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HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, 27th July, 1989

Present: Mr. Deputy Wixley, Chairman)Cororation of London
 Mr. P.P. Rigby, Deputy Chairman)
 Mr. R. Sumray- - London Council for Sports and
 Recreation
 Mr. C. Gregory - Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents'
 Association
 Mrs. E. Allen - Highgate Conservation Area Advisory
 Committee
 Mr. M. Hammerson - The Highgate Society
 Mr. P.D. Greenall - Joint Amenity Groups of Hampstead
 Mrs. R. de Joia - Hampstead Conservation Area
 Advisory Committee
 Mr. H.M. Hall - South End Green Association
 Mr. M. Norris - Heath and Old Hampstead Society
 Mr. I.W. Harrison - Vale of Health Society
 Mr. G. Colton - Ramblers' Association
 Miss K. Springett - Marylebone Bird Watching Society
 Mr. R. Smith - Open Spaces Society
 Mr. R. Eyres - Council for the Protection of Rural
 England
 Mr. G.J. Levy - Friends of Kenwood

Mr. T. Simmons - Deputy Town Clerk
 Mr. D. Milnes - Town Clerks Department
 Mr. P. Canneaux - Superintendent of Hampstead Heath

Apologies Mr. Milnes reported the receipt of apologies for
 for absence from Mr. Hill (Hampstead Conservation Area
 absence: Advisory Committee) who had nominated Mrs. de Joia to
 attend in his place, Mrs. Bellwood (Ramblers'
 Association) who had nominated Mr. Colton to attend
 in her place, Mr. Gravis (Haringey Jogging Club) and
 Mr. Duran (representing the disabled).

Introductory The Chairman made an introductory statement
 welcoming

Statement: those present to the first meeting of the
 Consultative Committee and, inter alia, defining the
 Committee's terms of reference. in answer to a
 question the Chairman stated that it was not the
 Corporation's intention to circulate Management
 Committee agenda and papers to the Members of this
 Committee as they consisted predominantly of public
 reports and were consequently obtainable from
 Guildhall.

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Mr. Harrison stated that there was a need to develop a mechanism whereby Members of the Consultative Committee were kept informed of developments.

A report (CiRCULATED) of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath was considered as follows:-

Aztec a) stating that as from 3rd July 1989 the House: administrative unit for the Heath was located at Aztec House, 397-405 Archway Road, N6;

Adventure b) stating that a report as to the future of the Playpark Playpark and the One O'Clock Club was in preparation, and One although emphasising that some form of playpark would O'Clock certainly remain.

Club:

Mr. Canneaux stated that it would be inappropriate to speculate before the consultant's report had been received and considered as to what kind of playpark would ultimately be provided.

The Chairman and Mr. Simmons emphasised that the Corporation had already expressed a commitment to consult with interested parties on the future of the Playpark.

Mr. Colton hoped that the members of the Consultative Committee would be given an opportunity to comment.

Cycling: c) commenting on the problems created by cycling on the Heath away from the recognised cycle paths and the particular problems caused by mountain bikes.

Mr. Colton expressed the view that it was impractical to ban mountain bikes, but notices should be available clearly banning cycles from the hard paths.

Mr. Simmons referred to Byelaws 13 and 14 which regulated the use of cycles on the Heath.

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Mr. Canneaux explained the current difficulties in effectively enforcing the regulations due to a shortage of staff. His main concern was not the

presence of cycles, but the manner in which many of them were ridden.

Mr. Sumray emphasised the importance of clearly marking the cycle routes and asking people to ride slowly.

Mr. Milnes reported the receipt of letters from the London Borough of Camden, the London Cycling Campaign and a number of residents of Woodsome Road, NW5 on the issue of cycling.

After further discussion it was agreed that this Committee would support the more vigorous enforcement of the existing regulations as a means of controlling cycling.

Mr. Harrison emphasised that any change in policy must be communicated to the public at large, ideally through the local press, and he had it confirmed that small children's bikes were exempted from the general regulations

Skateboarding: d) referring to the increasing problems caused by skateboards, particularly in Golders Hill Park.

Mr. Canneaux detailed the problems which could be overcome if designated areas for skateboarding were set aside.

The Chairman emphasised the need for regulations that could be enforced. The level of nuisance should be assessed.

Mr. Sumray stated that it might be worthwhile ascertaining whether there were any areas that could be designated for skateboarding and, if so, encouraging people to use them.

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After further discussion it was agreed that the Management Committee be recommended to keep the matter under review for the present whilst considering the possibility of,

(i) interpreting the byelaws in such a manner that they are reasonably applicable to

skateboarding;

(ii) designated areas and permissible times for skateboarding.

Drainage: e) detailing plans for drainage works at Parliament Hill Fields and, subsequently, Hampstead Heath Extension.

Mr. Canneaux stated that the works at Parliament Hill Fields had now commenced.

Mr. Hammerson was concerned as to possible damage to the watertable and the archaeological aspect.

Mr. Canneaux replied that there was no problem as regards the watertable at Parliament Hill Fields. However, the Extension was a more sensitive area from this point of view and the proposals, therefore, included the construction of a bund (which would be seeded with wildflowers) to prevent flash flooding at times of heavy rainfall. He undertook to consider consulting the Museum of London as regards the archaeological question.

Mr. Simmons pointed out that there was a requirement that all reports submitted to the Management Committee had to take account of the ecological effect of any proposal being put forward.

Mr. Sumray enquired as to whether any changes were intended to the management policy for the sports pitches once the drainage works had been completed.

Mr. Canneaux replied that once the works were finished and the pitches in an improved condition the intention was to promote the facilities in order to increase useage.

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New f) reporting as to the sites being considered for Service the development of new service accommodation and as Accommodation: to the further discussions that would be held.

in answer to a question regarding the size of the proposed development, Mr. Canneaux replied that it was unlikely that more than one acre of land would be used. As to the building itself, the Hampstead Heath Acts precluded a construction in excess of 20'

in height. The building would have to fulfill operational requirements at a reasonable cost and needed to be fairly close to the facilities of the Heath.

Mr. Sumray stated that the loss of the tennis courts to provide a site would be resisted. He was also concerned that a decision to use the Lido area might impede any future development of the Lido itself.

The Chairman replied that should the loss of the tennis courts be contemplated that would only be on the basis that they were re-provided elsewhere. The Chairman also stated that Mr. Sumray's point regarding the Lido was recognised.

Mr. Rigby emphasised that the principal reason for the Corporation having to consider the provision of new service accommodation was the disgraceful condition of the present facilities provided at Parliament Hill.

Mr. Simmons explained that once the consultant's report had been received and reported to the Management Committee the process of consultation would start.

Pergola: g) detailing the current restrictions on access to the Pergola pending extensive works thereto.

Mr. Simmons stated that the City Engineer was currently preparing a report on works required to the Pergola. The negotiations with the London Residuary Body had realised a sum of £500,000 for the project. The structure was listed and advice would be sought from English Heritage before any works commenced.

Mr. Sumray pointed out that it was currently possible to gain access to the Pergola.

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Mr. Canneaux replied that the notice warning people away from the Pergola was being continually removed by vandals. His staff were, therefore, keeping an eye on the Pergola in order to try and prevent people wandering on to it.

The Chairman stated that additional resources were being sought for next year in order to increase the

number of patrols on the Heath which would, of course, assist in this instance.

Management h) reporting as to the Corporation's intention to Plan: prepare a Management Plan for the Heath; this was a long term project which would involve a great deal of consultation.

Mrs. de Joia stated that her association would welcome the opportunity to discuss policy issues with the Corporation. She also expressed interest in the Corporation's views on the policies of the London Borough of Camden as they affected the fringes of the Heath.

Mr. Canneaux stated that work on the preparation of the Management Plan should commence in October 1989, and the Chairman confirmed that the Plan would be a suitable matter for discussion within the Consultative Committee.

Mr. Greenall referred to a number of significant panoramas that were viewable from the Heath and he emphasised the importance of recording them.

Mr. Hammerson referred to the Himalayan balsam problem and braken in the area of Kenwood. He was also concerned that the tree screen at the Ladies Pond was trimmed last year.

Mr. Canneaux stated that he was aware of the balsam and braken problems, although on the Golders Hill side it had been eradicated. He undertook to look into the matter of the tree screen at the Ladies Pond and assured the Committee that there was no intention to do further such work.

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Mr. Harrison was concerned that the Management Plan should take account of the fringes of the Heath. He suggested that the Corporation should, whenever possible, consult with the relevant residents' associations before commenting on planning applications affecting particular areas. Consultation would have to take place informally as matters could not always be left for meetings of this Committee.

Mr. Simmons replied that the Management Committee

accepted that they must, as far as they were able, look after the fringes of the Heath by making representations on any relevant planning application. Hitherto the Committee had relied on the knowledge of Mrs. Jay of the Heath and Old Hampstead Society in these matters but this subject was something the Corporation would have to develop. The Management Plan would be discussed with the Consultative Committee, but further consultation would depend on the nature of the document and how this would be undertaken would be resolved at a later date.

Staff: i) detailing the current staffing levels.

Mr. Canneaux was heard as to the present staff situation at the Lido and assured the Committee that, despite the difficulties, every effort would be made to avoid closures next summer.

Other (i) Mr. Hall referred to the problems caused by Business: dogs, particularly in the area of the Parliament Hill footbridge. He suggested that the use of "poop scoops" should be encouraged.

The Chairman replied that people had strongly held but differing views on this subject. It had been discussed by the Management Committee who had agreed that sweeping changes in policy should be discouraged, rather than there should be a tighter enforcement of the existing regulations. He assured the Committee that Mr. Canneaux would monitor the situation.

(ii) Mr. Sumray pointed out that the panoramic map of London at Kite Hill had disappeared.

Mr. Canneaux replied that the map had been stolen, although it will be replaced.

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(iii) Mr. Sumray enquired as to what was being done about the accumulated rubbish at West Heath.

Mr. Canneaux replied that every effort was being made to deal with the problem.

(iii) Mrs. Allen referred to the problems caused by traffic associated with the Kenwood Concerts which lead to parking on the Heath. She had

written to English Heritage about the problem but had not received a reply.

Mr. Canneaux replied that the traffic and its effects were problems for English Heritage and the Police. indeed the Management Committee had already made representations to English Heritage and the Police. He stated that whilst there were some very limited concessions to park on the Heath adjacent to the concert site, he hoped that these were not being abused. !Certainly, the Corporation would not tolerate parking on its area of the Heath.

Mr. Rigby pointed out that the current problems were a consequence of the success of the concerts. Parking was a big problem which the Police must address.

(v) Mr. Harrison was heard as to the proposal that a representative of the Consultative Committee be appointed as a Member of the Management Committee.

Mr. Simmons replied that the Order transferring the Heath to the Corporation had, in defining the constitution of the Committees, precluded this proposal. The matter had been taken up with the Department of the Environment, but the Department remained unmoved.

Mr. Greenall enquired whether a Consultative Committee member could attend the Management Committee as an observer.

(vi) Mr. Harrison enquired as to the policy on the temporary use of the road across the Heath.

Mr. Canneaux replied that he relied on his staff to intorm him if use of the road was being abused by contractors. The road was for emergency vehicles only.

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(vii) Mr. Canneaux undertook to consider a suggestion trom Mr. Mammerson that interpretive facilities be provided on the Heath.

Future it was agreed that meetings of the Consultative

Meetings: Committee be held in March and September of each year.

it was further agreed that in the special circumstances of the current year the next meeting be held on a date to be arranged in November.