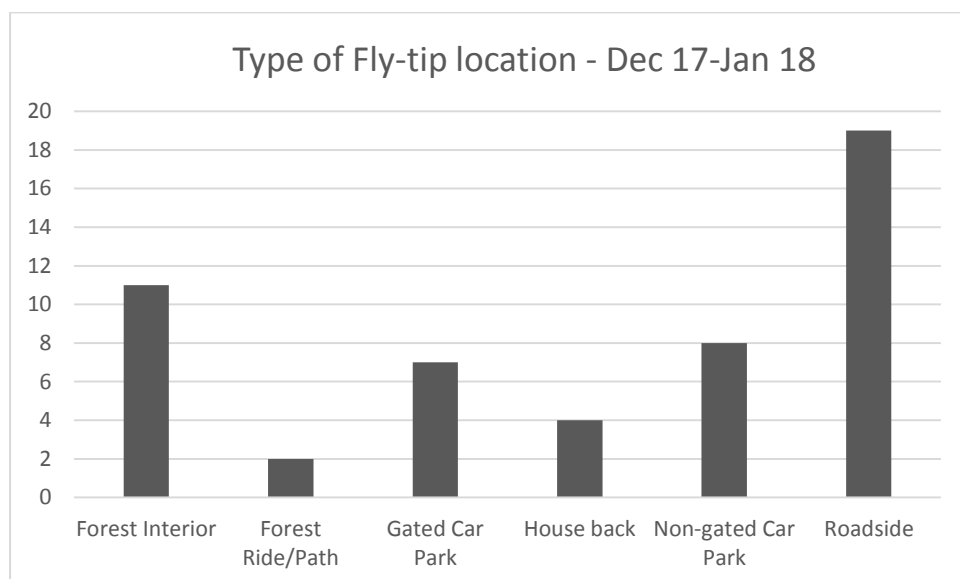
Fly tipping



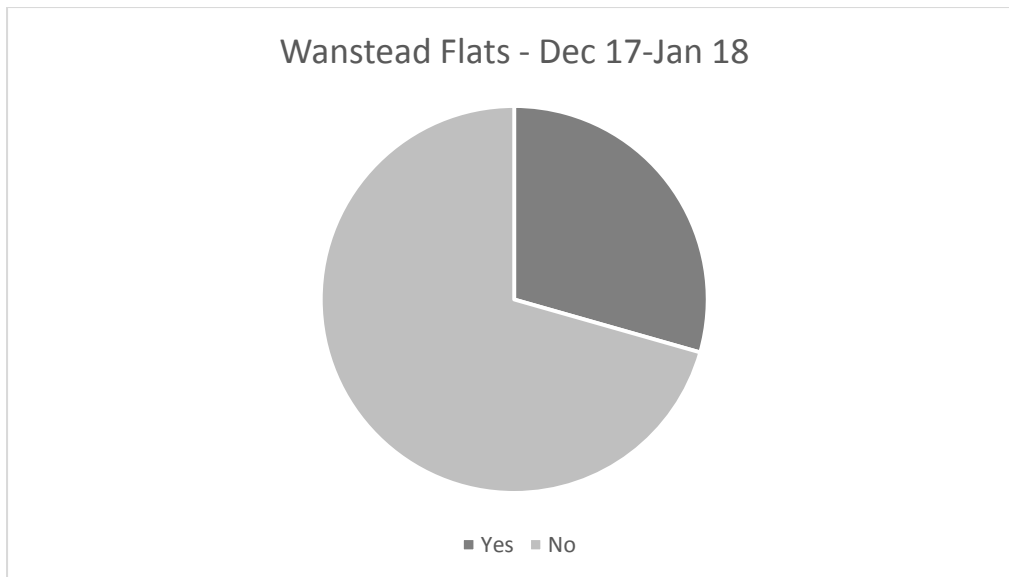
8. Fly-tipping for the period of December 2017 - January 2018 totalled 51 incidents, which is a 50% reduction in comparison to the 102 fly-tips removed during the same period 12 months ago.



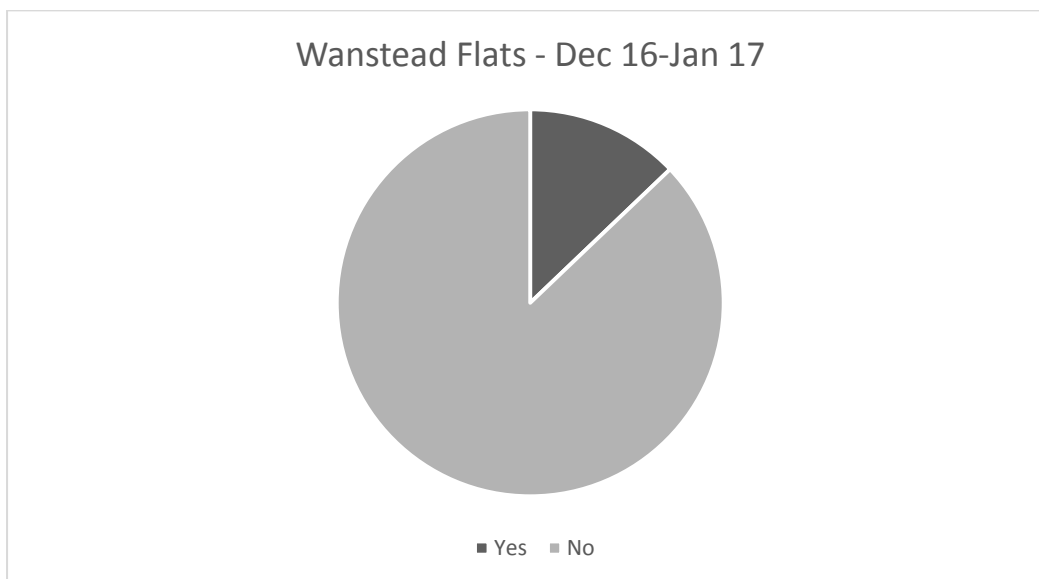
9. Furniture (25%) and Building waste (23%) remain the most numerous materials deposited illegally in the Forest.



10. Forest Roadsides remain the most vulnerable locations for fly-tipping and comprise up 37% of all fly-tips over the December 2017 - January 2018 period.
11. Analysis of fly-tips in gated car parks showed that 4 of the 7 fly-tips were in Centre Road car park. Improvements to the security arrangements at this car park have commenced on the 20 February 2018.



12. A total of 23% of fly-tips occurred in the Wanstead Flats area in December 2017 - January 2018, this is a higher percentage compared to the same period last year at 13%. However, the number of tips remained similar at 15 and 13 respectively.



Rough Sleepers

13. There has been a slight increase of 2% in rough sleeper camps with one found in the Beacontree Avenue area, two on Leyton Flats, one in the Wanstead Flats and Bury wood area. These camps have been cleared, apart from one on Leyton Flats. This camp has been reported to the UK Border Enforcement Agency in the expectation that the person will be subject to enforcement action. The City Corporation is continuing to work closely with the Police, homeless organisations and the local authorities to resolve rough sleeping on the Forest.

Enforcement Activity

14. The following prosecutions were heard during the period under report.

Date of Court Hearing	Name of Defendant	Byelaw/ EPA	Court Name	Outcome	Amount Awarded
Trial 6 Dec 2017	Shanthakumar Sathiyaseelan	EPA 33 1(a) EPA 33 (5)	Chelmsford Crown Court	Adjourned to May 2018	N/A
Mention Hearing 12 Jan 2018	Shanthakumar Sathiyaseelan	EPA 33 1(a) EPA 33 (5)	Chelmsford Crown Court	Prep for May 2018	N/A
PTPH 11 Jan 2018	McGuire	EPA 34 1(a)	Chelmsford Crown Court	GUILTY PLEA	Fine £900 Costs £1100 Comp £500
PTPH 11 Jan 2018	Smith	EPA 33 1(a)	Chelmsford Crown Court	Acquitted	N/A

Licences

15. A total of 18 licences for events were issued during the two months being reported, which yielded an income of £2,148.60 plus VAT. 26 licences were issued during the same period in 2016/17 income of £7,485.83 (inclusive of large compound of £2,000).

Unauthorised Occupations

16. There have been no Unauthorised Occupations recorded during this period. However, the City Corporation has continued to monitor traveller movements following evictions within the area by partner authorities.

Dog Incidents

There have been no serious dog incidents reported.

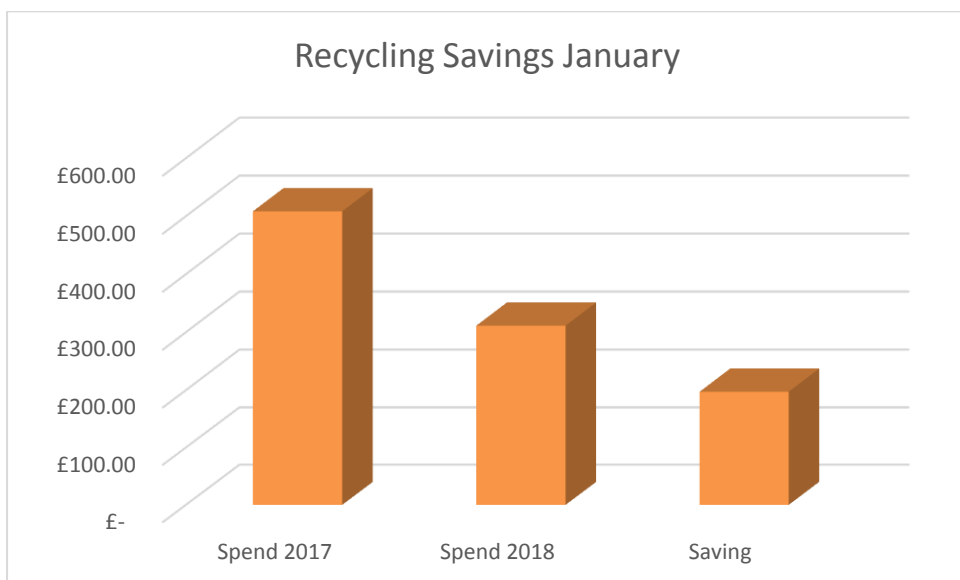
Waste Management and Recycling

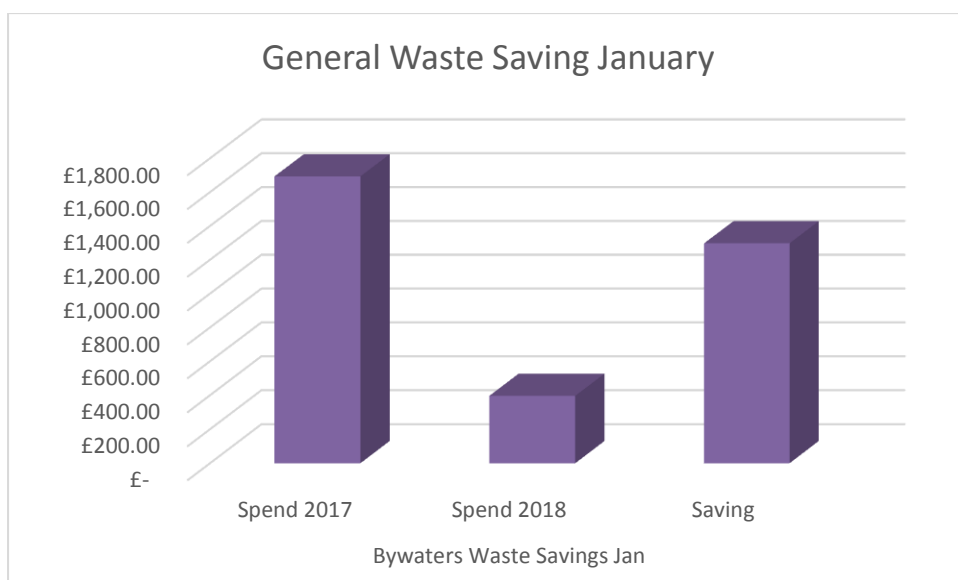
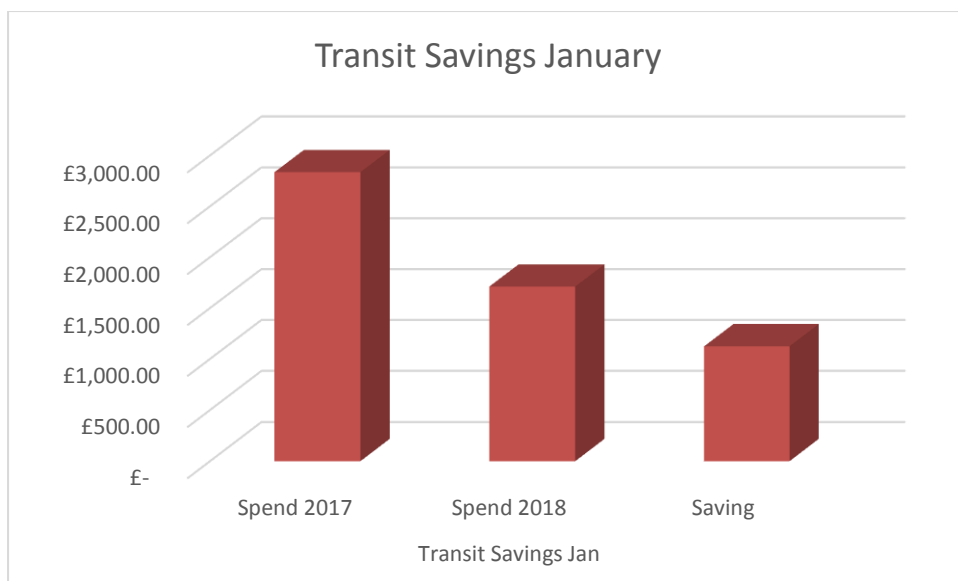
17. We have recently completed a review of waste management and recycling within Epping forest. This includes changes to working practice, procedures and contract review. This has resulted in considerable savings, which are reflected below:

<u>2017</u>					
<i>Month</i>	<i>London Waste £ Transit</i>	<i>Bywaters Tipping £ Transit</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Waste</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Recycling</i>	<i>Total Month</i>
January	£ 2,834.91		£1,693.10	£ 508.44	£ 5,036.45
Total Transit	£ 2,834.91	Total	£1,693.10	£ 508.44	£ 5,036.45

<u>2018</u>					
<i>Month</i>	<i>London Waste £ Transit</i>	<i>Bywaters Tipping £ Transit</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Waste</i>	<i>Bywaters £ Recycling</i>	<i>Total Month</i>
January	£ 928.06	£ 783.00	£ 395.92	£ 311.14	£ 2,418.12
Transit Total	£ 1,711.06	Total	£ 395.92	£ 311.14	£ 2,418.12

<u>Recycling Savings Jan</u>			
	<u>Spend 2017</u>	<u>Spend 2018</u>	<u>Saving</u>
	£ 508.44	£ 311.14	£ 197.30
<u>Transit Savings Jan</u>			
	<u>Spend 2017</u>	<u>Spend 2018</u>	<u>Saving</u>
	£ 2,834.91	£ 1,711.06	£ 1,123.85
<u>Bywaters Waste Savings Jan</u>			
	<u>Spend 2017</u>	<u>Spend 2018</u>	<u>Saving</u>
	£ 1,693.10	£ 395.92	£ 1,297.18
<u>Total Savings For January Only</u>			<u>£ 2,618.33</u>





18. Although this is the first month of the new contract, the savings are encouraging and the trend is expected to be ongoing throughout 2018.

Heritage; Landscape and Nature Conservation

Biodiversity

19. The nationwide influx of wintering continental Hawfinches finally became apparent in Epping Forest in January. Flocks of up to 15 of these birds, our largest finch species, were seen throughout the month in Bury Wood, especially between Ludgate and Pear-tree Plains. The Hawfinch used to breed in Epping Forest and this was one of the first places it was discovered as a British breeding species, by the Epping naturalist Henry Doubleday.

20. **Ramorum Disease update:** the Sweet Chestnut tree at The Warren Plantation reported previously with suspected Ramorum proved positive for the disease.

This tree is now dead and itself no longer poses a threat as the Ramorum spores are only generated from living plant tissues. However, this now means that the disease may appear in the many other Sweet Chestnut trees. This will require a heightened level of monitoring and swift action to fell infected trees. No infection has been found amongst the Larch trees (the other major tree vector species). However, the long-planned felling of these conifers will take place as part of next year's work programme.

Agri-environment schemes

21. Epping Forest officers and their colleagues from other Open Spaces Divisions met Natural England again at the Epping Forest offices at the end of January for more discussions about the new Stewardship Scheme and implications for the income for habitat management work.

Grazing

22. The cattle have spent December and January in the winter housing at **Great Gregories**. Calving for the Longhorn herd continued during this period while the calving of the City Commons Sussex herd began in January. The Sussex herd had had 7 calves by the end of January. In the meantime, in this period 11 more Longhorn calves were born making a total of 21 calves this winter so far, with 7 more expected in February/March. A further 11 Longhorn cows and a bull were purchased which brings the current Conservators' Longhorn herd size to 134 animals with more calves expected. The herd size is now very close to the total number originally envisaged for this stage in the approved Grazing Expansion Plan (prior to the termination of the external grazing contract).

Heritage

23. Good progress has been made with the **Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan** preparations and discussion were held with the consultants during January ahead of the production of a draft for further consultation with officers.

Land Management

Town & Country Planning

24. **Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Plan:** The main planning "event" was the 6-week consultation by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) on its new Local Plan – a so-called Regulation 19 consultation which comes prior to the Plan's submission to the Planning Inspectorate. The consultation period came to an end on 29th January and a substantive response was made on behalf of the Grand Committee under delegated authority and is reported separately in more detail.
25. **London Borough of Redbridge (LBR) Local Plan:** At the same time as our response to the EFDC Local Plan was being made, the Inspector's Report on the Main Modifications (MMs) required for the London Borough of Redbridge Local Plan was published. Despite our representations the Inspector has accepted the "2km buffer zone" for development control around the Forest, which we argued was arbitrary and too limited for some development impacts, including traffic generation. Although it is considered a buffer, nonetheless a total of 500 new houses are proposed within the zone and the Inspector accepted this number.

26. However, the Local Plan Policy LP39, protecting Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was enhanced by the Inspector and The Conservators' role is highlighted in the MMs. The Inspector required specific mitigation solutions to be provided rather than vague references to mitigation. In MMs 68 & 69 the Inspector has required that the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) mitigation measures involve direct consultation with The Conservators. In addition, levels of tariff per house that are required from developers to fund mitigation must be explained in a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
24. Your officers will be seeking to engage LBR in early discussions about mitigation and examine how we might influence the Planning Obligations SPD. It is hoped that a meeting with LBR and involving Natural England, the statutory body responsible for SAC protection, can be arranged early in 2018. We will also be requesting that LBR becomes a signatory to the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the protection of the SAC. The MoU is being used as a basis for establishing a mitigation strategy across 4 other local authorities, including EFDC.
25. In addition to the Local Plans responses, your officers also commented on 11 planning applications during the period in question. Key points included:
- 25.1 Land at Greenview, Holyfield Road** – demolition of existing commercial buildings and the erection of nine detached dwellings. Access to the site is across Forest land; current commercial site is claiming a prescriptive right of way.
- 25.2 Forest Rise, Debden Lane** – total refurbishment with outbuilding for swimming pool and guests (second dwelling). Access is across Forest Lane; with the existing property benefits from a prescriptive right of way.
26. **Upshire Millennium Field** – An Easy Access Path, which has been grant funded by Tesco's, has now been installed at the Millennium Field. The trustees are very pleased with the result and feel that this will prove a worthy asset for the public using the recreation area.

Operations

Habitat Works

27. Wood-pasture Restoration and Management – Contract and in-house arborist teams continue working on wood-pasture restoration, which is the main activity for the in-house teams at present. The final measurement of the areas worked this winter has still to be done, however, activity on the ground has been especially prominent this year with increasing positive and negative public comment on the work. The forest mulcher was hired for a further three-week period undertaking work in Lords Bushes, Walthamstow Forest, Three Planks Ride, Almshouse Plain and Barn Hoppitt.
28. Wanstead park: Ornamental Waters continues its path of recovery with water from the borehole still being diverted to it. The level in the Heronry Pond is now relatively low and the source of increasing comment. Our communications have

emphasised that our priority is to restore water levels as best as we can this winter in the Ornamental Waters. Subsequently there will need to be some juggling of the water movement to restore levels in the Heronry Pond while not undermining the gains made in the Ornamental Waters.

Risk Management Works

29. Tree Safety – Consultants surveys of the Forest's tree safety zone have almost been completed with a few additional surveys being commissioned. Work to complete the 2017 program arising from the consultant's survey is still ongoing with a scheduled completion for the end of March 2018.
30. Tree Root Nuisance: A review is being undertaken into all Tree Root Nuisance claims made against the Forest. The first phase of this review is complete with both the paper and electronic files reconciled. We are currently checking the status of works and other commitments identified in the files on the ground. Once complete we will be working with the insurance team to identify possible strategies for reducing the City's significant financial liabilities in this area.
31. Sink hole: A sink hole of around three feet deep by five feet across appeared on St Peters Green on Friday 26 January exposing some infrastructure cables. Following initial investigations, we sought to get UK Power Network to make good the sink hole since, it was their cable being exposed. They have offered a contribution towards the costs of repair however the refilling of the sinkhole is now being undertaken by contractor engaged by the City of London.

Access Works

32. Ride Management: 3.5 km of the surfaced rides have had a significant cut back of the edge vegetation. This work will help to let light and wind penetrate the ride surfaces and will allow quicker drying out of the surface. In undertaking the work, the teams have cleared back to any drains that are present so as to facilitate and potential future drainage works. The current works give a flavour of the likely proposed scale of activity for the wider surfaced path network.
33. Car Park Improvements: With funding from the City Surveyors team we have been able to make some helpful improvements to several car parks:
- 33.1 Honey Lane car park has had new gating installed along with some resurfacing,
 - 33.2 Lincolns Lane has had its entranceway extended to allow cars to be fully on a hard surface when turning in or out of the car park and the whole car park has been top-dressed. We are keeping this car park closed for a time to allow these works to settle in as ideally they would be undertaken in dryer conditions and any benefits to the resurfacing would be quickly lost if we opened the car park too early.
 - 33.3 High Beach Church: We have improved the edging and undertaking limited surfacing to this small but well used pull in by the church

33.4 Centre Road: Works are pending at Centre Road to improve the surfacing and gateway security. To let the surfacing works settle in the car park will have to be shut for a time and reassessed before opening.

34. The small green on the corner of Nursery Road and Smarts Lane in Loughton has had the new style oak bollards installed along its edge to deter commuter parking. Unhelpfully, part way along, and despite the service check showing no cables, electric cables appeared exactly on the line of the bollards. The current gap section where bollards could not continue to be installed we are proposing to close off by installing couple of benches.

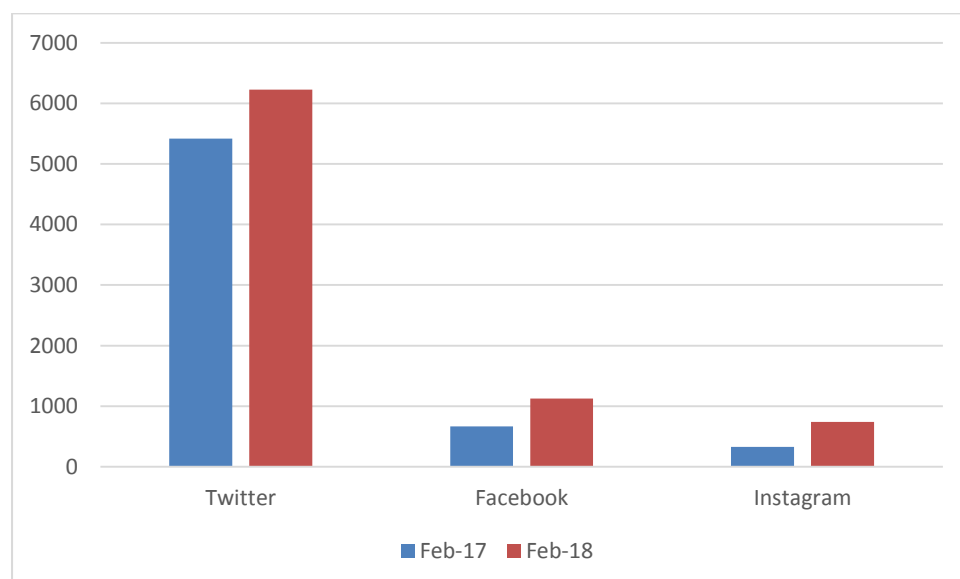
Visitor Services

Communication and Information

35. As of 8 February 2018, Epping Forest social media followers are:

- Twitter followers: 6,226 (15% year on increase)
- Facebook likes: 1126 (69% increase)
- Facebook followers: 1197 (newly included in report so no comparison)
- Instagram followers: 715 (125% increase)

The chart shows a comparison of our figures at a similar reporting point in 2017



36. Forest Focus winter edition was very well received. The ezine edition is greatly increasing in popularity. Consideration is being given to increase the print run of Forest Focus, due to popular demand.

37. Work has now been completed revising the new official Epping Forest map and delivery is expected in March 2018.

38. Work has now been completed on the 'Short walks in Epping Forest' book. The advance 100 copies have been received and reaction has thus far been exceptionally positive. The main delivery is expected in mid-March. The team are currently working on retailing and promotion of the book. The partnership work with local Estate Agent, Stow Brothers, is in place, with the free offer of the book from The View available to those who receive 'welcome to the area' packs from the estate agent (as per the funding application).

Chingford Golf Course

39. Numbers of visitors to the golf course have been lower, partly down to the snow we had in December which closed the golf course for a week along with the wet weather throughout December & January. In a result of this hire equipment has been restricted going out to protect the course.
40. We currently have 724 public registered players on the booking system which is increasing on a weekly basis now we are continuing to register users when visiting.
41. Total revenue for December & January was £21,694.21. Revenue from online bookings for December was £484.50 & £1132.51 for January. Revenue from the front of house golf reception for December & January was £20,077.20 of which:
- Golf Green fees = £16,233.35
 - Fridge Sales = £345.50
 - Hire Equipment Sales = £1237.50
 - Shop Stock Sales = £1600.85
 - Football Bookings = £660
42. Total revenue from online bookings and front of house revenue from December & January last year was £26,337,18; a total decrease of £4,642.97. Part of the decrease of income over the wetter months this year is due to our payment schemes changing from last year where season tickets holders were still paying towards their final fees in December & January via the 'pay as you go' system which we've stopped to allow us to collect our fees earlier in the year.
43. The greens were cut once or twice a week depending on the weather throughout December and January. Solid spiking was carried out in front of the tees on wet patches to allow foot traffic to move easier and create less wear. We suffered multiple types of damage to the greens; hole 7 has suffered from severe motorbike damage twice, holes 4, 5 & 6 also had motorbike damage but was not as severe. Dog damage to the greens has increased but this could be down to the fact the surface is softer due to weather conditions.

Wanstead Flats Football

44. East London League, who have a history of delayed payment, have paid in full for 2017/18 season.

Visitor Numbers

Visitor Number	Month	The View	VC	The Temple	QEHL	Total No
2017	January	2383	1263	759	1453	5858
	February	3289	1266	559	1952	7066
	March	2749	1444	532	1603	6328
	April	5016	2729	2412	3087	13244
	May	3607	2074	1052	2248	8981
	June	4018	1790	513	2861	9182
	July	3942	2103	465	2599	9109
	August	4197	2564	794	3123	10678
	September	4215	1858	722	1902	8697
	October	4519	2569	744	2594	10426
	November	2956	1757	649	1775	7137
	December	3530	933	643	2809	7915
Calendar Year		44421	22350	9844	28006	104621

Visitor Centres Income

Income	Month	The View	VC	The Temple	Total
2017	January	£4,060.00	£571.00	£240.00	£4,871.00
	February	£4,674.00	£435.00	£189.00	£5,298.00
	March	£5,404.00	£768.00	£174.00	£6,346.00
	April	£15,682.60	£1,258.56	£585.47	£17,526.63
	May*	£5,946.60	£847.60	£295.10	£7,089.30
	June	£5,211.55	£763.14	£146.47	£6,121.16
	July	£7,951.95	£1,271.17	£246.83	£9,469.95
	August	£7,142.18	£1,358.28	£899.46	£9,399.92
	September	£7,109.09	£1,008.35	£188.18	£8,305.62
	October	£7,236.31	£1,261.64	£217.84	£8,715.79
	November	£5,259.90	£809.92	£211.64	£6,281.46
	December	£8,051.97	£481.02	£245.66	£8,778.65
Calendar Year		£83,730.15	£10,833.68	£3,639.65	£98,203.48

Visitor Services Spend per Head

Spend per Head	Month	The View	VC	The Temple	Total
2017	January	£1.70	£0.45	£0.32	£2.47
	February	£1.42	£0.34	£0.34	£2.10
	March	£1.97	£0.53	£0.33	£2.83
	April	£3.13	£0.46	£0.24	£3.83
	May	£1.65	£0.41	£0.28	£2.34
	June	£1.30	£0.43	£0.29	£2.02
	July	£2.02	£0.60	£0.53	£3.15
	August	£1.70	£0.53	£1.13	£3.36
	September	£1.69	£0.54	£0.26	£2.49
	October	£0.28	£0.49	£0.29	£1.06
	November	£1.78	£0.46	£0.33	£2.57
	December	£2.28	£0.52	£0.38	£3.18

Visitor Figures Comparisons 2016/2017

% Increase/Decrease in	Month	Total 16	Total 17	Difference 16/17	% Difference
Annual Visitor Figures	January	5858	6145	287	5%
	February	7066	6416	-650	-9%
	March	8481	6313	-2168	-26%
	April	9248	13244	3996	43%
	May	9467	10340	873	9%
	June	5978	9182	3204	54%
	July	8807	9109	302	3%
	August	9761	10678	917	9%
	September	6960	8697	1737	25%
	October	9522	10426	904	9%
	November	6403	7137	734	11%
	December	7869	7915	46	1%
Total				10182.00	

Visitor Services Events and Activities

45. Epping Forest Christmas Grotto ran on *Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th December* attracting over 2,000 people, with over 500 pre-booked tickets sold for the weekend, creating £7,458.61 in ticket sales alone. With an array of activities to take part in, the weekend was a huge success with positive feedback given through Survey Monkey. Profit made from the event was £2,568.02.

46. A taster session craft event at The View, 'Printing inspired by Nature', 24 January 2018, was a partnership event with London Borough of Waltham Forest Adult Education Service (LBWFAES). LBWFAES wanted to test appetite for this class in the location. All course costs were met by LBWFAES and 13 people of a maximum 16 attended. Attendees represented over a third of total visitors on a cold wet day and also made purchase in the shop. As a result, further paid for bookings for courses are in discussion.
47. Visitor Services responded constructively to discussions initiated by London Borough of Waltham Forest officers concerning a bid on 1 December 2017 to be London Borough of Culture 2019 or in 2020. Workshops run by LBWF indicated that residents of LBWF felt that Epping Forest was a unique and significant contribution to what was special about their borough and local artists were keen to put on events and activities relating to the Forest. The View is illustrated in the bid document, p15. 22 boroughs have submitted entries: the winning borough will be awarded £1.1 million. The 'Forest' London Boroughs of Redbridge and Newham also bid for this award. The winner, and 6 'exemplary' other bids are due to be announced in February.

Major incidents

48. None.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – None

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest Consultative Epping Forest and Commons	24 01 2018 12 03 2018
Subject: Epping Forest Operations Programme for 2018/2019 (SEF 14/18)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces and Heritage	For Decision
Report author: Geoff Sinclair and Jeremy Dagley, Epping Forest	

Summary

This report outlines the conservation, visitor access and risk management projects proposed in the Forest for the year 2018/19.

The main theme for the habitats conservation work continues to be the grant-funded operations aimed at managing the Favourable Condition of the Site of Special Scientific Interest. The area to be worked remains at an increased hectareage of around 38 hectares across 17 of the 38 compartments to ensure that the 10-year commitments under the Environmental Stewardship Agreement with Natural England are met. Contractors, as in the last two years, will be involved in key areas of wood-pasture and grassland management. The grazing programme will continue to expand with the key aim being to unite the Bury Wood and Chingford grazing areas to ensure more extensive, less intensive grazing over a longer season.

The work programme also addresses key areas of risk, particularly those related to woody vegetation along highway verges, fly-tipping, rough sleeping and tree safety. An issue for the coming year will be the continuing response to and resources required in relation to the increased risk posed by tree pests and diseases. There will also be attention focused on aquatic Non-Native Invasive Species (INNS) principally New Zealand Pygmy-weed.

Access along the ride network is to be addressed through tackling over-growing vegetation through systematic survey and remedial work. A new improved design of bridge is to be installed at Whitehall Plain to improve north-south visitor access connecting with the Chingford Visitor “hub”.

Following a successful contract tendering process in 2015 and 2016, the programme will continue to improve the value for money we achieve using bulk contracts where possible. These contracts are proposed for retendering in 2018/19.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the annual work programme as summarised in the main report

Main Report

Background

1. This report describes significant conservation, visitor access and risk management projects proposed in Epping Forest for the programme year 2018-2019.
2. The work outlined below is drawn from the 2004-10 Epping Forest Management Plan and subsequent documents and strategies developed from that Plan (see Background papers below). The habitat work is also determined by Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) *Favourable Condition* and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) *Favourable Conservation Status* priorities which have been agreed and approved by Natural England and are financially supported by Environmental Stewardship (ES) and Basic Payment Scheme (BPS).

Current Position

3. The Forest is in the final year of a 10-year ES agreement with Natural England for funding conservation work across the Forest grasslands, heaths, wood-pasture and also the grasslands of the Buffer Lands. The key elements in the ES agreement are:
 - 3.1 The continued grassland management through either or both grazing and mowing;
 - 3.2 The restoration of 390ha of wood-pasture habitat. The latter habitat work is covered by the ES's Higher Level Scheme (HLS) payments because it is a UK Habitat of Principal Importance.
4. Following a review of progress in 2015/16 to ensure the City Corporation meets its commitments by the end of the agreement, the scale of the HLS-funded wood-pasture work has been set at around 38 hectares per year across 19 of the 38 Forest Compartments. In 2017 we completed all works in two compartments leaving 17 to be worked in 2018. To accomplish this level of work across multiple sites there has been an increase in Epping Forest arborist teams' time spent on this habitat restoration, as well as more work by specialist contractors and the use of mulching equipment hired for specific suitable sites.
5. A total of 189 ha of our grass and haylage cutting and the bulk of our highway verge cutting is now undertaken by local contractors Warren Smith Farming Ltd and Bush Wheeler Services respectively. Their three year agreements ended in Dec 2017 and these three year contracts will be re-tendered in time for works to start in 2018. The grass and haylage work is subsidised by BPS and ES Entry Level Scheme (ELS) grants.
6. The habitat conservation works are supported by agri-environment payments from the Rural Payments Agency and Natural England, through both the aforementioned BPS and ES.

Proposals

7. The proposed 2018/19 programme focuses on the HLS wood-pasture restoration commitments, increasing the number of grazing cattle across Buffer Land and Forest grasslands and managing risks, particularly those related to woody vegetation on highway verges, tree pests and diseases, fly-tipping and tree safety. We will also be working on increasing the planned response to risks associated with Forest paths and tree root nuisance claims, both of which give rise to a significant number of our insurance claims.
8. Estates Maintenance Contract (EMC): In partnership with the City Procurement Service (CPS) the City Corporation will re-tender two bulk contracts, grass cutting and road verge cutting, on a three-year basis in 2018, The haylage contract has a further year to run on our three year agreement and following the good performance of our contractor we propose continuing with them for the third year.
9. Habitat Conservation Programme 2018 -2019: The key activities of the habitat conservation programme are described below:
10. **Wood-pasture Restoration:** In 2018/19 it is planned to work approximately 38 ha across 17 of the 38 Forest compartments, with the main highlights being:
 - Lords Bushes (Compartment 32) – where more work will be done in 2018-19 to catch up with work delayed due to ground conditions in the last two years
 - Barn Hoppitt (Compartment 29) – re-connecting ancient Oak areas to the grasslands and re-invigorating the thorn scrub
 - Bury Wood (Compartment 24) – continuing more than 30 years of wood-pasture restoration across this large compartment in the heart of the densest Hornbeam pollarded area;
 - Pillow Mounds & Comical Corner (Compartment 14) and Rushey Plain (Comp 10), both around High Beach– continuing work to open up around small ancient oak pollards and protecting ancient beech from soil compaction and erosion with soil mulching, natural barriers or fencing being considered around the two worst affected beech trees.
- 10.1 The majority of the wood-pasture restoration work is scheduled to commence from mid-July after the bird breeding season and, following the tree safety work, and will continue through to March 2018. It is anticipated that it will occupy the arborist teams for much of that time.
11. **Wood-pasture and Grassland Maintenance:** In 2018, around 94 ha of cleared wood-pasture will be cut with tractor mounted flails. It is proposed that this work will largely be undertaken with in-house staff, as in previous years, as they have the local knowledge and experience of the sites to ensure responsive and the best quality management of this important conservation task. Open grass areas across the Forest will be cut using a similar programme as in previous years with contractors undertaking around 50%, 72 ha, of the work.
12. Staff and volunteers will continue with the ongoing Skylark conservation activity on **Wanstead Flats**. At **Wanstead Park** Exchange Land support and advice will

be given to The Wren Group in its volunteer conservation work on the grassland mosaic there, which now supports important colonies of butterflies.

13. **Grazing:** last year, 2017, was our first full year of the in-house grazing operation with the Conservators' English Longhorn herd. It is planned that the number of cow grazing days will be increased in 2018 as the herd has grown in size over the last year. In particular, the main aim will be to achieve a combined Chingford Plain-Bury Wood grazing area, using a revised invisible fencing configuration, to ensure extensive grazing over a larger area which will match the long-standing extensive Fairmead grazing.
14. Re-establishing grazing across Barn Hoppitt (Compartment 29) and the completion of the invisible fencing loops there will also be reviewed. The independent grazing auditor will visit during the grazing season to observe and record the progress of the Grazing Strategy. The auditor is to submit his report towards the end of the 2018.
15. During 2018-19 the delayed construction of an enclosed pound at Fairmead car park will also be undertaken. As reported to your Committee in 2017 the Car Park would still be available for visitors except for those times when it is being used in occasional cattle management operations.
16. **Ponds/Lakes/Bogs:** Monthly monitoring for Floating Pennywort will be continued during 2018 using a specialist contractor with any outbreaks responded to as they appear. During 2017 we were able to highlight the substantial bankside erosion problems at Jubilee Pond to colleagues from the City Surveyor's Department. To safeguard the City's substantial investment in the re-lining of Jubilee pond improvement works led by the City Surveyors department will be progressed.
17. Following excellent clearance work at Speakman's Pond by volunteers from the Epping Forest Centenary Trust, we will be investigating how best to remove and control the smothering growth of the Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) New Zealand Pygmy-weed (*Crassula helmsii*). The objective will be to maintain some open water habitat through the regular removal of the pygmy weed. This is one of 19 Forest ponds invaded by this highly competitive species and similar work is likely to be carried out at Butlers Retreat Pond, which was opened up by staff in 2017, and may be considered for other sites dependent on results and resources.
18. Should *Froglife* be successful in its grant bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund then Cow Pond (subject to a separate report to Committee in January 2018) the restoration work at this site would begin with liaison with CoL Conservation Section staff.
19. More minor works, largely by volunteers, will continue to be planned for the Forest bogs to ensure water levels are secured and over-growing vegetation removed. These follow recommendations on bog conservation following a 2016-2017 survey of all Forest bogs by the County Botanical recorder, Dr Ken Adams (see Background Papers below). A volunteer task will be programmed as close to International Bog Day in July if possible.

20. **Visitor Access Management Programme:** In addition to at least an annual cut of official bridleways the following specific visitor access works are proposed to take place in the Forest during the year:
- 20.1 Highams Park: An operational Individual Site Management Plan will be prepared for Highams Park which will draw together the existing and near term proposed activity. During 2018 it is proposed that we work with local volunteers to seek funding for restoring the original estate coach drive as a north-south multi-user surfaced path through the Park on the east side of the lake. The potential of constructing a pedestrian-only path on the west side of the lake will also be reviewed, seeking to protect the flora on both sides of the Park from erosion and compaction.
 - 20.2 Ride improvements: A path improvement and maintenance plan will be completed in the first half of 2018 following an audit of paths in 2017. In the first instance this is likely to lead to increased work on overgrowing vegetation followed by works on the path side drainage. It is also likely that we will implement an annual path monitoring program to cover a proportion of the paths each year. Routine maintenance of path edge vegetation will be continued across the whole network.
 - 20.3 Perimeter replacement Queens Green: The bollards at Queens Green, High Beach are deteriorating quickly and will be replaced with square sawn oak posts as used at Smarts Lane Green, Loughton in 2017.
 - 20.4 Whitehall Plain Bridge and path: In association with the Department of the Built Environment we will look at erecting a new bridge or raised boardwalk across the River Ching on Whitehall Plain in the location of the deteriorating culvert bridge. In addition to the river crossing, sections of the paths leading to the bridge have been cut through by drainage grips creating muddy, deep hollows in places. Improvements over these eroded sections will be reviewed as possible additions to the bridge works.
 - 20.5 Parkland Plan, Wanstead Park: Work on this project will continue in 2018 through the City of London's Gateway process to identify funding for progressing the improvement plan proposed in the Parkland Plan.
21. **Risk Management Activity:** Ongoing maintenance of highways edge vegetation will largely be contracted out through a three-year agreement with a local provider. In-house teams will focus on the more challenging locations where there are a number of constraints such as frequent parked cars and on maintaining sightlines at path and road junctions. One significant task will be the management of roadside elm alongside Bell Common, Epping which would be managed over the next 2 years by reducing the height of the elms to ensure the hazards of falling stems are removed.
22. **Tree Safety:** Trees identified for hazard removal will be a significant proportion of spring and summer programmes for the Arborist Teams. A potentially difficult tree safety operation, held over for a couple of years, is the re-working of the poplar and plane avenue at Woodford that leads up to the Winston Churchill statue. A community and stakeholder consultation document has been prepared and

depending on the outcome of this consultation exercise work will be undertaken in the summer of 2018. Currently dangerous trees have been worked in line with the tree safety assessments.

23. **Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) work:** The planned removal of Larch from The Warren Plantation (Compartment 15) in 2017 to manage a *Phytophthora ramorum* outbreak was delayed and will take place in summer 2018. Monitoring of Oak Processionary Moth will continue with control measures taken as required.
24. **Fire safety:** 6km of firebreaks are cut at least twice a year in the summer on Leyton and Wanstead Flats. The need for further cuts will be assessed depending on the prevailing grass growing conditions.
25. **Insurance claims:** In association with the City of London's insurance team we will be developing management policies for Tree Root nuisance and path management. These are two areas where each year we receive substantial legal claims and it is increasing evident that a review of practice is desirable.
26. **Large Raised Reservoirs (LRR):** Woody and herbaceous vegetation will be kept cut on raised reservoirs. Further works will follow on from the six monthly Panel engineer inspections and will be undertaken in association with the Built Environment Department. Following the filling of the Ornamental Waters at Wanstead Park the water management strategy will seek to ensure the running of a small stream from the Perch Pond to the Ornamental waters through the spring and early summer months, subject to water needs to keep the Heronry at an acceptable level.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

27. Open Spaces Department Business Plan - The proposals follow from three of the Open Spaces Department's Strategic aims of: providing high quality accessible open spaces, involving communities in site management and adopting sustainable working practices.
28. Epping Forest Management Plan - Management Plan - The proposals match a number of the Epping Forest Vision for the 21st Century's key visions including:
 - Epping Forest's position as a unique and ancient landscape for people and wildlife will be strengthened;
 - The Forest will retain its natural aspect with the diversity of wildlife habitats enhanced and the features of international importance protected.
 - Epping Forest will be highly valued as part of a larger and fully accessible protected landscape area.

Implications

29. **Financial** - The work outlined in the proposed work programme is to be covered by the local risk budget of Epping Forest Division supplemented by grant aid from the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and the Environmental Stewardship Scheme

grant awarded by Natural England covering both Entry Level (ELS) and Higher Level (HLS) work, together with funding from the City Corporation's Cyclical Work Programme. Additional grant aid will be sought where available to fund agreed activity.

30. **Legal** - Formal consent for these works has been sought from Natural England under Section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for the SSSI and as required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in relation to the SAC.

Conclusions

31. The work outlined above covers a large number of the Forest compartments and addresses key access issues across the Forest ride and pathway network and also risk management work, particularly along Forest roadsides and boundaries. The habitats programme is the continuation of several decades of conservation work and a commitment to achieve the Favourable Condition of the SSSI compartments and Favourable Conservation Status of the SAC.
32. Volunteers will continue to be instrumental in delivering a significant proportion of the work on a number of key projects in 2018/19, including wood-pasture restoration and ponds work and their important contribution is acknowledged.
33. In-house teams will deliver much of the work detailed in the report. Contractors will be used to support implementation of the grass-cutting and highway vegetation management works as well as key areas of the wood-pasture restoration work.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Map of ES Higher Level wood-pasture restoration areas

Background Papers

- The Epping Forest Management Plan 2004-2010;
- The Barn Hoppit Wood-pasture Restoration Plan 2006-2011;
- The Lords Bushes and Knighton Woods Integrated Site Plan 2004-2010;
- The Wanstead Flats Integrated Site Plan 2006-2011;
- Branching Out Stage II Project Plan (Nov 2008) – including the Keystone Trees and Grazing Strategies;
- SEF 01/13 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: Grazing Expansion Plan for Implementing the Epping Forest Grazing Strategy. 13th Feb 2013.
- Wanstead Park Conservation (2011);
- SEF 50/16 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: Epping Forest Grazing Expansion Plan Continuity Arrangements. 21st November 2016
- The Topology and Vegetational History of Some Epping Forest Sphagnum Bogs (Report to EF Conservators - K.J. Adams 2017).

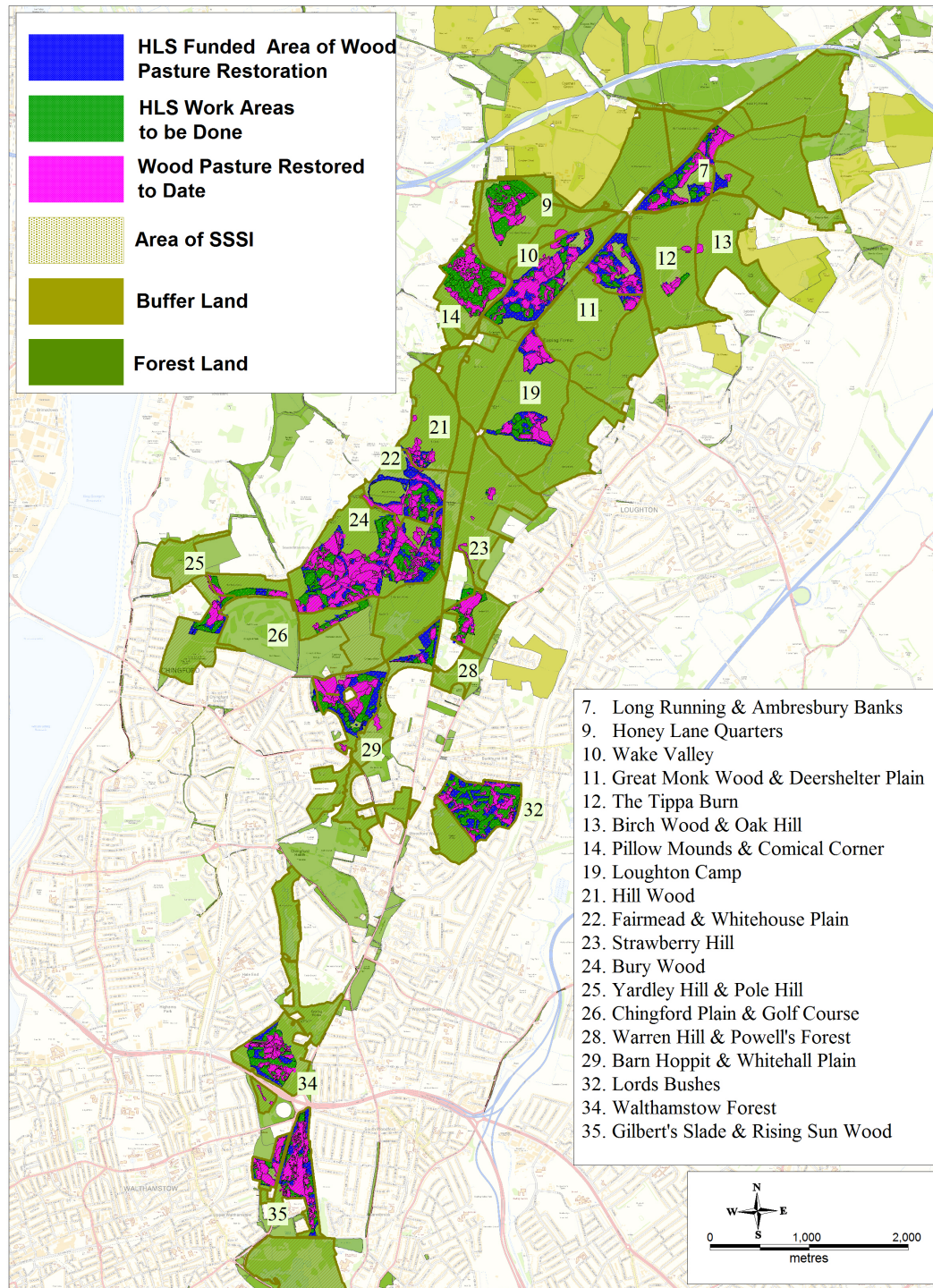
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APPENDIX 1: HLS WOOD PASTURE RESTORATION



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Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest Consultative Epping Forest and Commons	24 January 2018 12 March 2018
Subject: Epping Forest Buffer Lands – Annual Agricultural Holdings review (SEF 15/18)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces and Heritage	For Information
Report author: Jeremy Dagley, Epping Forest	

Summary

The City of London maintains 735 hectares of strategically-acquired Buffer Lands Estate under the approved Buffer Lands Policy. Collectively, the Buffer Lands Estate plays a key role in supporting the management objectives for the internationally-important Forest and protecting it from development and adverse land uses. In addition, they further provide enhanced public access, alternative sites for recreation, protection for ancient landscape areas and historic linkages to the Forest. The importance of these roles has been recognised in the current version of the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan, which includes an objective to ‘*conserve and enhance*’ the Forest and its Buffer Lands.

The Buffer Lands also provide essential operational underpinning of the approved Grazing Strategy, which is crucial to maintaining the *Favourable Condition* of the Epping Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest. The grazing of the Buffer Lands is also required for maintenance of their important parkland landscapes and is proposed to continue with both in-house and licensee grazing.

Based on external land agency advice and existing agreements, Breach Barns Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) needs to be completed and notice may be served for a 2019-20 renewal of the FBT at Netherhouse. The agricultural rental income next year from agricultural tenancies will be slightly above the 2017-18 figures, following the renewal of the FBT at Copped Hall Park (North).

This report provides a summary of the main agricultural land management activities completed in 2017 – 18. It also previews proposed management and wildlife conservation operations, which will be in-line with national cross-compliance regulations.

The Forest’s conservation management objectives, as well as the Buffer Lands management, were directly supported by the Buffer Land Estate’s generation of a combined grant income expected to be over £165,000.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to approve:

- the procurement of land agency advice for the continuation and completion of negotiations at Breach Barns, for a review of Netherhouse, Obelisk Field and Woodredon Estate (south) agreements and on a case-by-case basis as required, adhering to City Procurement guidelines;
- the procurement of contract services for the carrying out of agricultural management, including fencing and weed control, as required, following City Procurement procedures;
- a renewal of the 3-yr lease to the Upshire Millennium Trust on similar terms;
- revision of the boundary between the Woodredon North Farm Tenancy business and No 2 Green Lane Bungalow to facilitate surplus property disposal.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London's Buffer Land is intended to help preserve the environmental setting, landscape quality (including historic grazing land linkages) and conservation of the Forest, as approved in the Buffer Lands Strategy & Policy by the Policy and Resources Committee on 14 October 1993.
2. Over the past 57 years the City has acquired 14 parcels of land, totalling 735 hectares (ha), on the perimeter of the Forest. This Buffer Land provides complementary wildlife habitats and recreational links between the Forest and the wider countryside and is of nature conservation importance. The area subject of this report is the 466ha, (63.4%) of the estate which is under agricultural management. The remaining 269.13ha of non-agricultural Buffer Land Estate comprises woodland, golf courses and the Deer Sanctuary. However, the grassland of the Sanctuary also attracts income under both the Basic Payment Scheme and the Forest's Environmental Stewardship agreement with Natural England (NE).
3. As well as being supported by the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) agri-environment support, the Buffer Land Estate forms a significant component of the Entry Level and Higher Level Environmental Stewardship Schemes (ELS/HLS) by generating "points" for habitat options that allows income-generating habitat options to be located on the Forest (see also *Financial Implications* below). As a result of this the Buffer Land provides direct financial support to the conservation management of Forest Land.
4. Much of this Buffer Land is also important to the Forest for operational reasons. In particular, the Buffer Lands provide essential support for the grazing of the Forest's wood-pasture by providing key grazing, haylage, lay-back lands and out-wintering areas for the Forest cattle

Current Position and 2017-18 report

5. The recommendations approved by Committee last year were all carried out and are included in the paragraphs 6 – 20 below.
6. The importance of the Buffer Lands' role in protecting the Forest's landscape setting, environment and biodiversity has been recognised in the current Regulation 19 submission version of the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan (Dec 2017), which includes an objective to 'conserve and enhance' the Forest and its Buffer Lands.
7. The Buffer Lands, along with the Forest and The Commons (Inc. Burnham Beeches), are now all merged under a 'single business identifier' as required by the Rural Payments Agency and as approved by your Committee in 2016.
8. The BPS payments and the ELS & HLS points generated by the Buffer Lands provided a combined anticipated final income in 2017-18 for the Epping Forest Local Risk budgets of around £165,000 (see also *Financial Implications* below).
9. **Grazing at Warlies Park and Copped Hall:** The Buffer Lands play a vital role in ensuring the continuation of traditional grazing of the Forest wood-pasture habitat. The grazing on the Buffer Lands also provides the appropriate management of the parkland at Warlies and the Grade II* landscape at Copped Hall Park. During 2017, the in-house grazing herd of English Longhorns grazed Warlies Park throughout the grazing season. At Copped Hall the fields were grazed by a licensee under an annual grazing licence.
10. The cattle from both the in-house and licensee's herds came off the Buffer Lands by November 2017. The move to winter housing completes a successful year of 16,000 grazing days. This exceeds previous grazing activity across all sites and follows the move to in-house management in November 2016.
11. All the cattle are now housed at Great Gregories. Autumn calving started with 14 calves being born by early December. As at the time of writing this report a further 16 calves are expected in January and February. All future calving is to be winter-calving timed between October and February.
12. The Commons' Sussex cows, 24 of them, arrived at Great Gregories at the end of November and the remainder of The Commons' young stock are due to arrive at the time of writing this report.
13. Great Gregories (5.58ha)
The permissive access across the Parliamentary Railway Field was removed as approved by Committee in the last report, to ensure improved security for the young livestock including new calves. The public footpath network here remains well-used and a further section of one of the hedgerows alongside the central footpath was laid to ensure it did not overgrow the pathway and to provide an attractive boundary. The work, led by volunteers, received interest and compliments from footpath users.
14. Additional works at Great Gregories have been taking place to improve the efficiency of the site and management of the cattle. This includes the laying of a

new concrete feed passage by the in-house Operations Team. The levelling off and laying hard-core surfaces was carried out by contractor alongside the new housing to provide easier access for machinery to feed the animals.

15. The CCTV camera system was also upgraded within existing budgets so that all cattle can be now viewed remotely day or night if required. By the end of March a new cattle handling system will be installed in the existing top cow shed and this will ensure safer handling conditions for both staff and the animals.
16. **Warlies Park** (27.4ha): 1,000metres of new fencing was erected to replace old fencing, beginning the replacement of the boundary fencing around this site which will continue over the next few years.
17. **Raveners**: the four fields at Raveners Farm were rented out under an annual herbage agreement to a local farmer and used for haylage.
18. Haylage was also taken from **Gt Gregories and North Farm** fields for over-winter feed for the in-house Longhorn herd.
19. **Copped Hall (North)** (70.32ha): The Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) was renegotiated at this site encompassing the same fields as in the previous FBTs and with the same tenant. A 4-yr FBT running until 20th September 2021 is now in place there.
20. The negotiations over the FBT at **Breach Barns** were started and are continuing with the tenant (see below).
21. At **Swaines Green** the boundary with a neighbouring property which had previously only been marked out using GPS and concrete marker posts was fenced, following agreement with the private land owner, ensuring secured boundaries for City Land and clear demarcation of public access across the land.

Proposals

22. It is proposed to offer the same annual herbage agreements to local farmers for the grazing of the **Copped Hall** Park and neighbouring fields and the taking of haylage at **Raveners**.
23. The tenancies at **Netherhouse, Woodredon Estate (south) and Obelisk Field, Warlies** will be reviewed with an external land agent to consider whether any changes need to be made through negotiations with the tenants.
24. The negotiations on the **Breach Barns** FBT will be concluded by the external land agent (Strutt & Parker), already engaged this year.
25. Following your Committee decision of November 2017 to declare No 2 Green Lane Bungalow surplus to requirements as an operational property, it will be necessary to renegotiate the boundary between the property and the Woodredon South Farm Tenancy held by Mr Nigel Padfield, whose current arrangements overlap.
26. The City Corporation has also been asked to consider compensation claims for crop loss following winter grazing of Fallow and Reeve Muntjac Deer on winter cereals. The services of an agronomist have been sought and a specific report will be made on the matter to your Committee.

27. At **Warlies Park** the current 3-yr lease on the Millennium Green field to Upshire Millennium Green Trust is coming to an end this year and it is proposed to renew it on similar terms for the continuing benefit of the local community and in recognition of the grant investment on a surfaced path that Committee approved in 2017.
28. The main body of **Warlies Park** would continue to be grazed by the in-house English Longhorn herd, as would the smaller fields at **Gt Gregories**. The remaining **Gt Gregories** fields and the fields at **North Farm** and **Woodredon North** (see below) would be taken for haylage as in previous years to ensure a good winter supply of fodder.
29. The **Trees Outside Woods Project** expression of interest, if accepted by the Woodland Trust, may be developed as part of a project for submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the areas of Buffer Lands that may be considered as part of any bid would be subject to approval through a separate reporting process to your Committee over the next 18 months.
- i. The following works on the Buffer Lands are scheduled for 2018 -19:
Replacement of fencing at various sites would continue with both contractors and in-house staff carrying out the work, including replacement and/or repairs to lengths of **Warlies Park** and **Copped Hall** Deer Park fencing
 - ii. The 4 fields at **Woodredon North**, which are now managed in-house, would be cut early for a first crop of haylage and then over seeded to improve the quality of winter forage in the future to ensure that the English Longhorn herd can be 'finished' for market on grass rather than supplements.
 - iii. Weed control may need to be carried out as in previous years, by a variety of methods including topping as well as some herbicide treatment, which for Ragwort would follow the Epping Forest Ragwort Protocol;
 - iv. Fertilising a number of fields with farmyard manure from **Great Gregories** out-wintering housing will be carried out again, ensuring the Nitrogen Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) regulations are adhered to at all times, with detailed field-by-field records maintained by your officers;
 - v. There would be continued management of the wildlife plots at **Copped Hall North** (alongside the tenanted arable land) for the benefit of biodiversity and this would be informed by the review of the bird populations following detailed breeding bird surveys completed last year by a volunteer;
30. Further tasks at **Swaines Green** would be carried out by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers to undertake scrub management.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

31. The work and proposals outlined above meet the City of London Corporate Plan's (2015 -2019) key policy priorities of:
- maximising the opportunities and benefits afforded by our role in supporting London's communities;
 - increasing the outreach and impact of the City's cultural, heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation.

32. **Open Spaces Department Business Plan** - The proposals follow from three of the Open Spaces Department's Strategic aims of: providing high quality accessible open spaces, involving communities in site management and adopting sustainable working practices.

33. **Epping Forest Management Plan** - The proposals match a number of the Epping Forest Vision for the 21st Century's key visions including:

- i. Epping Forest's position as a unique and ancient landscape for people and wildlife will be strengthened;
- ii. The Forest will retain its natural aspect with the diversity of wildlife habitats enhanced and the features of international importance protected.
- iii. Epping Forest will be highly valued as part of a larger and fully accessible protected landscape area.

Implications

34. **Financial** - under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, administered by Natural England, the Buffer Land generates points that are anticipated to have contributed around 59% of the Stewardship grant for 2017-18. This income helps to support conservation work including work towards *Favourable Condition* of the Epping Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and *Favourable Conservation Status* of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC), as well as the good management of the Buffer Lands themselves.

35. The combined income generated by the Buffer Lands under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ES) is anticipated to be around £165,000 for 2017-18. These incomes, as well as the land itself, help underpin the approved Forest Grazing Strategy and The Conservators' habitat conservation work across both the Forest and Buffer Lands.

36. **Legal** – following the merger under a single business identifier there have been no further legal issues raised during the FY 2017-18.

37. **Property**: The use of a specialist agricultural letting and management consultant is desirable to ensure that the City Corporation receives the best advice to properly manage and maximise the benefit of the agricultural lettings.

Conclusions

38. More cow grazing days were completed than ever before across the Buffer Lands in 2017 due to a combination of in-house and licensed herds. This ensured the appropriate management of the important parkland landscapes. New fencing was completed at Warlies to begin a phased replacement of key boundary fencing that will allow the grazing of the parklands to continue. The renewal of the FBT at Copped Hall ensured continuity of management, while three other tenancies may be reviewed over the next two years with the tenants. The lease on Upshire Millennium Field also requires negotiation with a view to renewal on the same terms for the benefit of the local community.

39. The importance of the Buffer Lands to the Forest was reflected in the Epping Forest Local Plan. The developments proposed in this Plan will need to be considered carefully for their potential impacts on the management and

conservation of the Buffer Lands as well as the Forest itself and these considerations will be a key part of the work related to Buffer Lands over the forthcoming year.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Epping Forest Buffer Lands Map

Background Papers

- Epping Forest Buffer Lands Action Plan 1998 (approved 13th July 1998)

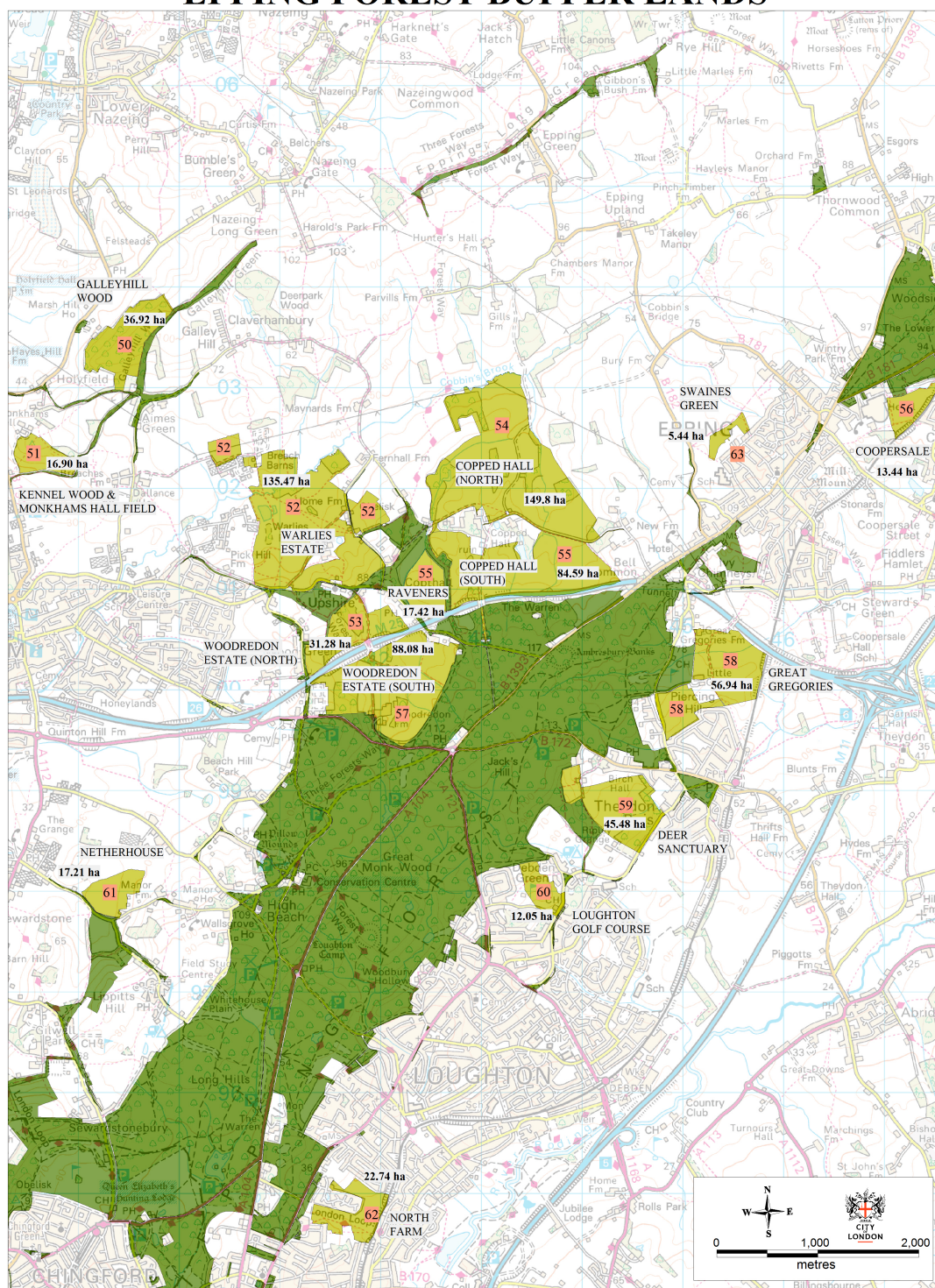
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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest & Commons	12 03 2018
Subject: Epping Forest District Council Local Plan – Regulation 19 Consultation update (SEF 19/18)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces & Heritage	For information
Report Author: Jeremy Dagley – Head of Conservation, Epping Forest	

Summary

This report provides an update on The Conservators' response to the Epping Forest District Council ('the Council') Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan. The Council has confirmed that it will be submitting its Plan to the Planning Inspectorate by its 31st March deadline. Discussions are underway in relation to mitigating adverse impacts as part of a mitigation strategy as required under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the protection of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), to which The Conservators' are co-signatories. The proposed mitigation measures and any proposed Statement of Common Ground with the Council would be brought before your Committee later this year for approval.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the response on behalf of The Conservators' to the Plan in **Appendix 1**;
- note that Epping Forest District Council is seeking a Statement of Common Ground with The Conservators prior to the Plan's Examination-in-Public; and
- note the consequent range of mitigation issues (**Appendix 2**) that are under consideration, a final prioritised list of which will be brought before Committee for approval at the earliest opportunity.

Background

1. Epping Forest District Council, whose boundary includes 64% of Epping Forest, published its Local Plan, under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012), in mid-December 2017. It sought representations from the public and other bodies over a 6-week period that concluded on 29 January 2018.
2. It was not possible, therefore, to provide a response for approval by Grand Committee before this deadline. Therefore, following an update by The

Superintendent of Epping Forest at January's Committee meeting, a response was made by the Town Clerk under delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

3. The Local Plan addresses the next phase of the District's development for the 15 years to 2033, including the allocation of 11,400 new homes, of which nearly 4,378 units are currently allocated within 3km of the Forest's boundaries and the majority, over 6,000, are within 5km. This proposed significant increase in development and its associated infrastructure, presents a considerable threat to the Forest and this is reflected in the response that was made under delegated authority. This response concludes that the Local Plan is '**unsound**' because it is not consistent with national legislation, including The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitats Regulations) and is not considered 'justified' or 'sustainable'. The full response is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Update

4. Your officers met on 21st February with the District Council, other local authorities and Natural England to discuss the issues raised in our response and similar concerns on the soundness of the Plan raised by Natural England.
5. The District Council informed us that it intends to submit its Plan to the Planning Inspectorate by 31st March 2018. It further accepted that changes to the Plan, in response to our and Natural England's concerns, could not be made before this submission deadline. Therefore, it conceded that there would have to be modifications to the Plan and that it would seek these through separate Statements of Common Ground with Natural England and The Conservators. It would present any Statements of Common Ground, should they be agreed, to the Inspector alongside the Plan before the Examination-in-Public which is expected in autumn 2018.
6. In addition to seeking these Statements of Common Ground, the Council also wishes to make progress with a Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which it is required to prepare as the 'Competent Authority' (as defined by The Habitats Regulations) for the SAC in respect of its Plan. The preparation of a mitigation strategy is also an agreed action under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the protection of Epping Forest to which The Conservators are co-signatories. The current scope of **impacts**, in relation to the SAC, that are under consideration for mitigation are listed under **Appendix 2** of this report.
7. The proposed mitigation **measures** to respond to these and any other impacts, identified during the course of the forthcoming discussions, will be presented to your Committee for consideration and approval at the earliest opportunity. If approved these mitigation measures could form part of a Statement of Common Ground with Epping Forest District Council, which would also be brought to your Committee for approval subsequently.

Conclusions

8. The Conservators and Natural England both consider that the Epping Forest Submission Local Plan is 'unsound' because of its likely adverse impacts on Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Forest more broadly. As a result, there is a requirement for the Council, in agreement with other parties to the MoU, to consider mitigation measures which would form an effective and measurable mitigation strategy. In addition, as the Council is unable to make further modifications to its Plan prior to submission on 31st March, it is seeking to reach a Statement of Common Ground with The Conservators before the Examination-in-Public.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Response of The Conservators of Epping Forest on the Epping Forest District Council; Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan
- **Appendix 2:** List of mitigation impacts under consideration as part of the Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

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RESPONSE of THE CONSERVATORS of EPPING FOREST on the EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL REGULATION 19 SUBMISSION LOCAL PLAN

1. Introduction and context

1.1 Epping Forest is owned by the City of London Corporation and comprises some 6000 acres (2,500 hectares). It is supported by a further 1,800 acres (730 hectares) of Buffer Lands, acquired by the City to protect the Forest from encroaching development and to maintain the links between the Forest and the wider countryside. The Epping Forest Act 1878 charged the City, as Conservators of Epping Forest, with a duty to conserve varied vegetation and preserve the Forest's *natural aspect*.

1.2 The Conservators comments, in general, are given in response to the Plan in relation to all Forest Land, whether covered by the Epping Forest Act, the Habitats Regulations 2017 or the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 or all of these designations. The Conservators consider that the protection and enhancement of the Forest, as a whole, should be a core aim of the Local Plan.

1.3 For example, whilst an assessment of the impacts on the SSSI is not formally part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA - Document EB206)), on which we comment in detail below, a consistent approach to both the SAC and SSSI interest features in the Plan is important. In particular, irrespective of any designation, the ancient wood-pasture habitats of the Forest and its network of ancient green lanes are irreplaceable. The European site boundary is clearly part of a wider ecological network and approaches to biodiversity conservation need to be compatible with each other and seek the best outcomes for the natural environment. The ancient green lane network, which is extensive across the District, provides the building block for future, wildlife-rich green infrastructure and green corridors to link other ancient woodlands and other important sites like the Lee Valley.

1.4 In addition, maintaining the same approach to the Forest as a whole would be beneficial for developers and decision makers as it would avoid confusion, would provide clarity and would reduce the amount of SSSI assessment required at the project level.

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2. Overview of impacts of the Plan

2.1 The increased housing proposed in the Plan (21% increase) is a cause for great concern because of the pattern of allocations and their proximity to the Forest, with around 6,000 new homes being planned within 6.2 km of the boundaries of the Forest's Special Area of Conservation and within 5km of protected Forest Land.

2.2 The proposed increased housing so close to the Forest would lead to impacts on the Forest from:

- A. Increased traffic and expanded highways – with air pollution a key concern as well as noise, visual intrusion into the natural scenery and loss of relative tranquility
- B. Increased recreational pressure/demands – with increased costs of management and potential damage to soils, impacts on tree hazard management
- C. Impacts of urbanisation – litter, fly-tipping, alien species introductions, noise (and loss of relative tranquility), impacts on natural aspect and scenery.

3. Summary of issues & concerns:

3.1 The Conservators have previously expressed concern and disagreed with elements of the Regulation 18 Local Plan. Many of these concerns remain with the Regulation 19 Submission Plan and are reiterated in detail below. A key issue is that there is no formal, policy commitment to a **Mitigation Strategy** for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). We also have other concerns with the soundness of the Submission Plan, including:

- 1. **Mitigation Strategy** – although a strategy is referred to in the preamble to Policy DM2 and a Visitor Survey has just been completed, with air quality monitoring close to being agreed, there is nonetheless no commitment in Policy to this strategy and no proposals to enact it through a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 2. **Mitigation Hierarchy** – without this Strategy in place and with a series of potential significant impacts on Forest Land, the Local Plan currently seems to be already some way down the mitigation hierarchy, which should begin with avoidance measures rather than potential compensation
- 3. **Habitats Regulations Assessment (Document EB206)** does not provide the required Appropriate Assessment.
- 4. **Housing allocations (Policy SP2)** – the pattern and density of housing allocations, (Policy SP2) in general and in detail (Policies for Places P1 – P15) are likely to have adverse impacts on the Forest.
- 5. **Development Management Policies (DM2 & DM22)** – we recommend substantial changes to some Policies, as drafted and, in particular, Policy DM2, on Epping Forest protection and Policy DM22 on Air Quality, neither of which include commitments to a Mitigation Strategy.
- 6. **Highways capacity (Documents EB502 & EB1101A & B)** – the implications of proposed highways capacity changes included in the Infrastructure Development Plan (Documents 1101A & B) and Highways Assessment (Document EB502), especially at **Wake Arms Roundabout**, have not been appropriately assessed and could cause adverse impacts on Epping Forest.



7. **Green Belt (Policy DM4)** – the loss of Green Belt and the long-term protection of its boundaries and preventing infill of the smaller settlements within the GB remains of considerable concern.
8. **Green Infrastructure (Policies SP7 & DM5)** – the lack of a Green Infrastructure Plan and detail on alternative green spaces to reduce pressure on Forest Land, although we broadly welcome the wording and intent of Policies SP7, DM1 and DM5.
9. **Open Spaces (Policies SP2 & P2)** – we disagree with the loss of open spaces in existing settlements and consider these policies contradict others.
10. **Uncertainties inherent in the Plan** – the level of uncertainty over the long-term protection of the Forest and the under-playing of the importance to the District of the whole Forest (not only the statutorily-designated areas like the SAC)

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4. Policy SP2

4.1 Policy SP2 - Representation on Issues

4.1.1. The Conservators consider SP2 to be unsound because it is not consistent with the requirements of the Habitat Regulations 2017 or national policy to protect and enhance areas of biodiversity (such as Epping Forest) and is thereby not justified. The general pattern of District housing allocations is to be concentrated around Epping Forest with around 6,000 houses projected to be provided within less than 5km (see Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Dec 2017 Document EB206) of Epping Forest land (including the SSSI area) and within less than 6.2km of Epping Forest SAC boundaries (6.2km has been established as the *Zone of Influence* for 75% of visits by a recent Visitor Survey by Footprint Ecology on behalf of the Council and other authorities, including the Conservators). We do not consider that the Plan has shown that this level of increase is sustainable in terms of road infrastructure. For example, the general pattern clearly has implications for the highways infrastructure required to serve it, as revealed by the Highways Assessment (HA) list (Document EB502, Table 3-8) of “Essential” highway junction improvements along roads in or leading through the Forest SAC (also listed in the Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) Part B (Document EB1101B Section 8.3) as DW6, EPP15 and WAB5).

4.1.2 Where a local plan is reliant upon particular projects to secure delivery of some or all of the local plan, any such projects must be assessed as part of the plan level **Habitats Regulation Assessment** (HRA). Whilst the full detail of a project may not be available, the HRA must gather as much information as it can in order to have certainty, at the plan level, that the quantum and locations of development proposed in the plan can be delivered without adverse effects on European sites.

4.1.3 It seems apparent that the **Wake Arms Roundabout** and **M25 Junction 26** improvements are a fundamental part of the delivery of growth in the plan, due to the level and locations for development proposed. The plan level HRA must therefore demonstrate certainty that the Wake Arms roundabout and M25 J26 projects can be delivered without adverse effects on Epping Forest SAC. The impacts of increased traffic on both these junctions have been considered before in relation to the London Borough of Enfield proposed Northern Gateway Access Road (NGAR). The NGAR proposal would have increased flows by 5.9% (a.m. hours) and 4.1% (p.m. hours) on the A121 Woodriven Hill to Wake Arms Roundabout, less than the percentage increase in traffic from the



current Plan housing proposals over the Plan period (2011 – 2033). In the NGAR public inquiry Inspector's Report (Enfield NGAR Inquiry Report July 2002 (APP/V4630/V/01/1075981) the Inspector was concerned then that traffic models and analysis underestimated actual traffic flows and the effects of congestion. In 2015, another Inspector's report (PINS/Q5300/429/9), which considered the impact on the Forest of this same proposed route as part of the North-East Enfield Area Action Plan (NEEAP), concluded that it was still unclear how the concerns identified by the previous inquiry had been overcome.

It is imperative that this Plan's proposals are subject to more rigorous analysis. This demonstration must follow step-by-step processes and if adverse effects cannot be ruled out then this has implications in terms of the legislation. If there are risks that the project could damage the SAC the Local Plan would not be sound.

4.1.4 Secondly, in **SP2A**, under the Plan proposals, established and well-used open spaces in settlements close to Epping Forest would be lost, in whole or in part, to built development. The Policy at SP2A then refers to "adequate open space provision", which is unspecific and does not set the level of quality, accessibility or type of open space and does not preclude a reduction in the current area available. This runs counter to the need for provision of increased open space to accommodate a variety of needs (informal/sport) for increased housing. Such an approach is likely to increase the recreational pressure on Epping Forest (including the SAC) when avoidance should be the first consideration (see our response to DM2) in the hierarchy of mitigation for the protected site.

4.1.5. **Short-term mitigation issues:** Elsewhere in this document we examine long-term mitigation through proposals for a Mitigation Strategy. However, SP2 proposals also present a number of issues that will create significant short-term problems for the Forest, particularly relating to traffic. For example, the closure of station car parks at Epping and Loughton for the re-development of these sites, seems likely to cause considerable disruption to traffic flows over a period of many months. It is unclear to The Conservators how these issues will be tackled with regard to protection of the Forest from increased traffic flows and a concomitant increase in localised air pollution.

4.2 Policy SP2 - Suggested changes

4.2.1 Please see our comments on and suggested changes to Policies DM2, DM22, P1, P2, P3, P6 and comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA - Document EB206).

5. Policy SP3

5.1 Policy SP3 - Representation on Issues

5.1.1 The Conservators welcome the place-shaping principles embodied in Policy SP3A and, in particular, SP3A sub-policies (vi), (vii), (viii) and (xii).

6. Policy SP7

6.1 Policy SP7 - Representation on Issues

6.1.1. The Conservators welcome the aim of Policy SP7 to provide a comprehensive green and blue infrastructure across the District. We welcome the sub-policy SP7E insofar as this will be used to



ensure that green infrastructure in developments like the garden communities (e.g. Latton Priory sub-policy SP5.1) will not be isolated and unconnected with other important green infrastructure. We also agree with the precautionary note within the HRA (Document EB206) about ensuring connectedness does not bring extra recreational pressures onto protected sites inadvertently.

6.2 Policy SP7 - Suggested changes

6.2.1 The Conservators propose that Cobbin's Brook's protection as a Local Wildlife Site is enlarged to take in the Flood Risk zoning in its entirety. It is further suggested that the valley is linked to The Lower Forest and that the Epping Forest Buffer Lands are strengthened through proposals in a Green Infrastructure Plan document.

6.2.2 We would also propose further protection of links towards The Lower Forest and the Epping Forest green lanes both southwards towards the Buffer Lands and eastwards to ensure that Epping Forest is enhanced as the Plan Vision A (v) seeks to do (page 19 of Submission Plan).

7. Policy DM1 (and Policies Map)

7.1 DM1 - Representation on Issues

7.1.1. This is in general a very positive policy for biodiversity and picks up current policy and good practice in relation to demonstrating biodiversity net gain, preventing loss of irreplaceable habitats, recognition of LPA duties for priority habitats and species and requiring adherence to BS 42020.

7.1.2. However, this Policy is seen through the lens of development impact and seems reactive only, especially without a complementary Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan (see our comments on Policies SP7 and DM5 also). The Conservators consider that the Policy would benefit from explicit recognition of the need to proactively prevent the isolation of important ecosystems. This applies particularly to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, such as The Lower Forest within Epping Forest SSSI and Hainault Forest SSSI. These designated sites must be supported by and linked to a wider biodiversity network across the District and beyond. This should be clearly designated as green infrastructure.

7.1.3. Narrowing of Forest Protection

Furthermore, DM1 and DM2 (see below) do not fully replace the previous Epping Forest District Council Local Plan Policy HC5, which recognised the need to protect the whole of Epping Forest as an historic landscape of high biodiversity. This included the areas of the Forest such as the ancient green lanes and The Lower Forest. The Reg 19 Submission Plan seems to narrow the protection for the Forest and takes a noticeably less holistic approach to this irreplaceable District asset.

7.2 DM1 - Suggested changes

7.2.1. The recognition and protection for the whole of Epping Forest Land under the Epping Forest Act 1878 should be explicitly stated within this Policy to reinforce Local Plan Objective A (ii). In addition, the Plan should take this opportunity to recognise the importance of the covenanted land (protected by the Arbitrator's Awards of 1882 following his appointment under the Epping Forest Act 1878) as well as the Buffer Lands around the Forest in Plan Policy.

7.2.2. For The Lower Forest a protected GI corridor around the west of Epping, to both the Conservation Areas and Epping Forest Buffer Lands and to the main body of Epping Forest, is important. GI links to The Lower Forest's south-east through to the important floodplain of the River Roding should also be designated to ensure enhancement and strengthening beyond the demarcating of Local Wildlife Sites. This should be set out in a Green Infrastructure Plan.

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7.2.3. In this context of integrating ecosystems and keystone green infrastructure, The Conservators welcome the recognition of the Cobbin's Brook valley as a Local Wildlife Site, which the City's Buffer Lands help to protect. This corridor should be protected and broadened as green infrastructure in line with the flood zones and become a foundation for linking sites and integrating ecosystems, including that of The Lower Forest. This should be set out in a Green Infrastructure Plan.

8. Policy DM2

8.1 Policy DM2- Representation on Issues

8.1.1. Main concerns

8.1.1.1. Policy DM 2 follows the general biodiversity policy DM1 (see our comments above). Policy DM2 specifically relates to Epping Forest SAC and the Lee Valley SPA. Where there are significant issues or the need for strategic approaches for European sites, it is common practice for a specific policy to be included within a local plan in addition to the more general protective biodiversity policies. The inclusion of DM2 is therefore in principle welcomed. Such policies should recognise the specific issues relating to the particular sites and set out the measures necessary to provide the required protection. This can often refer to gathered evidence to underpin a particular approach to European site protection, and where in progress or in place, any specific strategies to provide an area wide mitigation scheme.

8.1.1.2. Policy DM2 as currently worded does not provide sufficient clarity on the specific risks and the requirements from developers are not clear. The wording is currently not fit for purpose as it does not ensure adequate protection for Epping Forest SAC. Current work between neighbouring authorities, Natural England and ourselves has identified risks to Epping Forest that necessitate a strategic level approach to the long-term conservation of the SAC. With over 50,000 dwellings proposed for the HMA of which 11,400 are within the EFDC Local Plan, there are very real risks for the SAC resulting from the two main impact pathways under consideration; air quality and recreation.

8.1.1.3. The policy and its supporting text needs to be reworded to appropriately reflect the current work to gather evidence on these two matters and the strategic solutions necessary to protect Epping Forest. The policy needs to give certainty that the SAC will be protected as development proposals come forward, and this requires clear guidance to developers on what is expected, where development may be constrained, what mitigation is necessary and how that mitigation will be secured and delivered. Without such wording, adverse effects on integrity to the SAC cannot be ruled out. As such the local plan is currently not compliant with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and is therefore unsound.

8.1.1.4. The following advice highlights the key areas of concern within Policy DM2, and how those concerns could possibly be alleviated.

8.1.2. Concerns on Supporting Text

8.1.2.1. Biodiversity policies should set out how the authority intends to secure the conservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity assets as a mutually dependent part of sustainable development alongside economic growth and supporting community needs. For the specific policy



wording about the European sites, the policy should commit to securing the conservation of the European sites with recognition of the value of such sites as the most valuable biodiversity sites within a wider network of biodiversity assets. The policy should recognise the opportunity for EFDC to restore and enhance Epping Forest as an integral part of delivering the local plan. The supporting text for policy DM2 runs from paragraph 4.16 to 4.26. The wording does, in places, give a positive focus on the role and value of these sites, but the focus on essentially leaving all considerations to the individual project level does not fulfil plan level requirements to meet the duties places on local planning authorities within the Habitats Regulations and parent European Directives.

8.2 Policy DM2 - Suggested changes

8.2.1. Changes to DM2 Supporting Text

We identify the following specific concerns, and recommendations for how the supporting text may be strengthened:

Para of DM2 supporting text	Concerns	Recommendations
4.16	Incorrectly applies the Habitats Regulations, is confusing and implies that protection comes from detailed project level assessment. This paragraph needs rewording.	Reword to refer to - European sites are afforded the highest level of protection due to their habitats and species that are vulnerable or rare within a European context. The Council has a duty to secure the maintenance and restoration of these sites as part of its work as a public body. Additionally, where development plans or projects are likely to have a significant effect on European sites, the Council must assess the implications of such effects, and secure any mitigation necessary to prevent an adverse effect on site integrity.
4.17	Does not adequately explain a strategic, plan level approach to mitigation. Clarity needed for developers.	Reword to refer to – The Council’s duties to maintain and restore European sites, and protect them from any potential affects arising from new development, is best achieved by putting measures in place at the plan level, so that development projects have clarity on where they can develop and what measures may be necessary to incorporate into a development proposal. Strategic approaches to European site mitigation often include for example, access management, provision of alternative recreation space and sustainable transport choices to reduce air pollution.

4.18	The paragraph correctly acknowledges the issues of air quality and recreation. Concerns relate to the role of buffers.	Suggest rewording the sentence on the role of buffers to say that these <i>may help</i> to relieve recreational pressure. This is currently a presumption and needs to be factored in to a strategic approach.
4.19	Positive reference to Council role and responsibility but a focus on project level HRA though.	Reword to add in –The Council has taken steps to work with partners to develop a plan level approach to securing the protection of European sites.
4.20	<p>Paragraph is confusing as it does not clearly stipulate the HRA findings of likely significant effects from recreation, for Epping Forest SAC. It is essential that the Plan secures the necessary mitigation in order to provide confidence that adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC can be avoided. At the moment, this is not secured.</p> <p>Reference to the MoU as a stewardship role is misleading and does not convey the fundamental importance of it for mitigating the effects of development. This reference needs removing and clarity given on the fundamental importance of the MoU.</p>	<p>Reword paragraph to give clearer summary of HRA findings. Suggest rewording to include –</p> <p>The HRA of the local plan concluded that management regimes in place enable Lee Valley SPA/Ramsar site to be screened out from likely significant effects arising from recreation pressure as a result of the local plan. The HRA concluded that likely significant effects from recreation pressure could not be screened out for Epping Forest SAC. Plan level measures to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC are therefore required.</p> <p>In terms of air quality, the HRA screened out both the Lee Valley SPA/Ramsar site and Epping Forest SAC from likely significant effects. This conclusion relies on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Essex/East Hertfordshire HMA authorities, Natural England and the City of London as Conservators of Epping Forest, which must be implemented as part of the local plan in order to resolve air pollution issues at Epping Forest.</p>
4.21	Again, as above the misleading stewardship role reference for the MoU needs removing. The MoU is in recognition of the risk of deteriorating air quality as a result of development. It is not stewardship.	<p>Change stewardship role to follow on from suggested paragraph wording above –</p> <p>In recognition of the requirement to prevent air quality deterioration at Epping Forest as a result of traffic increases, the MoU signed by the Essex/East Hertfordshire HMA authorities, Natural England and the City of London as Conservators of Epping Forest ensures that the parties named work in partnership to fulfil....</p>
4.22	No comments	No comments
4.23	The second half of the paragraph relating to Epping Forest suggests that DM2 provides “the mechanisms for managing future recreational pressures on the Forest.” The current wording	<p>Reword last two sentences to –</p> <p>The Council’s approach is to put in place a mitigation strategy that combines a range of access management measures with the provision of green infrastructure to</p>

	<p>does not fulfil this, but recommended changes below would enable this sentence to be correct. Reference to the approach that is “to facilitate the development of a green infrastructure network” does not cover all mitigation measures that should be put in place.</p> <p>Paragraph should be updated in light of recent visitor survey findings too.</p>	<p>encourage recreation at suitable alternative sites. This is being initially detailed within an interim framework, to explain how developers within a 6.2km zone of influence need to adhere to the strategy with tariff based contributions, followed by a European site conservation supplementary planning document. The strategy will have an evidence based suite of costed mitigation and monitoring measures, and set out delivery, governance and review processes.</p>
4.24	<p>Does not make clear that the provision of greenspace is one aspect of a mitigation strategy. Needs an introductory sentence to explain this before describing the green infrastructure provision.</p>	<p>Reword to the start of the paragraph–</p> <p>In pursuit of protecting the vulnerable habitats of Epping Forest, the interim framework, and then subsequent SPD will include a range of measures. One aspect of the strategy will be to provide alternative spaces.....</p>
4.25	<p>Para 4.25 then goes on to indicate that “small scale housing will contribute to support the development and implementation of an access management strategy by the City of London Corporation”.</p>	<p>Reword to –</p> <p>The interim framework and subsequent SPD will set out the contributions being sought by the Council. All development with a net increase of one or more residential units within the 6.2km zone of influence will be required to make a tariff based contribution.</p> <p>It is suggested that a simple map illustrating the zone may be beneficial here within the local plan.</p>
4.26	<p>Does not logically follow paragraph 4.25</p>	<p>Recommend adding this one sentence paragraph to the end of paragraph 4.24.</p>



Policy DM2 – Suggested Changes continued

8.2.2. Changes to DM2 Policy Wording

8.2.2.1. The policy wording in DM 2 is not sufficient to secure such mitigation and we identify the following specific concerns, and recommendations for how the policy may be strengthened.

Section of policy DM2	Concerns	Recommendations
A	This sentence is confined to the SPA and SAC. These sites are particularly reliant upon wider functionally linked land and ecological corridor linkages.	Reword to refer to - development proposals contributing to the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity, character, appearance and landscape setting of Epping Forest and the Lee Valley, with particular regard for the legislative requirements in relation to the European site designations afforded to these areas.
B	This part of the policy simply deflects issues to project level HRA. Given the issues relate to the in-combination, cumulative effects of the overall quantum of development, such project level assessment is difficult and mitigation measures, particularly for small sites, very difficult to secure. It is not clear whether such project level assessment will be required for development in the settlements identified in DM2C, where contributions are required.	Reword to refer to – the Council is working in partnership with other relevant organisations to put in place strategic approaches to protecting the European sites, in recognition of the cumulative impacts of recreation and air pollution from development. New development will be required to adhere to strategic approaches where applicable, as detailed below. Outside this requirement, where any project specific likely significant effects are identified, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are in place to avoid or mitigate for any potential adverse effects.
C	Here the policy identifies settlements where contributions will be required. This list needs to be updated with the more recent visitor survey results. The visitor survey results will not however identify how the money will be collected, how the tariff is set, governance or any other details. There needs to be a clear, strong policy steer and direct cross-reference to a strategy, which we suggest should be established as an SPD. DM2C does not provide sufficient clarity, weight or guidance to ensure mitigation will be delivered and will be fit for purpose.	Reword to refer to – In recognition of additional recreation pressure from residential development on Epping Forest SAC, the Council will require proposals for any net increase in residential units within 6.2km to make a financial contribution to a strategic approach to mitigate the cumulative effects through access management and monitoring. An interim framework with tariff based developer contributions will be developed into a European site conservation supplementary planning document, with an evidence based suite of costed mitigation and monitoring measures, delivery, governance and review processes.

D	<p>Sets up greenspace provision as mitigation, but fails to specify a quantum of greenspace, how greenspace will be secured, funded or delivered, for example managed in perpetuity. While greenspace provision is a positive step, which recent survey work indicates is likely to work as mitigation and will bring wider benefits, DM2 D is not sufficient or clear to provide necessary mitigation for Epping Forest SAC. It is not a given that there is sufficient greenspace that could be improved or provided as new sites. As with DM2C this could be greatly strengthened by directly cross-referencing to a strategy document, secured as an SPD, that sets out what greenspace is necessary as mitigation for Epping Forest SAC and how such greenspace works alongside the contributions to the management of Epping Forest as a mitigation package.</p>	<p>Reword to refer to – The Council’s strategic approach protecting Epping Forest SAC and Lee Valley SPA recognises the need for natural greenspaces to support the function of the sites or provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace for people to undertake recreation away from the sites. In accordance with the interim framework, to be followed by a European site conservation supplementary planning document, the Council will require development to contribute towards or provide the following: then insert points I to iv. The interim framework/SPD should stipulate where large scale development has additional SANG requirements over and above a contribution to the strategy.</p>
E	<p>Appears to overlap with DM2B in deferring assessment to the project level. It is confusing to bring in a 400m buffer here. The impacts from urbanisation, as with impacts from recreation, extend over a wide area. The 400m zone is identified and suggested in the HRA, drawn from the Thames Basin Heaths (see para 3.21 in the HRA). The buffer has been lifted from the Thames Basin Heaths (where it relates to urban effects that include cat predation and recreation) without justification or clarity. In the Thames Basin Heaths the buffer sets out an area where there is a presumption against development within 400m of the European site boundary, as Natural England advice is that mitigation is unlikely to be effective so close to the European site boundary. EFDC’s Plan includes a number of allocations within 400m. It is not clear what mitigation is possible to resolve urban effects for these sites. The Plan therefore seems to be reliant on a number of sites for which project level HRA is likely to be difficult and potentially may not be able to rule out adverse effects on integrity.</p>	<p>An evidence based buffer that is appropriate for Epping Forest should be established. This may be 400m, but currently the 400m inclusion is simply lifted from elsewhere. Appropriate policy wording should be included after consideration of the suitability of 400m.</p> <p>Reword to refer to - The Council recognises that residential development within 400m (or other distance) of Epping Forest SAC is unlikely to be able to demonstrate effective mitigation measures to prevent adverse effects on the SAC. Planning applications within 400m (or other distance) of Epping Forest SAC will not be permitted unless robust mitigation measures are demonstrated.</p>



8.2.3 Policy DM2 - Further representations on other issues

8.2.3.1. Further representations on Policy DM2 issues no.1

Policy DM2 Representations on - *A meaningful proportion of Natural Greenspace*

Policy DM2D sets up greenspace as mitigation; stating that the Council will ensure the provision of a meaningful proportion of Natural Greenspace or access to Natural Greenspace. This is ambiguous as there is no clarity on what a meaningful proportion of greenspace might be and is unlikely to be effective. In order to function effectively, alternative greenspace sites need to be of a suitable size, design and location to draw access. It cannot be assumed that there is adequate greenspace in suitable locations or that this can be delivered. There is the risk that the mitigation as stated cannot be delivered.

8.2.3.2. Policy DM2 Suggested changes - *A meaningful proportion of Natural Greenspace*

The interim framework/SPD, therefore, should set out how much greenspace is required and demonstrate that such greenspace is deliverable.

8.2.3.3 Further representations on Policy DM2 issues no.2

Policy DM2 Representations on – *a Zone of influence*

The most recent visitor survey work by *Footprint Ecology*, undertaken in October/November 2017 was commissioned jointly by five local authorities (including EFDC) and the Conservators of Epping Forest (City of London Corporation) and one of the aims was to better understand where people who visit Epping Forest live. Draft results from that survey became available from 25th January 2018. Data from that survey showed 75% of visitors had home postcodes within 6.2km of the point where interviewed. The use of the 75th percentile to define a broad zone of influence has been widely used at other European sites, such as the Thames Basin Heaths, the Dorset Heaths and the Solent, and is recommended by Natural England for Epping Forest (see para 5.19 of the HRA (Document EB206)).

8.2.3.4. Policy DM2 Suggested changes – *Zone of Influence*

In line with the HRA recommendations (Document EB206, para 5.24) the survey results should be used to update the *zone of influence* and this should be **6.2km**. This now sets a distance at which likely significant effects from recreation would be triggered in the absence of mitigation. This zone should now be clearly referred to and mapped within the Plan on an updated **Policies Map**.

8.2.3.5. Further representations on Policy DM2 issues no.3

Policy DM2 Representations on - *the need to secure adequate strategic approach*

The impacts of recreation relate to increased recreation pressure from development over a wide area. It is very difficult to adequately assess impacts for small developments at a project level and ensure suitable mitigation is in place. The Local Plan provides the mechanism whereby mitigation for multiple developments over a wide area can be established and done so in a positive way that removes the burdens for developers and ensures adequate protection for the SAC. Such approaches are working well around European sites such as the Thames Basin Heaths, the Dorset Heaths, south-east Devon, the Solent and Cannock Chase, each involving multiple local authorities.

8.2.3.6. The Conservators of Epping Forest would fully support such an approach and indeed have signed up to the MoU as one of the parties fundamental to the development of a strategy. The Conservators see such an approach as the only way to ensure the long-term protection of Epping Forest SAC and the Forest more generally. The MoU represents the tentative initial steps towards the development of a strategy, however such a strategy is a long way from being established. Much more work is necessary to develop the strategy and to date little has been achieved beyond the visitor survey. The lack of clear policy or reference to a strategy in DM2 means that there is not



possible to have confidence that mitigation is achievable, deliverable or adequate to resolve the impacts.

8.2.3.7. Policy DM2 Suggested changes – *the need to secure adequate strategic approach*

DM2 Policy should explicitly cross-refer to a Mitigation Strategy. In the interim, a framework, with tariff-based developer contributions, which leads on to form a European site conservation supplementary planning document (SPD), with an evidence-based suite of costed mitigation and monitoring measures, delivery, governance and review processes should be established. **The Conservators would be happy to work with the Council to produce such a framework.**

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9. Policy DM4 Green Belt

9.1 Policy DM4 - Representation on Issues

9.1.1. The Conservators reiterate their concerns, expressed in response to the Regulation 18 Local Plan, about the erosion of Green Belt. We welcome the removal of the housing proposal, which would have extended Theydon Bois to the east of the railway and created a vulnerable new boundary within the Green Belt. However, we do not consider the Epping South proposed developments (EPP.R1 & EPP.R2), nor their increased density in the Green Belt, to be justified (see our response above to Policy SP2 and below to Policy P1).

9.1.2. Specifically, with DM4 (v) and (vi) we consider that the Policy is unsound because it does not afford enough protection for Epping Forest and would act to undermine Policies DM1, DM2 and DM5. Sub-sections of Policy DM4, (v) and (vi), are insufficiently circumscribed and the word “limited” is not specific enough, particularly in the absence of named exceptions. In our response to Reg 18, we stated clearly that we did not consider that the status of the Green Belt at High Beach and Gilwell Hill, both very close to the Forest boundaries, had been respected and protected. We re-attach the map that we provided in our previous response to the Council (see attached documents) to illustrate the fact that GB has been eroded and the hamlet most closely associated with Epping Forest has been allowed to grow and coalesce, reducing the open character of the place.

9.1.3. These lapses in safeguarding the open nature of the countryside must not be compounded by further erosion of the GB. DM4 (v) and (vi) allow for infilling and also the redevelopment of previously developed land. These two actions could allow the transformation of High Beach from a small hamlet to a much larger settlement with major implications for the road network through the Forest. The recent decision to close the Police helicopter support unit at High Beach creates a potential threat to the openness of the GB here and to the protection of the Forest. Similarly, the housing along Sewardstone Road could also be allowed to infill creating unsustainable ribbon development along an increasingly congested highways corridor, with significant knock-on impacts for the smaller roads through the Forest (see also paragraphs 11.2.2 and 12.1.4 of this document).

9.2 Policy DM4 - Suggested changes

9.2.1. These areas of Green Belt at High Beach and along the Sewardstone Road need to be strengthened by specific exclusion from DM4 (v) and (vi). In addition, they should be demarcated on the Policies Map for their positive role in providing linking and protective green Infrastructure for the Forest and towards the Lea Valley. We have made separate comments about the need for a clear Green Infrastructure Plan to provide clarity and substance to the aspirations of Policies DM5 and SP7 on Green Infrastructure.

10. Policy DM5

10.1 Policy DM5 - Representation on Issues

10.1.1. The Conservators regard this as a positive and strong policy in most respects. The supporting text in paras 4.38 to 4.43 is comprehensive and the emphasis on biosecurity, native planting and the importance of trees in the landscape is warmly welcomed.

10.1.2. However, we consider that these laudable aspirations need to be backed up by a clearly mapped green infrastructure on the Policies Map and a Green Infrastructure Plan as a supplementary document to the Local Plan. We would suggest, in addition, that this policy should make explicit reference to the need for greenspace provision to be part of the recreation mitigation for Epping Forest SAC.

10.2 Policy DM5 - Suggested changes

10.2.1. Within Policy DM5 reference should be added to the requirement to provide greenspace as part of the interim framework and subsequent SPD to mitigate for increased recreation pressure at Epping Forest as a result of new housing growth. It is suggested that the sentence at point DM5(iii) could be expanded to state 'incorporate provision of new green assets or space, including specific provision for European site mitigation in accordance with the strategic approach outlined at policy DM2'.

10.2.2. The key new connections and elements which would make a viable green infrastructure for the District need to be identified on the Policies Map and in a Green Infrastructure Plan that goes beyond the bounds of the Garden Communities and matches the Infrastructure Development Plan. There should be a clear commitment to develop such a Plan in this Policy and in Policy SP7.

11. Policy DM22

11.1 Policy DM22 - Representation on Issues

11.1.1. This policy is referred to within **DM2** as the policy delivering the air quality mitigation to protect Epping Forest SAC. Whilst the supporting text for policy DM22 gives appropriate coverage of this, the policy wording itself is weak and does not clearly give the commitment to mitigation delivery through an agreed Mitigation Strategy.

11.1.2. Furthermore, the implications of mitigation for air quality are not elaborated in either the supporting text in **para 4.161** or in the Policy itself (see **DM22B**). However, as seems clear from the HRA (see para 6.12), Scenario 5 and above in the Highways Assessment (HA - Document EB502) and the Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP – Documents 1101A & B) delivery schedule of schemes, mitigation would involve increasing the capacities and changing the geometries of roundabouts and highways junctions within the Forest. Some of these are considered “essential” by the IDP in order to deliver the increase in housing at the proposed locations (see SP2 and Policies P1 -15) and yet the HRA is unable to assess the impacts of these on the Forest SAC and the Plan itself does not offer an explanation of how Epping Forest as a whole would be protected and enhanced by these schemes.

11.1.3. It seems apparent that the **Wake Arms Roundabout** improvements are a fundamental part of the delivery of growth in the plan, due to the level and locations for development proposed. The plan level HRA must therefore demonstrate certainty that the Wake Arms roundabout project can be delivered without adverse effects. This demonstration must follow step-by-step processes and if adverse effects cannot be ruled out then this has implications in terms of the legislation. If there are risks that the project could damage the SAC the Local Plan would not be sound.

11.2 Policy DM22 - suggested changes

11.2.1. The policy needs to clearly state that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Essex/East Hertfordshire HMA authorities, Natural England and the City of London as Conservators of Epping Forest is committed to and being implemented through a **Mitigation Strategy** as part of the local plan in order to resolve air pollution issues at Epping Forest.

11.2.2. DM22 also needs to make clear that mitigation measures would not compromise the physical integrity of Epping Forest (see our comments on Policies SP2 and DM2).

11.2.3. The HRA does not provide a sufficient assessment of the impacts of the Plan on air quality and further monitoring and modelling is required. A full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017 needs to be carried out before the Plan and this Policy DM22 can be considered sound.

(Please see our detailed comments below on the HRA Document EB206)



12. Policy SP5 Garden Communities

11.1 Policy SP5 - Representation on Issues

11.1.1. The proposed **Latton Priory** development (**SP5.1**) of 1,050 houses lies within 6.2km of Epping Forest SAC and within 3km of Epping Forest SSSI boundaries. This development is a large potential contributor of the traffic through the Forest and needs to be considered at Plan-level in the Forest Mitigation Strategy.

11.1.2. This was considered by the HRA to be outside the 75% Zone of Influence (Zol) but the recent draft Visitor Survey (available since 25th January 2018) has shown that this needs to be extended to 6.2km. As such the HRA needs to consider the impacts of this site in terms of its likely recreational impact as well as the impact on roads through the Forest.

11.1.3. The HRA (Document EB206) considered that a Garden Communities site like this would have sufficient greenspace or 'strategic green infrastructure' (HRA para 5.19 (fifth bullet point)). The green infrastructure requirements are welcomed (see **Policy SP5F (iv)**) but they should be more detailed and part of a Plan-level Mitigation Strategy. The green infrastructure should ensure that the 'Gibberd Saucer' is protected and not breached.

11.2 Policy SP5 - Suggested changes

11.2.1. The impacts of this development need to be considered at Plan level through a Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest, in particular the impacts of traffic on the B1393 and through the Forest to Wake Arms Roundabout need to be assessed.

11.2.2. The Rye Hill Road southwards to the B1393 should be closed and considered "essential". In the IDP Part B (Document 1101B) a Rye Hill Road diversion is listed as "desirable" only. Furthermore, should this development be progressed the proposed north-south sustainable transport corridor should be established and in full operation prior to any 'safeguarded route' (see Policies Map) to the M11 Junction 7 being constructed. The uptake of sustainable transport may well experience a lag time and provision of an alternative highways option to the motorway could reduce the level of uptake significantly. In addition, any such 'safeguarded route' should not allow a right turn at the intersection with the B1393 so that traffic cannot head directly southbound towards the Forest. Instead the traffic would be directed to the M11 Junction 7 roundabout bypass that is proposed as a "desirable" under the code **LPR3** in the Infrastructure Development Plan (**IDP - Document EB1101B**).

11.2.3. More information on the strategic green infrastructure needs to be provided, including design and location, to determine whether it would be effective. This Policy could be strengthened by directly cross-referencing to a Mitigation Strategy document, secured as an SPD, that sets out what greenspace is necessary as mitigation for Epping Forest SAC and the size of the allocation for greenspace to absorb and sustain the recreational pressure at Latton Priory.

12. Policy P1 - Epping

12.1 Policy P1 - Representation on Issues

12.1.1. The Conservators welcome the fact that the proposed expansion of Epping eastwards contained in the Regulation 18 Plan consultation has been withdrawn as this would have created a long convoluted boundary, which may have made the remaining Green Belt (GB) boundary around Epping vulnerable to further erosion (see our comments in our response to the Reg 18 Plan – Dec 2016).



12.1.2. However, of real concern to the Conservators are the Epping South proposed developments (EPP.R1 & EPP.R2) in the GB, with the proposed increased density and doubling of housing numbers to a minimum of 950. We do not consider these to be justified because of the likely adverse effects on traffic congestion and air pollution at road junctions close to or adjacent to Forest Land. The doubling of the housing numbers would seem to call into question the availability of sufficient green space at these sites for them to “consume their own smoke”. These two developments are likely to have significant adverse impacts through the increased recreational pressure on the Forest, including the SAC, and also on the nearby Forest Buffer Lands at Great Gregories.

12.1.3. The general adverse impacts on the highways infrastructure, air quality and on recreational pressures on the SAC have been dealt with elsewhere in our responses to Policies SP2, DM2, DM22 and to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (Document EB206). Our specific concerns with this Policy P1 relate to the access to the highway and the impact on nearby highway junctions and parking. The access required for the proposed western section of Epping South seems likely to have a direct physical impact on Forest Land owned by The Conservators and protected under the Epping Forest Act 1878. The Conservators have not been consulted about this.

12.1.4. In addition, the Highways Assessment (Document EB502) and Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP - Documents 1101A and B) suggest that the significant increase in traffic would require alterations to the small Ivy Chimneys junction (IDP – EPP28) and the traffic-lighted Bell Common/Theydon Road Junction (Junction 10 in the HA and EPP14 in the IDP). At Bell Common the IDP also proposes as “desirable” that the Bell Common junction (EPP23) is provided with an additional lane. An additional lane would require land-take almost certainly from Epping Forest Land, protected under the Epping Forest Act 1878. This is in contradiction to the Plan Objectives (page 20 of the Reg 19 Submission Plan).

12.1.5. In addition, due to the junction capacity problems, the traffic from these developments is likely to ‘rat-run’ to the Wake Arms Roundabout along Theydon Road and Piercing Hill to Theydon Bois and then through the Forest. These key issues outline above call into question the deliverability of this housing as well as the sustainability of its greenspace and the Plan Policy P1 would not seem to be effective or sound.

12.1.6. In addition to these potential adverse impacts, this Epping South development is likely to have an adverse impact on the Conservators’ Buffer Land at Great Gregories. This site is the out-wintering site for the Conservators’ breeding herd of cattle and the hub for organising the grazing operation that ensures the Forest’s wood-pasture habitats can be grazed and maintained in favourable condition (as defined by Natural England for Epping Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).

12.1.7. Currently, a well-used public footpath runs through the centre of the site between hedges, also passing close to the yard where the cattle calve and are fed during the winter. There had been incidents of trespass into the fields, which are important protected sites for the young calves and which are also a checking area for the cattle before they go out onto the Forest. The yard has also been subject to trespass on occasion. With the current numbers of people using the public footpath the problems with unauthorised access have been reduced to a manageable level.

12.1.8. However, should such a large residential area be developed, without any nearby alternative greenspace, the footpath would be the only access to countryside for the residents. This seems likely to overwhelm the Great Gregories site which is within a few hundred metres of the development and incidents between dogs and cattle, particularly calves, could put the security of this cattle management area in jeopardy. Should the number of dogs off-lead increase significantly, *Neospora*,

an infection spread through dog faeces causing abortions in cows and already a problem in the area around the Forest, would also become a considerable threat to the health of the breeding herd.

12.2 Policy P1 - Suggested changes

12.2.1. The Epping South development should be re-considered, particularly the western site which has the potential to cause direct adverse impacts on Epping Forest Buffer Lands as well as damage to the Green Belt. This development needs to be considered as part of the broader issue of traffic that is being generated through Epping Forest roads, as highlighted in our comments on Policies SP2, DM2, DM22 and our comments on the HRA (Document EB206). The impacts of this development need to be considered at Plan level through a Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest.

12.2.2. Should the master-planning for these areas be taken further the natural greenspace requirements would need to ensure that they could “consume their own smoke” and provide for recreational pursuits (such as dog-walking) that would ensure no additional pressure on Epping Forest or its Buffer Lands at Great Gregories. The issue of pressure on the public footpath that access directly onto Great Gregories would need to be directly and effectively addressed by any master-plan.

13. Policy P2- Loughton

13.1 Policy P2 - Representation on Issues

13.1.1. The loss of amenity greenspaces in Loughton (Jessel Green and Borders Lane) are of particular concern to the Conservators, as already stated in our response to the Regulation 18 Plan consultation (December 2016). These proposals run in direct contradiction to other Plan policies on green infrastructure (**DM5 and SP7**), reducing the greenspace available to the residents at the same time as increasing the density of the residential population. As such this policy would seem to be unsound.

13.1.2. This policy would have the effect of eliminating at least half of a large, well-established and important historic recreational area at Jessel Green (**LOU.R5**) and would displace recreational pressure onto the Forest (see also our comments above on Policy SP2A). There seems to be no clear strategy to increase the alternative green space in Loughton but rather to make contributions to Epping Forest access management. This suggests that the mitigation hierarchy process of avoiding damage to Epping Forest before considering mitigation options has not been followed here.

13.1.3. In addition to this direct impact on the Forest, the loss of an historic area of green space associated with the idea of “green wedges”, later created in nearby Harlow, seems to send the wrong signal about the Local Plan objectives.

13.2 Policy P2 - Suggested changes

13.2.1. The impacts of these developments need to be considered at Plan level through a Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest (see our comments above on DM2 and below on the HRA).

14. Policy P3 - Waltham Abbey

14.1 Policy P3 - Representation on Issues

14.1.1. Development at Waltham Abbey will require the potential need to upgrade/widen the existing Galley Hill Road and Crooked Mile (see **Policy P3N (vii)**), in order to ensure safe access points and sufficient capacity for the proposed new developments at **WAL.R1 (295 houses)**, **WAL.R2**

(315 houses), WAL.R3 (130 houses), WAL.E6 (employment site) and travellers' site (WAL.T1).

Galley Hill Road is an ancient green lane, and its verges are part of Epping Forest, owned by the Conservators and protected by the Epping Forest Act 1878. Access to the sites would require the loss of Forest Land to access tracks or highway land about which there has been no consultation with the Conservators. The deliverability of these proposed developments, therefore, is open to question and the Plan would not seem to be effective in this regard.

14.1.2. In addition, this burden of housing within the 6.2km Zone of Influence around Epping Forest and relying on a narrow highway access and Forest roads is part of the broader concerns on soundness expressed by the Conservators elsewhere in this document, relating particularly to Policies SP2, DM2, DM22 and the Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment (Document EB206). This development would need to be considered along with 'Place' Policies P1, P2, P6 and Garden Communities Policy SP5 in a Mitigation Strategy for the Forest.

14.1.3 Policy P3 - WAL.E8

The Conservators also reiterate their concern, expressed in their response to the Regulation 18 Plan, that the proposed employment site at Waltham Abbey south of the M25 (WAL.E8) has the potential to add to the problems of congestion at M25 Junction 26 southern roundabout. This could have adverse knock-on impacts along the arm of the A121 that leads through Epping Forest, along which queueing is already a significant issue (see also our comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA – Document EB206 below).

14.2 Policy P3 - Suggested changes

14.2.1. The impacts of these developments need to be considered at Plan level through a Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest.

14.2.2. Although the housing developments here are split into sub-plots of less than 400 homes, and sub-Policy P3K implies that a contribution to Epping Forest access management and monitoring is all that is required, any master-planning, in our view, would need to provide a supply of alternative greenspace to serve the needs of this potential new community (see also our comments on the 400-home threshold under the 'HRA Representation on more specific points' - Chapter 5)

15. Policy P6 – North Weald

15.1 Policy P6 - Representation on Issues

15.1.1. The proposed **North Weald** development of 1,050 houses lies within 6.2km of Epping Forest SAC and within 1.5km of Epping Forest SSSI boundaries. This development is a large potential contributor of the traffic through the Forest and needs to be considered at Plan-level in the Forest Mitigation Strategy.

15.1.2. This was considered by the HRA to be outside the 75% Zone of Influence (Zoi) but the recent draft Visitor Survey (available since 25th January 2018) has shown that this needs to be extended to 6.2km. As such the HRA (Document EB206) needs to consider the impacts of this site in terms of its likely recreational impact as well as the impact on roads through the Forest.

15.1.3. The Conservators are concerned that the Policy P6 only refers in P6F (iii) to highways and junction upgrades. Such a large development so close to Epping Forest needs a clearer plan to ensure that the traffic it generates is not funnelled through Epping Forest along Epping Road. However, it is proposed that the employment site NWB.E4 is to have a western access leading to



Epping Road. Furthermore, there seems to be no plan to ensure that traffic is preferentially directed northwards to the A414 rather than southwards to Epping Forest roads.

15.1.4. The site, which includes the same number of houses as the proposed Latton Priory development (Policy SP5.1), does not seem to be required to provide for its own green space despite being well in excess of 400 homes (see Policy DM2) and within the Zol of Epping Forest SAC. The reference to “adequate public open space” in sub-Policy P6L (v) is insufficient and lacking in the required detail to ensure a green infrastructure.

15.2 Policy P6 - Suggested changes

15.2.1. The impacts of this development need to be considered at Plan level through a Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest.

15.2.2. A high quality green infrastructure that can cope with the recreational requirements of such a large new residential population needs to be provided for and detailed in the Policy.

15.2.3. The large amount of traffic generated would need to avoid Forest roads and should be directed northwards onto an enhanced A414 junction. Limits to access southwards and the western access from Epping Road to the employment area (NWB.E4) need to be re-considered in order to protect Epping Forest.



16. Habitats Regulations Assessment (Dec 2017)- HRA (Document EB206)

16.1 HRA - Representation on Issues

The Conservators have identified a number of significant concerns with the HRA in relation to Epping Forest SAC. These are listed below and relate to HRA process and the tests that need to be met for Habitats Regulations compliance. This is to a large degree a high-level summary of concerns. Additional concerns are also raised in relation to the Plan Policies, particularly DM2 and DM22.

16.1.1. HRA – Representation on overarching points

STRATEGY & SCALE

- 16.1.1.1. The HRA does not provide a clear, evidence-based and logical progression from screening potential issues through to detailed Appropriate Assessment of all identified risks, and then to applying relevant and evidence-justified mitigation to prevent adverse effects. The way in which mitigation should be secured, and the need for a clear strategy is not drawn out. The recommendations made above in our detailed response on DM2 are the types of recommendations that we consider should have been elaborated on within the HRA.
- 16.1.1.2. **Scale of change:** The HRA fails to identify the scale of change relating to the new development – i.e. the current levels of impact and the potential for additional development to add to that harm. As the Local Plan itself states in paragraph 2.61 the proposed 21% increase in households during the Plan period represents a “*step change from both that identified through previous plans and strategies and previous rates of delivery achieved.*”

16.1.2. RECREATION

- 16.1.2.1. **Recreation:** The HRA does not provide a comprehensive review of the ways in which recreation and other urban effects may impact Epping Forest SAC. Para 3.3 – 3.21 cover pathways but fail to include the full range of pathways, for example increased fire risk, contamination of ponds (e.g. increased turbidity or chemical contamination from pet dogs); introduction of non-native species (e.g. fish in ponds); blocking of gateways preventing access for emergency vehicles (e.g. fire engines), damage to veteran trees from climbing, vandalism and other anti-social behaviour. In addition, there is the likelihood of increased root damage to trees from soil compaction and contamination and, thereby, the need for increased tree hazard assessment monitoring and the concomitant additional impacts of safety work.
- 16.1.2.2. **Greenspace mitigation:** The HRA does not address whether the level of mitigation proposed is adequate; i.e. matching mitigation measures to the impact pathways and scale of impact proposed. The one recommendation for mitigation relates to greenspace delivery without any detail as to the level of greenspace required to mitigate or whether it can be delivered.
- 16.1.2.3. **Appropriate Assessment (Recreation and Urbanisation):** The HRA does not follow the required steps set out in the legislation. The initial sift appears to be a screening stage and appears to identify likely significant effects for Epping Forest as a result of recreation and urban effects; as such these should then be considered in detail within an Appropriate Assessment; instead the HRA appears to go into more detail in an attempt to rule out likely significant effects.

16.1.3 AIR QUALITY

- 16.1.3.1. **Appropriate Assessment (Air Quality):** The HRA sets out in Chapter 6 and Appendix C to provide what it considers to be an Appropriate Assessment on Air Quality impacts on the SAC. However, The Conservators do not consider that this assessment, based on 2016

modelling, provides enough information to ensure an Appropriate Assessment which can rule out likely significant effects.

16.1.3.2. The impact of the Plan is downplayed in our view by examining a change between 'Do Something' and a 'Do Minimum' scenario that incorporates changes such as "outstanding commitments", about which there is no detail, and changes in other local authority areas, that would arise within the Plan period of 2011 - 2033. This 'Do Minimum' seems to be an 'in combination' figure rather than a baseline. The HRA Baseline itself (set at 2014) already lies 3 years into the Plan period. The 'Do Something' scenario needs to be compared to that of a 'Do Minimum' that does not incorporate increases from any Local Plan-led growth. The delay in bringing this Local Plan to Examination-in-Public until 2018-19 should not become a factor in assessing the Plan's and other 'in combination' impacts that started earlier.

16.1.3.3. When looking at the data provided by the traffic models for the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flows table on page 118 (Document EB206) the increases in traffic through the Forest, as a result of the Plans 'in combination', are very significant. For example, on the A121 to the M25 (Junction 26) the two-way flows for the Option (Option D) with the lowest increase are still raised from 25,236 in 2014 to 30,659 vehicles a day by 2033, a 21% increase in traffic through the Forest.

16.1.3.4. Although the subsequent tables in the HRA, which model the changes in NO_x and N values, show a modelled decrease in predicted pollution levels there are several key facts and uncertainties which, in The Conservators' view do not allow the Council as the competent authority to conclude that the Plan "will not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site" and which require much more detailed analysis in a full Appropriate Assessment.

16.1.3.5. Firstly, in the HRA (Document EB206) the tables on NO_x and N values (following page 123), show that in all but 4 of the 140 rows of data the predicted Critical Loads of Nitrogen (kgN/ha/yr) under the 'Do Something' scenarios remain within the 10-15kgN/ha/yr range that is internationally-recognised as damaging to temperate forest and heathland habitats such as those protected within Epping Forest SAC. As stated in para 6.9 of the HRA (page 107) the NO_x concentration, such as the level alongside the A121, is "...*certainly high enough for nitrogen deposition to be well above the critical load...*".

16.1.3.6. Furthermore, these Critical Load thresholds have been established for exposures of generally not longer than 20 years, and usually for a considerably shorter period. There is scientific evidence that Critical Load thresholds should be lower when of longer duration, such as the decades of N pollution exposure at Epping Forest SAC. One could conclude that, despite the predicted UK-wide improvement in vehicle fleet and other emissions cited in the HRA (para 2.27, page 15), the significant increase in traffic generated through the Forest, as a result of the Local Plan and 'in combination' proposals, would prevent until well beyond 2033 the very significant reductions in N pollution that are considered essential now for conservation of habitat integrity.

16.1.3.7. Thirdly, as with our concerns on recreation above, there is no certainty that the proposed mitigations of modal shift and increased junction capacity are adequate (see our detailed comments on Chapter 6 of the HRA below). In fact, some of the proposed pollution impact mitigation may involve damage to the SAC's integrity (see our comments above on Policy SP2 and below under specific points).

16.1.3.8. Fourthly, the air pollution modelling is extrapolated from traffic modelling that does not take into account the possible queueing and congestion at junctions like the Wake Arms Roundabout (HRA para 6.10, page 107). In addition, The Conservators have requested that any monitoring and modelling require pollution measurements from transects that directly abut the Wake Arms Roundabout. The HRA does not include these locations in its maps of the transects (pages 121 and 122). Therefore, the pollution levels at Wake Arms Roundabout remain unknown and the impact of the very large increases in traffic over the Plan period at this location make any conclusions in the HRA about air quality impacts uncertain.

16.1.3.9. The pollution modelling also has not yet incorporated Ammonia as a component of the N pollution (para 6.10), although this was demonstrated as significant by a PhD study in the Forest over ten years ago.

16.1.3.10. As the HRA states in para 6.13 there is a need for further refinement of the traffic modelling as well as long-term air quality monitoring, the parameters of which are currently being discussed and planned between the four local SHMA authorities, Natural England and The Conservators.

16.1.3.11. Without more information and commitment to a clear Mitigation Strategy, in which the impacts of specific mitigation options, such as capacity enlargement of the Wake Arms Roundabout, are assessed step-by-step, there cannot be a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity of Epping Forest SAC.

16.1.3.12. As the HRA states in para 2.9 (page 12) the Plan “*must provide an adequate policy framework within which these measures can be delivered*”. In the view of The Conservators the fact that a Mitigation Strategy is not included in the wording of the policies of the Plan means that an adequate policy framework is not provided (see also our comments on Policies SP2 and DM2). As such, the Local Plan Regulation 19 Submission Version is unsound.

16.2 HRA – Representations on more specific points (Chapters 5 & 6)

16.2.1 HRA CHAPTER 5 –RECREATIONAL PRESSURE & URBANISATION

- 16.2.1.1. For urban development 400m is used as a threshold to identify whether urban effects are triggered (see **para 3.21** of the HRA). Fly-tipping is the concern singled out, yet the 400m is justified due to it relating to walking distance. Fly-tipping is usually undertaken by those with a vehicle and there is no evidence to suggest that it is limited to dwellings within 400m of the SAC. As we discuss above, the 400m in the Thames Basin Heaths is used differently, as a zone within which there is a presumption against development.
- 16.2.1.2. **Para 5.19** (first bullet top of page 101) suggests that 5km is a consistent maximum distance that visitors will regularly travel to reach inland countryside sites. This is not the case and a range of visitor surveys show distances well beyond 5km; for example, the 75% distance for Cannock Chase SAC, based on recent visitor survey data is 15km.
- 16.2.1.3. **Para 5.23** identifies that a full Mitigation Strategy has yet to be defined and **para 5.24** subsequently states that the size of the tariff remains to be determined. There is no mention of detailed mitigation measures. In other words, mitigation measures are yet to be identified and in the view of The Conservators this surely makes any conclusion of no adverse effects on integrity impossible to justify.
- 16.2.1.4. The HRA (**para 5.28**) refers to Policy DM2 wording regarding greenspace as mitigation and suggests that a 400-house threshold could be applied, such that only allocations above 400 dwellings could consider delivery of their own accessible greenspace.



There is no justification for this 400-house threshold in the HRA, but if the threshold is used, it will apply to relatively few allocations, which could severely limit its effectiveness in our view.

- 16.2.1.5. The HRA does not consider Latton Priory or North Weald Bassett developments (1,050 new houses each) as these were outside the Zone of Influence (Zoi) considered by the HRA; – but see our comments on Policy DM2 and the need for a Zoi of 6.2km. As a result, the HRA itself only lists (**para 5.28 & Footnote 53**) the two developments that make up the Epping South masterplan area – **EPP.R1 and EPP.R2**. For these two sites we have made comments under our Policy P1 response. Mitigation outside these developments (i.e. those that are not expected to ‘consume their own smoke’), therefore, must be Natural Greenspace delivered by the local authority. There is no consideration as to whether this is achievable.
- 16.2.1.6. The ‘in-combination’ section for urbanisation (**paras 5.36 - 5.37**) only refers to London Boroughs of Redbridge and Waltham Forest and fails to consider the overall quantum of growth likely around the Forest.

16.2.2 HRA CHAPTER 6 - AIR QUALITY

- 16.2.2.1. **Para 6.12** (page 107) states that the current focus for mitigation is Scenario 5 of the Highways Assessment (HA - Document EB502) that is considering alleviating congestion and thereby increasing the flows of traffic through **Wake Arms Roundabout** lying entirely within Epping Forest SAC. There is no detail given in the HRA as to how the flows would be kept to “the current base case”. In the HA it indicates that this would be achieved through unspecified **local widening** to increase approach lane and circulatory capacity (Table 3-8 of Document EB502). The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP – Document 1101B)

16.2.2.2. Highway and roundabout widening would imply that land would need to be taken from the Forest SAC in order to achieve mitigation. The HRA does not assess the impact and an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is required into the implications of these mitigation options for the SAC.

- 16.2.2.3. **Para 6.13** (page 108) acknowledges the likely knock-on impacts of capacity enlargement at the Wake Arms Roundabout for other junctions in and close to the Forest such as Junctions 10 and 22 in **Table 3-8 of the HA** (Document EB502). The IDP (Document 1101B) also details proposed enhancements and makes it clear that it is “desirable” for capacity changes to the Robin Hood Roundabout (DW11 in the IDP) – entirely within the Forest SAC, along the A104. Such changes could have adverse impacts on the SAC, including on its physical integrity.
- 16.2.2.4. There are also potential losses of protected Forest Land (although non-SAC) around Junction 10 in the HA (Document EB502), which is labelled as EPP23 in the IDP (Document 1101B).

16.3 HRA - Suggested changes

16.3.1. On the basis of our representations above The Conservators consider that an Appropriate Assessment for Epping Forest SAC, into the impacts of air quality, recreation and urbanisation, must be carried out as required by the Habitat Regulations 2017. This assessment needs to examine step-by-step the impacts of mitigation options.

16.3.2. Furthermore, there must be an explicit commitment in Plan Policy to a Mitigation Strategy and the scope and framework for that Strategy should be set out in the Plan to be fully developed in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

(Please also see our suggested changes for Policies DM2 and DM22 in particular).

17. CONCLUSIONS

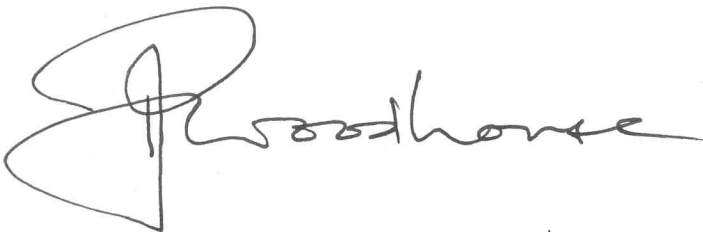
17.1. Following the points made above The Conservators of Epping Forest cannot support the Regulation 19 Submission Version 2017 of the Plan. We have registered a number of significant concerns around the protection of Epping Forest, in particular in relation to place-shaping and development management policies.

17.2. We welcome the aspiration embodied in Vision A (v), which states that "*Epping Forest will be conserved and enhanced*". We also warmly welcome the protection afforded to the Buffer Lands under the Plan Objective A (ii). The Forest is an irreplaceable asset protected for recreation and enjoyment and of international importance for biodiversity.

17.3. The Conservators, therefore, look forward to continuing to work positively with the Council and others through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to produce a comprehensive Mitigation Strategy for the Forest. We also look forward to working in many other ways and through many other channels with the Council and its partners to ensure that the vision for Epping Forest and for the green infrastructure of the District can be made a reality.

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Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Woodhouse', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

Mr Philip Woodhouse
Chairman of The Conservators of Epping Forest
29th January 2018

cc Chief Executives and Heads of Planning at Uttlesford District Council, Harlow District Council and East Herts District Council

(For correspondence please contact: Jeremy.dagley@cityoflondon.go.uk (Tel: 020 8532 1010))

APPENDIX 2 – RANGE of *RECREATIONAL & URBANISATION* IMPACTS on the SAC under CONSIDERATION for MITIGATION

- Increased vandalism of protective infrastructure and natural features (including ancient trees)
- Car parking congestion/overflows leading to erosion of Forest verges and car parking other inappropriate or sensitive sites
- Trampling and cycle tracks leading to soil erosion, loss of vegetation and loss of fungal mycorrhizae;
- Soil compaction, particularly around tree roots, and changes to soil chemistry
- Eutrophication from dog fouling leading to vegetation and soil chemistry changes
- Increase in litter and pollution or other contamination from litter and fly-tips
- Increase in introductions and spreading of invasive non-native species
- Spread of diseases in wildlife and livestock (e.g. Neospora, Ramorum)
- Disturbance and worrying of grazing livestock leading to loss of grazing days
- Damage to and increased costs of grazing infrastructure
- Disturbance to wildlife and loss of sensitive species (e.g. heathland reptiles, birds)
- Increase in fire risk
- Restrictions in access to Forest sites by emergency services (especially fire service)
- Increased costs in tree hazard surveys
- Increased intervention management for safety of trees and other vegetation
- Increased costs of communications strategy to address other impacts
- Increased costs in the management and directing of visitor access
- Increased costs of patrolling or wardening areas
- Requirement for increased visitor facilities/information
- Costs of zoning including temporary exclusion and monitoring (e.g. for OPM)
- Increased costs of monitoring all impacts and monitoring control measures
- [Loss of relative tranquillity (noise pollution, congestion at key sites) and natural aspect (e.g. visibility of vehicular traffic)] – note this may not be considered a direct impact on the SAC conservation interests

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest & Commons	12 March 2018
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Superintendent of 'The Commons'	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>This report provides a general update on issues across the nine sites within 'The Commons' division that may be of interest to members and is supplementary to the monthly email updates.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to note the contents of this report.</p>	

Consultative Group Terms of Reference

1. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the three Consultative Groups were agreed and adopted with minor amendment, at the various Group meetings across the Division in January and February. The amendment related to the membership time limit of 4 years + 4 years. This restriction could cause specific problems for Ward Councillors, so their membership is now explicitly mentioned within the ToRs.

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

2. The quarry site at East Burnham continues to operate, infilling the cavity with inert waste which is largely clays from basements. A site visit with the Local Authority Enforcement Officer was held with a City of London Officer attending. Dust levels continue to be higher as measured by the sticky pads but lower by the Frisbee gauges. A six-monthly ground water hydrology report has been submitted by the operator. Water table levels have been outside envelopes on several occasions and two wells in the Beeches have levels that are consistently low, but these can be attributed to weather conditions rather than quarry workings.
3. Progress continues with the South Bucks District Council (SBDC) local plan. An Officer attended the air quality inception meeting between SBDC and the contractor engaged. This included a presentation by Natural England (NE) about the latest position regarding SAC sites, air pollution generated by traffic increases and local plans. The draft report is due in April.

4. A very useful meeting was held at Epping Forest between Officers and the respective NE advisers regarding Countryside Stewardship. The application pack for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common has arrived. Liaison continues between Officers and Natural England advisers regarding this complex grant system and application procedure.
5. Work has started on the new 10-year plan for Stoke Common including presentations to the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group, the Friends of Stoke Common AGM and the local Rotary Club.
6. A 'Pollard open day' was held at Burnham Beeches following discussions during the study tour/conference in Spain. Staff from Hampstead Heath demonstrated cutting techniques on the trees with Burnham Beeches staff on hand to describe the work. Staff from Epping Forest and Ashted attended as well as three independent arborist companies, a total of 21 people not including Burnham Beeches staff. A Spanish arborist spent the entire week working with Burnham Beeches and Hampstead Heath staff, helping with reduction work on the old trees.
7. The Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common consultation group meeting was held at the Beeches office on 16th January and was well attended. Along with the usual updates on activity and progress on projects the evening was dominated by discussion on the forthcoming review of the Stoke Common management plan.
8. At Burnham Beeches the Ranger team has worked on and around 61 ancient pollards, completed all tree safety inspections at both sites and much of work identified in those surveys during January and February 2018.
9. At Stoke Common – the team supervised contractors carrying out restoration work on the West common and carried out heathland restoration directly and with volunteers across the site.
10. Storm procedures were in place on 4 separate occasions in January 2018 – most of the storms caused little damage but 4 large trees were brought down across internal road ways at Burnham Beeches by strong winds in the early hours of the 18th. These were all cleared away by mid- afternoon that day.

PARTNERSHIPS

Kenley Revival update

11. Conservation Works are nearing completion and the last remaining works are in relation to the removal of graffiti from the rifle range and this will be contracted separately. The other works still to be completed by PAYE are the infilling of KC14 (by doorway entrance), KC29 (back wall) and KC44 (spine wall).

12. The recruitment of the Learning and Volunteer Officer commenced, and the post awarded, subject to satisfactory references. It is anticipated that the person will be in post by late March.
13. A 'Women at War' season will take place in March with the following events:
4th March – Amy Johnson workshop at Croydon Airport, 10th March – Home Front day at Turf projects, 16th March – Amy Johnson: Last Flight Out at Matthew's Yard along with joining screenings of the Darkest Hour and web articles.
14. An archaeology dig will take place 16 – 27th July with a few days for the public to participate, a day for Open Spaces department, a public open day with tours and a second week for professional archaeology groups. The dig will be led by MOLA and Historic England.
15. A legacy workshop was held on 7 December 2017 to focus the Kenley Airfield Friends Group and City of London employees on the legacy opportunities for the project and which activities could be sustained post-project. The next step will be to develop a project proposal for legacy post-project.
16. The interpretation works, including signage and travelling exhibition, will shortly commence with an aim, at this stage, to install the on-site signage by late summer 2018. A further creative workshop will be held on 21 February to allocate content to signage and it is envisaged the planning application will be submitted by 1 April pending completion of the design phase.
17. Targets for volunteer contributions have already been met for the lifetime of the project.
12. At their meeting of February 2018 Project Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee considered a Gateway 6 (Regular) report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding the Kenley Revival Project. Members noted that the project had proved a success to date in terms of engagement. Members authorised the use of £28,000 of the contingency budget to fund changes to the activity programme.

The West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons

18. Stites Hill Road, Coulsdon Common is now partly closed until February 12th 2018 to enable Sutton and East Surrey Water to replace a large water main adjacent to City of London land. The Ranger team have taken this opportunity to carry out some remedial tree works along the edge of the highway during this closure.
19. Following two separate storm events tree safety checks were conducted across all sites at the beginning of January and fallen trees and overhanging branches were removed.
20. High risk tree assessments have all now been completed for the West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons.

21. The City of London have successfully challenged a long running dispute over ownership of a section of fencing and a highway retaining wall at the boundary of Farthing Downs. The risk associated with management and maintenance has now been established as being with Croydon Council.
22. Rangers and volunteers have installed a new section of fencing on the boundary of Woodplace Farm, Farthing Downs.
23. Scrub clearance along Bunker Bank on Kenley Common, has been completed by the volunteer team.
24. The vacant post for the Livestock Ranger for West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons was advertised and interviews took place in February. An appointment has not been made and the post will be re-advertised.
25. The cows have now been moved from site to the barn at Merlewood Estate Office to avoid compaction and poaching during the wet season. The breeding herd are overwintering at Epping Forest.
26. The West Wickham and Coulsdon Common Rangers, London Natural History Group and Geological Society for London met at Spring Park to discuss possible interpretation about geology and prepared guided walk for May 2018.
27. A contractor has been appointed to coppice sweet chestnut on Woodland Way, Spring Park.

Ashtead Common

28. The Ashtead Common Consultative Group met in January to consider aspects of the management of the common linked to the development of the management plan.
29. The annual mega task held in conjunction with the Lower Mole Countryside Partnership and Epsom and Ewell Council achieved 372 volunteer hours coppicing hazel. This contributed to over 700 hours of volunteering achieved in January.
30. Rangers and volunteers have been working to extend Birch Grazing Area to double its size, making it approximately 5.5ha. The new extension is more wooded than the existing grazing areas.
31. OPM surveys conducted by the Forestry Commission have identified further nests on the common. These will be removed and the infected trees (only, not the 50m zones as before) will be sprayed if the tree is in a high-risk zone. This reflects the approach taken by nearby Richmond Park.
32. Work on the veteran oak pollards and scrub areas has been completed. There remains some ride/ path management and tree safety work to complete before the cutting season finishes.

Incidents

Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common

- 33. There were 16 reported formal incidents during the period
- 34. Thirty-six traveller caravans and over fifty associated vehicles moved on to the car parks at Burnham Beeches late afternoon on Sunday 7 January. They were successfully moved from the site by 11.00pm on Monday 8 January and all clear up operations concluded by 10.00am Tuesday 9 January.
- 35. Two incidents relate to fly tipping around Burnham Beeches.
- 36. There were five incidents related to dogs and PSPO's, four of which required formal follow up action. Rangers also helped reunite two lost dogs with their owner's and helped an owner recover a dog that had injured its leg whilst exercising well away from where the owner had parked her car.
- 37. Rangers also assisted the Police in searching for an elderly missing person and in recovering a young person who had run off from a local school and was found at the Beeches.

Ashted Common

- 38. The remains of local man James Middleton, who had been missing from his Epsom home since July 2nd, were discovered on Ashted Common by a Police led search team on Sunday February 11th. It is suspected that his mobility scooter had become stuck on tree roots in an area surrounded by scrub, off a desire-line path, and that he had tried to walk away for help. Rangers assisted the police for two days by clearing scrub, extricating the mobility scooter and generally facilitating the search for remains.

The West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons

- 39. Farthing Downs – Gates have been vandalised and the incident reported to the Metropolitan Police. The Head Ranger is to meet with Police and parents of the offender to discuss compensation or community resolution.
- 40. Farthing Downs – dead Jack Russell puppy discovered in a ditch. The Rangers took to the local vet who, in turn, contacted the owners.
- 41. Coulsdon Common – two fly-tipping incidents during this period. Various items removed and disposed of by the Ranger team.
- 42. Riddlesdown Common – Rangers responded to an out of hours call from an injured man in the car park. Staff liaised with emergency services and coordinated the safe removal of the injured party from site.
- 43. West Wickham Common – Fly tipping incident – garden waste and a wheelbarrow were dumped on site.

Filming, major events and other activities

Burnham Beeches

- 44. The Beeches hosted five local school visits/activity days for around four hundred children.
- 45. Successful half term woodland wonder and a family quiz trail were enjoyed by visitors of all ages.
- 46. The Friends of Stoke Common held their AGM in Stoke Poges supported by the Beeches team – and held two volunteer events.
- 47. The Beeches team hosted another twelve events for volunteers of all ages including Cubs and students from Berkshire College of Agriculture.

The West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons

- 48. A Deer seminar and winter tree identification course was delivered at Merlewood Estate Office.
- 49. A bird box making event was held at Merlewood Estate Office.
- 50. A 'Bumps and lumps' walk conducted by the Senior Ranger to Spring park describing the terrain and features on site.
- 51. A night-time treasure hunt event took place with Bromley cubs at Spring Park.

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Ashtead Common Consultative Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The main purpose of the Ashtead Common Consultative Group is to assist the development and delivery of the latest Ashtead Common Management Plan which itself is a product of extensive stakeholder consultation. The aim of the Management Plan is to ensure an appropriate balance between the needs of access and nature conservation and thereby protect and conserve Ashtead Common *in perpetuity*.

1. To consider the annual work programme as set out in the management plan.
2. To identify and agree areas where further public consultation may be required.
3. To consider any major changes to the plan that may arise from time to time.
4. To consider, where appropriate, issues raised by the local community, or visitors and to assist the Superintendent in resolving them.
 - In addition, outcomes of Ashtead Common Consultative Group meetings should not:
 - Compromise the long-term welfare of the site
 - Conflict with the site's use for quiet enjoyment
 - Harm the conservation status of the site

Membership

7. The City of London has statutory responsibilities and interests, and will be represented at the Group by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee, together with two other Members appointed by that Committee. Other bodies such as Natural England and Historic England also have statutory interests in the management of the site and they will be invited to attend as meeting agendas dictate.
8. The Ashtead Residents Association, Ashtead Common volunteers, Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council will each have the right to a representative at the Group.
9. The Group will identify and welcome representatives from local conservation groups, heritage societies, educational bodies and recreational user groups such as horse riders, ramblers and cyclists, together with other individuals who have an interest in the management of Ashtead Common and accept the terms of reference. Membership of the Group will be for a period of four years after which individuals may be invited to serve for a further period of four years.

Attendance by members of the public.

9. Members of the public may attend. Any member of the public wishing to bring an issue to the attention of the Consultative Group must provide a minimum two weeks written notice and provide details as required, to the Chairman and Superintendent who will consider its inclusion on a future agenda as appropriate.

General

10. The Chairman of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee or his nominated representative shall be Chairman of the Committee.
11. Outputs from the Ashted Common Consultative Group will inform the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, which remains the decision making body.
12. Meetings will be held not less than once per year (plus an annual 'external site meeting' to view works carried out and discuss forthcoming project issues).
13. The Group will meet formally in January or February each year.
14. Meetings shall normally take place locally to Ashted Common.
15. The Town Clerk to convene the meetings and prepare and circulate the agendas and be responsible for the minutes, supported by local Officers where appropriate.
16. A further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require – see **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1

Protocol for additional meetings and site visits

For additional meetings/visits to be held for consideration of essential business by Officers or Members of Consultative Groups between scheduled meetings:

- i. A minimum of five members of the Consultative Group, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be in agreement to do so.
- ii. The minimum notice period for calling an additional meeting/visit is 28 days.
- iii. The nature of the issue must be submitted in writing to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Superintendent at least 14 days before the meeting.
- iv. The Chairman or Deputy Chairman and the Superintendent will preside at all additional meetings/visits.

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	12 March 2018
Subject: The Commons Management Priorities 2018-19	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of The Commons	For Decision
Report author: Hadyn Robson	

Summary

Each of the nine open spaces in the division has a comprehensive management plan and detailed work programmes to guide management activity over a 10-year period.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the management priorities for The Commons for the period 2018-19.

Main Report

Background

The work prioritised in the management plans and work programmes, together with any additional project work and organisation requirements forms a set of annual management priorities. These are presented as:

Appendix 1 – Ashted Common

Appendix 2 – Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

Appendix 3 – West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons

Current Position

The management priorities have been presented to local consultative groups for information or will be the subject of discussions later in the year.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

The management priorities support Key Policy Priority number five: increasing the impact of the City's cultural and heritage offer on the life of London and the nation; providing safe, secure and accessible open spaces.

The management priorities support the five themes of the City Together Strategy and reflect the charitable status of our open spaces

Financial Implications

The projects and tasks outlined in this report will be funded by the local risk budget of The Commons Division.

The annual work programme addresses soft landscaping issues and poses no direct implications for the City Surveyor's property maintenance, nor impacts on the revenue works programme

Conclusion

This report seeks approval for the proposed management priorities for The Commons Division for the period 2018-2019

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Ashted Common

Appendix 2 – Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

Appendix 3 – West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons

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The Commons Division shared aims

Protect and conserve the biodiversity and heritage of The Commons	Provide accessible sites that bring benefit to, and are valued by, local and wider communities who play an active part in their management	Develop stakeholder relationships to promote The Commons in the context of their wider landscapes, whilst seeking to balance conflicting demands	Embed innovative financial sustainability across our activities
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The Commons Division core values

For the community:

- Providing welcome, safe and secure sites for people and wildlife
- At the heart of the local community
- Working with others to maximise benefit to the Commons and surrounds

For the team:

- Outward facing, forward looking
- Ready to challenge and wherever possible mitigate environmental threat
- Maintain multifunctional staff, valued for their skills and knowledge

Ashtead Common Priorities (Charity Reg. 1051510)

- **Rye Brook Reed Bed** - work with the South East Rivers Trust to design a system to remove pollution from the surface water outlet at Two Bridges.
- **Vision & management planning** - continue programme to define management aims and objectives and develop plans to deliver these over the long term.
- **Survey and monitor** for veteran tree vitality and the effects of veteranisation. Develop a comprehensive survey and monitor programme and deliver the top priority identified.
- **Veteran trees** - continue with the district based approach to deliver the agreed plan.
- **Grazing** - extend Birch Grazing Area to include the wooded area east of Footpath 30.
- **Mowing** - increase the frequency of ride mowing to ensure firebreaks are maintained to an adequate width.
- **Bracken control** - maintain the area mown in 2017 and introduce spraying as a control method.
- **Oak Processionary Moth** - continue surveys to check for the presence of OPM and respond to infestations by removing nests and spraying infested trees.
- **Volunteering** - maintain the Monday and Thursday volunteer groups, support work experience placements and provide corporate volunteering opportunities.
- **Scrub grassland** - Continue the restoration program to establish a 50% mix of scrub and grassland.

The Commons Division shared aims			
Protect and conserve the biodiversity and heritage of The Commons	Provide accessible sites that bring benefit to, and are valued by, local and wider communities who play an active part in their management	Develop stakeholder relationships to promote The Commons in the context of their wider landscapes, whilst seeking to balance conflicting demands	Embed innovative financial sustainability across our activities

The Commons Division core values	
For the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing welcome, safe and secure sites for people and wildlife• At the heart of the local community• Working with others to maximise benefit to the Commons and surrounds	For the team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outward facing, forward looking• Ready to challenge and wherever possible mitigate environmental threat• Maintain multifunctional staff, valued for their skills and knowledge

Page 94	<p>Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common Priorities (Charity Reg. 232987)</p> <p>Veteran trees Carry out clearance & reduction work as per work programme & carry out squirrel control to ensure reduction in damage on old pollards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young pollards - Carry out annual programme of cutting on young pollards• Grazing - Continue to graze 163ha at Burnham Beeches as well as cattle grazing via contractor & pony grazing on Stoke Common• Heathland restoration - Continue with work programmes on both sites. Carry out follow up work on Stoke Common, including small scale mowing to control gorse and birch and encourage a mix of heather ages• Grant applications - Apply for Countryside Stewardship grants for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common including liaison with NE adviser over detailed structure of grants• Stoke Common management plan - Produce new 10 year plan for Stoke Common including consultation with experts and public.• Impact of development - Continue working with South Bucks District Council and Natural England to obtain the best protection possible from development pressure through the local plan. Liaise with other neighbouring authorities regarding their plans.• East Burnham Quarry - Liaise with Summerleaze Ltd over the operation of the quarry and ensure protection of Burnham Beeches from harm. Carry out associated monitoring• Events & social media - Continue to work with the community to deliver the annual events programme. Maintain activity on social media to increase the number of people following accounts and attending events.• Friends of Stoke Common - Assist work parties and help recruitment drive for more volunteers.
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Management priorities for the West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons 2018 – 2019

The Commons Division shared aims			
Protect and conserve the biodiversity and heritage of The Commons	Provide accessible sites that bring benefit to, and are valued by, local and wider communities who play an active part	Develop stakeholder relationships to promote The Commons in the context of their wider landscapes whilst seeking to balance conflicting demands	Embed innovative financial sustainability across our activities

The Commons Division core values	
<p>For the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing welcome, safe and secure sites for people and wildlife • At the heart of the local community • Working with others to maximise benefit to the Commons and surrounds 	<p>For the team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outward facing, forward looking • Ready to challenge and wherever possible mitigate environmental threat • Maintain multifunctional staff, valued for their skills and

West Wickham Commons (Charity Reg. No. 232989)

West Wickham Common	Spring Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak pollards – deliver annual condition monitoring so that we can review plan for restoration work • Heathland – restore, maintain and monitor our relic health lying above the ancient earthworks • Earthworks – Continue to research and interpret landscape features • Boundaries – review to ensure site protected, safety of people and management of landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coppicing – Continue the annual work programme of restoring traditional management to this woodland • Boundaries – review to ensure site protected, safety of people and management of landscape

Coulsdon Commons (Charity Reg. No. 232988)

Farthing Downs and New Hill	Coulsdon Common	Kenley Common	Riddlesdown
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassland – restore open areas on Farthing Downs and New Hill to achieve ESS agreement options • Scrub – manage blocks of retained scrub on Farthing Downs and restore succession on New Hill • Boundaries – review to ensure site protected and safety of people • Stock fencing – carry out repair and replacement of stock fencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rydons Wood – work with volunteers to continue restoring woodland area • Boundaries – review to ensure site protected and safety of people • Stock fencing – carry out repairs and replacement of stock fencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassland – restore and maintain the open areas of species-rich grassland along Whyteleafe Bank & Bunker Bank. • Boundaries – review to ensure site protected and safety of people • Stock fencing – carry out repairs and replacement of stock fencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrub – restore successional areas in Main Common and Riddlesdown Quarry • Grassland – restore open areas across Norfolk Bank, Farnet, Bull Pen and Butterfly Glade and in the Quarry • Stock fencing – carry out repairs and replacement of stock fencing

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	12 th March 2018
Subject: Ministry of Defence. Safety Fencing – Kenley Airfield (public protection and safety)	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of The Commons	For Decision
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>In January 2009 your committee received a report from the Superintendent of the City Commons, detailing the refusal by Croydon Council of a planning application submitted by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for the erection of a 1.2m high wood and steel palisade style safety fence around Kenley Airfield.</p> <p>The purpose of the fence was to separate visitors to the Common from flying activities and thus minimise the associated health and safety risks. At that time Croydon Council recommended that the Airfield's 'Safety Working Group' (SWG) investigate and trial, alternative safety measures. Shortly thereafter a trial safety system of moveable metal crowd control barriers was introduced along with a Safe Operating Procedure (SOP). The City worked closely with the MOD as part of the SWG.</p> <p>This 'temporary' situation has been maintained to the present day. However, a recent review of the near-miss incident records between visitors and flying related activities indicates that the temporary safety measures have been ineffective. The Superintendent has been advised by the Comptroller and City Solicitor that the responsibility for the H&S risk rests with those in charge of the flying operations i.e. the MOD and Surrey Hills Gliding Club (SHGC).</p> <p>The Ministry of Defence have recently confirmed that they are to submit a revised planning application to erect a 1.2m wooden safety fence placed on the hard perimeter track of the airfield which is within and would largely enclose their ownership. The proposed safety fence physically separates the space between visitor activity to the Common, MOD and civilian glider training whilst maintaining full visitor and operational access to the City Corporation's land holding. The MOD proposal allows visitor access to the airfield on non-flying days.</p> <p>Recommendation(s) members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support the planning application submitted by the MOD as far as the application benefits the Health and Safety of visitors to Kenley Common and respects the balance required to protect the heritage landscape. ii. Authorise the Superintendent to respond as approved, to the planning application. 	

Main Report

Background

1. Kenley Airfield, owned by the MOD, sits at the centre of and is to all intents and purposes, encircled by Kenley Common. There is no physical, permanent barrier between the two land ownerships albeit the perimeter track in the ownership of the MOD forms a visual boundary. Visitors commonly cross this ill-defined boundary. **Map 1.**
2. Under planning law the Common is a Conservation Area and contains two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) within which sit the City's 'heritage features' such as blast pens, rifle range etc. The City Corporation's SAMs are currently on the Heritage at Risk Register (HARR) and are presently being conserved as part of the Heritage Lottery Funded Kenley Revival Project. Historic England (HE), are a full partner in the HLF funded project and have confirmed that the SAMs will be removed from the HARR once this project is completed. **Map 2.**
3. Glider flying regularly takes place on the MOD Airfield (either RAF or SHGC) which has historically caused Safety risks associated with visitors to the Kenley Common crossing onto the airfield whilst flying is taking place.
4. In 2007 and as recognition of the identified H&S risks, a SWG was formed with representatives from the MOD's Defence Estates, City of London Corporation, SHGC, RAF 615 Volunteer Gliding Squadron, Air Training Corp, Friends of Kenley Airfield, Croydon and Tandridge Councils.
5. In November 2008 the MOD submitted a planning application to Croydon Council for the erection of a 1.2m high wood and steel 'palisade style' safety fence around the airfield. The justification being that the fence would permanently separate visitors to Kenley Common from flying activities and thereby reduce the Health and Safety risks outlined above.
6. The proposal met with a largely hostile response from the local community as it was felt that the fence would deny public access to the MOD land albeit there is no legal entitlement for such access.
7. The MOD's planning application was refused by Croydon Council on the grounds that it would harm the character and appearance of the Kenley Airfield Conservation Area. In doing so they recommended that the SWG identify and test alternative physical safety measures and agree a SOP.
8. In July 2009 your Committee received a report from the Superintendent of the City Commons outlining Croydon Council's reasons for refusing the MOD's planning application. **Appendix 1.**
9. Subsequently the SWG agreed the SOP and introduced a trial safety system consisting of approximately 1275m of 'temporary' metal crowd control barrier system and refreshed signage. This 'temporary' situation has been maintained until the present day.

10. In 2011 Croydon Council wrote to the MOD stating that the temporary nature of the barriers was questionable and that they were ineffective as a barrier between visitors and flying activities as they are often 'moved from position'. The Council then explained that the barriers had been in situ more than 2 years and are seen by them as being permanent and thus deemed as 'development' and that planning consent would be required for their continuing presence.
11. The Council went on to acknowledge that, given the ineffectiveness of the 'temporary barriers' a more effective, permanent solution should be sought to help manage health and safety risks whilst ensuring that any permanent fencing is sympathetic to the historic character and landscape.
12. The matter went silent and remained unchanged until the current Superintendent of the Commons assumed his role in 2014.

Current Position

13. The MOD ceased flying operations in April 2014 and the airfield was, in military terms, 'de-activated'. No further military flying has taken place since that date.
14. SHGC have continued to fly from the airfield under license from the MOD up to the present time. This includes responsibility for the SOP and barrier maintenance. Despite SHGC's best efforts to maintain them the temporary barriers have been very regularly vandalised and/or blown/pushed over.
15. In 2017, following a review of H&S incident reports associated with flying operations and visitors to the Common, the Superintendent took advice from the City Solicitor with regard to liability which was ascertained as resting with the MOD and SHGC. **Appendix 2.** This was communicated to the MOD and the matter was then placed on the Open Spaces Risk Register until the matter was resolved. **Appendix 3.**
16. The latest incident report log is included as **Appendix 4.**
17. Subsequent meetings with the MOD, SHGC and Kenley Airfield Friends Group confirmed that the temporary barriers and the associated SOP have been ineffective and that near misses between flying activities and visitors to the Common remain worryingly frequent.
18. As such there is a known and foreseeable risk that does not appear to be effectively managed. The frequent near misses are objective indicators that this is the case.
19. It was also concluded that the temporary barriers were themselves unsightly and harmed the character of the conservation area as well as provided an additional health and safety risk in their own right, in that they are not fixed and are frequently overturned.

20. It appeared that the only reliable way to overcome all the above issues would be for the MOD to seek planning consent to erect a more sympathetically designed, permanent safety fence that allowed continuing public access as far as practicable, and to reflect this in a reinvigorated SOP.
21. In 2017 the MOD confirmed that they had 'reactivated' the airfield and that 615 Volunteer Gliding Squadron will recommence military flying activities in 2018, generally flying weekdays only. The SHGC shall continue to use the Aerodrome at weekends.
22. The imminent re-activation of the airfield has accelerated the need to resolve the long-standing H&S problems outlined in this report and the MOD have now drawn up a new design for a permanent safety fence to encircle the active airfield, based on the principles outlined in above.

Proposals

23. The new design proposal is for a permanent 1.2m high wooden safety fence of a similar style to that used by the City of London elsewhere on Kenley Common. 17 wooden gates, including two pairs of double gates for vehicular access, are proposed at critical points to facilitate visitor access on non-flying days and to ensure that the City can move vehicles around the airfield as required to manage the remainder of the Common. **Appendix 5.**
24. The MOD are proposing to place the safety fencing within the perimeter track of the airfield (of which the total width is in the MOD's ownership) effectively splitting it into two parallel tarmac 'highways' in a such a manner as to allow the public permanent benefit of between 4m and 11m width of this surface on the City's 'side'.
25. The Superintendent was present at the MOD's recent public consultation on the proposals which was extremely well attended. The MOD's presentation at that meeting confirmed the Superintendent's view that their proposals are both necessary and appropriate given the imminent increase in flying activities and the existing high number of near misses already recorded due to the ineffectiveness of the temporary barriers and SOP.
26. The Superintendent is also of the view that the design and location of the safety fence is as sympathetic as possible and strikes the right balance between the need to improve public safety (by segregating them from a high risk activity which is outside of the City Corporation's control) and the historic nature of the landscape.
27. Unlike the situation in 2008, the MOD has taken detailed advice on the proposed safety fence's physical design and location so that it is both sensitive to the heritage of the site and facilitates public access across its land as afar as is reasonably practicable.
28. The MOD proposes that the gates within the safety fencing will be left open and closed only when flying is taking place. Members should note that the

proposed design closely resembles its own fencing currently used to define boundaries and other features on Kenley Common.

29. Public feedback on the proposals appears in the main to understand and support the MOD's proposals albeit this is far from unanimous.
30. The MOD intend to submit the planning application in spring 2018.
31. In January 2018 the MOD wrote to the Superintendent asking for a letter of support concerning the 'in principle need' for the fence. The Superintendent consulted the Chairman and Director of Open Spaces and provided the MOD with a response. **Appendix 6.**
32. As the Airfield forms part of the Conservation Area, Historic England (HE) must respond to any planning applications effecting the area. HE objected to the 2008 safety fence planning application. However, the Superintendent is advised by HE's Inspector of Ancient Monuments that on this occasion they will express their 'disappointment' that the safety fence is deemed necessary specifically that it will, in their opinion, harm the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments. However, it seems unlikely that they object to the planning application itself.

Options

33. Members may wish to consider the following options:
 - i. Authorise the Superintendent to comment in writing to Croydon Council in support of the MOD's planning application concerning the proposed safety fence on Kenley Aerodrome. **This is the recommended option.**
 - ii. Authorise the Superintendent to comment in writing to Croydon Council objecting to the MOD's planning application concerning the proposed safety fence at Kenley Aerodrome
 - iii. Stay silent on the matter.

Proposals

34. In H&S terms this is an 'interface risk' to which the City Corporation is not seeking 'physical/direct' control or to accept liability that rests with others. The City Corporation's role is that of a careful landowner striving to ensure that reasonably practicable safety measures are supported where it is in its interest to do so.
35. Members should consider the health and safety of visitors to Kenley Common and the potential for them to come to harm due to activities associated with the MOD and SHGC's flying operations.
36. Further, Members should balance the known and foreseeable H&S risks against any perceived detrimental impact the proposed safety measures might have on the character of the Conservation Area and there potential to harm the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Corporate & Strategic Implications

32. The recommendations of this report support the City's KPP5 from the Corporate Plan *Increasing the outreach and impact of the City's cultural, heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation.*
33. The recommendations of this report support the departmental Business Plan:

OSD3	Enrich experiences by providing high quality and engaging, visitor, educational and volunteering opportunities.
OSD4	Improve the health and wellbeing of the community through access to green space and recreation

Implications

34. The City Solicitor has advised the Superintendent that responsibility for any risks associated with flying activities to visitors of the Kenley Common rests with the MOD and SHGC albeit visitors to the common form the majority of the 'at risk' audience.
35. There are no financial implications associated with this report.
36. There are potential reputational risks to the City Corporation with either of the available options. By not supporting the proposal the City Corporation could be seen to be passive when there is an opportunity mitigate significant foreseeable risk by acting as a responsible land owner/occupier without exceeding our responsibility or taking on additional duties.
37. There appears to be a general level of support from the local community with an appreciation of the MODs very active consultation on the matter. The MOD appears committed to maintaining public access onto its land when there is no flying activity.

Conclusion

38. Data collected during a prolonged trial of temporary barriers indicates that 'temporary' barrier and SOP has failed and that the health and safety risks associated with visitor across and around an active airfield may best be minimised by the proposals contained in the MOD's imminent planning application to Croydon Council. This has helped the Superintendent come to the recommendation made in this report
39. Croydon Council have set the MOD a very difficult challenge i.e. to solve the H&S issues whilst minimising detriment to the Conservation area.
40. In January 2018 The Chairman of this Committee approved a broad note of support to the MOD concerning the broad proposal to introduce safety fencing on the airfield on the grounds that it resolves long standing H&S issues. The letter acknowledges that the planning authority will make the final decision.
41. The local community appear to generally support the planning application.
42. Historic England are likely to express disappointment to Croydon Council relating to the MOD's application but, at the time of writing, have stated that they are unlikely to object.

43. Should the planning application be approved by Croydon Council the Superintendent will remove the matter from the Department's Health and Safety Risk Register.

Appendices

Appendix 1. EFCC report of July 2009.

Appendix 2. Statement to MOD following advice from the Comptroller and City Solicitor

Appendix 3. Open Spaces Risk Register

Appendix 4. H&S incidents. Sample

Appendix 5. MOD – fence design proposals for submission as planning application

Appendix 6. 'In principle' Letter of Support on behalf of the Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee

Picture 1. Typical fence used by the Open Spaces Dept. on Kenley Common

Map 1. Kenley Common and Airfield

Map 2. Conservation area and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Andy Barnard

Superintendent of The Commons

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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	July 6th 2009	
Subject: Kenley Aerodrome - Refusal of Planning Permission for Erection of a Safety Fence	Public	
Report of: Superintendent of the City Commons	For Decision	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>In January 2009 your Committee received a report on a planning application submitted by Defence Estates on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the erection of a 1.2m high safety fence around Kenley Aerodrome. The application was recently refused by Croydon Council. This report explains the current situation.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>I recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That this report is noted and a further report is submitted in due course once the effectiveness of the trial barriers and any subsequent proposals submitted by the MoD, have been assessed.		

Main Report

Background

1. Towards the end of 2008 Defence Estates submitted a planning application to Croydon Council for the erection of a 1.2m high safety fence around the perimeter of Kenley Airfield. The City objected to the application because of the detrimental impact the fence would have had upon the Kenley Common open landscape and the setting of the aerodrome, part of which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
2. On June 11th 2009 Croydon Council refused planning permission for the following reasons:
 - The proposed fencing would neither preserve nor enhance the quality, character or appearance of the Kenley Aerodrome

Conservation Area, and would harm the setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

- The proposed fencing constitutes inappropriate development resulting in a harsh and incongruous feature detrimental to the open character and visual amenity of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
3. Croydon Council concluded that the health and safety of the general public and cadets in relation to gliding activities is a material consideration, but advised that *"a physical barrier should be a last resort"* and that there are other measures that need to be explored and exhausted first, and suggested use of a safety working group to do so.
 4. The latest application followed a similar application made by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Greater London in 2007 for the erection of a 1.2m high metal palisade fence around the airfield's perimeter. This application was refused.
 5. Kenley Aerodrome is an active airfield used by the RAF 615 Volunteer Gliding Squadron (615 VGS) and Surrey Hills Gliding Club (SHGC). A large part of the airfield previously formed part of Kenley Common, but was acquired from the City by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the purposes of an aerodrome under the provisions of the Air Ministry (Kenley Common Acquisition) Act 1922. The MoD acquired additional land by Act of Parliament in 1939. These areas revert back to the City of London as public open space if the MOD ceases use for this purpose.
 6. Kenley Aerodrome has a long and distinguished history as an airfield and played a significant part in the Battle of Britain. Since then it has changed significantly, but according to English Heritage remains *"the most complete fighter airfield associated with the Battle of Britain to have survived."*
 7. There is no permanent physical barrier separating gliding activities from the public. The 615 VGS and SHGC are concerned that members of the public are getting dangerously close to gliders and winch cables. The Health and Safety Executive have been consulted and they require the level of assessed risk to be reduced if flying is to continue.
 8. The Kenley Safety Working Group, which includes representatives from the MoD, SHGC, the local planning authorities and the City of London, continues to meet regularly to address safety issues.

Current Position

9. The MoD is trialling temporary fencing around areas used for runway and winching operations. Crowd control type barriers are positioned along the outside track to restrict the public to the perimeter of the airfield. The barriers do not form a complete loop around the airfield, and members of the public still have access around the outside.
10. The MoD and SHGC are currently monitoring the effectiveness of these barriers to ascertain whether they reduce the level of risk sufficiently to satisfy HSE requirements.

Proposals

11. It is proposed that the Superintendent of the City Commons reports to you further in due course on the effectiveness of the trial barriers and any subsequent proposals submitted by the MoD.

Strategic Implications

12. This report supports the City Together Strategy as follows:

- Protects, promotes and enhances our environment

Conclusion

13. The recent planning application for the erection of safety fencing at Kenley Aerodrome has been refused. The Superintendent of the City Commons will continue to work with the Kenley Safety Working Group to monitor the effectiveness of the temporary fencing, and will report back on any further proposals submitted by the MoD.

Background Papers:

Epping Forest and Commons Committee report of 12th January 2009 entitled 'Kenley Aerodrome – Ministry of Defence Planning Application for Erection of a Safety Fence'

Contact:

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Appendix 2.

Statement provided to the MOD in March 2017 highlighting and clarifying the City's position as neighbour of the flying activities and associated Health and Safety risk.

The operation and activities of the airfield pose a level of risk to the users of Kenley Common. We have also previously discussed that we expect an increased number of visitors to Kenley Common and the airfield as a result of the Kenley revival project.

Being a responsible neighbour, the City Corporation welcomes your engagement with the health and safety issues at the airfield and your approach to the HSE request an up to date review. We also trust you will be in touch with the local authority, and any other relevant parties, as appropriate.

We note the three courses of action you are taking to address the H&S issues at the airfield and whilst we understand that these are matters for you as the landowner, we would be grateful if you would keep the City Corporation updated on the progress of this action. In particular, please could you let us know of any matter relating to the airfield which may have an impact on our management of Kenley Common. For example, noting the Surry Hills Gliding Club has been given consent to fly at weekends, we would be grateful for notice of their new weekend flying times. Similarly we would be grateful to be kept apprised of any progress you may make relating to planning application(s) associated with Health and Safety issues on the airfield

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Risk no, Title, Creation date, Owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date	Current Risk score change indicator
OSD TC 009 Glider operations – Kenley Airfield 18-Nov-2016	<p>Causes: Inadequate security measures, safe operating procedures (SOP) by RAF and Surrey Hills Gliding Club (SHGC)l to prevent incursions on to airfield by members of the public during flying operations</p> <p>Event: Public incursion on to active airfield</p> <p>Impact: Death, injury, damage to corporate reputation, site closure, potential loss of HLF funding.</p>	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	6	<p>A SOP is inactive. Flying continues in absence. CoL officers have raised the risk with RAF and SHGC. RAF and SHGC have been asked for SOP and have agreed actions to ensure safe operations in place forthwith. Operations to be monitored by CoL until SOP is seen to be effective and maintained as such.</p> <p>18 Nov 2016</p>	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	6	31-Mar-2018	↔
No change								

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Appendix 4. Recent H&S incidents – Kenley Airfield

03-Oct-17	1156	3 females crossing in front of 615 Hangar as aircraft landing over their heads	Shouted to tell them of danger- explained purpose of yellow line
03-Oct-17	1426	2 male cyclists riding towards end of short runway - line of aircraft landing	
03-Oct-17	1500	Female walking dog across landing landing runway	Asked them to leave
04-Oct-17	All day	'Too many incursions to list'	
06-Oct-17	1200	Two people on runway - winch end	They left when observed gliders in circuit
06-Oct-17	1445	Jogger down middle of runway	Chased them in buggy and advised of danger
06-Oct-17	1530	Three school children walking up runway past glider about	Turned around back behind yellow line
17-Oct-17	1320	Two cyclists with dogs riding adjacent to grass airfield wh	Requested they keep behind yellow line as required on SHGC notice.
17-Oct-17	1322	Two cyclists on airfield side of perimeter track.	Asked to keep behind yellow line. They said they didn't see the signs.
13-Nov-17	1050	Dog running across launch point unsupervised. Owner co	Dog ushered away.
13-Nov-17	1457	Female walking on short runway heading east as glider w	Steve Swan (P1 in landing aircraft) challenged her. She said she hasn't seen any sig
17-Nov-17	1445	Two persons walking down Old Hayes Lane during launch	Turned around and walked back to western edge.
20-Nov-17	1105	Dog on airfield at Western end or cross runway.	Chased off with buggy.
01-Dec-17	1225	Woman with push chair and dog walking across tarmac fr	Asked to keep outside yellow line
18-Dec-17	1335	6 people walking the field near launch point	Left on request
10-Jan-18	1050	Dog walker walking across middle of airfield	Launch postponed and person removed
10-Jan-18	1100	Two dogs jumped onto glider wing and ran in front of glid	Launch stopped
10-Jan-18	1509	Person and dog walking on end of east west runway. Glider landing, chased by dog- 20 yd seperation	

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RAF Kenley

Proposal for safety enclosure and gate access

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Safety Enclosure Key Principles

- This presentation details the proposed enclosure routing and access gate locations
- Runway End Safety Areas (both paved and grassed) require protection

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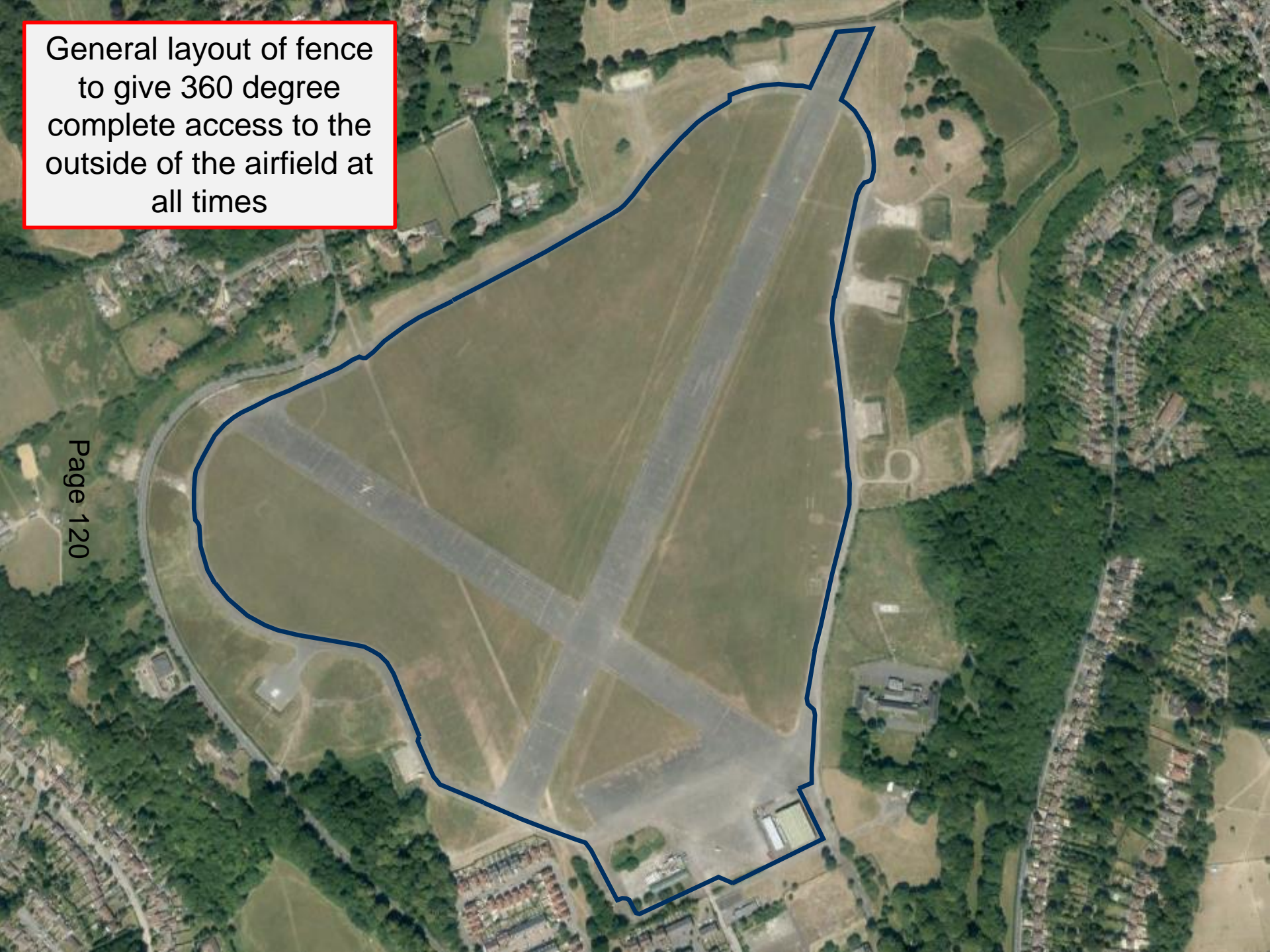
All other locations proposed routing is designed to give the general public as much access as possible

- MOD needs to retain a minimum width for vehicular access (both MOD and City of London)
- Max government vehicle width standard is 2.55m; therefore, with driver egress and door width, a total of 4m is used.

Safety Enclosure Key Principles

- Existing taxiway is standard war time MOD construction, with average width of 15m
 - Existing “yellow line” currently gives the public between 2-4m depending on location, but will not be used for future demarcation
- Two types of gates are proposed; one for vehicles and one for pedestrian access
- Vehicle gates (4m wide) will only be opened when needed for vehicular access
 - Pedestrian gates will be closed (not locked) when flying is in progress, and will be open when there is no flying.

General layout of fence
to give 360 degree
complete access to the
outside of the airfield at
all times

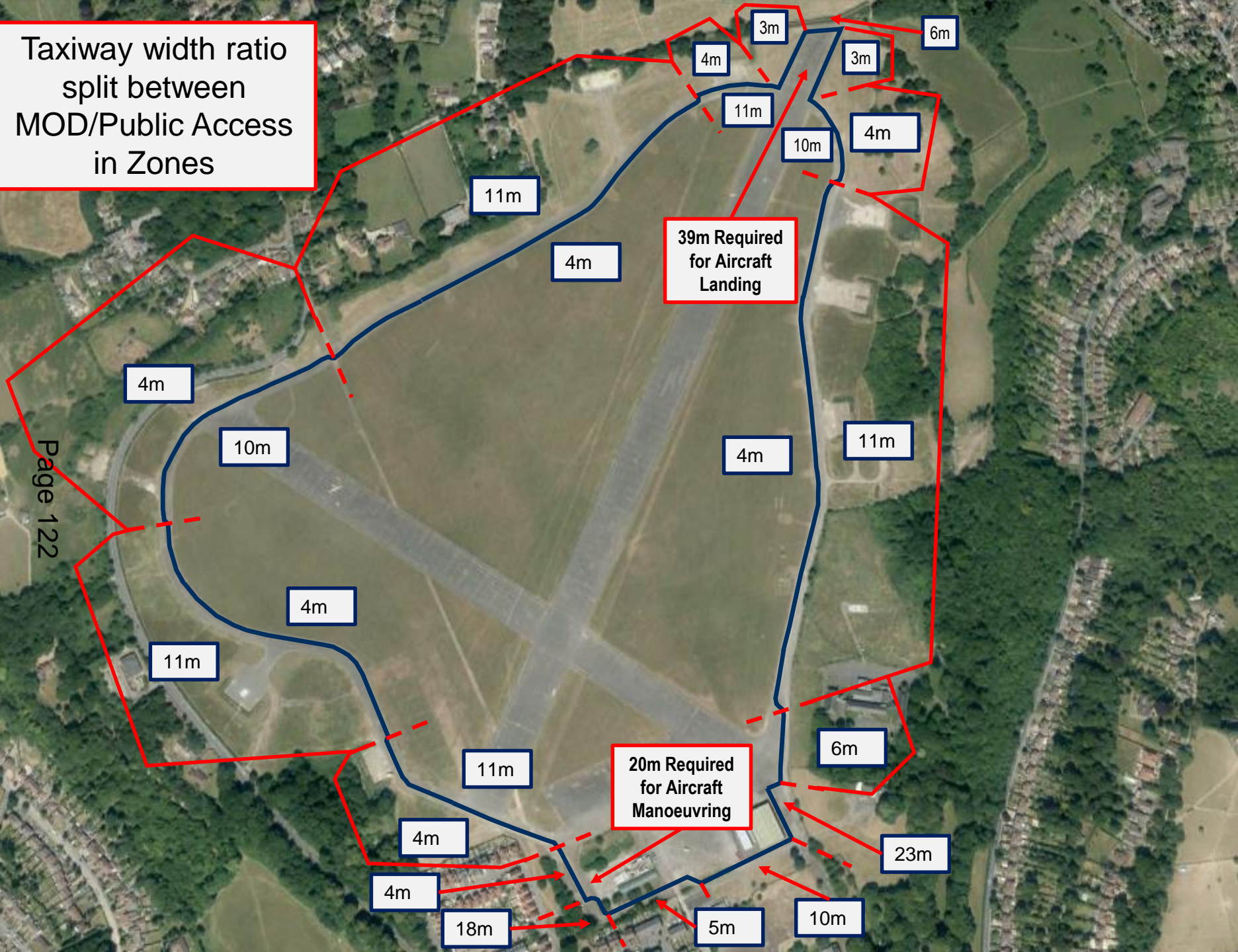


Taxiway width ratio
split between
MOD/Public Access

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Taxiway width ratio
split between
MOD/Public Access
in Zones

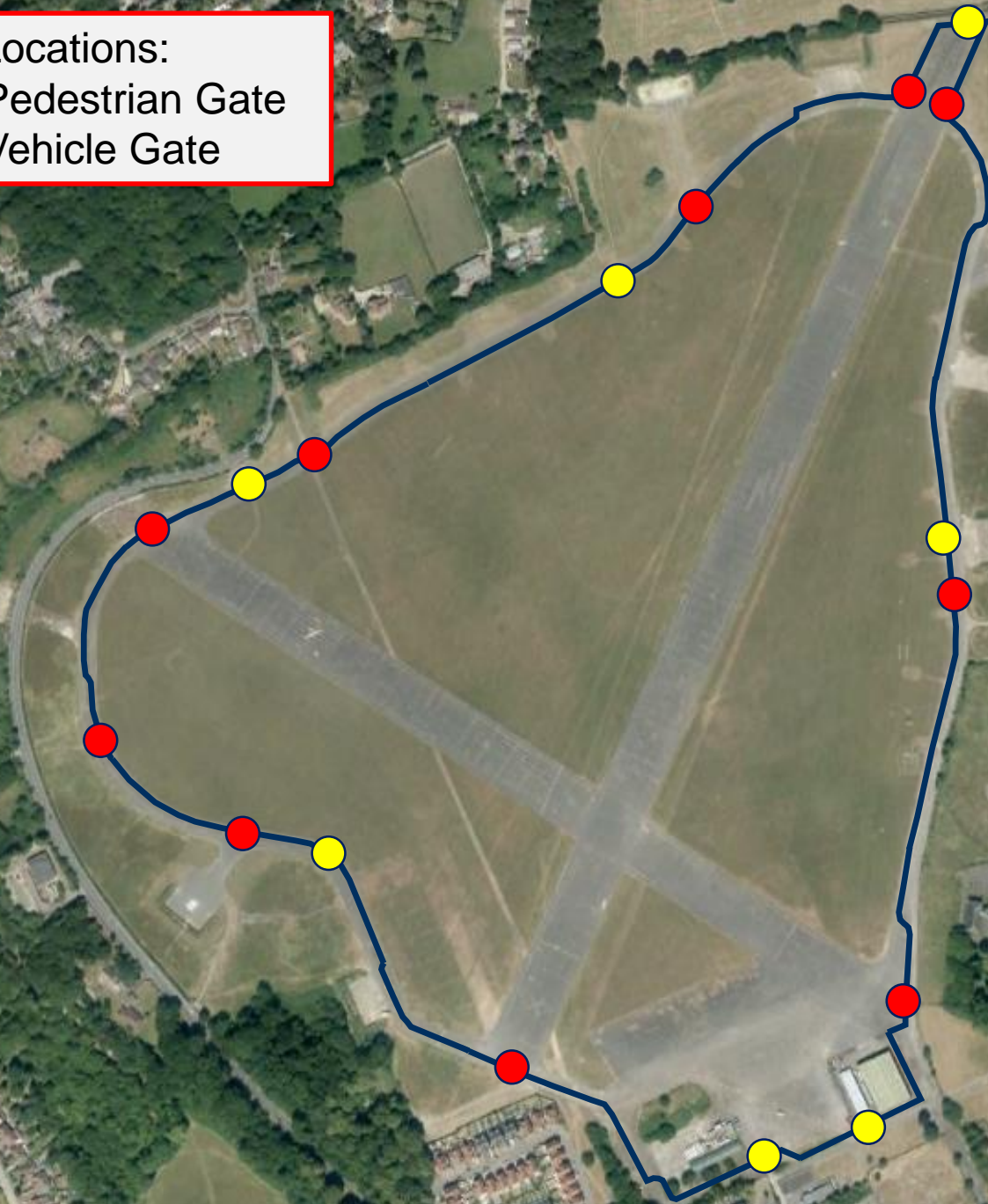


Public Access Width Only



Gate Locations:

- = Pedestrian Gate
- = Vehicle Gate





Date 25 Jan 2018

Dear Wing Commander Hobson

Kenley Airfield – Safety Fence – Planning Application

The City of London is aware that Kenley airfield will soon come into regular operational use by the RAF.

It appears that the forthcoming planning application strives to reduce the risks associated with operational flying in extremely close proximity to an area of intense public access and associated land management activity. The proposal has the twin benefit of improving safe access to the common and the removal of the temporary metal barriers that have attempted to fulfil a similar function for many years.

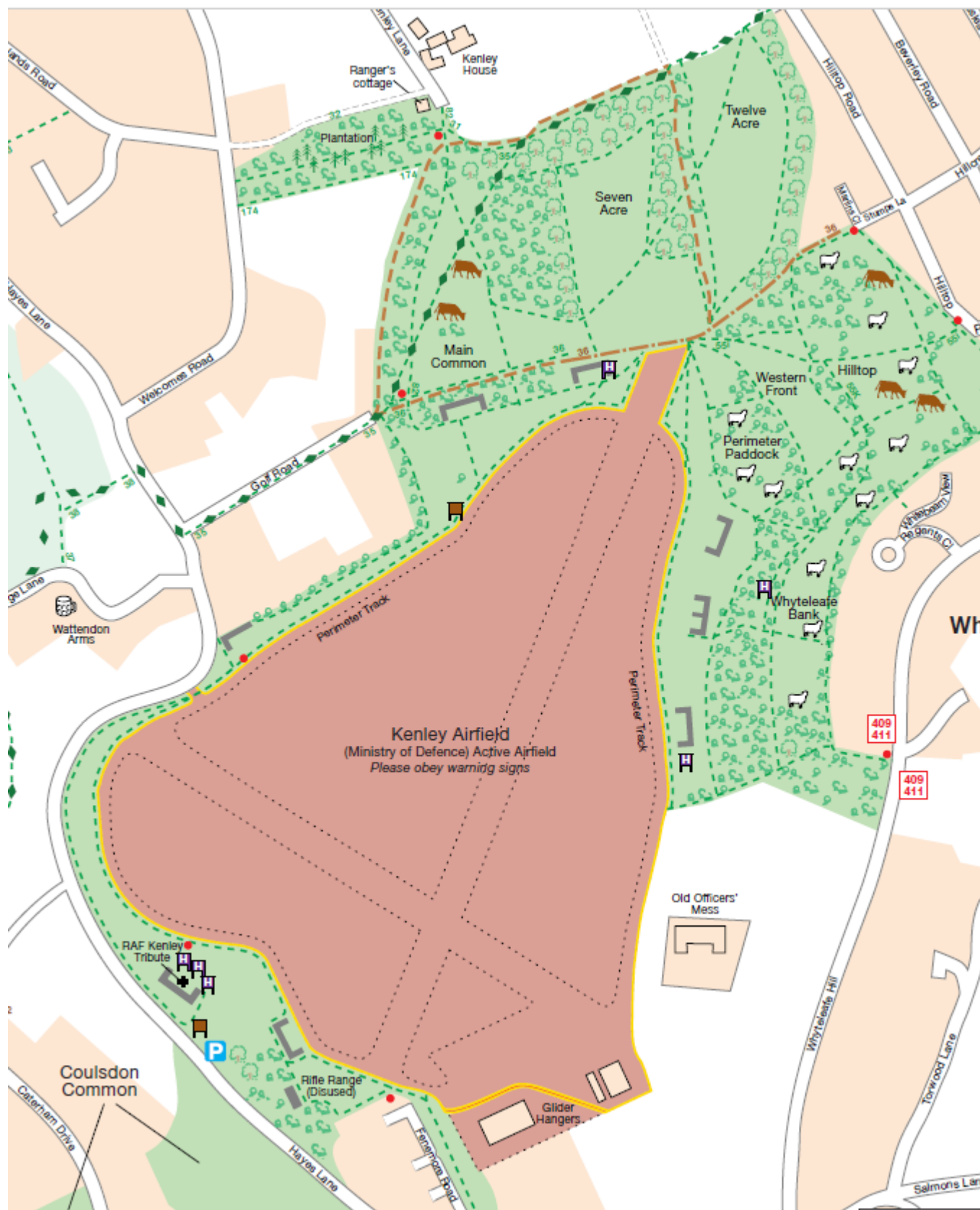
The City Corporation supports the important health and safety improvements this proposal can provide.

The City remains conscious of the need for all planning applications related to the airfield to reflect its status as a Conservation Area and that such decisions ultimately rest with the Planning Authority. The City's Epping Forest and Commons Committee will form a final view, having liaised with its local Consultation Group, and may provide wider comment during the formal application assessment period.

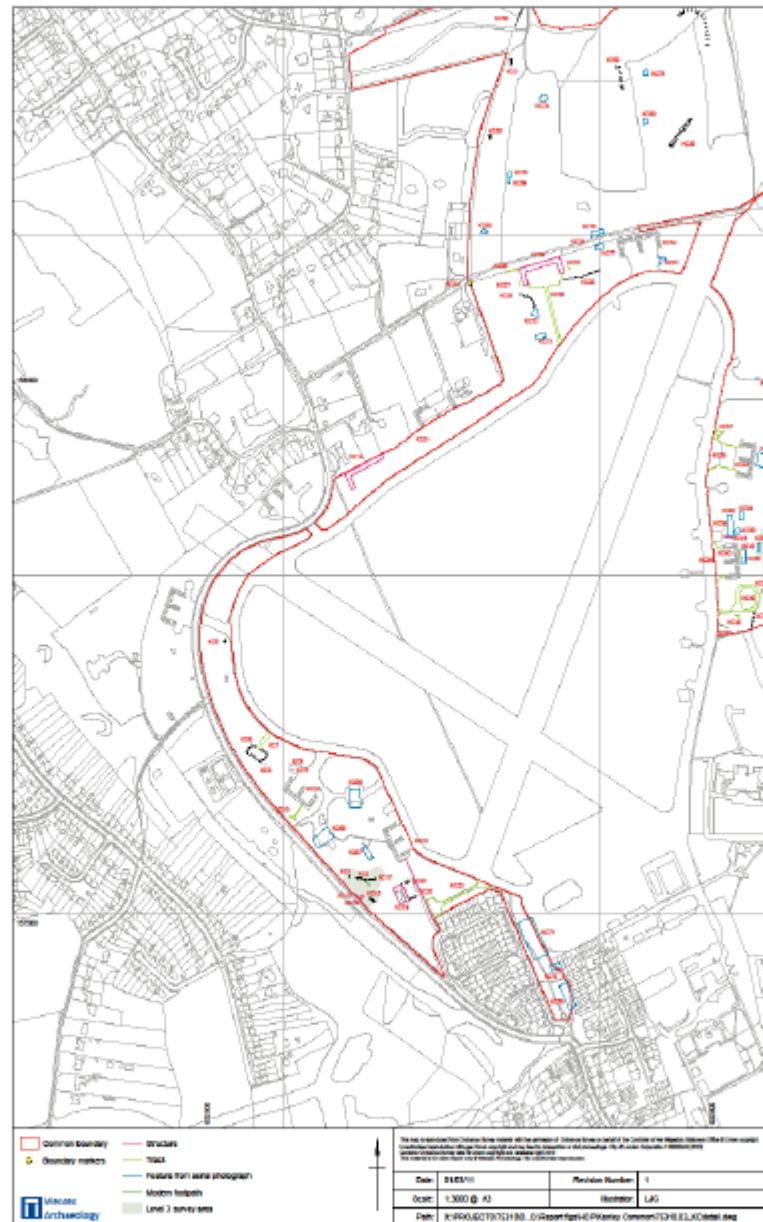
Yours sincerely

Andy Barnard. Superintendent of The Commons. Open Spaces Department
cc. Philip Woodhouse, Colin Buttery.

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Detail plan of the recorded archaeological features on Kenley Common (west)

Figure 5a

Figure 5.6: heritage assets on Kenley Common (west) (Wessex Archaeology)

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Committees:		Dates:	
Epping Forest and Commons Projects Sub Committee		12/03/2018 14/02/2018	
Subject: Kenley Revival Project Project at Gateway 6 - reporting		Issue Report: Regular	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces Report Author: Andy Thwaites			For Decision
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>90% of the funding for the Kenley Revival Project comes from the Heritage Lottery Fund. HLF require project budgets to make provision for contingency and expect it to be used subject to their approval.</p> <p>The original contingency budget was £93,657. The use of approximately £21,000 of this has been authorised since the project commenced in October 2015, mainly in relation to the conservation works (use of a separate budget for inflation was also authorised).</p> <p>Whilst work to conserve the Fighter Pens and Firing Range has finished, the ambitious programme to involve people in learning about and enjoying Kenley's heritage is ongoing. The original budget for this aspect of the project was £330,000.</p> <p>There is now the opportunity to capitalise on this success and do more to broaden the range of people involved in the project by re-scoping the activity programme for the second half of the project.</p> <p>A further £28,000 is needed to deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community archaeology - engagement of Museum Of London Archaeology to supervise the dig and Unexploded Ordnance experts to fulfil a watching brief. • Learning Festival Year Two - engagement of arts practitioners to deliver sessions with schools and in public libraries. Delivery of a Learning Festival Roadshow in July with tours of local libraries with workshop and a Learning Month in November delivering workshops in schools on the theme of remembrance • Increased amount spent on education activities including equipment purchase to do more object handling and loan box sessions, and to deliver more outreach workshops. <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorise the use of £28,000 of the contingency budget to fund changes to the activity programme. 			

Main Report

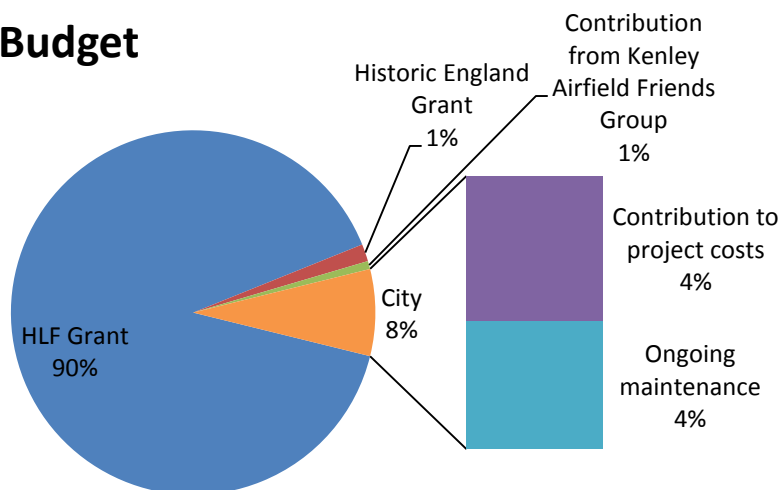
1. Issue Description

1a. The total cash budget for the Kenley Revival Project comprises:

Funding source	Amount
Heritage Lottery Fund	£880,900
City of London – match funding	£ 40,012
City of London – ongoing maintenance	£ 35,190
Kenley Airfield Friends Group	£ 7,000
Historic England	£ 15,000
Total	£978,102

The ongoing maintenance element from the City actually represents a saving over a 10 year period on the pre-project 20 year plan projection for maintenance work at the site.

Cash Budget



1b. The project commenced in October 2015 and will run to April 2019, so is just over half way through. Already it is exceeding targets. For example:

- Target for number of volunteers engaged 300. Already 789.
- Target for students attending Learning Festival 500. Actual 856
- Target for attendance at Heritage Day 500. Actual 2,000
- Target for attendance at Sky Heroes Day 500. Actual 5,000

1c. There is now the opportunity to adapt the activity programme for the second half of the project to capitalise on this success and ensure all stated outcomes are comprehensively met.

	<p>1d. The project aims to achieve twelve of HLF's outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage will be better managed • Heritage will be in better condition • Heritage will be better interpreted and explained • Heritage will be identified and recorded • People will have developed skills • People will have learnt about heritage • People will have changed their attitudes and/or behaviour • People will have had an enjoyable experience • People will have volunteered time • More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with the heritage • The local area/ community will be a better place to live, work or visit • An organisation (specifically the Kenley Airfield Friends Group) will be more resilient <p>1e. Achievement against these outcomes is monitored by the project's Evaluation Consultants. They have reported that progress is good to date. They have also noted that engagement with the local community has greatly exceeded the original targets, but that there is still more work to do to widen the range of people engaged.</p> <p>1f. In response the project team has developed proposals to deliver some activities in a slightly different way to target particular audiences and to include more outreach work to involve a wider range of people. It is proposed that the scope of the very successful Learning Festival is broadened and that the community archaeology event extends to two weeks.</p> <p>1g. HLF has already agreed these changes and the use of the contingency budget.</p> <p>1h. Using £28,000 of the contingency budget will leave approximately £45,000 remaining.</p>
2. Last Approved Limit	Authority to access £49,000 of contingency and inflation budgets to complete conservation works was granted in August 2017.
3. Options	<p>A – Authorise the use of £28,000 of the contingency budget to deliver the revised activity programme.</p> <p>B – Restrict the use of the remaining contingency budget. Scale back the proposed level of activity, not deliver the community archaeology event and run a smaller learning festival. It will still be necessary to access approximately £6,340 of the budget to pay for additional items already authorised by HLF (editing of oral history videos and professional event management at Sky Heroes Day).</p>

Appendices

Appendix 1	N/A
Appendix 2	N/A

Contact

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