

Annual Working Party Review – Minutes of Beech Gardens Landscaping Working Party – December 2013 – June 2014

Landscaping Working Party
16.12.13 @ 6.30

Present	Randall Anderson	Chair
	Nancy Chessum	Gardens Advisory Group (GAG)
	Anne Napthine	GAG
	Gillian Laidlaw	GAG
	Robert Barker	Asset Maintenance Working Party and Lauderdale
	Rosie Harvey	Defoe
	Sarah Hudson	GAG and Sustainability Working Party
	Janet Wells	John Trundle
	Tess Bryde-Williams	Bryer
	Karen Tarbox	CoL. Head of Property Services
	Christopher Bate	CoL. Project Manager, Beech Gardens
	Michael Bennett	CoL. Barbican Estate Manager
	Helen Davinson	CoL. Resident Services Manager
	Louisa Allen	CoL. City Gardens Manager
	Apologies	Tim Macer
Paula Tomlinson		GAG
David Murray		Bunyan
Peter Inskip		Shakespeare

- Introductions
- Setting the scene
 - Waterproofing scheme
 - Construction trials have now started
 - Works will commence in New Year lasting 62 weeks
 - Landscaping scheme to run in parallel
 - Replanting to be agreed in advance
 - Commitment to put the planting back
 - Funding not yet full agreed. £300K has been approved in the interim.
 - Outlines back from Landscape Architect with indicative costings of £600K to £900K
 - These have not yet been looked at by a Quantity Surveyor so savings could possibly be made with soil and planting
 - Additionally some possible doubling up with main project
- Parameters
 - Cost. £300K interim approved
 - Constraints as to plant type
 - Review has shown that there is no obvious tree root incursion.
 - Will be weight restrictions
 - Structural weight load and waterproofing load may differ.

- Waterproofing project will have an insurance backed guarantee. BEO is yet to talk to insurers about Landscaping.
 - To include pond re-establishment
 - Gardens have a Listed Status of 2*
 - Listing of Gardens is different to that of building in that it is advisory rather than statutory. (some members did not think this was the case and CB stated he would confirm again with Planners)
 - Joanna Gibbons the commissioned Landscape Architect will also be working with Avanti to formulate the LBMG for Landscaping (Volume II)
 - The Beech Gardens scheme will help to inform the guidelines
 - Intention to put a planting scheme back that meets residents desires.
 - Some areas are not so visual so perhaps cut down there (specifically the west of JTC)
- Possible Interim Measures
 - After works, there will a 12 month defects liability period.
 - BEO considering the possibility of waiting to the end of this period before major planting. Grass and/or sedum for the interim.
 - RB expresses the view that it's best to test to full load capacity during this period. Also would residents be prepared to wait another year?
- Irrigation
 - Dependent upon the scheme that's chosen
 - The brief was to look at sustainable planting
 - To grow from young to need less water
 - O/ground tanking in the first years a possibility
 - Very little room for piping
 - Where would the tanks be?
 - Will there be rainwater harvesting? No
 - The pipework will be sleeved so beds could be irrigated in the future
 - The fountain will still need water supply and this now needs to be chlorinated.
 - LA pointed out that when the trees get larger they will need more water
- Wishlist
 - Variety of height in time
 - Quick height in key areas
 - Important that children can play in and around planting
 - Seasonal change plus green in winter
 - 2/3 small trees – edible?
 - Christchurch Greyfriars (trad. Herbaceous) – this may need a twist for the Barbican
 - The Highline
 - Birdlife
 - Bird boxes
 - Good for insects (in turn good for birds)
 - Perfume
 - DINGLY DELL – privacy from podium to be retained.

- Some grass
 - Moving grasses
 - Undulation in beds
 - Sustainable planting with minimum watering needed
 - Aldersgate St side of JTC – to use air quality plants (silver birch, lavender and conifers)
 - To be careful about non plant structure (ongoing maintenance etc.)
 - A nod to existing planting further down Ben Jonson Highwalk
 - Flax
 - Not formal
 - Lawn edging (as used elsewhere on estate) to help stop soil runoff – has proved very successful.
 - Take into account the wind
- AOB
 - Flooding – currently the drains in the bed can't cope and flow out onto the podium. There are no extra drains within the BG area, there will now be channel from the beds to the drains. RM wanted to ensure that the channel covers would be of an approved material.
 - This is a prototype but there should be flow through to the rest of Ben Jonson Highwalk. How does this work with the Streetscene planting? KT will speak again with Streetscene officers again as BEO now has more influence and control over what happens on the podium.
 - Next steps.
 - Minutes and wish list to all
 - Wish list to be forwarded to Joanna
 - 2 schemes – RB stated these should be costed with provisional approval before consulting more widely.

Next meeting: 14 January – 6.30 – Residents' Meeting Room

MEETING	Landscaping Working Party	DATE	Tuesday 15th January @ 6.30 pm
OFFICERS ATTENDING	Randall Anderson (RA) - CHAIR -Working Party Chair Karen Tarbox (KT) - Head of Housing Needs, Property & Barbican Estate Housing Services Michael Bennett (MB) - Barbican Estate Manager Sarah Styles (SS) - House Officer Nick Day (ND) - Opitgreen Limited Johanna Gibbons (JG) - J&L Gibbons Kevin Jones (KJ) - J&L Gibbons		
RESIDENTS ATTENDING	Nancy Chessum -Gardens Advisory Group (GAG) Anne Naphine - GAG Gillian Laidlaw - GAG		

	<p>Sarah Hudson - GAG & Sustainability Working Party Robert Barker - Asset Maintenance Working Party & Lauderdale Tower representative Rosie Harvey - Defoe House representative Janet Wells - John Trundle Court representative Tess Bryde-Williams - Bryer Court representative</p>	
Apologies	<p>Helen Davinson - Resident Services Manager Tim Macer - Willoughby Resident & RCC Chair Christopher Bate (CB) - Housing Surveyor Louisa Allen - City Gardens Manager Paula Tomlinson - GAG Ronan Kavanagh - Bunyan Court representative Peter Inskip - Shakespeare Tower representative</p>	
Item no.	SUBJECT/DISCUSSION	Action
1.	<p>Introduction by JG about her working with Avanti and the City of London Planning Department to look at different approaches to be reviewed by the Working Party. Each approach would be looking at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the water resource • taking into account the soil types, the wind directions, and that it is a south facing plot • the Dingly Dell • how it would fit into the other environments such as Fann Street • the biovitic city movement to understand the role of all gardens within the City • skateboard prevention • severe shading, large water bodies and artificial levels • the character of the landscape • the wishlist of the Working Party 	
2.	<p>Proposed approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach 1 :Plant it small, see it grow: an ecological priority • urban wildness to contrast with architectural formality • a sense of upland landscape and extension of the Fann Street wildlife garden • wild flowers and non-mow grass • edible agenda • provides an environment for wildlife • no automatic irrigation • Approach 2: Instant gratification: floral exotics and specimen multi-stems • ornamental grasses and mature, plotted plants • mixed shrub planting for year round foliage and floral interest • vines and passion fruit on climbing structures • automatic irrigation • Approach 3: High Biodiversity: urban orchard • Going back to the notion of the original planting • Fruit trees selected for heritage interest and significance • Roses on climbing structures 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no automatic irrigation <p>Opitgreen showed the construction of their green roofs to the Working Party. The system stores water and prevents pooling.</p>	
3.	<p>Further questions/ comments from Working Party following the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the insurers placed any constrictions eg the load of the landscaping? JG is aware of certain constraints, and RA confirmed that the City of London has not put a ban on any irrigation being installed. What about the effect on the wind? JG explained that planting will adapt, the plants are not staked to allow movement with the wind and the root ball adapts to the environment. The style of the approach will not influence the Listed Guidelines currently being worked on. Any climbers on the columns would have an air gap and be constructed of tension cables. Concern about vandalism if it was an urban orchard. Comments were given on the inclusion of statement plants, variations in heights, trees for the birds, the plan for the ongoing maintenance and if a different gardening skill level would be required, the maximum height of the plant materials, colours and seasonal charge to be written into the design. Is the Listing of the gardens different to that of the Listed Building category? KT and CB will liaise with Planning Department for the answer. 	CB
4.	<p>Summary of feedback from Working Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority felt that Approach 1 with a small amount of Approach 3 with some additional structure from possibly floral exotics would be the best way forward JG preference is Approach 1 	
5.	<p>Further actions/ comments once feedback to the approaches was received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JG to provide a shadow plan which shows how the growth will be in 5/10/15 years Approach 2 is the highest maintenance option Again officers confirmed that there will always be 2 planting schemes to be considered Consultation process to be in line with CoL projects/works consultation protocol being completed by the RCC and BRC. Frequency of the Working party meetings can be decided once JG and KT have reviewed the programme of works for VL. 	JG KT & JG

6.	Next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All agreed to meet in a month's time, date TBC. 	
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Beech Gardens Landscaping Working Party (BGLWP) minutes

MEETING	Residents Meeting Room	DATE	25/06/14 at 6.30pm
PRESENT	Randall Anderson – Chair Anne Naphine - Garden Advisory Group (GAG) Paula Tomlinson - GAG David Murray – Bunyan Court resident representative Sarah Hudson - GAG Janet Wells - John Trundle Court resident representative Tess Bryde-William - Bryer Court resident representative Robin Gough - Asset Maintenance Working Party (AMWP) Nigel Dunnett (ND) - Landscape Architect Ed Payne – Landscape Architect Karen Tarbox (KT) - COL- Head of Property Services & Barbican Christopher Bate - COL - Project Manager, Beech Gardens Michael Bennett – COL - Barbican Estate Manager Sheila Delaney - COL - House Officer Louisa Allen - COL - City Gardens Manager Bradley Vijoen - COL - City Gardens Development & Project Officer		
Apologies	Robert Barker – AMWP & Lauderdale Tower resident representative Nancy Chessum - GAG Gillian Laidlaw - GAG Tim Macer - AMWP Peter Inskip – Shakespeare Tower resident representative Rosie Harvey – Defoe House resident representative Nigel Walmsley - AMWP Fiona Lean – AMWP & Ben Jonson House resident representative Berthe Wallis - GAG		

Item no.	SUBJECT/DISCUSSION	Action/Date
1 - Re-setting the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KT - concerns about the previous 2 schemes for Beech Gardens (BG) proposed by J&L Gibbons. Concerns included - large amount of trees (and maintaining these), water retention system, irrigation, colour, load bearing issues. Consequently an alternative scheme was now being proposed. KT introduced ND ND - presentation to the group to discuss the concept of this new scheme & provided a first opportunity for him to discuss scheme with Group. KT - meeting also provides an opportunity to refresh Group with regards to deadlines e.g. funding approvals via Committee cycles, consultation process & planting. Following on from meeting - BEO to consult with all residents. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ND - presentation to BGLWP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation included examples of ND's previous works including Olympic Park, Queens Gallery entrance garden. - ND's proposed scheme was based on the following principles: irrigation, exposure & aspect, colour & human experience, biodiversity, maintenance, sustainability & cost effectiveness. - Different planting types were presented that suited planting zones according to light/shade at different times of day/year. There are 4 zones (sun/woodland edge/half sun & half shade/deep shade). - The zones incorporated biodiversity, e.g. flowers for pollination & sustainable robust planting which did not require much watering & no irrigation system. Robust planting to include careful choice of plant colours (e.g. light plants in shady areas) & multi-stemmed trees to give the effect of bushiness. This clumping of trees together would also assist the issues about air pollution. - Start up would include small trees which would take 5-10 years to develop, but this depended on soil depth. Some areas will not have soil depth for larger trees. - ND summed his proposed scheme as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement for seasonal bedding • No irrigation • Looks good all year around • Low maintenance - ND - scheme can be amended if necessary, but must be mindful of Listing implications. 	
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2 – Comments , Questions & discussion about proposed scheme

	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be discussions around functional area of the gardens which are public, e.g. the use of space & who uses the garden. For example between 12noon to 2pm the original garden was very busy & used by the public. The 'Dingly Dell' in the centre attracts anti-social behaviour (asb) in the evenings & if made secluded & dense this could increase. Fann St Wild Life Garden offers secluded areas to residents, but Beech Gardens is open to the public. How can we reconcile issues? Can we design them out? • Concerns that opening the garden up too much would cause noise to travel across the podium more easily. • There will also be more people in the area with the onset of Crossrail & also the Barbican 'Cultural Hub'. • All of the new public spaces in the last few year have generally been respected by the public • ND - we can listen to residents' needs & alter the scheme to ensure it offers a balance between the need for denser greenery to counter pollution & less dense to deter any potential asb. <p>Hard Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will pond maintenance come under Open Spaces? Yes they will discuss with BEO via the new Management Plan. <p>Soft Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we have some trees on Aldersgate St side of JTC? Yes the soil is sufficiently deep for this. • There is a deeper area on soil on the beds over Beech St tunnel. Can trees be planted here? Residents were advised that the roots were not source of water leaks. The mounds in this area make it difficult to water as the water runs off these steep mounds 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no shrubs shown in ND’s proposal, for bio-diversity. Should these not be included? Shrubs can be included, however woody plants need irrigation, but scheme can be altered • Can climbing plants be introduced, say on the turrets? Yes but watering climbers can cause problems & must be detached from the turrets. Climbers can damage fabric of the building & the turret roofs have also just been refurbished. There could also be Listing issues. The recently removed ivy near Ben Jonson Place had damaged the building. • The estate is very windy. Has this been considered in the new planting scheme? Yes, as the previous schemes raised concerns about dense single stem trees in shallow soil. There is a finite load bearing maximum load, as we need to know the height and weight of the trees in 15/20 years’ time. This is why this scheme can propose clumping multi stem trees together. • Is the future proposed Streetscene planting scheme on Ben Jonson Place a separate issue? Planting in BG will form a template for other areas of estate in line with Listed Building Guidelines. • Most residents want more height in the schemes. Will this be considered? Again depends on the budget, but there will be a compromise with planting between this scheme & the ones previously proposed. <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the budget for the proposed schemes? Approval from Committee in September will be sought to review further funding (currently £300k has been secured). However considerations include, future maintenance, whole life costs etc. <p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about the drainage system? Original drainage system is still there, but was cleaned out about 2 years ago & there will be ongoing maintenance in the future. There will also be new drainage channels to take water away from new beds. • Will proposed scheme deter skateboarders? There is a double thickness perimeter on the beds to deter skateboarders & also plants that grow over the perimeter edges, again this should deter skateboarders. <p>Irrigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the water from the Garchey system be used as recycling water to irrigate BG? Does the new scheme not require some kind of watering system? Can we have a water storage system of recycled water to water BG? Garchey water is ‘grey’ water not for suitable watering plants. There could be hand watering or a targeted irrigation system for the first year or so whilst the planting establishes itself. The scheme would utilise a water retention system. Currently no funding for a water storage/recycling system & funding is currently for a water proofing project. 	
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3 - Actions/Timelines

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were some concerns regarding the previous 2 schemes by J&L Gibbons. • It was agreed by the BGLWP that the new scheme appeared favourable in comparison with the previous one. • It was therefore proposed due to the concerns & deliverability over the previous proposed 2 schemes that the BEO would consult on only one scheme rather than the originally proposed two schemes. This was agreed with the BGLWP. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - July - amendments to proposals following comments from BGLWP - July - consult with residents & acquire feedback. Include suggestion for residents to visit Olympic Park to view ND's work & link to ND's website. - July - Open Day to be held at BEO for residents to discuss & comment on chosen scheme. Open Day to include opportunity for residents to digitally manage aspects of ND's proposed scheme & to list criteria of design and parameters. - August - BGLWP to meet again & make decision on scheme chosen - August - Landscape Architects to produce final landscape design & detailed planting scheme - September - Report to Committee seeking funding. 	<p style="text-align: center;">ND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BEO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BEO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BGLWP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BEO</p>
4 – Date of next meeting		
	Please note - Date of next meeting TBC	ALL