

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee – For Discussion	9 March 2015
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee – For Information	23 March 2015
Subject: Hampstead Heath Ponds Project – update report	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion

Summary

The Ponds Project has continued to progress since the Gateway 5 – “Authority to Start Work” report in January 2015.

Camden Council’s Development Control Committee granted planning consent on 15 January 2015 and, according with the published programme, site preparation works commenced on 2 February 2015, and are scheduled to last approximately four weeks. Works will be managed through to completion by the City’s Project Team together with the contract partners – Bam Nuttall (Constructor), Atkins (Lead Designer) and Capita (Cost Consultant).

Construction works will commence in April 2015. The 18 month construction programme should be completed in October 2016.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to:

- Note the 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 firstly 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 the existing requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1975 and the anticipated additional obligations which would fall under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, whilst preserving the natural aspect and state of the Heath in the most effect manner, in accordance with the

City's duties under the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, and was 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 and planning consent was granted by Camden's Development Control Committee, subject to Conditions and Section 106, on 15 January 2015. This has enabled site preparations works to commence on schedule and the anticipated start for construction is April 2015.

Planning Conditions and Section 106

4. As part of the planning application process, planning approval was granted subject to both a Section 106 agreement and various conditions. The Section 106 agreement included the establishment of a Community Working Group, the employment of 3 apprentices, the agreement of a Construction Management Plan and various local employment and local procurement measures. Conditions included approvals of the material finishes for the dams at Mixed, Men's and Highgate No.1 Ponds as well as the Ladies' Bathing facility. Other environmental conditions included dust monitoring and ecological measures, such as a bat mitigation strategy.
5. The timetable for compliance with all the conditions is being carefully monitored by the Project Team to ensure that a timely start on site can be facilitated. Officers will continue to liaise with both colleagues in Atkins and at the London Borough of Camden.

Site Preparation

6. Site preparation works commenced on 2 February 2015, and at the time of writing, the works are going to schedule. Site preparation involves vegetation clearance and tree removal and will take approximately four weeks to complete. This has been timed to have the least impact on wildlife (outside of bird nesting season), and a detailed environmental monitoring exercise took place before work commenced. Approximately 143 trees, mostly category U and C, are being felled and another 35 are being coppiced or pollarded and will be allowed to grow back. The public reaction to this work has been mixed. The felling of the two category A trees at Hampstead No. 2 Pond has caused concern for some, it has been agreed that the felled trees would not remain on-site and the opportunity to re-use the wood would be investigated. People have approached the Contractors to find out why the work is taking place and some have been unhappy that trees need to be removed.

Stock Pond

7. On 30 January 2015, the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group (PPSG) met with Officers from the City of London to discuss the designs for Stock Pond. The PPSG were concerned by the visual and environmental impact of the loss of a group of trees at the south-western corner of the pond. These trees are to be removed to make way for an open channel grass spillway which will direct water

away from the dam and allow water to safely leave the pond in a heavy rainfall event. Because of concerns raised by the PPSG, Atkins were asked to review their design and explain why other options had been discounted. As part of this review Atkins put forward a previously discounted option for a buried box culvert with a drop shaft within the pond. This design has the benefit of reducing some tree loss but does mean a large concrete structure will be located in the pond next to the path in a very visible location. At the site visit, the Stakeholder Group expressed their concerns about the chosen option, preferring instead the box culvert option. It was agreed that the outcome of this discussion would be fed back to the Project Board for a final decision. The tree removal schedule was altered accordingly so that no trees, which would be saved in the box culvert design, would be felled until a decision had been made and this reported back to the PPSG.

Community Working Group

8. As part of the Section 106 agreement, a Community Working Group (CWG) is to be set up in agreement with Camden Council. The remit of this group is to: make recommendations to the City of London and its constructor BAM Nuttall in respect of minimising the impact of the Ponds Project Construction Phase in line with Camden's Considerate Constructor Manual; to receive and consider the City of London and its constructor BAM Nuttall's responses to recommendations made; to review responses to complaints made to the City of London on the management and implementation of the Ponds Project Construction Phase; to be made aware of the information provided through the City of London's website and other media (Facebook, twitter, blog, e-news, leaflets and posters), focusing in particular on information relating to high impact construction activities and mitigation measures. The group will meet monthly, and will be made up of twelve members, eight representing the community, one a swimming representative, the site agent from BAM Nuttall and three City representatives. Minutes will be taken at each meeting, and the first meeting is to take place on Monday 23 February at Parliament Hill Conference Room.

Membership will include:

Chair – Project Director, City of London

Liaison Officer – City of London

1. Highgate Ward Councillor
2. Hampstead Town Ward Councillor
3. Gospel Oak Ward Councillor
4. Chairman of the Heath & Hampstead Society
5. A swimming representative
6. A representative from William Ellis / Parliament Hill School / LaSwap
7. Chairman of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group/ Fitzroy Park RA
8. A representative from Dartmouth Park CAAC
9. A representative from Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum
10. BAM Nuttall Site Agent
11. Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
12. Assistant Director Engineering (and responsible person under the Reservoirs Act)

Ponds Project Stakeholder Group

9. The Ponds Project Stakeholder Group (PPSG) will continue to meet on a quarterly basis with additional guided site visits throughout the Construction Phase. The PPSG will also be represented on the CWG through its Chairman, a representative of the Fitzroy Park RA.

Communications during construction

10. A wide range of communications will be used to inform and engage with the public during the Construction Phase.
 - Signs – information and path diversion signs will be displayed at the appropriate entrances to the Heath and around the compound areas.
 - Website – regular updates on the Project and information about path diversions will be posted.
 - Social Media – Twitter and Facebook will be used to send out updates on the Project and a new blog will be set-up to keep the public up-to-date on all aspects of the Project during the Construction Phase.
 - E-bulletin – a regular update on the project will be sent by email to a database of contacts.
 - Leaflets – a series of leaflets will be produced throughout the project which will be handed to Heath visitors and will be made available at various points on the Heath.
 - Staff briefings – Heath staff will be regularly briefed so they are able to answer questions and direct the public to sources of further information.

Path Diversions

11. Officers have worked with BAM Nuttall to ensure the impact of the Project on the Heath visitor is minimised, however, there will be some path diversions which are necessary for the work to take place safely. The timing of these path diversions are subject to change if the programme is altered.

Highgate Chain

- Stock Pond – the causeway across the dam at Stock Pond will be temporarily closed while work takes place on the dam crest. This closure will last approximately one month, starting in November 2015. While this route is closed, the public will be diverted either north of the pond by Kenwood or down Millfield Lane and past the Bird Sanctuary Pond.
- Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond – the back gate of this pond will be closed for the duration of the works. Swimmers will be asked to use the main gate while the pond is open and signs will be placed at the pond giving advance warning. During the replacement of the changing facility there will be no-access to the pond.
- Bird Sanctuary – the causeway between Bird Sanctuary and Model Boating Pond will be closed for a period of approximately seven days in October 2015 while the crest is raised. The public will be diverted around the southern end of Model Boating Pond or up Millfield Lane towards Kenwood.

- Model Boating Pond – the paths on the western edge of Model Boating Pond will be closed permanently from April 2015 and an alternative path will be created around the edge of the construction compound, up the hill towards the Tumulus. This path will be in use until the ground around the pond is reinstated in late summer 2016 and the new permanent paths have been created. The causeway between Model Boating Pond and Men’s Bathing Pond will be closed for approximately three months while the crest is raised from January to March 2016. The public will be diverted around the northern end of Model Boating Pond or around the southern end of Men’s Bathing Pond. Cyclists will be asked to dismount and walk their bikes until they meet the cycle path again. This diversion will be sign-posted well in advance and we will continue to advertise it using the City of London website and social media.
- Men’s Bathing Pond – the causeway between Men’s Bathing Pond and Highgate No. 1 Pond will be closed for a period of one month from May 2016 while the sheet pile wall is being constructed. The public will be diverted along the causeway between Men’s Bathing Pond and Model Boating Pond.
- Highgate No. 1 Pond– there will be a small path diversion while the spillway is being constructed, public will be diverted around the work compound.

Hampstead Chain

- Vale of Health – the causeway at Vale of Health Pond will be closed for 7 days while the path is resurfaced in September 2015. The public will be diverted around the Vale of Health itself or onto another path on East Heath.
- Viaduct – the path around the southern edge of the pond will be closed for two months from May to June 2015 while the crest is restored and the spillway built. The public will be diverted across the Viaduct Bridge.
- Catchpit – informal paths will be inaccessible during the works. The public will be diverted around the work compound.
- Mixed Bathing Pond– the causeway at Mixed Bathing Pond will remain open to pedestrians apart from two days in January 2016 when crane works will take place. On these two days the public will be diverted around the southern edge of Hampstead No. 2 Pond, off the Heath, around South Hill Park Gardens and then back to the Heath via Parliament Hill, or to the north of Mixed Bathing Pond, along the Lime Avenue.
- Hampstead No. 2 Pond– the causeway between Hampstead No. 2 Pond and Hampstead No. 1 Pond should remain open with a small diversion off the path during path resurfacing in January 2016.
- Hampstead No. 1 Pond– there will be a small path diversion while construction is taking place, pedestrians will be diverted around the work compound.

Separate work related to the ponds

12. There are two items of work in process on the Heath which relate to the ponds but are not part of the Ponds Project.

- Bird Sanctuary Overflow Pipe
There are two overflow pipes which transfer water from the Bird Sanctuary Pond into Model Boating Pond during normal conditions. These pipes were due to be inspected on site during the Ponds Project works and retained. However, on New Year's Eve water was spotted coming through part of the dam close to the outfall to one of these pipes. A temporary fix was installed to avoid any further erosion of the dam but this has temporarily reduced the overflow capacity and remedial works need to be carried out as soon as possible. A CCTV survey has now been carried out and works are being planned in coordination with the Ponds Project.
- Ladies' Pond Water Supply Upgrade
As part of the City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme, a project has been started to improve the water supply at the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond. This involves laying a new water pipe from Millfield Lane toilet block to the Ladies' Pond through the end of the Bird Sanctuary. This work is being carried out by the City's term contractor, JB Riney and will be completed before the bird nesting season. The new supply will be terminated short of the changing rooms so that it can be connected into the new facility when it is completed as part of the Ponds Project.

Appendices

- None

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

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