

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Committee(s): | Date(s): |
| Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee | 22 nd July 2013 |
| Subject: Queen's Park Draft Conservation Management Plan | Public |
| Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath | For Decision |
| Summary | |
| <p>This report provides an update on the production of the new Conservation Management Plan for Queen's Park. The first draft of the CMP is enclosed with this report for the views and opinions of the Committee. Further public consultation will be undertaken following any proposed amendments by the Committee in order to seek wider public opinion on the strategic components of the draft plan.</p> | |
| Recommendation | |
| <p>That the views of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee be received on the draft Conservation Management Plan and proposals for wider public consultation be endorsed.</p> | |

Main Report

Background

1. Chris Blandford Associates were appointed consultants in 2012 to prepare a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Queen's Park. The plan is being developed to ensure that over the long term the significance attributes of the park are conserved. The CMP for Queen's Park is now in its first draft. The park manager formulated the Queen's Park CMP Working Group (QPCMPWG) and arranged a number of focus group sessions under the headings; Natural Environment, Built Environment & Infrastructure, Community & Recreation and Heritage. Focus group sessions were held in November and December 2012 with key objectives and policies formulated by this group. The current draft contains an executive summary, a focused set of policies and aspirational goals with broad timescales and estimated costs.

Current CMP Draft

2. The Executive Summary includes a breakdown of the key headlines, aims and objectives and provides a quick overview of the plan. This is a large

document and the inclusion of this section is important in enabling readers to pick and choose the section of the document they want to read.

3. The Executive Summary has been broken down in to six areas, Introduction, Understanding the Heritage, Statement of Significance, Risks and Opportunities, Aims and Objectives, and Adoption and Review.
4. An earlier SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats) analysis had been carried out internally with staff from the across North London Open Spaces Division and with park users at a roadshow event. This SWOT analysis supported both Chris Blandford Associates and the QPCMPWG with the process and focused their thoughts on considering aims, objectives and goals. During the focus group sessions in November and December 2012, the groups also carried out their own SWOT analysis and a comprehensive list of objectives, aims and proposed policies for the future management of the park were discussed.
5. A Statement of Significance identifies what is important about Queen's Park and why. This helps define what the CMP is seeking to protect and enhance, informing the conservation vision, aims and objectives for future management of the park.
6. Risks and opportunities have been identified in the draft and these have been produced from the work with focus groups, staff and public consultation.
7. Aims and objectives within the CMP have been broken down in to five topic areas; Heritage, Built Environment & Infrastructure, Natural Environment, Community & Recreation and Managing Information about Heritage. The context of each topic is set out with an overriding objective, associated essential actions and aspirational goals.
8. Overriding Objectives for each topic area are:
 - **Heritage** – *Conserve and enhance the park's historical values.*
 - **Managing Information about Heritage** – *Ensure good understanding of the park's significance through systematic approach to managing information and high quality interpretation.*
 - **Built environment and Infrastructure** – *Conserve and enhance the park's built environment and infrastructure, ensuring it is fit for purpose, in good condition and in keeping with the character of the site.*
 - **Natural Environment** – *Conserve and enhance the natural environment of the site.*
 - **Community and Recreation** – *Conserve and enhance the site's community and recreational values, providing facilities and activities which meet visitor's needs, whilst conserving the site's other values.*
9. An action plan provides a summary of overriding objectives and associated essential actions. The essential actions have been prioritised on criteria of importance and urgency, expected timescales, responsible person for delivery and indicative cost for each headline topic.
10. Essential actions have been given a broad indication of costs from low < £1,000 to high >£100,000.

11. Each essential action has been prioritised on the criteria of importance and urgency. Actions which have a significant impact on the park's values and/or which are addressing urgent issues are defined as having a high priority. Delivery timescales are defined below;
 - **Short Term** is defined as delivery within 1 – 2 years;
 - **Medium Term** is defined as delivery within 3 - 5 years;
 - **Long Term** is defined as delivery within 6+ years (all aspirational goals would fall in to this category).
12. The draft document contains a list of potential funding sources to support implementation of the essential actions in the action plan.
13. Some actions are already in progress and are currently being undertaken by staff or the management team and achieved through the parks local risk budget.
14. Careful consideration will need to be given how the prioritisation between the essential actions needed to retain the key areas of the parks "significance" and more aspirational goals, especially as the park has recently faced budgetary cuts to its staff resource and other areas. Any immediate essential actions must be realistic and achievable. The production of the CMP will also open potential external funding sources that are likely to be necessary to pursue if all the actions are to be achieved.

History of Queen's Park

15. A historical document was produced in March 2011 by Land Use Consultants who were appointed by the City of London to carry out research and develop 'A History of Queen's Park' document. This historical document has been important in highlighting the importance of the parks designer Alexander McKenzie in the landscape designer movement of the time.

Public Consultation

16. The Focus Group sessions that were held in November and December 2012 comprised of City of London employees, the Brent Museum Curator, representatives from local Residents Associations, local sports coaches, and local residents with an interest in one or more of the five specific key topic areas. Some individuals were unable to attend the group sessions, but provided their feedback in to the process at a later date.
17. The draft CMP was well received at the recent meeting of Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group.
18. It is important that the views and opinions of park users on the strategic aspects of the CMP are captured and understood. Their comments and suggestions will help shape and develop the final CMP document. It is recommended that further public consultation takes place with the community,

stakeholders and statutory consultees with the support of the Consultants, Chris Blandford Associates and City of London staff over the next few months.

19. It is suggested that at least three further consultation events are held in the park over the summer period. This will include a session on Queen's Park Day which takes place on September 15th 2013. This event alone can receive up to 15,000 visitors.
20. Modelling similar events which have taken place at other Open Spaces within the Department, further consultation can include the use of story boards, information panels and postcard feedback. At these events visitors will be given an opportunity for to give feedback on the draft CMP and future developments in the park. Final analysis arising from this process should then be subject to further communication.
21. On July 10th 2013 following advice from a local Ward Councillor at the recent Joint Consultative Group, the Park Manager will give a brief presentation at the Brent Connects Forum updating residents from the Borough of Brent on the process and inviting them to comment on the CMP or attend one of the consultation events in the park over the summer period.
22. A similar presentation will be given to the Queen's Park Area Residents Association on the 11th July 2013 at their monthly meeting.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

23. The CMP meets the Corporate Community Strategy 3. *Environment - A World Class City which protects promotes and enhances our environment Departments*, 4. *Promotion A world Class City which is vibrant and culturally rich*. It also meets the Departmental Strategic Aims – *Involving communities and partners in developing a sense of place through care and management of our sites; Deliver sustainable working practices to promote the variety of life and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations and Promote opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation, learning and healthy living*.

Implications

24. Many of the essential actions will be funded from the Queen's Park local risk budget. It is recognised that in the current economic climate other actions may require funding from external sources.
25. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

26. It is acknowledged that Queen's Park continues to be a popular open space within the community, providing a wide and diverse range of facilities and services. The process of developing a CMP has helped to identify those

“significant” components of the park enabling a long term maintenance and management strategy for the park to be developed. Many of the essential actions can be funded through the Superintendents’ local risk budgets, other more aspirational goals will need to be funded through external sources if they are to be realised.

Appendices

- Draft - Queen’s Park Conservation Management Plan (CBA, March 2013)

Background Papers:

A History of Queen’s Park (LUC, March 2011)

Richard Gentry

Hampstead Heath Constabulary & Queen’s Park Manager

T: 020 8969 5661

E: richard.gentry@cityoflondon.gov.uk