

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	20 July 2015
Projects Sub Committee	21 July 2015
Subject: Hampstead Heath Ponds Project – Update Report	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Information

Summary

The Ponds Project has now been under way for four months and continues to progress well. The 18-month construction programme is on schedule and due for completion in October 2016.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Ponds Project was initiated following a series of hydrological studies, which revealed that in the event of a severe storm, there was a risk that the reservoirs on Hampstead Heath could overtop, potentially leading to erosion and dam failure, putting lives, property and infrastructure at risk.
2. Between 2012 and the summer of 2014, a highly iterative and consultative process was undertaken to consider the design criteria and approach, and then a wide range of options. In June 2014, an option for each chain of Ponds was selected and approved, on the basis that it satisfied both the existing requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1975 and the anticipated requirements under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, whilst preserving the natural aspect and state of the Heath in the most effective manner, in accordance with the City's duties under the Hampstead Heath Act 1871 and in accordance with the agreed design principles.
3. Following Committee approval in June 2014, a planning application was submitted to the London Borough of Camden in July 2014. Planning consent was granted by Camden's Development Control Committee in January 2015, subject to Conditions and a Section 106 agreement. Preparation works took place in February and March 2015, with work on the Ponds Project starting on 13 April.

Planning Conditions and Section 106

4. Planning approval was granted, subject to both a Section 106 agreement and various Conditions. City Officers are continuing to liaise with colleagues in Atkins and the London Borough of Camden to discharge these Conditions as necessary, in line with the work programme. There are nineteen planning conditions in total. Of these, seven require no further approval but need to be complied with, seven have been approved, one part-approved (further details to be submitted) and one is awaiting approval. The remaining three Conditions relate to the Kenwood Ladies' Pond changing rooms and will require more information to be submitted, once the constructor has appointed a suitable sub-contractor for the works.
5. The Community Working Group established as part of the Conditions has been meeting monthly and includes representation from the local ward Councillors (more on this below). The London Borough of Camden also asked that three apprentices be employed. Appointments for two of these positions have been made, while the third post will be re-advertised due to lack of interest, with school leavers being targeted in July 2015. The Construction Management Plan (or Project Management Plan) is currently with the London Borough of Camden and has also been discussed by the Community Working Group.
6. Other environmental Conditions included dust monitoring and ecological measures, such as a bat mitigation strategy, both of which have been progressed by the City of London in collaboration with the designers and constructor.

Construction work

7. The majority of work has so far been concentrated at the Model Boating Pond, where a large compound has been fenced off, closing the paths that run adjacent to this Pond. A temporary path has been created around the western edge of the compound for vehicle and pedestrian access while the works take place. At the end of May, a 40-ton crane installed a temporary steel sheet pile dam. This dam was constructed by pushing sheet metal piles into the ground using a silent, vibrationless method. Now complete, this temporary dam has enabled the southern end of the Pond to be drained and its silt removed, so that the existing earth dam can be raised by 2.5m. The material for this new structure is being sourced from the borrow pits within the work compound. Top soil has been stripped from within the compound for haul routes, silt-processing and the borrow pits.
8. The works at Viaduct Pond are also well under way. The existing dam has been raised by 200mm, a new overflow buried pipe has been installed, and a spillway created. This spillway will be lined with turf, which is currently being grown from a specified seed mix.
9. During July, works have started at the Vale of Health and Hampstead No. 2 Ponds and will continue at the Model Boating Pond.

Community Working Group

10. The Community Working Group (CWG), which was set up in agreement with London Borough of Camden, has continued to meet monthly. A set of data has been agreed with them, by which they can be reassured the City is monitoring various aspects of the project correctly (see Appendix 1). This monitoring data, together with the programme data for the next two months and a list of any complaints and actions resulting from these, enable the Group to see how the project is progressing. The monitoring data includes details of air quality, water quality, vehicle movements, levels and the height of the new dam structures.
11. The Group has also made several helpful suggestions, including the relocation of one of the passing bays to avoid conflict with the public at Highgate No. 1 Pond, installation of fences and earth bunds to protect tree roots, and the addition of a banksman, on foot, behind the delivery vehicles. This was initially piloted as a trial but the intention is to continue it throughout the programme, to increase the safety and confidence of Heath users during the project.
12. A series of guided walks has been taking place to coincide with work starting at each Pond. Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, the Community Working Group and the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group are invited to attend these walks, and further walks will be arranged for the general public.

Communications during construction phase

13. The Ponds Project blog (<https://hampsteadheathpondsproject.wordpress.com/>) continues to receive over 100 visits per week. The dedicated website (www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/pondsproject) is kept up-to-date and the Heath's social media feeds are being used to send information out. A weekly email update is also being sent to a list of subscribers and leaflets have been produced for staff to hand out to the public. Heath staff are regularly briefed by email and through face-to-face briefings, so they are able to answer questions and direct the public to sources of further information.
14. A time-lapse camera has been installed at the Model Boating Pond. This provides a live feed to the works happening at this location, which is accessible from the internet.

Ladies' Pond

15. During the detailed design for the Project, the supporting slab of the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing facility was assessed and shown to be in a poor condition. It was agreed that the replacement of this slab would be carried out as part of the Ponds Project. The Partnering Team are working together to develop a plan for minimising the disruption that this additional work will have on the programme. As previously reported, the constructor is investigating the use of innovative construction techniques to speed up the delivery of both the new slab and the new changing facility. These may include some level of prefabrication or the use of alternative construction materials. However, the agreed internal design of the changing rooms will remain and, by shortening the construction time of the

building, the aim is to keep both slab and building works within the original programme.

16. There is a provisional sum identified in the budget of £1.5m for the Ladies' Pond changing facility and associated slab works. The constructor is currently reviewing tenders for these works; it is anticipated that an instruction to proceed will be issued to them in the next two months. If the cost of the works can be met within the approved budget, an instruction will be issued by the Client Representative (Assistant Director of Engineering). The Committee should note that due to the time-sensitive nature of this work, an issue report may be presented for approval during the summer recess if the cost of the works exceeds the approved budget.

Conclusion

17. The Partnering Team is pleased with progress to date and continues to meet on a regular basis. The works are progressing in accordance with the programme, helped by dry weather since commencement. The range of information on the Project has been well received by the public and the blog is being viewed regularly. Any complaints are reported to the Community Working Group on a monthly basis and are being managed effectively.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Data seen by the Community Working Group.
- Appendix 2 – Pictures of works on site.

Background papers

- CARES Flood Risk Study report
- Haycock Hydrology Improvements Detailed Evaluation Process (HiDEP): Hydrology and Structure Hydraulics and Recommendations Report
- Aecom Peer Review
- Design Review Method Statement
- Design Flood Assessment
- Constrained Options Report
- Shortlist Options Report
- Interim Quantitative Risk Assessment and accompanying Position Paper
- Preferred Options Report
- Strategic Landscape Architect Review
- Ponds Project Public Consultation Report
- Application for planning permission submitted to the London Borough of Camden for engineering works to the Hampstead and Highgate chains of ponds
- Judgment of the Honourable Mrs Justice Lang in R (Heath and Hampstead Society) v Mayor (et al) of the City of London

Background papers are available at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/pondsproject

Selected previous committee reports

- Bid Report, July 2009
- Evaluation Report, May 2011
- Project update and appointment of the design team, July 2013
- Preferred Options and Non-Statutory Consultation, November 2013
- Contract Tender Report, January 2014
- Public Consultation Results, January 2014
- Option Selection Report (gateway 4c), June 2014
- Pre-Authority to Start Work Issue Report, November 2014
- Gateway 5 – Authority to Start Work Report, January 2015

Previous committee reports are available at: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/committees

Jennifer Wood

Ponds Project Liaison Officer

T: 020 7332 3847

E: jennifer.wood@cityoflondon.gov.uk