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# Highgate Wood Conservation Management Plan

**Draft 2**

**Prepared for the City of London**

**by LUC**





# LUC SERVICES

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**43 Chalton Street**  
**London NW1 1JD**  
**Tel: 020 7383 5784**  
**Fax: 020 7383 4798**  
**[london@landuse.co.uk](mailto:london@landuse.co.uk)**

14 Great George Street  
Bristol BS1 5RH  
Tel: 0117 929 1997  
Fax: 0117 929 1998  
[bristol@landuse.co.uk](mailto:bristol@landuse.co.uk)

37 Otago Street  
Glasgow G12 8JJ  
Tel: 0141 334 9595  
Fax: 0141 334 7789  
[glasgow@landuse.co.uk](mailto:glasgow@landuse.co.uk)

28 Stafford Street  
Edinburgh EH3 7BD  
Tel: 0131 202 1616  
[edinburgh@landuse.co.uk](mailto:edinburgh@landuse.co.uk)

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## **SECTION A: INTRODUCTION**



# 1 Introduction to the Conservation Management Plan

- I.1 Highgate Wood is a 28 hectare (70 acre) area of easily accessible ancient woodland located in Haringey, north London, approximately 6 miles from the City of London (**Figure 1.1**). Its long history of use dating back to Roman times and its rich woodland habitat combine to create a special atmosphere. These qualities along with more recently added facilities such as the playground, sports pitch and café ensure that the Wood is well-used and loved by the surrounding community and beyond.
- I.2 Highgate Wood has been owned and managed by the City of London Corporation (CoL) since 30<sup>th</sup> October 1886 under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886.

## WHY IS A CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN NEEDED?

- I.3 This Conservation Management Plan draft considers all aspects of the management of Highgate Wood, and aims to present a clear list of objectives for the site, along with a statement of significance. The Plan is the product of consultation with the Highgate Wood Advisory Group, the Management team, and the Highgate Wood staff. The Plan will provide guidance for the Management team for the next ten years, and will also serve as a strategic policy document which will be available for public reference purposes. The new plan when approved will replace the existing Management Plan which was introduced in 2001.

## EXISTING STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

- I.4 A number of existing plans, surveys and studies have been used to inform the development of the CMP including:
- Highgate Wood Management Plan 2001 – 2011
  - A variety of wildlife and monitoring surveys carried out by City of London staff and other external specialists
  - Biodiversity Action Plan for Highgate Wood
  - Detailed information on the historic development of the Wood from Michael Hammerson
  - A SWOT analysis by the Highgate Wood management team
  - The Highgate Wood Heritage Assessment, prepared separately by LUC (2011) to support the preparation of the CMP
- I.5 The Highgate Wood Manager, his Management Team and the Superintendent of the North London Open Spaces Division have been involved throughout the preparation of the Plan.
- I.6 The City of London and Land Use Consultants held a workshop on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011 as a key stage in the CMP process for Highgate Wood. The

purpose of the workshop was to gain the support and input from the Advisory Group formed of local specialists, representatives of local community groups/organisations and members of the Highgate Wood Management Team.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

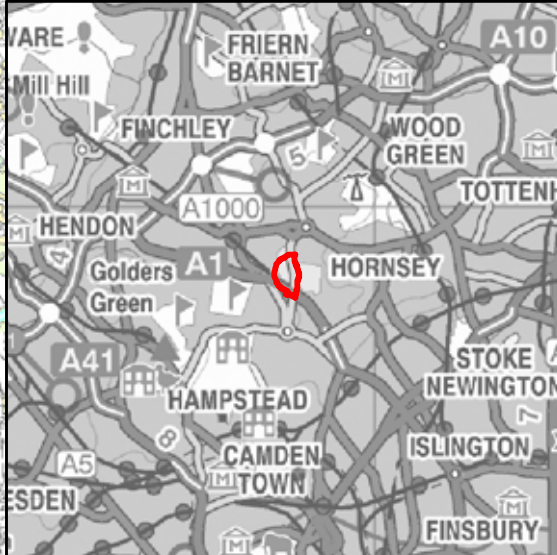
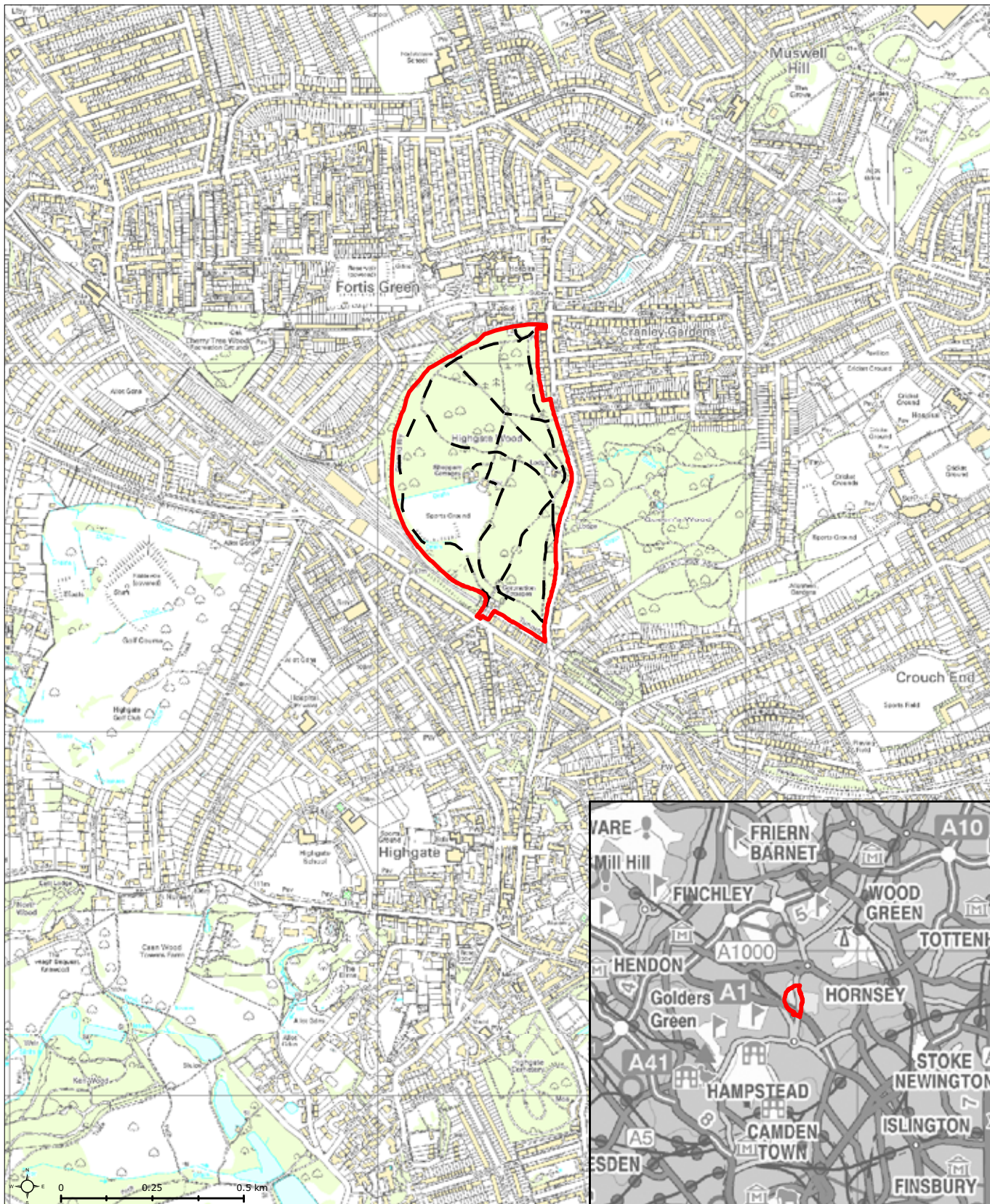
1.7 The Plan is set out under four main headings:

**Section A: introduction** (chapters 1 and 2) – explains the purpose of the Plan and provides background information and management context.

**Section B: understanding the place** (chapters 3 – 8) – an assessment of the heritage, ‘natural’ environment, community and recreation and built environment and their relative values and significances. This section also provides a summary of the consultation process carried out as part of the Plan preparation.

**Section C: analysis** (chapter 10) – a consideration of the key issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities relating to each of the themes outlined in Section B.

**Section D: the plan** (chapters 11 – 13) – details of the overall management approach set out as an overall vision, a series of policies relating to each theme and their accompanying actions.



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- Highgate Wood site boundary
- Current path network

Highgate Wood

**Figure 1.1**  
**Location plan**



Map Scale @ A4: 1:15,000

Source: Land Use Consultants



## 2 Background information and management context

- 2.1 The Wood is owned and managed by the CoL and provides valuable opportunity for both formal and informal recreation as well as the conservation of wildlife and access to nature. This chapter provides an introduction to Highgate Wood in terms of its character, context and management. The site plan is provided in **Figure 2.1**.

### AN INTRODUCTION TO HIGHGATE WOOD

- 2.2 It has recently been established that the majority of the wood is underlain by Claygate Beds. Geological surveys are in the process of being up-dated and corrected for this area. This type of sandy clay results in erosion and run-off during periods of flooding. This erosion is made worse by the large numbers of visitors and trampling, and due to the fact that the humus layer is very thin throughout large parts of the wood. The sandy clay is interspersed with pockets of flint gravels, and the western edge of the wood has been disturbed by gravel digging in the past.
- 2.3 The site enjoys a long history extending back to the pre-Norman period and was also the centre of a first Century AD small scale pottery industry. The woodland is made up of predominantly hornbeam with oak standards with an assortment of other species notably a number of Wild Service trees (*Sorbus torminalis*) an indicator of Ancient Woodland. Highgate Wood was an important woodland resource for many centuries and was once an important part of the Bishop of London's hunting park which is described in greater detail in the Heritage Assessment. The first historical reference to the wood appears in the Domesday Book of 1087, where it is described as part of the Hornsey Woods.
- 2.4 Following concern that the land would be sold for development Highgate Wood was purchased under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886, to be maintained in perpetuity for the benefit of the public. It was publicly declared "open for the use and recreation of the public forever" on October 30 1886, by the Lord Mayor of the time, Sir John Staples and remains in the ownership of the City of London today.
- 2.5 The rich diversity of wildlife in the wood has been well researched and documented over the years. To date, over 900 invertebrate species, 338 moth species, 353 fungi species, 70 bird species, and seven bat species have been recorded. Many of these species are reliant on very particular niches found only in ancient woodlands, with their well-developed and complex ecosystems.
- 2.6 Highgate Wood is an important leisure and amenity resource providing an opportunity for many people to visit a woodland site that has retained much of its historic fabric as well as gaining access to an open space that offers leisure and recreation in a built up area of London.
- 2.7 Highgate Wood offers visitors a number of recreational facilities, including a playing field, trim trail, cricket nets, a large children's playground, a café, and



an information centre with booklets, newsletters and trail guides. There is also a football and a cricket pitch which are maintained for regular weekend league clubs.

## MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

### Planning context

2.8 Open spaces provide substantial health benefits, create sustainable communities and improve the attractiveness of an urban area. Current national government policies, including the Urban White Paper and the Sustainable Communities Plan reflect the importance of accessible spaces. In addition, national planning policies have been formed to protect and enhance open spaces within urban areas and these are implemented at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels.

2.9 National, regional and local designations are shown in **Figure 2.2**.

### *The national context*

2.10 The Coalition Government has announced a programme of radical reforms to the planning system as part of its agenda for devolving greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods. The Government published the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation in July 2011. The draft NPPF is designed to consolidate planning policy statements, circulars and guidance documents into a single consolidated framework. The draft NPPF must be regarded as a 'material consideration'. At the heart of the draft framework is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' i.e. local planning authorities should plan positively for new development and approve proposals wherever possible.

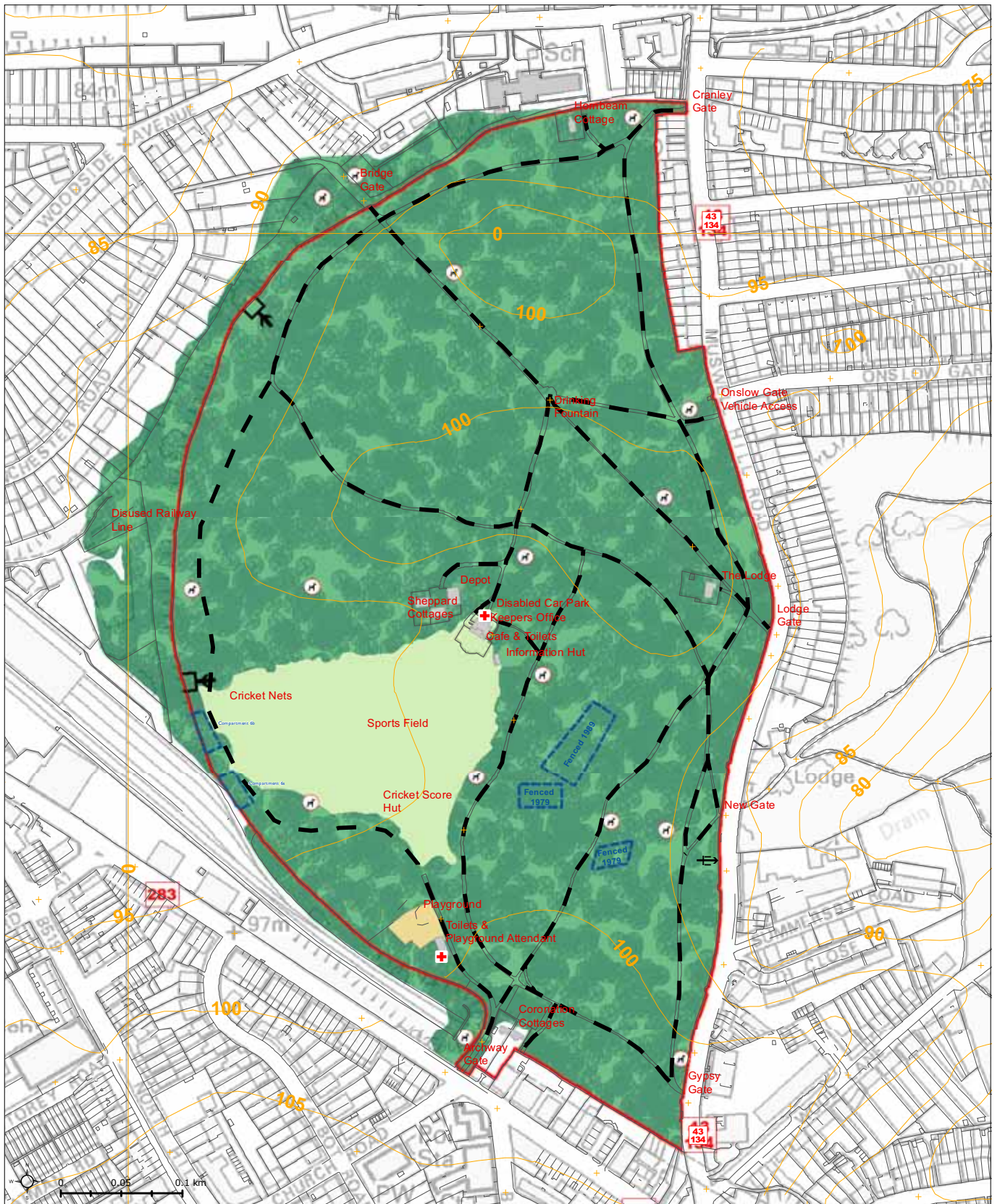
2.11 The creation of strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by creating a good quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect community needs and support well-being is central to the Government's vision and it is recognised that in order to achieve this objective the planning system should ensure access to open spaces and recreational facilities that promote the health and well-being of the community.

2.12 Planning Policy Statements (PPS), and the few remaining Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) will remain in place until the NPPF comes into force. PPSs and PPGs explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. Those particularly relevant to Highgate Wood are:

- PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment
- PPS 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

### *The regional context – London*

2.13 The Mayor of London's **London Plan** is the overall strategic plan for London. It sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide



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	Culvert		Woodland Canopy 2006
	Bus routes		Grass
	First aid		
	Contours		
	Current footpath network		
	Dog waste bins		
	Compartment areas		
	Highgate Wood boundary		
	Playground		

**Highgate Wood**

**Figure 2.1**

**Site plan**

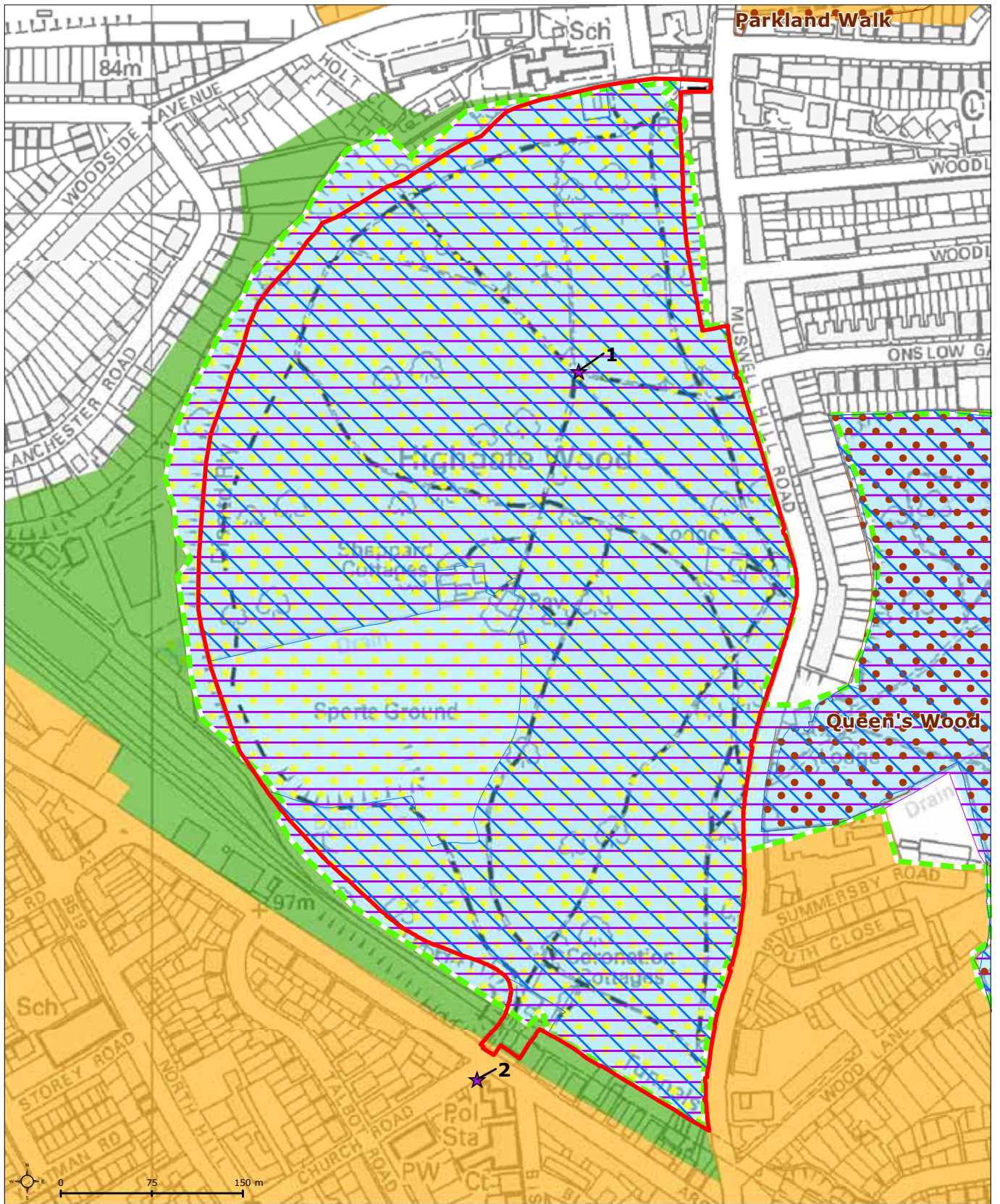
**LUC**

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:4,500**

Source: Land Use Consultants

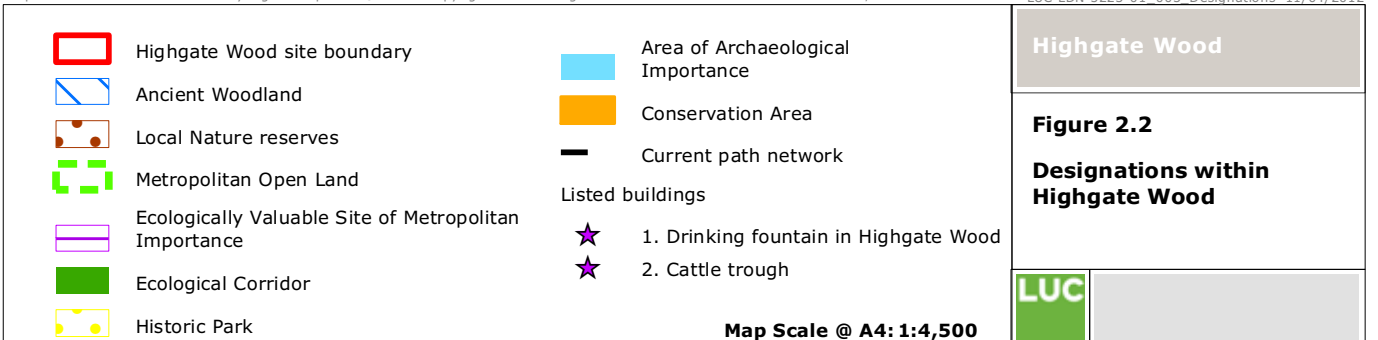






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LUC LDN 5223-01 003 Designations 11/04/2012



### Highgate Wood

**Figure 2.2**  
**Designations within Highgate Wood**



Source: Land Use Consultants



decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor. Policies most relevant to Highgate Wood are contained in Chapter 7 London's Living Place and Space and include policies relating to Heritage Assets and Archaeology, Metropolitan Open Land, Biodiversity and Access to Nature and the Blue Ribbon Network.

- 2.14 The Plan aims to protect major strategic open spaces such as Highgate Wood which is designated as **Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)**. Under Policy 17.7 Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) has an important role to play as part of London's multifunctional green infrastructure and the Mayor is keen to see improvements in its overall quality and accessibility. This is a designation unique to London, and protects strategically important open spaces within the built environment. The policy recognises the importance of and sets the criteria for land designated as Metropolitan Open Land. MOL is then referred to in local planning policies.
- 2.15 Highgate Wood was designated as a site of **Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation** in October 1990, in recognition of the fact that the site is considered to be of London-wide significance for nature conservation.
- 2.16 The Mayor of London's **Biodiversity Strategy** details the Mayor's vision for protecting and conserving London's natural open spaces such as Highgate Wood. It seeks to ensure that there is no overall loss of wildlife habitats in London, and that more open spaces are created and made accessible, so that all Londoners are within walking distance of a quality natural space. The 2008 report *Improving Londoners' Access to Nature* highlights areas of London which are deficient in access to sites of Metropolitan or Borough Importance for Nature Conservation.
- 2.17 Highgate Wood also makes a significant contribution to, and is influenced by, the following Mayor of London's strategies:
  - Children and young people
  - Older people
  - Accessible London Supplementary Planning Guidance
  - Transport
  - Planning for Equality and Diversity Supplementary Planning Guidance

#### ***The local context***

- 2.18 Although managed by the City of London (CoL) as one of its outlying sites management of Highgate Wood does, and will need to continue to, consider the policies and aspirations of the London Borough of Haringey with particular attention to planning policy and general open space needs. The Examination in public on the Core Strategy started in June 2011 and consultation finished in November 2011 on some of the fundamental changes that resulted from that process. As it stands the Core Strategy Strategic Policies 11, 12 and 13 all promote a network of quality, accessible open spaces as areas for recreation, visual interest and biodiversity. Core Strategy Strategic Policy 13 – Open Space is the most relevant to Highgate Wood and is outlined below:

### **SP13 - Open Space and Biodiversity**

New development shall protect and improve Haringey's parks and open spaces. All new development shall:

- Protect and enhance the existing boundaries of the borough's Green Belt, designated Metropolitan Open Land, designated Open Spaces, Green Chains, allotments and other open spaces from inappropriate development;
- Provide amenity space in accordance with the Council's Open Space and Recreational Standards Supplementary Planning Document;
- Manage the impact of such new developments in areas adjacent to designated open space;
- Secure improvements, enhancement and management in both quality and access to existing green spaces;
- Seek on site or financial contributions towards open space from new developments as set out in the Open Space and Recreational Standards Supplementary Planning Document;
- Seek to secure opportunities for additional publicly accessible open space especially in those identified areas of Open Space deficiency i.e. in the east of the borough where the quality and amount of provision is poorer as set out in the Council's Open Space and Recreational Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

All development shall protect and improve sites of biodiversity and nature conservation through its:

- Contribution to wildlife and ecological habitats and where possible include green and brown roofs, rainwater harvesting, green walls, bird and bat nesting/roosting opportunities;
- Protection, management and maintenance of existing trees and the planting of new trees where appropriate;
- Protection, enhancement and creation of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).

The Council will enhance and improve the borough's green infrastructure through:

- Implementation of the borough's green infrastructure projects (such as Lordship Recreation Ground Improvements);
- Working with adjoining boroughs and partners to safeguard the existing Green Infrastructure, to create new green infrastructures and link up sites.

New development shall provide opportunities for Children's Play Space by:

- Protecting and enhancing existing play spaces;
- Making provision for children's informal or formal play space in addition to amenity space provision as set out above;
- Ensuring easy access to a range of quality and safe play opportunities for all children and within a practical journey from their home without the need to use public or private transport;
- Provide play spaces that are attractive, welcoming and engaging for all children and young people, children of both gender, disabled children and children from minority groups in the community;
- Securing a financial contribution pursuant to a S106 Agreement towards the provision of Children's Play Space and ensuring its long term maintenance is addressed through planning obligations.

Developers will be encouraged to:

- Recognise that the potential for play spaces can exist for a range of outdoor activities and for users of all ages in other existing public spaces; and
- To work with the relevant agencies, community groups and developers to ensure the provision of safe, stimulating play facilities.

2.19 A Sustainable Way Forward - **Haringey's Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2016**, contains several priorities which are relevant to Highgate Wood:

- Provide award winning parks and open spaces



- Protect the natural environment
- Give greater opportunities to live a healthier lifestyle
- Manage our environmental resources more effectively

### **The City of London’s strategic policy context**

#### ***Community Strategy - ‘The City Together: A Vision for a World Class City 2004-2014***

2.20 The Community Strategy Vision states:

*‘The City of London will build on its success as the world’s leading international financial and business centre, and will maintain high quality, accessible and responsive services benefiting its communities, its neighbours, London and the nation.’*

2.21 Two specific objectives in the Community Strategy are the responsibility of the Open Spaces Department:

- To protect and maintain open spaces and biodiversity through effective management.
- To encourage services and initiatives which benefit wider communities and contribute to local, regional and national prosperity.

#### ***The City of London’s Corporate Plan***

2.22 The Corporate Plan represents the long-term ambitions to achieve CoL’s vision as set out in the City Together strategy. The strategic aims outlined in the Corporate Plan which are most relevant to the Open Space Department include:

- Provide excellent services for our communities.
- Provide valued services for London and the Nation.

#### ***The Open Spaces Business Plan 2010-2013***

2.23 The Open Space Department has its own vision and shares the CoL Core Values.

Vision: “A World Class City needs a World Class Environment”

Values:

- The right services at the right price
- The best of the old with the best of the new
- Opportunity and prosperity for all

2.24 The Business Plan is a guiding document for the Open Spaces department setting out the strategic aims and improvement objectives.

The strategic aims:

1. Provide safe high quality accessible Open Spaces and services in accordance with nationally recognised standards for the benefit of London and the Nation.
2. Celebrate a sense of place involving communities in the care and management of our

sites.

3. Adopt sustainable working practices, promote the variety of life and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations.
4. Promote opportunities to use and enjoy the outdoor environment for recreation, health, learning and inclusion and ensure the value of Open Spaces is recognised.
5. Manage, develop and empower a capable and motivated work force to achieve high standards of safety and performance.

The improvement objectives are to:

1. Achieve high standards and deliver value for money work programmes for sites in accordance with long-term management plans.
2. Extend **partnership-working** and continue to develop closer links with local authorities, particularly in relation to **planning and transport**.
3. Ensure that measures to promote **sustainability** and **biodiversity** are embedded in the Department's work.
4. Market ourselves and adapt **events and education programmes** to deliver opportunities particularly for **young people**.
5. Provide focused opportunities for **staff and volunteers** to feel confident in meeting the changing requirements of the organisation.

## MANAGEMENT OF HIGHGATE WOOD – CITY OF LONDON

### The legal framework

- 2.25 Concerned that access to the countryside was being threatened, the CoL promoted two Acts of Parliament in the 1870s. The Epping Forest Act and the City of London (Open Spaces) Act were passed in 1878. These enabled the CoL to acquire and protect threatened open spaces. Highgate Wood was publicly declared “open for the use and recreation of the public forever” on October 30 1886, by the Lord Mayor of the time, Sir John Staples.

### Management, staffing and funding

- 2.26 The Open Spaces Directorate oversees the Open Space Department which is responsible for the management of the parks and open spaces owned by CoL.
- 2.27 Management responsibility for Highgate Wood falls within the North London Open Spaces Division who are also responsible for managing Hampstead Heath and Queen's Park. The North London Open Spaces Division is led by the Superintendent who is responsible for the operation of six teams as follows:
- Parliament Hill and Technical
  - Golders Hill and Queen's Park
  - Leisure and Events
  - Highgate Wood, Conservation and Trees
  - Office and Administration
  - Constabulary and Support Service

- 2.28 The Division is formed of the equivalent of 155 full-time directly employed staff. The management structure for the Division is shown in **Figure 2.3**.
- 2.29 The Highgate Wood, Conservation and Trees Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of Highgate Wood as well as nature conservation operations and management of trees at Hampstead Heath.
- 2.30 The Highgate Wood Manager is responsible for five teams, the seven staff at Highgate Wood, the Hampstead Heath Conservation and Heath Ranger Teams, the Tree Team, and the Ecology Team. The Highgate Team are responsible for tree and woodland management, sports pitch maintenance, and other core estate work.
- 2.31 Highgate Wood is managed by a dedicated team of eight staff including the site manager. Five of the team are resident on site. This resource provides an all year round service including Christmas Day, with a varied range of facilities and over 20 hectares of managed woodland.
- 2.32 Four members of the team have worked and lived on site for over 10 years and collectively possess a great deal of experience and detailed knowledge of the site and the flora and fauna.
- 2.33 Various members of the Highgate staff have strong links with other nearby sites (e.g. Queen's Wood). However up until recently there has been very little communication between Highgate Wood and other sites in Haringey.

#### ***Committee reporting arrangements***

- 2.34 The **Open Spaces Committee** determines the overall departmental policy, considers strategic and corporate issues and is responsible for matters relating to the City Gardens. The Open Spaces Committee meets six times year (February, April, June, July, October and December).
- 2.35 The management of each CoL Open Space is overseen by several City Committees, as required by various Acts of Parliament. Matters concerning Highgate Wood are discussed by **Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee**, which meets six times throughout the year.

#### **Community support**

- 2.36 Local community groups and organisations also have a key role in the management of the Wood, working in partnership with the CoL.
- 2.37 For example the Heath Hands have helped with carrying out nature conservation works including coppice management. Local specialists have supported CoL staff to carry out surveys of flora and fauna, the results of which provide an invaluable tool for the management of the Wood. Local specialists and educational groups have also been key in carrying out investigations into the history of the Wood.

#### **Sustainability**

- 2.38 Highgate Wood took part in the first stage of the City of London's new Sustainability Audit System, launching a new waste management system in 2010 which has resulted in a zero landfill rating for the site and a reduction in the number of vehicle movements. Highgate Wood also has a Sustainability

Improvement Plan which follows on from a Sustainability Audit carried out in 2010. New LED lighting has been installed and there are also plans to install additional solar panels and rainwater harvesting tanks.

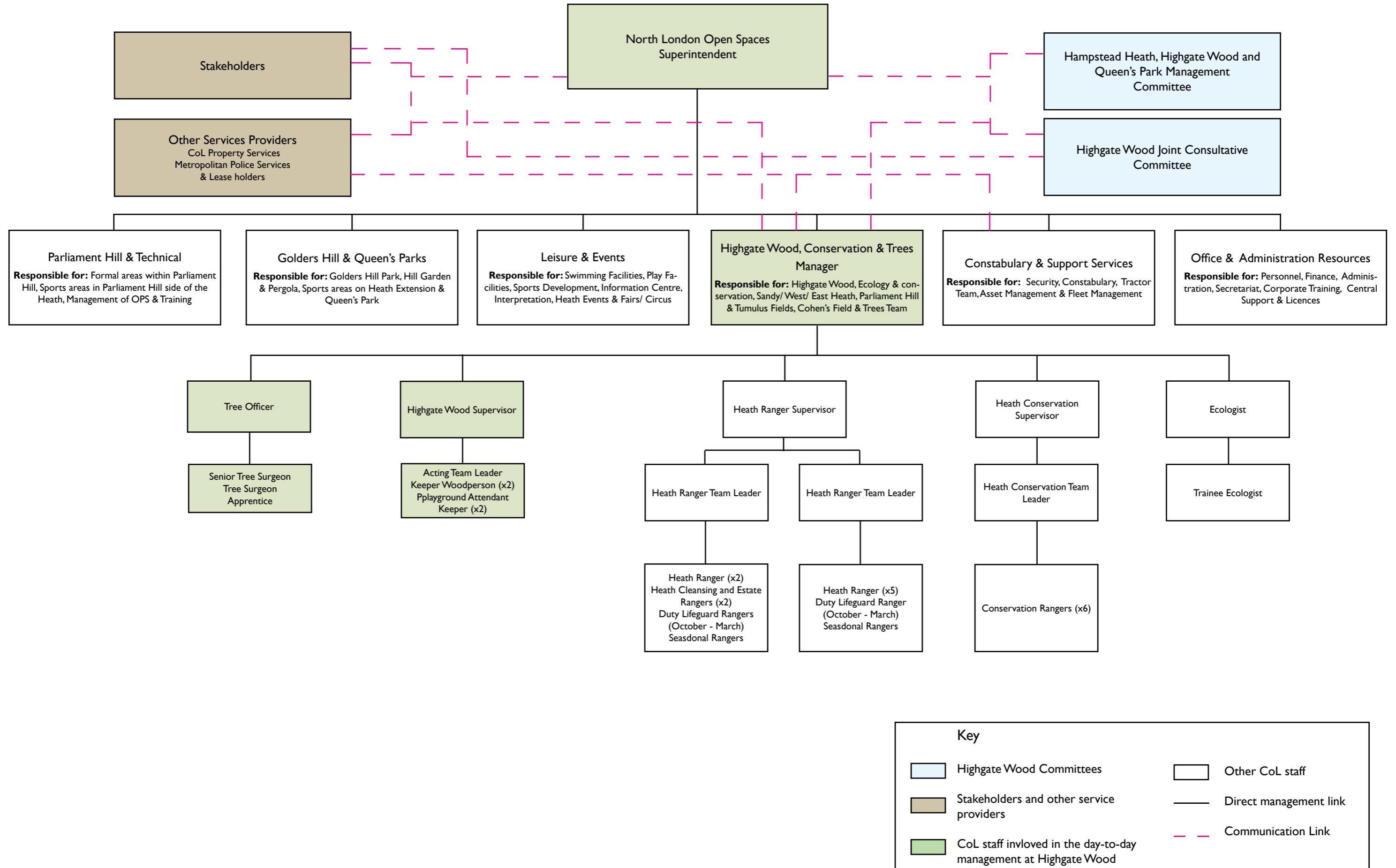


Figure 2.3: Highgate Wood, Conservation and Trees Section Management Structure



## **SECTION B: UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE**





## 3 Consultation

- 3.1 This section provides an overview of the consultation events carried out to guide the development of this CMP.

### **HIGHGATE WOOD ADVISORY GROUP**

- 3.2 The process for the development of this CMP has involved the formation of an Advisory Group, which was formed of local specialists, members of the Highgate Wood Consultative Committee, representatives of local community groups/ organisations and members of the Highgate Wood management team.

### **Workshop attendees and groups**

- 3.3 A workshop was held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011 as a key stage in the process of producing the CMP for Highgate Wood. The purpose of the workshop was to gain the support and views from the Advisory Group.
- 3.4 Advisory Group members were assigned to one of three groups according to their core area of interest or expertise. Group discussions were guided by a facilitator. The three groups were as follows:
1. Heritage
  2. Community/ Recreation
  3. Biodiversity
- 3.5 Each group were asked to complete three tasks to consider the following:
- A. Significance
    - What is important / why / where?
  - B. Issues and opportunities
    - How is the significance vulnerable?
    - How Highgate Wood be improved?
  - C. Developing objectives
    - How do we address the key issues/ opportunities? – developing a management approach
- 3.6 A summary of the findings of this workshop are provided in the paragraphs below.

### ***Summary of significance from each group***

- I. Heritage
  - Highgate Wood has a long history of use and development. Its heritage values include a range of archaeological features including the earthworks and the Roman Kiln site; the ancient woodland; development of Highgate Wood during the Victorian period; and the use of the woods during wartime. The broad range of heritage features provides significant opportunities for interpretation and education.

## 2. Community and recreation

- Highgate Wood is an easily accessible green open space with a special atmosphere. It provides a safe feeling with top quality facilities as well as excellent educational and recreational activities for all ages.

## 3. Biodiversity

- Highgate Wood is significant for the range of habitats and species that it supports and its location within the built environment and the connectivity with the surrounding nature conservation sites. It also has a consistent and diverse collection of historical survey records.

### ***Common issue/ opportunity and themes***

#### 1. Conserving the woodland structure:

- The importance of preserving and perpetuating the 'key stone' species within the woodland and continuing to practise a degree of coppice management including the creation of future conservation areas.

#### 2. The importance of further research and investigation:

- The need to carry out extensive research on the history of the site, focusing on the earthwork structures and Church archives. This research should also include monitoring the woodland and tree condition.

#### 3. Networking:

- The importance of forging stronger relationships with both external agencies such as the Museum of London, but also other nearby Ancient woodland sites in the area.

#### 4. Access considerations:

- The need to consider more carefully how to control access throughout the site, both in terms of vehicle movements and existing infrastructure but also pedestrian impact on the woodland areas and compaction and erosion concerns.

#### 5. Community involvement:

- The need to increase community involvement, focusing on growing a core of local volunteer for conservation work and looking at encouraging young people to get involved.

### ***Objectives***

- 3.7 On completion of considering the significance, issues and opportunities of Highgate Wood, each group was asked to develop a series of objectives to guide future management. These were then presented to the Advisory Group. At the end of the presentation, each member of the Advisory was

asked to prioritise just two of objectives. The table below lists the objectives developed by each the groups and indicates the number of people from the Advisory Group who prioritised each.

Objectives for Highgate Wood	Number of Responses (most responses = greatest priority)
<b>Heritage</b>	
<b>1. Conserve and enhance ancient coppice with standard woodland</b>	<b>11</b>
2. Gain a more thorough understanding of Highgate Wood through a programme of survey and research	2
<b>3. Explore all opportunities for interpretation and education</b>	<b>4</b>
4. Protect earthworks throughout Highgate Wood	
<b>Community and recreation</b>	
<b>1. Establish communication links with teenagers and secondary schools (Duke of Edinburgh) with a view to increase opportunities for activities and involvement of management of Highgate Wood.</b>	<b>4</b>
2. Establish demand for and establish if require a Friends of Group.	1
3. Develop partnerships with health authorities, hospitals, surgeries to increase opportunities for activities to enhance physical and mental health, and wellbeing.	
4. Increase knowledge of and links to Park land walk and Queen's Wood etc. through use of signage, websites, leaflets, maps, electronic information.	1
5. Review sports charges and explore all avenues for marketing & income generation, including possibly schools & promote our charity status.	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	
<b>1. To develop a prescriptive management approach to guide the appropriate conservation of HW and to maintain the oak population.</b>	<b>7</b>
2. Promote public access but to balance use with nature conservation management operations through controlled movement around sensitive areas.	2
3. To promote and to protect the historical interest of HW providing interpretation and education of historic management operations.	
4. Improve the soil conditions throughout the site to encourage greater ground flora to encourage species resilient to a changing climate.	1
5. To establish partnership with local community groups and specialist organisations to identify potential funding streams and to promote education and to support future management.	1
6. Liaise with LB Haringey and neighbouring land managers to protect and promote the importance of HW within the local green infrastructure network.	



## 4 Heritage

- 4.1 The Highgate Wood Heritage Assessment has been prepared separately by LUC (2011) to support the preparation of the CMP. This section provides a brief summary of the findings.

### DOCUMENTED HISTORY

#### Early history

- 4.2 Highgate Wood and the adjacent Queen's Wood are remnants of the Hornsey Woods mentioned in the Domesday Book. Whilst there is little evidence of occupation during the Roman Period, archaeological records suggests that 10 kilns existed in Highgate Wood and pottery was made from AD 43 through to approximately AD 160.
- 4.3 In AD 604, after the demise of the Roman Government in Britain, Highgate Wood formed part of the property of the Diocese of London. Following the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, the Wood formed part of a large Hunting Park given by King William to William, the Norman Bishop of London. The Bishop of London continued to have hunting rights over the land until as late as 1662, see **Figure 4.1**: The Medieval Park and the Bishop of London's Demesne which shows the Park's extent.

#### 16<sup>th</sup> century

- 4.4 During the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Wood was leased to various tenants who managed it as coppice with standards. Managing coppice with standards was a legal requirement when the Crown required oak timber to build the navy's fighting ships.

#### 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century

- 4.5 Oak standards and coppiced wood continued to be in increasing demand during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries to provide bark for tannin and charcoal for the iron and glass industries. During this period the Wood was known as Brewer's Fall or Brewhouse Wood making reference to the local brewers who held the lease for the Wood during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 1780s the Wood was leased by Francis Gallow who owned four Highgate inns and the Brewhouse on North Hill.

#### 19<sup>th</sup> century

- 4.6 Archway Road was built in 1813 as a 'bypass' to Highgate Village and Highgate Hill severing the southern part of Highgate Wood. The separation of the woodland area by the newly constructed Archway Road represented a major degenerative impact on the site as an area approaching 30 acres was now exposed to potential development. Although this did not happen for another fifty years, this loss and the further development of the Alexandra Palace railway in 1871 around the western perimeter of the wood was perceived with increasing alarm by local residents. Ownership of the Woods returned to the Ecclesiastical Commission and was renamed as Gravelpit Wood due to its use for gravel extraction. The current name 'Highgate Wood' was not adopted until 1896.

- 4.7 Regular coppicing continued until at least 1842 when the Wood was leased to the Earl of Mansfield and a period of neglect began. Mansfield's lease ended in 1884 and the Woods were subsequently leased to a dairy farmer.
- 4.8 At this time development in the area was intensifying and there was local concern that the Woods would be developed. This instigated a campaign fronted by the chairman of the Hornsey Local Board and a local politician, Henry Reader Williams. In February 1885, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners offered the Wood to the Corporation of London as a gift and this was accepted in 1886 under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 1886 the Wood was declared 'open for the use and recreation of the public forever'<sup>1</sup> by the Lord Mayor of the time Sir John Staples.

### **From acquisition: 1886**

- 4.9 The City of London Corporation began to convert the Wood into an 'urban park' and constructed the Lodge building (designed by Sir Horace Jones), added paths and improved drainage. The grade II listed drinking fountain followed in 1888 donated by grateful local residents.

### **20<sup>th</sup> century**

- 4.10 Inappropriate management during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century continued to erode the natural fabric of the Wood and the high volume of visitors caused compaction of the ground.
- 4.11 Highgate Wood had an important role in defending London during the Second World War and was used as a station for barrage balloons to defend against low-level aircraft. The balloons were anchored to concrete blocks which can be seen in the sport pitch during periods of dry weather.
- 4.12 During the 1960s the City of London Corporation attempted to improve the ground conditions within the Wood by relieving ground compaction in selected areas. In 1968 the Conservation Council of the London Natural History Society expressed concern at the planting of exotic conifers including Corsican Pine, Western Hemlock, Norway Spruce and Douglas Fir.
- 4.13 A programme of creating small fenced off coppice compartments commenced in 1977 and continues to this day. Judging by historical postcards, coppicing was still being carried out into the early 1900's. Although there was little or no coppicing carried out at Highgate Wood between 1910s and 1980s.

### **ARCHAEOLOGY**

- 4.14 The most significant discovery in Highgate Wood is the Romano-British Pottery which was discovered in the 1960s and 1970s. During the excavation several kilns were discovered and the best preserved was removed to be exhibited in Bruce Castle Museum in Haringey. It appears that the site would have been used intermittently until circa AD160.<sup>2</sup> It was established shortly after the Roman conquest and would have supplied London and the south east with tableware. Part of the roman kiln is now on display in the education building in Highgate wood.

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<sup>1</sup> Highgate Wood Leaflet, City of London

<sup>2</sup> Museum of London Archaeological Survey (1998) Highgate Wood An Archaeological Earthwork Survey



Figure 4.1

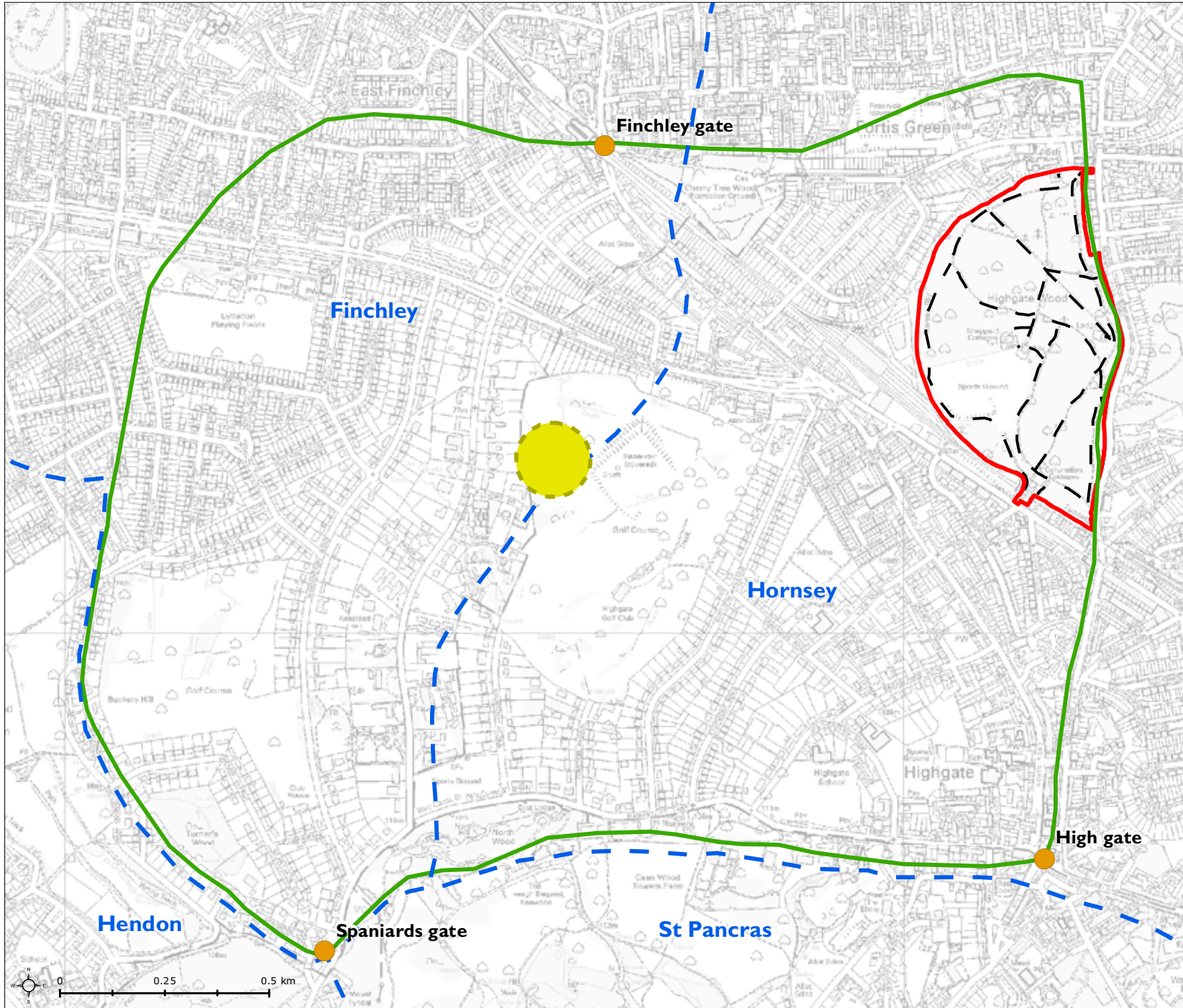
**The Medieval Park & The Bishop of London's Demense**

-  Present day boundary
-  Medieval hunting lodge
-  Boundary of medieval hunting park
-  Gate to medieval hunting park
-  Current path network
-  Parish boundary & name - The Bishop of London's Demense in Finchley and Hornsey c.1788

Map Scale @ A4: 1:13,000



Source: Land Use Consultants





- 4.15 The Museum of London Archaeological survey carried out archaeological survey of earthworks in 1998. The survey accurately mapped the earthwork features and states that it is possible that these features are a relic of a medieval rural landscape. See **Figure 4.2: Archaeology**.

## **HISTORIC WOODLAND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

- 4.16 Highgate Wood was managed over many centuries for the commercial production of fuel wood obtained by cyclical cutting of the hornbeam stock. The timber was harvested on a rotational basis processed on site and sold on for a variety of uses. It is hard to imagine now a world without central heating and freely accessible gas and electricity, but before the industrial revolution and the massive increase in coal production, the only available fuel source was wood. The woods around the City of London provided an essential resource and hornbeam was particularly valued for its burning qualities. The Oak standards were probably planted for a longer term investment for eventual use for the shipbuilding and construction industry, but their bark may also have served as a lucrative secondary commercial crop for the tanning industry.
- 4.17 Since 1977 a total of seven one acre areas have been coppiced every five years, to encourage regeneration of this traditional mix, as well as other native species, and to encourage tree age diversity. Within these areas, veteran trees are also supported, and a diversity of niche habitats and species are created and maintained.

## **EVALUATION**

- 4.18 Highgate Wood has a well-documented history extending back to the Roman and early medieval periods. During the Roman period the Wood was used for making pottery and flints from the early Mesolithic period have also been uncovered on the site which suggests early human settlement.
- 4.19 There are also good sources of information from the period prior to the site's transfer of ownership over to the City of London Corporation. This period saw a rapid decline in the management of the Wood for producing fuel due to the growing availability of coal.
- 4.20 The discovery of the Roman pottery kiln in the late 1960's was followed up by a number of archaeological excavations overseen by the Museum of London. The excavations revealed a considerable quantity of pottery centred around a series of kilns using the natural resources on the site (wood fuel, clay and water) to sustain a transient pottery ware industry.
- 4.21 Highgate Wood is one of an important cluster of Ancient Woodland site centred around the Hornsey and Highgate area, forming an important network of remnant sites from a lost landscape. The proximity of the sites is important as this allows a degree of movement of wildlife particularly birds and bats. This also offers an opportunity for site management to be linked and information sharing to be explored.









## 5 Natural environment

- 5.1 This section considers the natural fabric of Highgate Wood highlighting the key species and habitats.

### CONTEXT

#### Nature conservation designations

##### *Site of Metropolitan Importance*

- 5.2 Highgate Wood is designated as a **Site of Metropolitan Importance** for Nature Conservation as it is considered to be of London-wide significance for nature conservation.

#### UK and London Biodiversity Action Plans

- 5.3 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) sets out a national strategy for wildlife conservation, based upon action plans for habitats and species which are identified in the UK BAP. Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) relevant to Highgate Wood include the following:

- Broadleaved woodland
- Improved grassland
- Urban

- 5.4 Surveys of fauna at Highgate Wood have identified 31 BAP priority species. These are listed in table 5.1 below. Other protected species recorded at Highgate Wood are contained in Appendix I.

**Table 5.1: BAP priority species recorded at Highgate Wood**

<b>Moths</b>		
Oak Hook-tip moth	Small Square-spot	White Ermine
Lunar Yellow Underwing	Mouse Moth	Buff Ermine
Shoulder Striped Wainscot	Grey Dagger	Garden Dart
Rosy Minor	Mottled Rustic	White Letter Hairstreak
Rustic	Small Emerald	Small Heath
Mullein Wave	Brindled Beauty	
Small Phoenix	Powdered Quaker	
<b>Birds</b>		
	Starling	
Song Thrush	Dunnock	
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker		
<b>Bats</b>		
Pipistrelles		
Noctule		



Brown Long-eared

**Mammals**

Hedgehog

**Insects**

Stag Beetle

**Fungi**

Podoschypha multizonata

**London**

5.6 The UK BAP is taken forward at a regional level through the London Biodiversity Action Plan which is delivered by the London Biodiversity Partnership. The relevant action plans for Highgate Wood include HAPs for **Parks and Urban Green Spaces** and **Woodland**. The aims of the Woodland HAP are:

- To maintain the extent of woodland in London at its 2008 value of 4,909 hectares.
- To enhance the condition of 500 hectares of woodland by 2020 using improved management practices.
- To increase the total extent of woodland habitat in London by 20 hectares by 2015 including five hectares of wet woodland.

5.7 The London BAP also notes the importance of built structures within the urban environment.

**London Borough of Haringey**

5.8 The London Borough of Haringey has prepared a BAP to protect and enhance biodiversity value across the borough which supports the national and regional strategies. The BAP has been prepared through input by the Haringey Biodiversity Partnership which is formed of local “Friends of” groups, land managers, organisations from the voluntary sector and concerned individuals. The aim which is particularly applicable to Highgate Wood is:

- Promote and conserve ecological corridors and green chains including those which link to Highgate Wood and the Parkland Walk.

5.9 The CoL wish to contribute to London Borough of Haringey’s BAP and have therefore adopted the following objectives and actions.

**Objectives**

- To assist London Borough of Haringey in realising targets on improving Ancient Woodland sites in the Borough.
- Deliver a programme of events on the woodland environment.
- Contribute to work on improving bat habitat within the borough and raising public awareness on bat related issues.

## **Actions**

- Provide a team from the CoL to carry out two organised woodland management sessions between September and March with the assistance of volunteers.
- Hold 25 events annually centred on Ancient woodland habitat and its management.
- Hold four bat walk events annually in Highgate Wood and continue to develop and monitor bat habitat on site.

## **Habitat and Species Action Plans**

5.10 The habitat and species action plans objectives relevant to Highgate Wood include:

- To encourage good conservation practice in parks and green spaces across LB Haringey, improving access to nature, and raising the awareness of the importance of parks and green spaces in the conservation of Haringey's biodiversity.
- To conserve and enhance Haringey's woodland for the benefit of biodiversity and for the local community.
- To improve the overall value of built structures in Haringey for the benefit of biodiversity.
- To help reverse the current population decline of bats of all species and to address the public misconceptions about bats and secure their status as culturally valued animals.

## **London Tree and Woodland Framework**

5.11 The Woodland Advisory Group was formed to provide a strategic overview on the sustainable management of London's trees and woodlands. The organisations represented in the Group were:

- City of London
- Countryside Agency
- English Nature
- English Heritage
- Forestry Commission
- Government Office of London
- Greater London Authority
- Groundwork London
- London Development Agency
- London Tree Officers Association

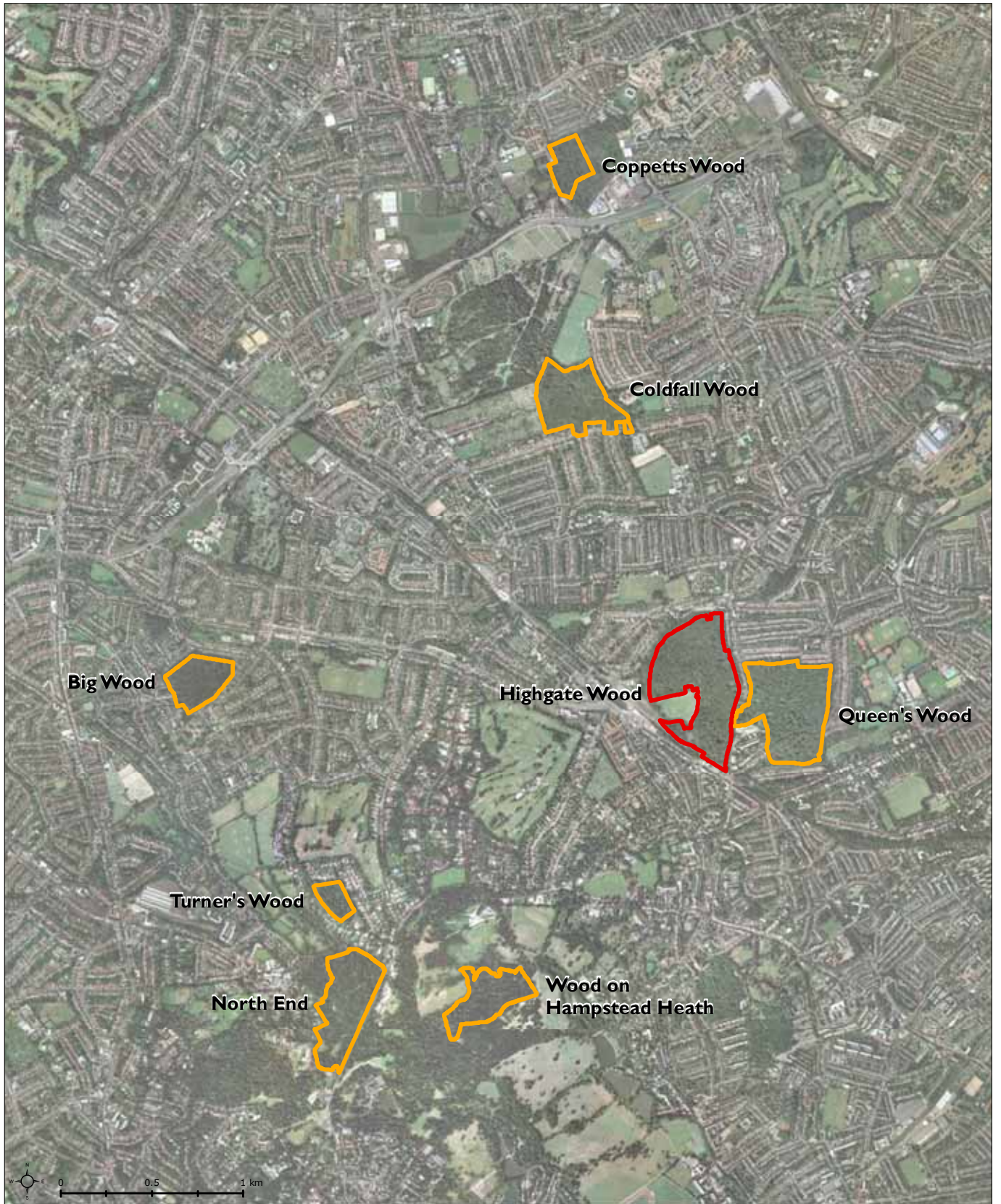
- Royal Parks
  - Thames Chase Community Forest
  - Trees for London
  - Woodland Trust
- 5.12 The Group produced a framework to address the protection, management and enhancement of London's trees and woodland over the next 20 years. The Framework aims:
- To ensure trees and woodland contribute to a high quality natural environment.
  - To help shape the built environment and new development.
  - Through people's contact with trees and woodland to help foster community and individual people's well-being and social inclusion.
  - To support the capital's economy.
- 5.13 The Framework notes that ancient woodland sites are of irreplaceable value due to the interactions between plants, animals, soils, climate and people. It also states that woodland covers eight per cent of London's land area and only 1.4% of the land area in London is now covered by ancient woodland. Much of this is on the edge of London which highlights the importance of ancient woodland of Highgate Wood.

## **HABITATS AT HIGHGATE WOOD**

- 5.14 Highgate Wood is designated as Semi-natural Ancient Woodland, and as already mentioned above in 4.21, forms part of a group of important woodland sites in North London. Semi-natural Ancient Woodland supports a large number of species, a number of which are listed as vulnerable, particularly those species that require stable unchanging conditions in order to survive. Figure 5.1 shows the Highgate Wood in location to other Ancient Woodlands.
- 5.15 Although there are in excess of 500,000 hectares of Semi-natural Ancient Woodland in the UK much of what remains has been partially or completely replanted and the ancient woodland trees and precious woodland soils that have taken many centuries to develop have been lost and degraded. Much of the Ancient Woodland sites that survive are less than 20 hectares in size and half of the recorded sites are less than 5 hectares.

Habitats recorded within Highgate Wood include:

- Ancient high canopy/ open oak and hornbeam woodland.
- Scrub regeneration within selected coppiced areas including birch, willow and blackthorn.
- Coppiced hornbeam areas.
- Grassland and wildflowers within selected coppiced areas.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2012. All rights reserved. Licence numbers 100047514, 0100031673. LUC LDN 5223-01\_004 Ancient woodland context 11/04/2012

Highgate Wood

**Figure 5.1**  
**Ancient Woodland Context**



Map Scale @ A4: 1:30,000

Source: Natural England



- Dead wood habitats - wood with fungal decay, dead wood in trees, woodpecker holes, decaying roots, dead trunks, log piles, and dead wood scattered throughout the wood.
- Hedges including lapsed ancient hedge boundaries, newly planted hedges, old and new ornamental/conifer hedges and dead hedges.
- Amenity grassland surrounded by some rough grassland, scrub and woodland edge with bare compacted earth exposed to sun.
- Bird, bat, hedgehog and bee boxes.
- Ditches.
- Ponds.

### **Species**

5.16 The rich diversity of wildlife in the wood has been well researched and documented over the years. To date, over 900 invertebrate species, 338 moth species, 353 fungi species, 70 bird species, and seven bat species have been recorded. Many of these species are reliant on very particular niches found only in ancient woodlands, with their well-developed and complex ecosystems.

### **Current management action**

5.17 There are a variety of niche habitats within the woodland areas. These niche habitats are mostly located within the seven existing conservation areas that have been created since 1977. There are also a number of ponds within the site that provide a home for frogs and newts. A detailed description of the all the existing conservation areas is included in the Appendices section.

5.18 The management of the conservation areas has been varied and evolved over time, in response to successes and opportunities for habitat diversity.

**Figure 5.2** locates each of the conservation areas and provides details of when they were established.

5.19 Protective dead hedges have been established around areas with dense bluebell growth and dominating species such as holly and beech is kept in check. Dead wood and ivy is left in canopies of trees in less frequented areas. Wild service trees suckers are transplanted into conservation areas.

5.20 Current core conservation management principles include the following:

- Continue creating small conservation areas to encourage regenerative growth.
- Focus on conserving stock of oak standards as 'key stone' trees.
- Increase the existing areas of dead wood habitat, especially standing dead wood to enhance birds, bats and invertebrate habitat.
- Improve the existing soil conditions throughout the woodland area using a programme of mulching and operations to reduce compaction and erosion.
- Continue to monitor and survey fauna and flora species and record and review our conservation work.

## EVALUATION

- 5.21 Highgate Wood consists of the 28 hectares of woodland and open space which is managed by a dedicated team of eight staff who collectively possess detailed knowledge of the site and its flora and fauna.
- 5.22 The Wood provides a range of habitats which support a number of protected and UK BAP priority species including bats, birds, fungi and moths. The management team and local specialists have dedicated a great deal of time and effort to recording biodiversity and species found on the site and much of this has been carefully logged and transferred to the GIGL database. This work has been carried out over a period of nearly twenty years which has created a valuable record which traces the changes in habitat and species distribution.
- 5.23 Highgate Wood is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation and is therefore considered to be of London-wide significance for nature conservation. Its status as Ancient Woodland adds to that significance.
- 5.24 A monitoring program to examine the rate and spread of canopy decline of mature oaks was carried out during May and June 2010. CoL staff mapped out 27 evenly spaced 50m square sections, and within these, a total of 327 mature oaks were surveyed for % canopy decline and % caterpillar defoliation. Approximately half of all the trees surveyed appeared to have 50% or higher canopy decline. Management should carefully consider the decline of oaks and options to reduce competition, through haloing, selective tree surgery, mulching and protection (from trampling and therefore compaction) could be explored.
- 5.25 As the ancient former coppice hornbeams grow they become more prone to collapse as their structure becomes unbalanced. Management of the hornbeams also needs to consider how best to conserve and enhance such an important resource. Options such as those outlined for the oak above along with experimental pollarding or possibly re-coppicing could be explored.





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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Contours</li> <li> Conservation Areas</li> <li> Footpath</li> <li> Bird feeders hung in trees</li> <li> The Hollies (bird sanctuary)</li> <li> Site of historic importance</li> <li> Mature wild service trees</li> <li> Earthworks</li> <li> Compartment areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Area where blue bells thrive</li> <li> Site of ancient pottery kilns (AD 50-150)</li> <li> Wood bank</li> <li> Highgate Wood boundary</li> <li> Playground</li> <li> Woodland Canopy 2006</li> <li> Grass</li> </ul>	<p><b>Highgate Wood</b></p> <p><b>Figure 5.2</b></p> <p><b>Habitats and nature conservation</b></p>
<p><b>Map Scale @ A4: 1:4,500</b></p>		

Source: Land Use Consultants



## 6 Community and recreation

- 6.1 This section outlines the current use of Highgate Wood and its importance to the local community.

### CURRENT USE

#### Informal use

- 6.2 Highgate Wood is a valuable resource for the local community with many users visiting on a daily basis for walking, dog walking and jogging. It is valued for its peace and tranquillity together with the opportunities it provides for contact with nature.
- 6.3 In addition to it being valued for its 'natural' environment, Highgate Wood also contains a number of popular built features including the café, playground and an education centre. Public toilets are also provided adjacent to the café and next to the playground.
- 6.4 The presence of a team of onsite staff helps to create a secure and safe environment for visitors to the Wood. Many regular visitors know or recognise the team.

#### Playground

- 6.5 The playground is a well-used facility attracting many visitors and is particularly favoured by younger children. A camera has been installed in a bird box with a monitor located in the building adjacent to the playground. This provides the opportunity to see birds nest-building and feeding their young.

#### Sport field

- 6.6 The sport field is located in the centre of Highgate Wood covering an area of approximately 2.6 hectares (6.5 acres). It is a popular feature of the Wood and is used throughout the year for informal games, picnics, sunbathing and walking etc. There are also two football pitches that are in use from September to April and a cricket pitch from April to September. The pitches are hired out to local teams and the sport field is also used by schools for sport days and athletics.
- 6.7 There are three football teams who play on alternate Saturdays and Sundays and four cricket teams who play on alternate Saturdays. Sport teams include:

**Table 6.1 Sport clubs at Highgate Wood**

Club	Current use
Old Tollingtonians Football Club	Play every Saturday Five teams in the club
Enigma Football Club	Alternate Sundays
Five Bells Football Club	Alternate Sundays
Metro Cricket Club	Alternate Saturdays
Strongroom Cricket Club	Alternate Saturdays

Palm Tree Cricket Club	Alternate Sundays
Black rose Cricket Club	Alternate Sundays

- 6.8 There are changing facilities and showers provided in the building attached to the café and a score hut is provided for the cricket teams. The sport pitches are marked out prior to each game together with the erection of goalposts, nets and sightscreens. Two cricket practices nets are provided in the south-western section of the field and are open at all times throughout the year. They are the only free practice cricket nets in the London Borough of Haringey and are well used.
- 6.9 The woodland backdrop provides a unique setting to the sport pitch and there are number of teams and leagues who are long-term users and the fixture list is fully subscribed.

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- 6.10 The CoL holds a full programme of events and activities at Highgate Wood ranging from Christmas Tree Recycling to guide walks and bush craft skills. Events and activities are delivered by CoL staff with the support of volunteers. The events held at Highgate Wood in 2011 are listed in table 6.2 below.

**Table 6.2 Highgate Wood diary of events 2011**

Month	Event
March	Birds and their song walk
April	The story telling tree Historical walk
May	Spring guided walk Birds and their song walk Tree identification walk
June	Insect safari Evening bat watch Come meet the bees
July	Evening bat watch Bushcraft skills (children session) Bushcraft skills (adult session) The story telling tree Summer guided walk
August	Great green picnic Birds of Bray (birds of prey display) Bugs and butterflies Historical walks Wildwood play day Evening bat watch City critters circus play day
September	Evening bat watch Heritage day Moth identification evening



October	Walk to look at fungi Autumn guided walk
November	Tree and fungi walk
December	Winter guided walk

## **EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION**

- 6.11 The ancient woodland of Highgate Wood and the species it supports provides a great number of opportunities for the local community to come into contact with the natural environment.
- 6.12 Highgate Wood is becoming increasingly popular as a local learning resource particularly local primary schools, who want to provide a natural outdoor setting for curriculum subjects such as natural history and the environment. Students are able to experience the woodland within walking distance to their school. CoL staff provide walk and talk sessions on nature and woodland species.
- 6.13 The sport field is very popular for summer sport days. Schools without sport fields are encouraged to use the fields for formal and informal sport activities.

### **Education centre**

- 6.14 A free annual newsletter is produced by the CoL and is available from the education centre. The education centre also provides trail guide leaflets and information on wildlife and history.
- 6.15 The education centre contains a Roman Kiln exhibition which includes a small section of the original 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD kiln that was unearthed in Highgate Wood in the early 1970's. There are plans to increase this exhibition which would involve the construction of an extension or reconfiguration of the existing building. The exhibition will be a joint venture between the CoL, the Museum of London and Bruce Castle Museum. Work is currently under way to prepare the proposals for the building work (see Chapter 7) and to secure funding. It is hoped that the project will be completed by the end of 2012.

## **VOLUNTARY GROUPS**

- 6.16 The Heath Hands volunteer group help with conservation work in the Wood including coppicing of hazel and clearing areas of brambles and ivy. Local school students also help with conservation works including the planting of hedges to protect sensitive ecological areas.
- 6.17 Some wooden bird and bat boxes have been made by local students and scout groups. A local resident has set up a scheme in which local estate agents donate "Woodcrete" bird and bat boxes to the Wood as well as a hedgehog and bumblebee box.

## **VISITOR SURVEYS**

- 6.18 A visitor survey was carried out in August 2000 by using face-to-face interviews with people in the Wood. The survey was carried out on one day and 122 questionnaires were completed. The aim of the survey was to understand current usage and satisfaction levels as well as capturing visitor opinion on current management.

6.19 A second survey was carried out over a 10 month period from October 2004 to August 2005. This was a self-selected survey with questionnaires being provided at the Information Hut. 151 surveys were completed, 119 of which were completed fully.

6.20 The results of this survey recorded the following:

- 86.8% of respondents travelled to the Wood by walking (45.5%) or car/motorcycle (41.3%)
- 52.6% of respondents visited the Wood less than once a week with 21.1% visiting about once a week and 16.4% visiting three or more times
- 44.3% of respondents visited the Woods for one to two hours with 28.9% visiting for more than two hours and 22.8% visiting for half an hour to one hour
- 70.5% of respondents visited the Wood during the weekend with 32.5% of respondents visiting on weekend afternoons and 19% visiting on weekend mornings. 21.4% of respondents visited on weekday afternoons
- 31% of respondents visited from postcodes within N10
- 51.4% of respondents who visited the woods had children of school age
- 30.1% of respondents visited the Wood for relaxation or informal recreation and 24.4% of respondents visited for contact with nature
- 88.2% of respondents felt safe when they visited the Wood
- Fear of dogs (41.4%), fear of crime (27.6%) and intimidation from other people (24.1%) were identified as the main factors which made respondents feel unsafe
- 19.9% of respondents had a dog in their household
- 28% of respondents felt that there were issues with dogs in Highgate Wood with dog poo and dogs not on leads the main issues
- 92.5% of respondents felt that CoL provide very good (55.5%) or good (37%) services at Highgate Wood

## **EVALUATION**

6.21 Highgate Woods is one of the few areas of woodland in London that has resident staff, which combined with relatively secure funding, provides a welcoming and safe environment for local communities.

6.22 The popularity and high level of use of the sport field can lead to conflicts between users groups along with wear to the fabric of the field. The management and maintenance of the sport field is guided by a separate management plan and involves a regular programme of aeration and fertilisation (autumn/ winter and spring/ summer feeds) to ensure alleviation of compaction and repair to worn areas of the field. The management plan for the sport field can be seen in Appendix 2.

6.23 The environment and history of the Wood, along with the enthusiasm and knowledge of staff combine to provide a significant educational resource. The

education centre adds to the offer and has further potential for improvement subject to fundraising.

- 6.24 The playground, toilets and café are all highly valued and well used facilities with the café and playground continuing to form hubs of activity in the Wood.
- 6.25 The Management team wish to explore the feasibility of creating a new 'Friends of Highgate Wood'. This would be primarily formed as a core of volunteers to carry out conservation work but could also contain a small focus group based on the working group who were assembled for the Conservation Management Plan Workshop.





## 7 Built environment

- 7.1 This section provides details of the built features within Highgate Wood. A description for each of the features is given together with details of existing use and management arrangements.

### OVERVIEW OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 7.2 Buildings began to appear within Highgate Wood shortly after the Ecclesiastical Commission transferred ownership of the Wood to the City of London Corporation as a gift (1886). Highgate Wood currently contains six staff lodges, a café and changing rooms, a Grade II listed drinking fountain, a playground, and gates at each entrance.

#### Drinking Fountain

- 7.3 One of the first built features added to the Wood was the drinking fountain. Located in the north part of the Wood, the fountain dates to 1888 and was erected shortly after the opening of Highgate Wood as a public open space. The fountain is listed at Grade II by English Heritage for its architectural importance. The obelisk is formed from Pink Peterhead granite with chamfered angles and is set over a broad basin. Both are carried on a square plinth standing on an octagonal base which is formed of grey granite. The plinth contains a narrow trough.

#### Lodges

- 7.4 The Lodge was the first building to be constructed in the Wood and dates to 1886. It was designed by the English architect Sir Horace Jones who was also responsible for the designs of Leadenhall Market and Old Billingsgate Market. The Lodge is built in the mock Tudor style popular at the time and was traditionally the home of Highgate Wood's Head Keeper. The Coronation and Hornbeam Cottages were built during the 1950's and Sheppard Cottages were built during the 1970s.
- 7.5 The lodges currently provide accommodation for the woodland team which enables the CoL to have a presence on site 365 days per year providing a sense of security for the site users.
- 7.6 A stores shed and offices are located adjacent to the Sheppard Cottages and is used by the CoL staff.

#### The café and changing rooms

- 7.7 The café is located in a former cricket pavilion, which dates to the 1930s. It is a well-used facility which is very popular with local residents and provides a useful focal point for the site. Its popularity often results in park users having long waits for tables.
- 7.8 The café is nestled within the woodland edge to the northeast of the sport pitch. However, its location in the heart of the Wood creates a major logistic problem as all deliveries and other related vehicle movements have to drive into the centre of the site. This leads to conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

## **Playground**

- 7.9 The playground currently covers an area of 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It is located near to Archway Road entrance and is within easy walking distance of several local primary schools. The playground was modernised in 1990 and a toilet block was added during the winter period of 1996/7. Further works were carried out in the playground during 2010 with the replacement of the Tots Tree house and the installation of a new space net.
- 7.10 The playground is checked daily before opening to ensure that the equipment is safe for use. A more detailed check is carried out every week. A qualified specialist engineer inspects all the items twice a year and reports the findings to the City of London.

## **Education centre**

- 7.11 The education centre was added to the Wood in 1995 and provides information on the heritage and nature conservation aspects of the site. The Building was constructed by a company called Norwegian Log and original drawings and specifications of the structure and its foundation slab have been obtained and appear in Appendix 3.

## **Gates**

- 7.12 There are seven entrances to Highgate Wood with gates as follows:
- Gypsy Gate
  - New Gate
  - Lodge Gate
  - Onslow Gate
  - Cranley Gate
  - Bridge Gate
  - Archway Gate
- 7.13 The 1873-76 Map records entrances at Gypsy Gate, Archway Gate and Onslow Gate. An entrance at Bridge gate is also shown but the location differs slightly due to the construction of the Alexandra Park Branch. Cranley Gate, Lodge Gate, New Gate and Bridge Gate are recorded on mapping dating to 1913-15. All the gates are of a modern design.

## **Paths**

- 7.14 Highgate Wood has a good network of pathways providing access to all parts of the Wood. The pathways are designed to be unobtrusive and appropriate to the environment.
- 7.15 Highgate Wood forms part of the Capital Ring which is a green footpath surrounding London which has been designated a 'strategic walk' by the Mayor of London.

## **Vehicle entry**

- 7.16 Vehicle entry to the Wood is limited to a single access point at Onslow Gate along Muswell Hill Road on the eastern boundary. There is limited parking

available in the Wood for visitors with impaired mobility. Other vehicle movements through the Wood include deliveries to the café and by the woodland team accessing the lodges. Vehicle access from Onslow Gate through to the café is surfaced in tarmac.

- 7.17 Cycle barriers have been introduced to try and reduce conflicts with other user groups.

### **Signage**

- 7.18 Signage and noticeboards are provided at each of the entrances. The noticeboards provide information on facilities, details of forthcoming events and management activities. Finger posts are located at key locations throughout the Wood linking key features both within and outside of the Wood's boundary.

- 7.19 Waymarkers are provided throughout the wood to demarcate Healthy Walk Trails and a children's' nature trail.

### **Function and maintenance of buildings and built features**

- 7.20 All built features within Highgate Wood have been recorded in an Asset Registration Database, which includes information on the following:

- Buildings
- Water and wastewater
- Waste
- Special interest
- Civil engineering
- Services
- Paths and roads
- Fixed assets
- Leisure
- Health and safety
- Chemical storage
- Ponds and ditches

- 7.21 The database is a web based system and contains a description and use for each feature along with its location and a description of the current condition. A draft 20-year plan for the built features has been produced highlighting the projected annual costs for each building/ feature. In addition, the CoL Surveyor has carried out detailed audits of all sites to ensure optimum use. Proposals to secure appropriate levels of long term funding to deal with the potential funding shortfall for repairs and maintenance have been developed by the Chamberlain and CoL Surveyor. The draft 20-year Plan and funded maintenance programme was agreed in 2008/ 09.

- 7.22 The buildings and structures within Highgate Wood are maintained by the Property Services Division of the CoL Surveyor's Department. This includes

responsibility for asset management and, in respect of these assets, health & safety and conformity to legislation. The Service Level Commitment document outlines the working relationship between Property Services and the Open Spaces Department.

- 7.23 Built features are inspected weekly and any repair issues are reported to Property Services. All issues are logged with progress tracked and the works assessed and planned in accordance with budget availability, or mandatory requirements. The Open Spaces Department are responsible for funding all improvements works which are arranged through Property Services or installed to a standard acceptable to Property Services.
- 7.24 Ongoing maintenance operations of buildings and structures include:
- The public toilets are inspected and cleaned on a daily basis
  - Path maintenance including infilling pot holes, surface dressing and weed control
  - Inspection and cleaning of seating
  - Removal of graffiti
  - Repairing vandalism
  - Clearance, and maintenance of drains/ gullies
  - Repair, maintenance and installation of fences/ gates
  - Repair, maintenance and installation of seats, signs, paths and bins
  - Visual inspection of paths, fences, gates, notices and other features

### **Leases and tenancies**

- 7.25 Five of the six lodges are currently occupied by residential CoL staff and one lodge is currently used as an office.

### **EVALUATION**

- 7.26 The collection of lodges within the site allows the residential members of the team to provide extended opening times especially during the summer months when visitors and local residents can enjoy the long summer evenings.
- 7.27 The network of footpaths enables freely accessible routes around the site whilst the café, playground and education centre provide popular focal points for informal recreation and relaxation.
- 7.28 Although traffic movements are limited, there is still concern about safety issues and conflicts between pedestrians (particularly dog walkers and those with young children) and vehicles.
- 7.29 The café is very popular and well used facility. However the catering facilities are cramped and are inappropriate for its commercial use. There is also limited seating within the café. Likewise, the education centre is a popular facility but space for displays is restricted.
- 7.30 The entrances are clearly defined but signage is overbearing and not sympathetic to the woodland character.

## 8 Statement of significance

- 8.1 This section summarises the many and varied layers of significance that make Highgate Wood an important and highly valued resource.
- 8.2 The statement of significance is arranged under the themed headings as set out earlier in the Plan, however it is important to emphasise that **Highgate Wood's significance is defined by its evolved character as managed Ancient Woodland still retaining the distinct fabric of hornbeam coppice with oak standards. The inherent beauty of the Wood, its time depth value, the rich diversity of habitats and species and its use by the community are all related to this character and form of management.**

### HERITAGE

- 8.3 Highgate Wood has a **long history of use and development**. Its heritage values include the range of archaeological features including the earthworks and the Roman Kiln site; the ancient and veteran trees as key features of the landscape; developments during the Victorian period and the use of the Wood during wartime. The heritage resource provides significant opportunities for interpretation and education.
- 8.4 The **extensive historic records** of Highgate Wood reach back to the Roman period. There are also records charting Highgate Wood through the early medieval period. Flints from the Early Mesolithic period have also been uncovered on the site, suggesting early human settlement. There are good sources of information from the period prior to the site's transfer over to the CoL's ownership which indicates the rapid decline of the Wood's use as a fuel resource with growing coal availability.
- 8.5 The **visible archaeological evidence** of banks, ditches, past tree management techniques and the significant discovery of the Roman pottery kiln give the Wood immense time depth interest. The Roman pottery kilns were discovered in in the late 1960's and there followed a number of archaeological digs overseen by the Museum of London. The excavations revealed a considerable quantity of pottery centred round a series of kilns using the natural resources on the site (wood fuel, clay and water) to sustain a transient pottery ware industry. Ancient hornbeam coppice stools and mature standard oaks provide engaging and attractive visible evidence of the former use and management of the woodland.
- 8.6 The heritage values provide immense opportunities for education and interpretation which are partly realised through various walks and talks by staff and a local historian, along with the education centre which provides static displays.

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.7 **Ancient woodlands** are some of the richest sites for wildlife offering habitats suitable to support a wide range of wildlife and often containing more

threatened species than any other UK habitat<sup>3</sup>. The Wood provides a **range of habitats which support a number of protected and UK BAP priority species** including bats, birds, fungi and moths. Highgate Wood contains important Ancient Woodland indicator species including the Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus terminalis*) which indicates a continual presence of woodland for hundreds of years. Highgate Wood is designated as a site of **Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation** providing a clear indication of its London-wide significance for nature conservation.

- 8.8 Highgate Wood is managed by a dedicated team of eight staff who collectively possess a great deal of **experience and detailed knowledge of the sites flora and fauna**. Together with the support of local specialists, the team have dedicated much time and effort to recording biodiversity and species abundance on site. This information has been collected over 20 years and is a **valuable record of changes in habitat and species distribution**.
- 8.9 **Several local experts on fungi, fauna, local history and archaeology live locally** to Highgate Wood. These individuals are a valuable source through supporting the management team and through their ongoing work leading educational walks on their specialist areas.

## COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

- 8.10 Highgate Wood is an **easily accessible green open space with a special atmosphere**. It provides a safe feeling with good facilities as well as educational and recreational activities for all ages.
- 8.11 The Wood is a very **important resource for the surrounding community** and provides a variety of options for precious periods of relaxation from the pressures and demands of modern urban life. The Highgate Wood management team have been able to foster long standing relationships with local residents, which has helped nurture a **welcoming environment where people feel safe and secure**. The site has several distinct groups of people enjoying the natural environment from early morning joggers, to young children and their parents exploring the woodland to dog walkers and power walker groups. **The café is very popular** with families with young children and it acts as an essential hub to for the site where people can sit down for a coffee or meal. It is also generates a useful income for the CoL.
- 8.12 The **sport field within a natural woodland setting is a popular facility** for both football and cricket teams throughout the year. There are a number of teams and leagues who are long term users and the fixture list is fully subscribed. The cricket practice nets are the only free nets in the London Borough of Haringey and are well used throughout the season. The sport field is very popular for summer sports days.
- 8.13 **Local primary schools frequently visit Highgate Wood** as a learning resource making use of the natural outdoor setting for curriculum subjects such as natural history and the environment. Children are able to have a real outdoor rural experience within walking distance of their school, with staff being able to provide walk talk sessions on nature and woodland species.

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<sup>3</sup> Woodland Trust



## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 8.14 The addition of the built features during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries has resulted in a **collection of buildings set within a unique woodland setting** in the dense urban environment. **The Lodge and the Fountain are of particular importance and interest.** The Lodge was the first building to be constructed in the Wood and dates to 1886. It was designed by the English architect Sir Horace Jones who was also responsible for the designs of Leadenhall Market and Old Billingsgate Market. The Fountain was built in 1888 and is of national important as evidenced by its Grade II Listed Building status.
- 8.15 The **network of footpaths enables freely accessible routes** around the site whilst the **café, playground and education centre provide popular focal points for informal recreation and relaxation.** The five staff cottages allow for the Wood to be open to the public throughout the year with a member of staff available at all times.



## **SECTION C: ANALYSIS**



## 9 Issues, vulnerability and opportunities

- 9.1 This section considers key management issues, ways in which the significance of the Wood is vulnerable and any opportunities that have become apparent during the CMP process. **Figure 9.1:** provides a photographic record of issues, vulnerabilities and opportunities.

### HERITAGE

Issue 1: Heritage	
Issue 1(a)	A legacy of mismanagement of the Wood including management as a formal park and loss of historic woodland management techniques has changed the character of the Wood. This is being reversed but there is opportunity to further strengthen the woodland character.
Issue 1(b)	Earthwork features have been accurately mapped but the function and age of the earthworks remains unconfirmed. Further investigation of the earthwork structures and their history is required to establish their age and origins.
Issue 1(c)	There is some damage to earthworks due to erosion through foot-fall and vegetation growth on earthworks.
Issue 1(d)	There is a threat of damage to archaeology from general maintenance work e.g. tree planting.
Issue 1(e)	There are opportunities to obtain further information about the history of the Wood, e.g. in the St. Paul's archive.
Issue 1(f)	The Wood is a fantastic educational resource; the education centre provides engaging displays on the heritage of the Wood including part of the kiln structure. However there is scope to extend and improve learning facilities and material.
Issue 1(g)	There are a number of distinct areas of ancient woodland in the vicinity of Highgate Wood. There is opportunity to strengthen their connection to celebrate the fragments of a past landscape which once dominated the area.
Issue 1(h)	Connections with external heritage organisations and other partners could be improved to improve service delivery.

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Issue 2: Natural Environment	
Issue 2(a)	Up until recently there has been little support from the CoL ecology teams who have been focused on projects and surveys on Hampstead Heath.
Issue 2(b)	The current operational management plan does not provide detail on habitat management and surveying work. There is a need to identify the works to be done over the next 5-10 years.
Issue 2(c)	There is often little time allocated to woodland management due to the resource requirement of other features and for delivering activities (e.g. education walks).
Issue 2(d)	There are some specific and potentially serious issues to be addressed with the future of the existing woodland e.g. the continuing decline of the oak standards and the lapsed hornbeam coppice.
Issue 2(e)	Until recently there has been very little communication at management level between Highgate Wood and other nearby woodland sites.

<b>Issue 2: Natural Environment</b>	
Issue 2(f)	Coppice woodland is under threat with a dramatic decline in managed coppice woodland in the UK over the last ninety years.
Issue 2(g)	The oak standard population is progressively declining.
Issue 2(h)	The tree age class distribution is poor with the majority of the existing oak trees 140-200 years old with a small number of older trees.
Issue 2(l)	Increased visitor numbers can negatively impact on the natural fabric of the site.
Issue 2(j)	The site suffers from frequent vehicle traffic movements mostly centred round the café operations.
Issue 2(k)	The Friends Group disbanded some time ago. A new Friends Group could be beneficial for the site and would enable the formation of a volunteer group to assist with woodland conservation operations. It would also provide a useful opportunity to raise additional funding for the site and might pair up with the Friends of Queen's Wood.
Issue 2(L)	There are opportunities to extend the existing education programme for primary and secondary school age groups.

## COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

<b>Issue 3: Community and recreation</b>	
Issue 3(a)	There is not currently a local representative group that has direct links with the site.
Issue 3(b)	Highgate Wood would benefit from a committed volunteer group from the local area.
Issue 3(c)	Recent years have seen a rise in the numbers of teenagers using the site particularly during spring/ early summer period. This has coincided with an emerging pattern of small isolated groups of individuals on site who have caused damage to property on site and have been involved in incidents of theft and threatening behaviour.
Issue 3(d)	There is reluctance from local secondary schools to use Highgate Wood for lessons or after school clubs.
Issue 3(e)	There is a lack of support from the Heath Constabulary which is a major issue but little can be done as the Constabulary do not have specific powers at Highgate Wood.
Issue 3(f)	There is renewed enthusiasm and interest in woodlands and woodland management due to increased public awareness of environmental issues.
Issue 3(g)	Highgate Wood is one of a number of Ancient Woodland sites in Haringey. There is opportunity to strengthen their connection to celebrate the fragments of a past landscape which once dominated the area.
Issue 3(h)	The Highgate Wood team have launched a new DVD to encourage more people to use the site as an excellent location to exercise with a number of different levels to suit individual needs.
Issue 3(i)	Local horticultural and arboricultural colleges need suitable locations for training and there is potential for Highgate Wood to be used as a training location.
Issue 3(j)	The London Borough of Haringey's Magistrates Court is located close to the Wood and could provide an alternative non-urban location for young people

<b>Issue 3: Community and recreation</b>	
	to carry out community service.
Issue 3(k)	The sport pitch often creates conflicts between players, picnickers and others enjoying the field area on busy weekends.
Issue 3(l)	The sport pitch experiences problems with drainage and often becomes waterlogged during prolonged periods of wet weather.
Issue 3(m)	There could be potential to generate additional income through recreational events.
Issue 3(n)	There could be potential to provide further opportunities for improving general fitness and outdoor recreation to offset the increasing concerns about obesity within the primary school age group.
Issue 3(o)	Higher visitor numbers could increase disturbance to wildlife.

## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

<b>Issue 4: Built environment</b>	
Issue 4(a)	The location of the café at the centre of the site provides a major logistical problem as all deliveries and other related vehicle movements have to come into the centre of the site which leads to conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.
Issue 4(b)	The size of the café restricts the current business operation.
Issue 4(c)	There is currently no cycling permitted in the Wood and there is limited vehicle access.
Issue 4(d)	Parking for authorised traffic is centred on the café which detracts from the woodland setting.
Issue 4(e)	Disabled access is limited to parts of the site.
Issue 4(f)	A number of lodges are poorly insulated and have antiquated inefficient heating systems.
Issue 4(g)	The play area is a popular facility but offers a limited range of equipment for children in the 7-10 age group.
Issue 4(h)	The buildings within the Wood could be run on more sustainable fuel systems given the rich resource on their doorstep.







Progressive decline of the Oak standards.



Sections of the Wood have been fenced off to create conservation areas.



The cafe is popular with visitors but the kitchen facilities are restricted.



The area surrounding the cafe experiences problems with erosion and compaction.



Onlsow Gate is the only point of entry for vehicles.



The location of the cafe at the centre of the sites leads to conflicts with between pedestrians and vehicles.





The sport pitches are a well used by local clubs.



The Education Centre provides visitors with the opportunity to discover about the heritage of Highgate Wood.



The Roman Kiln which was discovered at Highgate Wood in the 1960s should be permanently displayed in the Education Centre.



Grade II Listed drinking fountain within Highgate Wood.



The play area is frequently used by families and experiences high levels of use at the weekends.



The Woodkeepers' Lodges are a unique feature of Highgate Wood.

**SECTION D: CONSERVATION STRATEGY,  
OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN**



## 10 Vision and Policies

- 10.1 This section of the report takes forward the issues previously raised in the analysis work and during the consultation process to formulate a vision for Highgate Wood. The vision and supporting management policies underpin the detailed actions presented below each themed heading. **Figure 10.1:** Masterplan provides the overall vision for Highgate Wood.

### VISION FOR HIGHGATE WOOD

**To ensure the continuity of Highgate Wood as a managed Ancient Woodland site, whilst maintaining its reputation as a safe environment for relaxation, recreation and education. This special character, combining with heritage features, and conservation value will be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations.**

### SITE WIDE POLICIES

<b>Policy I: Heritage</b>		
The valuable heritage resource including the earthworks and the Roman Kiln site; the ancient, veteran and mature trees as key features of the landscape; selected developments during the Victorian period and evidence of the use of the Wood during wartime will be conserved, managed and interpreted.		
Policy I(a)	Conserve and enhance the ancient coppice with standard woodland management regime and extend it where possible. Specific measures will include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The development of additional conservation areas, focusing on threatened areas or those which are known to contain valuable habitats such as bluebells. Protection of these areas may be required</li> <li>2. Selective trials of pollarding and re-coppicing of ancient hornbeam coppice stools</li> <li>3. Haloing, protecting and mulching of selected oak standards and ancient hornbeams</li> <li>4. Coppicing and pollarding along selected path edges to create more ecologically diverse and visually appealing corridors and routes through the Wood</li> </ol>	Issue I(a)
Policy I(b)	Develop a structured programme of survey and research and share and disseminate results with other managers of Ancient Woodland within and beyond the CoL.	Issue I(b)
Policy I(c)	Conserve the integrity of all earthworks through a programme of gradual vegetation removal, fencing and interpretation. On-going maintenance of the earthworks will be required including monitoring of condition and periodic vegetation removal.	Issue I(c)
Policy I(d)	All archaeological features should be marked out by an archaeologist and relevant education and training provided to staff to ensure appropriate levels of care are taken during management operations in the vicinity of such features.	Issue I(d)

<b>Policy 1: Heritage</b>		
The valuable heritage resource including the earthworks and the Roman Kiln site; the ancient, veteran and mature trees as key features of the landscape; selected developments during the Victorian period and evidence of the use of the Wood during wartime will be conserved, managed and interpreted.		
Policy 1(e)	Carry out further research at the St. Pauls archive.	Issue 1(e)
Policy 1(f)	Seek to extend the education centre to allow for the return of the Roman Kiln structures and more information discovered about the origin of the earthworks. An initial options appraisal appears in Appendix 4 of this Plan.	Issue 1(f)
Policy 1(g)	Explore further opportunities for interpretation and education and develop a heritage themed programme of events throughout the year.	Issue 1(f)
Policy 1(h)	Establish links to other ancient woodland sites – physically and through interpretation/partnership working.	Issue 1(g)
Policy 1(i)	Create better links with English Heritage and the Museum of London to explore avenues for future projects e.g. excavating and dating of earthworks.	Issue 1(h)

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

<b>Policy 2: Natural Environment</b>		
The coppice with standards management regime will be implemented wherever possible and invasive vegetation will be controlled as required. A diverse age range of trees will be established and the range of habitat types will be conserved and extended. Species diversity will be maintained and where possible enhanced and a programme of survey and monitoring will be implemented to inform future review of the CMP.		
Policy 2(a)	Establish a programme of survey and monitoring work and seek support from the CoL trainee ecologist to implement it.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(b)	Develop a prescriptive management strategy to guide woodland management operations over the next 10 years and the conservation of the oak and hornbeam population.	Issue 2(b)
Policy 2(c)	Encourage the Conservation and Arboricultural Staff on Hampstead Heath to get involved in the management of Highgate Wood and explore the possibilities of learning from other CoL sites e.g. lessons learnt from recent ancient tree management and pollarding at Epping Forest.	Issue 2(c)
Policy 2(d)	Promote research opportunities with Life Science students or post graduates. Research could focus on significant issues relating to woodland species and in particular the decline of the oak standards.	Issue 2(d)
Policy 2(e)	Strengthen links with London Borough of Haringey and consider opportunities to coordinate habitat management across Ancient Woodland sites.	Issue 2(e)
Policy 2(f)	Continue to manage existing coppice areas and seek opportunities to expand these areas or create new conservation areas.	Issue 2(f)
Policy 2(g)	Promote the importance of coppice woodland to the local community and site users.	Issue 2(f)





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LUC LDN 5223-01 011 masterplan 11/04/2012

**Key - Existing**

- Highgate Wood boundary
- Grass
- Meadow
- Area where blue bells thrive
- Site of ancient pottery kilns (AD 50-150)
- Current footpath network
- Wood bank
- Existing conservation areas
- The Hollies (bird sanctuary)
- Site of historic importance
- Mature wild service trees
- Earthworks
- Existing compartment areas
- Playground

**Key - Proposed**

- Consider upgrading desire line to create new footpath
- Halo release oaks
- Next phase conservation areas
- Diversify the woodland edge to enhance the ecological value and to address safety concerns
- Option for carpark relocation
- Pedestrian priority zones

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:4,200**

**Highgate Wood**

**Figure 10.1  
Masterplan**



Source: Land Use Consultants



<b>Policy 2: Natural Environment</b>		
The coppice with standards management regime will be implemented wherever possible and invasive vegetation will be controlled as required. A diverse age range of trees will be established and the range of habitat types will be conserved and extended. Species diversity will be maintained and where possible enhanced and a programme of survey and monitoring will be implemented to inform future review of the CMP.		
Policy 2(h)	Continue to promote public access but balance use with nature conservation management operations through controlled movement around sensitive areas.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(i)	Promote and protect the historical interest of Highgate Wood providing interpretation and education of historic management operations.	Issue 2(h)
Policy 2(j)	Continue to monitor the oak standard population and to carry out halo release of selected specimens.	Issue 2(g)
Policy 2(k)	Manage the oak trees to prolong longevity and continue restocking operations.	Issue 2(h)
Policy 2(l)	Improve the soil conditions throughout the site to encourage greater ground flora to encourage species resilient to a changing climate.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(m)	Restrict pedestrian access to sensitive areas (e.g. the bluebell site).	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(n)	Consider methods to limit traffic entering the site and restricting delivery times.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(o)	Explore the possibility of re-launching a Friends Group.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(p)	Consider additional educational activities based at Highgate Wood particularly for secondary school groups.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(q)	Establish partnerships with local community groups and specialist organisations to identify potential funding streams and to promote education and to support future management.	Issue 2(a)
Policy 2(r)	Liaise with LB Haringey and neighbouring land managers to protect and promote the importance of Highgate Wood within the local green infrastructure network.	Issue 2(a)

## COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

<b>Issue 3: Community and recreation</b>		
The wide range of recreational facilities at and uses of Highgate Wood will continue to be actively promoted, provided and enhanced where possible. The CoL will continue to engage with schools, groups with specialised interests (e.g. London Wildlife Trust) and the general public to ensure that the Wood's importance and range of facilities is fully understood.		
Policy 3(a)	Build on existing relationships with members of the local community and stakeholders to form a dedicated Friends of Group.	Issue 3(a) and (q)
Policy 3(b)	Establish a committed volunteer group from the local area in connection with the above.	Issue 3(b)
Policy 3(c)	Improve links with young people and youth community groups.	Issue 3(c)
Policy 3(d)	Develop a more engaging offer to forge links with local secondary	Issue 3(d)

<b>Issue 3: Community and recreation</b>		
<p>The wide range of recreational facilities at and uses of Highgate Wood will continue to be actively promoted, provided and enhanced where possible. The CoL will continue to engage with schools, groups with specialised interests (e.g. London Wildlife Trust) and the general public to ensure that the Wood's importance and range of facilities is fully understood.</p>		
	schools.	
Policy 3(e)	Explore options to establish legal powers at Highgate Wood for the Heath Constabulary.	Issue 3(e)
Policy 3(f)	Explore options to host events that raise the awareness of the plight of the UK's woodland and importance of the woodland heritage in this country.	Issue 3(f)
Policy 3(g)	Explore options to establish an Ancient Woodland Site Managers Network.	Issue 3(g)
Policy 3(h)	Develop a health and well-being programme and investigate Natural England's Greenspace Walking Scheme.	Issue 3(h)
Policy 3(i)	Develop links with Capel Manor College and explore opportunities for partnership.	Issue 3(i)
Policy 3(j)	Develop a partnership with Haringey's Magistrates Court to provide alternative opportunities for community service.	Issue 3(j)
Policy 3(k)	Explore options to resolve conflicts between sportspeople and picnickers/others enjoying the field area on busy weekends. Potential solutions might include the establishment of a longer grass edge/meadow area to the outer edge of the open area, with regularly mown seating areas within to clearly demark recreational areas as opposed to pitch areas.	Issue 3(k)
Policy 3(l)	Carry out a detailed sports turf and soil/sub-soil assessment to inform a drainage improvement scheme for the sport pitch.	Issue 3(l)
Policy 3(m)	Explore the feasibility of increasing charges for hiring out the facilities and explore all avenues for marketing and income generation. The charitable status of the organisation should be highlighted.	Issue 3(m) and (t)
Policy 3(n)	Promote the continued use of the site for recreational activities.	Issue 3(n)
Policy 3(o)	Carefully monitor visitor numbers and restrict access to more ecologically and archaeologically sensitive areas.	Issue 3(o)
Policy 3(p)	Establish communication links with teenagers and secondary schools (Duke of Edinburgh) with a view to increase opportunities for activities and involvement of management of Highgate Wood.	Issue 3(p)
Policy 3(q)	Develop partnerships with health authorities, hospitals and surgeries to increase opportunities to enhance physical and mental health, and wellbeing.	Issue 3(r)
Policy 3(s)	Increase knowledge of and links to Queen's Wood etc. through use of signage, websites, leaflets, maps and electronic information.	Issue 3(s)

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

<b>Issue 4: Built environment</b>		
<p>The condition and appearance of existing buildings will be maintained and the setting of key heritage features such as the Fountain and the Lodge will be enhanced. Infrastructure and site furniture will be maintained and rationalised where possible and high quality design and materials appropriate to the woodland setting will be used throughout. There will be a general assumption against further built development unless it is deemed to have no negative impact upon the heritage, ecology or enjoyment of the site and it is of outstanding architectural design or the benefits it delivers are of sufficient merit.</p>		
Policy 4(a)	Investigate options to create a new car parking area close to the Onslow Gate entrance to rationalise vehicle deliveries and the presence of vehicles in the central part of the Wood.	Issue 4 (a) and (d)
Policy 4(b)	Re-configure the layout of the existing café building to improve kitchen facilities and to increase the capacity for dining indoors.	Issue 4(b)
Policy 4(c)	Restrict vehicle movements through the eastern side of the site.	Issue 4(a)
Policy 4(d)	Improve existing parking provision to relieve pressure on heavily used pedestrian areas.	Issue 4(a)
Policy 4(e)	Promote access for all and ensure existing provision is DDA compliant.	Issue 4 (d) and (e)
Policy 4(f)	Improve insulation within the lodges and update heating system.	Issue 4(f)
Policy 4(g)	Increase the range of play equipment to cater for children in the 7 – 10 age group.	Issue 4(g)
Policy 4(h)	Carryout a feasibility study to assess the volume of wood that could be sustainably harvested from site or nearby to provide for domestic heating and small scale industrial premises and offices. Consider using one of the staff lodges as a pilot project.	Issue 4(h)





# 11 Implementation

- 11.1 The delivery of the revenue and capital actions outlined in the preceding sections (and illustrated in Figure 10.1 Masterplan) will be co-ordinated by the CoL team led by the Highgate Wood Manager.
- 11.2 Each of the actions will be prioritised into a series of short, medium and longer-term action plans and will be included in the Open Spaces Department's business planning process. These tasks will then be incorporated into the North London Open Space Division's Annual Work Programmes.

## **AVOIDING HERITAGE IMPACTS**

### **Avoiding risks during the implementation stage**

- 11.3 In order to avoid risks to the heritage features during the implementation of the proposals, the following measures should be considered and reviewed:
- Tree removals and work to understory vegetation should be avoided from early March to August to avoid disturbance to breeding birds
  - Work should be carried out by CoL staff with the appropriate skills and knowledge or reputable and suitably qualified contractors
  - Allowances should be made for archaeological watching brief where required
  - Close supervision of capital works should take place by a contract administrator and the contractor's site agent
  - Plan for sufficient staffing levels to deliver the revenue projects and in particular and the delivery of annual conservation tasks

### **Design development and additional information required**

- 11.4 If the masterplan proposals and actions are to be implemented as part of one contract then a multi-disciplinary team would need to be formed to carry out additional surveys and design work. The team is likely to include:
- Ecologists
  - Arboriculturist
  - Landscape Architect
  - Architects
  - Structural and Services Engineer
  - Quantity Surveyor
  - CDM co-ordinator

## **PERMISSIONS AND AGREEMENTS**

- 11.5 Planning permission may be required for some aspects of the work including the extension of the education centre and the creation of a new car park. Tree works consent may also be required.



## **FUNDING**

11.6 The CMP identifies a number of actions that will require additional funding. The following funding streams may be applicable for Highgate Wood:

- Heritage Lottery Fund
- English Woodland Grant Scheme
- Natural England's Access to Nature Scheme

## 12 Adoption of the CMP and review

12.1 The Conservation Management Plan will be continually reviewed, revised and re-written. The cycle of the CMP is to:

- Adopt the CMP
- Operate according to the vision and policies held within the CMP
- Monitor the operation of the CMP
- Review the working of the CMP
- Reviewing the CMP to ensure that the vision and policies contained therein remain valid with time and changing circumstances

### MONITORING THE CMP

12.2 CoL will be responsible for carrying out monitoring of all capital and management works to ensure that these are being carried out satisfactory. The Highgate Wood Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the CMP and for ensuring that all relevant staff members are involved in the monitoring review of the CMP.

12.3 In addition, the following methods of monitoring and review will be implemented:

- Consultation with stakeholders, users of the Woods and those not using the site but living within its expected catchment area, to ascertain whether the vision and policies contained within the CMP still reflect the community's requirements.
- All key CoL staff will hold an annual internal meeting to monitor standards, to measure progress and to consider the success of the nature conservation works.
- Feedback from the annual Green Flag and Green Heritage awards.
- Review of comments received through GreenSTAT.

12.4 The CMP covers a period of 10 years and will be subject to continual review annually to enable any improvements and alterations to be made as necessary. The CMP will be formerly rewritten in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> year.

