

APPENDIX 1 for Copped Hall PMP report SEF 22/21

An INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY NOTES for COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (PMP) (Dec 2018 – 8 sections)

Purpose of the PMP

This is summarised on page 10 of the PMP. The report was commissioned by the City of London Corporation and supported by Historic England and Natural England through an 80% PA2 Stewardship grant. The purpose was to evaluate all physical and documentary evidence to set the importance of the site in context and to provide a framework for management recommendations to protect the heritage features and to inform a parkland restoration, with the aim of seeking funding for such a restoration, with Historic England and Natural England support, from Stewardship or successor grants.

Ownership and the Registered Park and Garden boundaries

The land owned by the City Corporation covers the majority of the nationally-important Registered Park & Garden Grade II* (130ha of the 165ha total). Importantly, the City Corporation owns the majority of the original parkland boundaries, as their extent fluctuated over the centuries from Tudor times to the 20th Century.

However, it is significant issue that land within the RPG is within multiple ownerships and establishing good working relationships with The Copped Hall Trust, which was consulted during the PMP, and with local residents within Copped Hall is important for the protection of the integrity of the site.

Heritage

The PMP itself provides an **Executive Summary** at pages 5 to 7. This includes the following important summary of the heritage significance of the site:

“Copped Hall park and gardens are recorded as Grade II on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest for England. The national significance is recognised by Historic England’s designation as Grade II* on its Register of Parks and Gardens (one of 38 registered sites in Essex, and 1610 registered sites nationwide – approximately 30% of all sites are Grade II*). Comparison with other estates regionally and nationally concludes that it was of a high status and contains a relatively rare package of relict features.*

Copped Hall is a multi-period site originating on the medieval and Tudor period, with connections both to Waltham Abbey and to royal and aristocratic owners. Archival material survives for some of the Tudor and Stuart period within the Sackville manuscripts (covering the ownership of both the Earl of Middlesex and Sackvilles) and considerable archaeological evidence for this period remains including the very substantial earthworks relating to the large-scale water features, also an earthwork mound to the south-west, and the park pale. These have been identified by the PMP of being a particular significance and rarity and are highlighted as areas for further research and protection. This period also influenced the subsequent layouts and design. The earliest veteran trees within the study area may date to this period”.

The heritage interest of the site, however, spans several periods since then before the Hall fell into neglect after 1917. For example, a serpentine canal was built in 1839 through the earlier Tudor Square Pond in Rookery Wood, while the ha-ha is first mentioned in 1895. The importance of the

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Tudor Square Pond is summarised on page 147 of “exceptional significance”. The pill-boxes from WW2 are also considered significant and details of preserving these are given on page 186.

Reunifying land within the RPG area is given high priority by the PMP – with a plea to at a minimum bring Kennel Field (currently straddling the RPG boundary as arable) out of tenancy and arable land and into the wood-pasture and parkland area.

The PMP considers that the park reached its zenith around the 1890s at the time of the second edition OS map of the area.

Significance of the heritage

The significance of the site is summarised on pages 146 and 1467 of the PMP, with it summarised thus:

***“12.4 An assessment of the significance of the site in relation to its contribution to landscape history design, both in the UK and, if appropriate, abroad. (Brief B2 iii)
Copped Hall Park is Grade II* on the register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest it is therefore assessed as of Exceptional Significance”.***

Timeline

A timeline of historic events connected to the Hall and its park, including its changing boundaries, is provided in the PMP between pages 18 – 34. The park is at its greatest extent to the east in Tudor times – at 1590. Much of this land lies outside the RPG but is protected by City Corporation ownership.

There are key phases in the history of the park:

- Phase 1 Pre-Medieval (page 81)
- Phase 2 1100-1500 (pages 82 – 85)
- Phase 3: 1550-1650 (pages 86 - 100)
- Phase 4: 1645-1745 (pages 101 – 108)
- Phase 5: 1745-1869 (pages 108 – 126)
- Phase 6: 1869-1917 (pages 127 – 131)
- Phase 7 1917-1986 (pages 132 – 134)

Ecological issues and wood-pasture & parkland restoration

The Park is of considerable nature conservation and wildlife importance. There are a five ancient Oak boundary trees on the site – which may date back to the earlier park boundaries. Given the closeness to Epping Forest, the presence of ancient and veteran trees and the known importance of nearby Warlies Park for saproxylic (decaying wood) invertebrates, Copped Hall is likely to be important for these species although a survey could not be completed as originally planned in the PMP.

The whole Copped Hall area owned by the City Corporation (compartments 54 and 55) supports red and amber listed bird species like Skylark, Cuckoo, Kestrel and Yellowhammer and also protected species (Schedule 1) like Red Kite -proved breeding on site and Hobby and Goshawk, probable breeding on or adjacent to the site. The area also supports the declining Brown hare and the Cobbins Brook has in the past supported Water Vole. All these species are vulnerable to disturbance.

Grazing is of key importance to the landscape conservation as well as the ecological restoration of the wood-pasture and parkland.

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The PMP proposes (pages 226 -228) a planting plan, proposing the use of the wood-pasture creation option under the Stewardship grant to help achieve the restoration. The PMP suggest more formality within the bounds of the RPG (see page 199) but a rougher wood-pasture character elsewhere and a high density of trees.

Access and interpretation

The focus and brief for the PMP was to understand its heritage significance and propose recommendations for its conservation. Access was considered in less detail particularly in the light of the multiple ownership of the central area of the site. The issue of car parking and the need to work alongside the Copped Hall Trust was highlighted (page 202). Recommendations were made to explore the Option AC1 Stewardship grant funding for both car parking and interpretation installations. The PMP summarise the need for further access considerations thus:

“It is suggested that a consultancy specialising in access provision and the historic environment may be able to facilitate discussion both internally for CoLC and with external stakeholders and then advise on suitable options arising from this. Future charging for parking may be an option for funding the associated infra structure required”.

Principles of Restoration

Principles are outlined for five key areas:

- Broad Spectrum principles (pages 191 - 192)
- Historic Parkland management (p, 192)
- Modern land management/biodiversity focus (p.192 – 193)
- Archaeological Features (page 193)
- Archives (page 193)

A Vision for the site

This is discussed on pages 189 and 190 of the PMP. It emphasises that in the view of the authors it would be inappropriate to try to establish or impose one single period of heritage restoration on the landscape. It also makes clear that the biodiversity importance of Copped Hall should be strong focus and guiding factor in the restoration and development of the Park.

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