

Committees: Epping Forest and Commons Committee - <i>for information</i>	Dates: 13 July 2023
Subject: Kenley Revival Project. A National Lottery Heritage Fund (formerly HLF) funded project. Unique Project Identifier: 1101	Gateway 6: Outcome Report Light
Report of: Director of Natural Environment Choose an item. Report Author: Andy Thwaites	For Information
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Summary

1. Status update	Project Description: Main project aims as stated in the original funding application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower, involve and inspire people to explore, record and take ownership of Kenley's World War Two heritage • Promote and raise the profile of Kenley Airfield as a nationally significant heritage resource and an important place for wildlife and recreation • Preserve a unique and important historical site and become a beacon of excellence for understanding the conservation of impermanent architecture RAG Status: Red Risk Status: Medium Costed Risk Provision Utilised: £93,657 (NLHF contingency) Final Outturn Cost: £1,178,952* * Includes £35,190 ongoing maintenance costs yet to be spent (included because this is contractually part of the project).
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<p>2. Next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Requested Decisions:</p> <p>1 – Note the closure of the project</p> <p>The Corporate Property and Project-sub Committee received this report on July 20 2022 and resolved to close the project and transfer £30,666.41 remaining in the project’s budget to local risk reserves to fund ongoing maintenance.</p>
<p>3. Key conclusions</p>	<p>The project took longer and cost more than originally planned.</p> <p>Using National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) terminology, the project’s Approved Purposes set out its objectives:</p> <p><u>Capital works including the conservation of five Fighter Blast Pens</u></p> <p>All the features listed as requiring work were conserved, although the delicacy of the fabric was such that some required a little more than was originally anticipated. Much of the 2017 work was affected by a rare variant of sulphate attack called thaumasite. Establishing the cause, liability and solution took considerable time, but eventually the thaumasite affected fabric was replaced in 2021. See Evaluation Report Addendum 2.</p> <p>Outcome: ultimately achieved, but considerably above original budget and timescale.</p> <p><u>Conservation Seminar to share with the sector</u></p> <p>An open seminar, ‘The Conservation of 20th Century Military Architecture’ was held at the Society of Antiquities in June 2019. It was attended by 110 people.</p> <p>Outcome: successful</p> <p><u>Increased onsite interpretation</u></p> <p>There were some changes to the Approved Purposes. The signage numbers were reduced from 45 in the Second-round submission to the following: 13 tabletops, 5 small wings, 6 large wings. The construction of a perimeter fence around the active RAF airfield negated the need for many of the directional wayfinders. The bespoke signs are made of fibreglass and are in the shape of aircraft wings. See Evaluation Report Addendum 1.</p> <p>Outcome: successful, but took longer than planned</p> <p><u>Educational programme</u></p> <p>Two Learning Festivals involved over 3000 participants. The first Learning Festival in 2017 attracted schools to onsite activities over five days. The second Learning Festival in 2018 included a</p>

Learning Festival Roadshow, Remembrance Programme and School Design Competition. Around 40 guided tours delivered to schools, uniformed groups, special interest groups, and veterans' groups, reaching over 1,700 participants. Themes for guided walks included wildlife, Battle of Britain, and Pilots and Pets. Around 20 handling workshops delivered onsite to schools and uniformed groups reaching 798 participants. The Hardest Day event in August 2019 attracted 250 participants. Around 70 workshops were delivered off site for schools, and specialist interest groups. Five screenings – Reach for the Sky (x2), Angels One Five and Spitfire (x2) A Heritage open day in 2017 and Sky Heroes open day in 2018 reached 3,000 and 5,000 people respectively. The 2018 Women at War season included a Home Front Day at Turf Projects, a performance of Amy Johnson's Last Flight Out, and Jason the Gypsy Moth school workshops, reaching a total 145 participants.

Outcome: very successful

Community archaeology programme

Three annual archaeological festivals were held, including an additional one organised at NLHFs request due to the success of the first two. In total over 200 participants were involved.

Outcome: very successful

Memories, artefacts, documents and photographs collated on a Kenley Revival website

Eight oral histories were collected and transcribed. Videos of six are on the bespoke website, plus a further two sourced from elsewhere or voiced by an actor. A recording of written memories has also been made available on the website. The online archive now features 227 objects, documents and photographs. A further 218 online memorials to Kenley's fallen have been posted. A dedicated team of volunteers continue to research, update and add material to the site.

Outcome: successful

Main Report

Design & Delivery Review

4. Design into delivery	<p>National Lottery Heritage Fund projects are delivered in stages. If successful at the first round, funding is provided for a development phase. If the outcome of the development phase is acceptable, funding is provided for a second-round delivery phase.</p> <p>The second-round application was highly developed and detailed, and in many respects established clear baselines and a realistic blueprint for delivery. However, the degree of risk presented by the conservation element of the project was not adequately considered. Had it been so, the design of this aspect of the project would have been quite different. See Evaluation Report Addendum 2.</p>
5. Options appraisal	<p>As stated in the Gateway 3-4 report:</p> <p><i>Only one option is detailed here because this project has been specifically designed to realise the opportunity that HLF funding presents. Without HLF funding the project will not happen.</i></p> <p>The Gateway 2 report offered two additional options. Undertake minimal conservation work and accept that the heritage assets would remain on the Heritage at Risk Register or carry out the works solely at the City's expense.</p>
6. Procurement route	<p>All goods and services were procured using tender processes that conformed with NLHF and City Corporation requirements.</p> <p>The conservation works were tendered by the Conservation Consultant, a team of specialist architects, using City systems and procedures.</p>
7. Skills base	<p>A Project Manager and a Learning and Volunteer Officer were appointed by the project.</p> <p>A Conservation Consultant acted as Contract Administrator for the conservation works (in addition to procuring the contractor as described above).</p> <p>The project was designed as a partnership partly with the intention of bringing external expertise into the project team in the areas of</p>

	conservation (Historic England), and local community engagement (Kenley Airfield Friends Group).
8. Stakeholders	<p>The principal stakeholder was the National Lottery Heritage Fund. They were kept informed via regular progress reports and quarterly progress meetings. In a letter dated 17 March 2022 they stated:</p> <p><i>“Congratulations on completing your Heritage Grant project. You should be tremendously proud that you and your team were able to overcome the various obstacles presented during delivery. The fact that you were able to achieve this to a high standard, during a pandemic, highlights the resilience and quality of your outputs.”</i></p> <p>The project partners – Historic England and Kenley Airfield Friends Group – were formally engaged via a project board that also included officers from the Surveyors, Chamberlains and Open Spaces Departments.</p>

Variation Review

9. Assessment of project against key milestones	<p>Two aspects of the project exceeded the timescales originally planned.</p> <p>On site signage was due to be installed in May 2017. It was eventually installed in August 2020. The main cause of this delay was a breakdown in relations between the main signage contractor and a sub-contractor.</p> <p>Conservation works were due to be completed by August 2017. They were initially completed by the end of 2017, but early in 2018 the effects of thaumasite sulphate attack were observed. The affected structures were rectified at the end of 2021. See Evaluation Report Addendum 2.</p>
10. Assessment of project against Scope	<p>Ultimately all targets were met, but there were some variations on original (development phase) baselines during six years of delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conservation works were originally costed at £260,000. Variations during the 2017 works pushed costs to £300,000, mainly due to the fabric of the heritage assets being more delicate than originally anticipated. These additional costs were covered by the project’s inflation and contingency

	<p>budgets. The cost of rectifying the thaumasite affected works was £151,000. Much of this was covered by underspends and contingency within the project's budget, but it was necessary for the City to find an additional £70,000. (£50,000 from local risk, £10,000 from the Cyclical Works Programme and £10,000 from community contributions. Ultimately the conservation works budget came in at £441,000, which was £181,000 more than the original estimate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learning and Volunteer Officer post was originally a part time role. In January 2017 the job was made full-time in recognition of the demands of the activity programme. The additional cost of this change was met from within project budgets. • Heritage Day event target of 500 attendees. Actual figure 3,000 • Sky Heroes Day event target of 500 attendees. Actual figure 5,000 • Conservation Seminar target of 30 attendees. Actual number of attendees 110. • Learning Festivals target 1,200 students engaged. Actual figure over 3,000 engaged over two years. • Community Archaeology target of 60 people engaged in two annual festivals of archaeology. Actual figure of 250 involved over three years (additional year run at NLHFs request using contingency budget).
<p>11.Risks and issues</p>	<p>This project passed Gateway 5 before the need for a Costed Risk Provision was introduced. However, NLHF projects are required to have a contingency budget, and this was populated partly by means of a Quantified Risk Analysis. £60,000 of the £94,000 contingency was identified in this way. Of this only £20,000 related to a risk that came to fruition, namely increased conservation costs.</p> <p>The project always intended to push the boundaries of the fledgling field of impermanent architecture conservation. However, the risks of doing so were not fully appreciated. This became apparent when thaumasite sulphate attack occurred. Although this was deemed to be an unforeseeable risk, a more cautious and graduated approach to conservation based on the possibility of unknown risk occurring could have limited the extent of the damage. See Evaluation Addendum 2.</p>
<p>12.Transition to BAU</p>	<p>Responsibility for the signage, website and support for local community volunteers has now transferred to the West Wickham</p>

	and Coulsdon Commons. The conserved heritage assets remain the City Surveyors responsibility, although vegetation control will be undertaken by the local ranger team in liaison with the Surveyor and Historic England.
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Value Review

13. Budget	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i></td> <td>Estimated cost (including risk): Within the range £250k to £2m (G2 report Jan 2012). Estimated cost (excluding risk): Within the range £250k to £2m.</td> </tr> </table>		<i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i>	Estimated cost (including risk): Within the range £250k to £2m (G2 report Jan 2012). Estimated cost (excluding risk): Within the range £250k to £2m.																																														
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14. Investment	Not applicable																																																	
15. Assessment of project against SMART objectives	NLHF projects are assessed on their performance against their Approved Purposes. See section 3.																																																	

<p>16. Key benefits realised</p>	<p>In line with NLHF outcomes, the Gateway 2 report offered the following success criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The heritage will be in better condition</i> – this was achieved, albeit at additional time and cost. • <i>People will have learnt about the heritage and developed skills</i> – 19,000 people were directly engaged with the heritage through a variety of events. • <i>A wider range of people will have been involved</i> – 2,700 school children attended educational sessions, 90 volunteers involved, 250 participants in community archaeology, youth programme. <p>Additionally, the G2 report stated that the Scheduled Monuments would be removed from the Heritage at Risk Register. This was achieved.</p>
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Lessons Learned and Recommendations

<p>17. Positive reflections</p>	<p>The people engagement aspects of the project performed better than expected.</p> <p>The project provided employment for a Project Manager, two Learning and Volunteer Officers, an apprentice and (via City PIP funding) a Legacy Officer. Many of these individuals moved on to other roles in the heritage sector.</p> <p>The project certainly advanced the fledgling field of impermanent architecture conservation by discovering a hitherto unheard-of form of sulphate attack and forming a practical solution to it. This knowledge has been shared with the heritage sector.</p> <p>The appended Evaluation Report details many more of the positive aspects of the project.</p>
<p>18. Improvement reflections</p>	<p>Regarding the conservation works, the optimism surrounding what might have been easily achieved obscured an adequate assessment of what could go wrong. That is not to say that inadequate financial provision was made for risk – that was one of the projects strong points and saving graces – but that decisions were made, and an approach taken, that did not align with the prevailing degree of uncertainty.</p> <p>For example, one logical way to manage the unpredictable risk would have been to phase the project or build in time for tests and trials beforehand. At the time of development this would have felt like an expensive extension to the schedule</p>

	<p>and a compromise to the desire to get the whole project done by a fixed date (see below). However, trials proved necessary anyway, and if done up front they might have identified thaumasite, or at least informed the final design.</p> <p>The trials approach could also have applied to the decision to develop bespoke signage. This would have tested the process for designing, building and installing the signs as well as their appearance and strength, and might have identified issues with contractor performance sooner than they became apparent.</p> <p>The Kenley Project initially worked backwards from a single fixed date relating to one requirement - to mark the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The aim was to get everything done by this anniversary, and unrealistic timescales were devised to achieve this. On reflection, commemorating the anniversary should have been a milestone for the project, rather than a deadline.</p> <p>The Kenley Airfield Friends Group and Historic England did a tremendous job to drive the initial development of the project by identifying both the need for it and the opportunities it offered. Later, the City assumed the lead role on NLHFs (then HLFs) advice. As the project progressed to implementation, a formalised partnership approach was seen as essential to maintain the partners involvement. With hindsight it is probably fair to say that the partnership approach was not the best option. The City carried all the risk and was ultimately solely accountable for all aspects. Involving the other stakeholders as consultees or customers rather than partners might have been a better approach.</p>
<p>19. Sharing best practice</p>	<p>The Conservation Seminar held in June 2019 for 110 participants was aimed at sharing learning with industry specialists.</p> <p>NLHF are becoming more adept at using the learning from their projects to inform future project development. The lessons learnt from this project will be shared with others.</p> <p>Information on thaumasite sulphate attack has been shared with construction specialists, including the conservation contractor, who is involved in other City projects.</p>
<p>20. AOB</p>	<p>None</p>

Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Kenley Revival Final Evaluation Report
Appendix 3	Evaluation Addendum 1 Signage
Appendix 4	Evaluation Addendum 2 Thaumaside

Contact

Report Author	Andy Thwaites
Email Address	Andrew.thwaites@cityoflondon.gov.uk
Telephone Number	01372 279083