



**Ponds Project Stakeholder Group
Monday 24 March 2014, 6.00pm
Parliament Hill meeting room**

Present:

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| Karen Beare | KB | Fitzroy Park RA (Acting Chair) |
| Jeremy Simons | JLS | City of London elected member (Deputy Chair) |
| Mary Cane | MC | Kenwood Ladies Pond Association |
| Lynda Cook | LC | Heath & Hampstead Society |
| Philip Everett | PE | Project Board Director, City of London |
| Geoff Goss | GG | Highgate Men's Pond Association |
| Michael Hammerson | MH | Highgate Society |
| Janis Hardiman | JH | Vale of Health Society |
| Prem Holdaway | PH | Hampstead Heath Anglers Society |
| Harriet King | HK | Brookfield Mansions RA |
| Charles Leonard | CL | Oak Village RA |
| Mary Port | MP | Dartmouth Park CAAC |
| Ellin Stein | ES | Mansfield Park CAAC |
| Bob Warnock | BW | Superintendent of Hampstead Heath |
| Armorer Wason | AW | West Hill Court RA |
| Peter Wilder | PW | Strategic Landscape Architect |
| Jennifer Wood | JW | Communication Officer, City of London (notes) |

Alternate members observing

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| Harley Atkinson | HA | Fitzroy Park RA |
| Nick Bradfield | NB | Dartmouth Park CAAC |
| Tony Ghilchik | TG | Heath & Hampstead Society |
| Virginia Rounding | VR | City of London elected member |

Officers observing:

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| Declan Gallagher | DG | Operations Service Manager, Hampstead Heath |
| Richard Gentry | RG | Constabulary Manager, Hampstead Heath |
| Jonathan Mears | JM | Conservation Manager, Hampstead Heath |
| Paul Monaghan | PM | Assistant Director of Engineering, City of London |
| Peter Snowdon | PS | Project Consultant, City of London |
| Esther Sumner | ES | Ponds Project and Management Support Officer |

Presenters:

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|--------------|----|-------------------------------|
| Steve Evison | SE | Resources for Change |
| Erica Sutton | ES | Resources for Change |
| Giles Brooks | GB | Contract Manager, BAM Nuttall |
| Ian Grant | IG | Site Agent, BAM Nuttall |

1. Apologies

Tom Brent, Rachel Douglas, Muriel Mitcheson, Jane Shallice
KB announced Marc Hutchinson's resignation from the PPSG as the HMPA representative and thanked him for his input over the past two years. Geoff Goss and Robert Sutherland-Smith will continue to represent the HMPA.

2. Approval of note of previous meeting

LC – on page 2, item 5. In interests of accuracy the note should be changed to ‘prove’ not ‘demonstrate’

KB – notes have always been accurately recorded by JW and her notes say ‘demonstrate’ so note will not be changed.

LC – wants it recorded in the note that this change was refused.

3. The way forward

- PW recapped on where we are and where we are going. There will be two seminars – Sunday, 13 April and Saturday, 10 May, then another meeting of the PPSG on 19 May.
- 13 April will deal with upper ponds and 10 May will deal with lower ponds. The format will be the morning in the Conference Room, lunch and then an afternoon walk on site.
- Atkins will attend both seminars.
- The 19 May meeting will be a chance to review all of the proposals before submission to planning. Camden will also be organizing a public forum at a time and date TBC.
- PH – can’t make 13 April and neither can anyone for the HHAS.
- BW – we will arrange another time for you to be taken through the information and given a chance to input.
- HK – can we have the information to review before the seminars?
- PW – this is a reasonable request and we will do our best.
- GG – will these seminars be an opportunity to revise the proposed options?
- PW – no intention to go back over work that has already taken place. We want to focus on the impact on the Heath and on aspects PPSG can have influence over.
- GG – from a Men’s pond perspective, because the work is concentrated at our pond, it is unfortunate but we cannot be positive about the proposals and are not able to input in a constructive way.
- HK – wants to see more on the dam engineering – drawings etc.
- PW – yes we will look at those kind of things, but we won’t be going back over the hydrology or the basis for the scheme.
- LC – there are still outstanding comments from Jeremy Wright on the QRA.
- PE – an answer was published and while it does not answer every question we have made it clear that we will not be giving detailed responses on those questions.
- LC – we were supposed to be getting designs to review before this meeting.
- PW – Atkins were unwilling to issue anything in a draft form as they will end up in the public domain.
- PH – still feel it is unclear what the size of the PMF flood is. It has gone from a 1 in 10,000 to a maximum PMF and now to a 1 in 400,000.
- KB – this has been dealt with before so we will not be revisiting it now.
- CL – an email was sent earlier that day with the outstanding requests of Brookfield Mansions and EGOVRA – they want to see further ground investigations west of HG No.1, passive overflow and there were a few valid proposals which were never considered.
- PW – there is a possibility that Atkins have considered these proposals but they are not viable.
- KB – there is a frustration that these ideas and proposals have disappeared and there is a lack of acknowledgement of why from Atkins.
- PW – agree – I will get back to you on these ideas and proposals.
- GG – thinks it’s a problem that we are now left with this proposal which involves major structural engineering and is in my opinion against the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act.

4. Results of Public Consultation

- SE from Resources for Change gave a 10 minute presentation on the consultation results.
- ES – direct mail goes straight in bin and pond side signs were muddled and difficult to read as too low down.
- SE – agree direct mail would not have been enough on its own but with all the other media used, the consultation reached a lot of people. We had a number of people say they thought the information was clear and presented well. There were a number of people who raised questions about imagery. Resources for Change had some input into the information but the design was down to the City and Atkins.
- KB – should Resources for Change not have advised if information was difficult to read – like signs too low?
- SE – yes that’s a fair point.
- GG – was the exercise considered a success? Numbers were low?
- SE – while numbers were not as high as we would have liked, it did succeed in raising awareness and it gave the City an idea of where to go next.
- GG – as scheme is not popular then surely the City should be looking at why.
- SE – no because there were a relatively low number of people who oppose the scheme.
- GG – two public meetings took place organized by H&HS and Highgate Men’s Pond Association. A few hundred people attended and they were overwhelmingly opposed.
- AW – impressed with the consultation exercise and it is much more difficult to get those who are neutral or positive about a project to respond. The number that are opposed are a relatively small number. Only negative comment was it focused on very narrow options which left it difficult to leave more broad comments.
- SE – we wanted to have a broader scope but did not want to raise expectations about what the consultation would affect.
- LC – p37 of report about Dam Nonsense is nonsensical. Those who were really concerned would have been involved whether for Dam Nonsense or not. Also carried out during winter which is why there is a low response.
- SE – will have a look at P37 and respond. The time of year was not able to be changed and while it might have affected number of respondents, it would not affect type of response.
- GG – this is about flooding and risk to life, the poor response is because so many people have questions over the current proposals.
- SE – flooding was not directly mentioned as both of the options dealt with the water management – it was about a preference of these options.
- CL – elephant in the room is Dam Nonsense organized by the very powerful H&HS. There is a silent majority who are for the proposals which reduce risk of flooding and it is sad we can’t have a sensible discussion and unfair that there is such a powerful lobby against the proposals.

5. Introduction of BAM Nuttall

- GB introduced himself and IG
 - 3rd/4th biggest contractor in UK
 - Small company feel
 - Hands on/ practical
 - Company vision is to be everyone’s preferred civil engineering company.
 - Early involvement means they be able to get best possible design. Bring lots of experience from similar works such as Brent Reservoir.
 - Strong safety culture, “don’t walk by” – also open to constructive criticism.
 - Do not sub-contract much.
 - Great expertise among staff and will be choosing small plant for this work.
 - Minimal footprint and minimize wagon movements on site and in surrounding areas.
 - Hoping to avoid draining ponds while work is taking place.

- Avoid pouring concrete on site.
- Try to keep work localized in small compound areas.
- We want to deliver a first class scheme that everyone is happy with.
- GB – BAM are using their own site investigation team Richies, for the GI.
- MC – given you are such a large company we were disappointed not to have female team for the Ladies Pond.
- GB – still not as many females working in the construction industry but we are trying to change this.
- IG – Site investigation mobilized today at Ladies Pond. The drilling will begin tomorrow. There is an office at Kenwood year. Additional trial pits have been added – west of Ladies Bathing Pond and west of Model Boating Pond.
- CL – can soil west of HG No. 1 be investigated?
- LC – how will you deal with nesting birds?
- IG – Our environmental manager has been out on site checking all of the areas and has been liaising with the Heath's ecologists. If a nesting bird is found then the borehole will be moved or postponed.
- HK – trial pits are intrusive – when will we know where the soil is going to come from?
- IG – that is the purpose of trial pits.
- HK – will there be pre-cast concrete and how will it be moved in?
- GB – there will be some concrete but only small pieces that will be brought in on small vehicles. Dams are all earthworks but there are some concrete elements.
- CL – is there an opportunity to build in more water storage during excavation?
- KB – access to ladies pond – will Millfield Lane be used?
- IG – we have been discussing access from the west.
- BW – we will do everything we can to avoid Millfield Lane.
- MH - the dams are part of the archaeological infrastructure of the Heath; we have no knowledge of their construction and the opportunity should be taken to do so; also that palaeobotanical samples of the ground surfaces on which they were constructed should be analysed to find more about the local environment at the time.
- IG – MOLA archaeologists will look at samples on site before they go off for analysis.
- MH – Archaeologists will need to do the analysis of those samples themselves; cannot tell from looking at them on site what pollen, insect remains, etc they may contain. Works on the dams will need to be monitored and construction detail recorded.
- KB – it would be interesting from a geological perspective to see soil analysis.
- IG – all of the information goes to the British Geological Society where it can be publically accessed.
- PE – we have no issue with publicising our findings upon completion.

6. Presentation of new visualisations including spillways on Highgate Chain.

- PW presented a series of plans and 3D visualisations of proposed spillways on Highgate Chain.
- Stock Pond: 10 – 14 trees at risk.
- MC – removing trees at the south west corner of Stock Pond could open up a window into the ladies pond.
- PW – most of the trees being removed are north of the path and only a few small trees are being removed south of the pond.
- PH – why does spillway need to be wider at various points?
- NB – opening up ponds by removing trees for better views is a good idea in my opinion.
- Model Boating Pond – 60m wide spillway at widest point. 10-15 trees at risk.
- ES – can trees on spillways which are removed be replaced with trees with lesser roots?

- PW – more about the trunks. Panel Engineer is against trees on dam structure but not on entire spillway.
- Men’s Bathing Pond – 2-3 trees at risk.
- PW – need more information here on where spillway goes and where concrete wall goes.
- CL – it would be helpful to have contours marked in the wider context.
- HG No. 1.- A deflection wall has been built to protect Brookfield. 4-5 trees at risk. Spillway is still being worked on.
- PH – contours are not correct.
- PW – I will take back to Atkins that we need more information on contours.
- PH – if deflection wall is added then water will avoid Brookfield but be sent down the street and could wash school children away.
- PM – the speed of flow on the ground will have been greatly reduced so this will be less dangerous than it is currently.
- HK – why not take it from Men’s Pond and dump it all in a field west of HG No.1?
- HK – would like to see where water level sits before it goes over the spillway. Overflow is in middle of spillway so it does not seem it will be used.
- CL – there is also a lower point in HG No. 1 where water will spill over before it goes over spillway.
- HK – a drawn section would be very helpful – through dam, through spillway and through existing.
- KB – clarification needed on contour lines
- LC – Read from PW’s job description: *“To help assuage local fears that the project is purely Engineering led”, it has been proposed that the City should appoint (at an additional cost) a Strategic Landscape Architect to work alongside the panel engineer. This will ensure that there is challenge within the detailed design process to protect the natural aspect of the Heath and to give reassurance to the community that the 1871 Act is fully taken into account, in the design of the dams to meet the 1975 Act (which potentially could reduce the overall consultation period),”* and asked him if he was fulfilling it.
- PW – yes – I am making sure your concerns reach Atkins. The upcoming seminars will give Atkins a chance to answer questions. It’s not just about Atkins, now we have BAM Nuttall on board who are also working with us and giving their expert advice on how to minimize impact. It’s not my job to have an opinion but to express your opinion to Atkins.
- JH – Vale of Health Pond. As it is not part of a system and if water did overtop, it would go into a valley and not hurt anyone, why does work need to take place?
- PW – this dam also needs work to improve resilience – just work to level out the crest not much work required.
- LC – will we have drawings to look at before the seminars?
- PE – yes you will.
- MH – having looked at the spillway works, there is a large area being affected. There are Saxon and mediaeval farms and features in the area, and close by is a scheduled Bronze Age monument, suggesting a Bronze Age landscape over the area; and two major prehistoric sites are known nearby. Trial trenches to assess the potential for archaeological remains will be essential, as they cannot be predicted in view of the absence of archaeological records for the area.
- PE – we will take MOLA’s advice on this.
- MH – I used to be an archaeologist for the Museum of London, and believe that trial excavation in the areas to be affected by the spillways must be carried out as the area is archaeologically unknown, there having been virtually no excavations carried out within the area of the Heath, but its potential from circumstantial evidence is high.

7. Next Meetings

- Sunday 13 April (seminar)
 - Saturday 10 May (seminar)
 - Monday 19 May
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- KB – can people let JW know of attendance.
 - Seminars will last from approximately 10am until 4pm.

8. AOB

- LC – when will results of ecological surveys be available?
- BW – these will be published soon and we will let you know when they are.