

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 30 October 2023
Subject: Parliament Hill Masterplan proposal public consultation	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Interim Executive Director, Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Assistant Director	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the public consultation carried out in July on proposals for the Parliament Hill Masterplan. The proposal focuses on six areas within the Parliament Hill area; a new wetland area, improvements to the café, improvements to the children's play area (under 5s), playground improvements, a new ball games court, and a new splash park.

The public consultation received 382 responses on the six proposals. The responses were generally supportive and positive, but there were significant concerns about design, appropriateness, value for money and funding. A report by MTW Consultants Limited accompanies this short report, providing a full assessment of the survey and results.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

The purpose of the Parliament Hill Masterplan

1. The proposals produced by the consultants Land Use Consultants were presented to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee during the public consultation period in July for their comments. Comments on the proposals were also received in a written statement from the Heath and Hampstead Society.

2. The proposal is intended to be a first draft of a more detailed developed plan which could then be put forward in a future funding bid. The individual proposals could also be delivered as individual standalone projects if funding was insufficient for the full programme. There is no immediate plan to apply for capital funding from central City of London Corporation funds.

Comments on the survey results

3. Although the six individual area proposals received generally positive responses as shown on the histogram charts in the accompanying report from MTW Consultants, the written comments provide a more full understanding of community reaction, with concerns about design, value for money, and impact on the natural aspect of the Heath. The comments section provides an interesting counterview to the higher-level results. The proposals for the play spaces generally received more support but the wetland and café proposals generated less positive responses.

Review of the proposals in light of the feedback from the consultation

4. What is clear from the responses is that there needs to be a further series of design iterations in response to the comments, with possible sets of options for particular areas like the play spaces and the café. Many Heath users are very sensitive to 'appropriateness' in landscaping and general design and prefer a minimalist approach. This view is strongly rooted in what so many Heath users would describe as the naturalness of the Heath, and the importance of protecting this from 'parkification'. The attempt to introduce new pathways and boardwalks in the wetland proposal generated a number of negative comments, where respondents have sensed an attempt to introduce features that they associate with a more formal landscape or a country park.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

5. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environment.
6. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.

Financial Implications

7. No impact

Resource Implications

8. No impact.

Climate Implications

9. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future strategies which are currently being drafted within the Natural Environment Division.

Legal Implications

10. No impact.

Risk Implications

11. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Equality Implications

12. No impact.

Security Implications

13. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Public consultation report

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