

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee - For Information	9 November 2015
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee - For Decision	23 November 2015
Subject: Landscape improvement works at the Millfield Lane entrance onto Hampstead Heath.	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Decision

Summary

This report informs Members on the proposed landscape improvement works at the Millfield Lane entrance. The intended works will be undertaken by in-house teams from across North London Open Spaces. The scheme will enhance this important gateway entrance onto the eastern side of Hampstead Heath.

Recommendation(s)

- That the Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee note the proposals to improve the hard and soft landscaping works at the Millfield Lane entrance onto Hampstead Heath.
- That the views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 23 November 2015.
- That the Members of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee support the proposals.

Main Report

Background

1. During the past seven years there has been a programme to de-clutter and remove the municipal appearance of this entrance to the Heath, and at the same time to manage the issues of de-compaction and desire lines.

Current Position

Millfield Lane Entrance

2. This entrance is well used by members of the public, swimmers walking to the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and people going to and from Kenwood.

3. Due to the toilet building being so unattractive, vegetation has been encouraged to grow, but this has been in an uncontrollable manner. This in turn has provided shelter for antisocial behaviour, and has led to the whole corner being fenced off.
4. There are unsightly desire lines, the remnants of old Christmas tree chippings and blocked views onto the Heath around this entrance.
5. There is also a grass area that is permanently waterlogged due to either a collapsed drain and/or an unsatisfactory design of a soak away which is connected to the water fountain.



Map 1: Location of Millfield Lane Entrance

6. Appendix 1 show photographs of the existing landscape and its condition and a plan of the existing layout at the Millfield Lane entrance is available at Appendix 2.

Proposals

7. The intention is to retain the existing toilet block with a long term aspirational goal to add timber cladding to the building. Views to the Model Boating Pond will be opened up, and renovation and management of desire lines will be undertaken.
8. Advice has been sought from a Landscape Architect and key staff on how best to develop the design. Initial verbal comments were shared with members of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee on their walk on 11 September 2015. Views will be sought from members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee on their walk on 7 November 2015.
9. The following hard and soft landscape improvement works are proposed and will form part of the 2015/16 Annual Work Programme:
 - Replace metal pole gate with timber pole gate (figure 1, Appendix 1).

- Crown lift yew and laurel around toilet building to allow views under canopy and light to ground level. Works to include reducing crown spread and deadwood (figure 2, Appendix 1).
- Remove all other coppiced laurel / hawthorn etc. and replace with grass and hedge around the toilet building. Grass to be maintained as 'rough grassland' (figure 3, Appendix 1).
- Plant native mixture of hawthorn, holly, dogwood, blackthorn - maintain as thicket max 1.2m high (figure 4, Appendix 1). Also new hedge maximum 1.2 high around toilet block (note 4, Appendix 3).
- Remove all chestnut pale fencing and replace (where shown) with timber post and rail to match existing along Millfield Lane (figure 5, Appendix 1).
- Crown lifting / thinning the laurel to create views into the Heath from Millfield Lane. Also remove metal pole gate and replace with wooden posts (figure 6, Appendix 1).
- Create an earth mound alongside the path to a maximum height of 1m, with a steeper profile on path side and shallow profile facing into the Heath with an aim to discourage desire lines. The mound will be maintained as rough grassland (figure 7, Appendix 1).
- Desire lines to be properly loosened and re-seeded. (Surface harrowing is insufficient to remove compaction – it needs deeper cultivation to improve drainage and air flow.) (figure 8a & 8b, Appendix 1).
- Reduce spread of willow clump to allow clear views towards the Boating Pond (figure 9, Appendix 1).
- An aspirational goal is to add timber cladding to toilet block building (figure 10, Appendix 1).
- Repair and renovate wet grass area.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The works support the City of London Corporate Plan 2015-19 – KPP5 *“increasing the impact of the City’s cultural and heritage offer on the life of London and the nation”*.
11. The design supports the Open Spaces Business Plan 2015/ 2017 to 2017/18 *“To preserve and protect our world class green spaces for the benefit of our local communities and the environment”* and aspirational goal B14 in the Hampstead Heath Management Plan Part 1 – Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007-2017 *“Improve the natural appearance and enhance the major gateways to the Heath”*.

Implications

12. The works will be carried out by the Division's multi-skilled staff, including the Arboricultural, Gardening, Keeping and Technical Maintenance Teams.
13. It is estimated that the costs of the soft and hard landscaping materials will be £4,200.00 which will be met from the Superintendent's Local Risk Budget.
14. There are no legal or property implications.

Conclusion

15. The works will improve the entrance at this important eastern gateway onto Hampstead Heath.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Photographs of the Millfield Lane entrance - September 2015.
- Appendix 2 - Plan of existing layout - Millfield Lane entrance.
- Appendix 3 - Plan of proposed landscaping works - Millfield Lane.

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Appendix 1



Figure 1 – Replace metal pole gate with timber gate
(Note 1, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 2 – Crown lift to allow views under canopy and light to ground level
(Note 2, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 3 - Remove coppiced plants, replace with grass/hedge around the toilet block
(Note 4, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 4 – Plant native plants - maintain as thicket max 1.2m high
(Note 5, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 5 – Remove chestnut pale fencing and replace with timber post & rail
(Note 6, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 6 - Crown lifting to create views and replace metal gate with wooden posts
(Notes 7 & 8, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 7 - Create an earth mound to discourage desire lines
(Note 11, appendix 3 - proposed layout)

A



B



Figure 8a & 8b - Renovate desire lines
(Note 12, appendix 3 - proposed layout)



Figure 9 Reduce spread of willow clump to create views towards Pond
(Note 13, appendix 3 - proposed layout).