

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	6 July 2015
<b>Subject:</b> Hampstead Heath Ponds Project – Update Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	<b>For Information</b>

### Summary

The Ponds Project has continued to progress since the last update report was presented to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee in March 2015.

Construction work started on schedule on Monday, 13 April 2015. In the weeks preceding this date the Construction Contractor (BAM Nuttall), the Designer (Atkins), Cost Consultant (Capita) and the City of London worked together to ensure smooth implementation of the Project.

The 18-month construction programme is scheduled to be completed in October 2016, and is on programme and on budget. This report describes what has been done so far, and includes photos in.

### Recommendation:

- It is recommended that Members of the Consultative Committee notes the contents of this report and the appendices.

### 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, first to consider the design criteria and approach, and then suggest a wide range of options. In June 2014, an option for each chain of ponds was selected and approved; the criteria for each selected option were that it satisfied the existing requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1975 and the anticipated requirements under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, while

preserving the natural aspect and state of the Heath in the most effective manner, in accordance with the City's duties under the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, and 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. Planning consent was granted by Camden's Development Control Committee on 15 January 2015, subject to Conditions and a Section 106 agreement. Preparation works took place in February and March 2015, with work on the Ponds Project starting on Monday, 13 April.

### **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. City Officers are continuing to liaise with colleagues in Atkins and the London Borough of Camden to discharge these conditions as necessary in accordance with the work programme. There are 19 planning conditions in total. Of these 19: seven require no further approval but need to be complied with, seven have been approved, one part approved (further details to be submitted) and one is awaiting approval. The final three conditions relate to the Kenwood Ladies' changing rooms and will require more information to be submitted once the constructor has appointed a suitable sub-contractor for the works.
5. Conditions included the establishment of a Community Working Group, which would meet monthly and include representation from the local ward Councillors (more on this below). The London Borough of Camden also asked that three apprentices be employed. Interviews for two of the apprenticeships have been completed and appointments made, while the third post will be re-advertised due to lack of interest, with school leavers being targeted in July 2015. The Construction Management Plan (or Project Management Plan) is currently with London Borough of Camden and has also been discussed by the Community Working Group.
6. Other environmental Conditions included dust monitoring and ecological measures, such as a bat mitigation strategy, both of which have been progressed by the City of London in collaboration with the designers and constructor.

### **Commencement Agreement**

7. To coincide with BAM Nuttall's start on-site on 13 April, the Commencement Agreement had been signed by all members of the Partnering Team. The Commencement Agreement represents a key stage in the Project, where its detailed scope, price, programme and risk elements are defined and accepted by the Partnering Team. It also represents the end of BAM Nuttall's pre-construction contribution and the start of the 18-month programme on site.

## **Construction work**

8. The first pieces of construction work included building vehicle passing bays, using crushed concrete, on the path which runs from Parliament Hill to the Model Boating Pond, and the creation of a crane platform, also from crushed concrete, next to Model Boating Pond. (Appendix 1, photographs 1 and 2). The materials for both these tasks had to be delivered to site, but these deliveries started at a slower rate than originally predicted, as smaller vehicles were requested to reduce the impact to the Heath and its users. These smaller vehicles are more difficult to source which has caused an issue. This has not affected the programme so far, but BAM Nuttall is looking at other solutions to ensure the slower rate of deliveries will not impact on the programme, including the trial of larger 20-ton vehicles. This slower start enabled the Project Team to monitor progress closely during the first week, which happened to be a busy week on the Heath due to warm weather and school holidays. The period between the start of the Project and the end of May was predicted to be the busiest for deliveries, and this period has passed with no major issues or complaints from the public.
9. The majority of work has so far been concentrated at the Model Boating Pond, where a large compound has been fenced off, closing the paths that run adjacent to this pond. A temporary path has been created around the western edge of the compound for vehicle and pedestrian access while the works take place. (Appendix 1, photograph 3). At the end of May, a 40-ton crane arrived to begin installing a temporary sheet piled-metal dam. This dam is being constructed by pushing sheet metal piles into the ground using a silent, vibrationless method. When completed, this temporary dam will enable the southern end of the pond to be drained, so that work on raising the existing dam can begin. Top soil is also being stripped from within the compound for haul routes, silt-processing and the borrow pits. ( Appendix 1, photographs 4, 5 and 6).
10. The works at Viaduct Pond are also underway. These include the installation of a temporary sheet-metal coffer dam, a new headwall with buried pipe linking it to the Pond, restoration and raising of the existing dam by 200mm, and the creation of a grass-lined spillway. Works are expected to be completed here by the end of June, with the exception of the spillway work which will be finished off when the specified turf has been seeded (Appendix 1, photographs 7 and 8).
11. During July, works are scheduled to start at the Vale of Health and Hampstead No. 2 Ponds and will continue at the Model Boating Pond.

## **Community Working Group**

12. The Community Working Group (CWG), which was set up in agreement with London Borough of Camden, has continued to meet monthly. A set of data has been agreed with them, by which they can be assured the City are monitoring various aspects of the project correctly. (See Appendix 2.) This monitoring data, together with the programme data for the next two months, and a list of complaints and actions resulting from these, enable them to see how well we are doing on the project generally. The monitoring data includes: air quality, water

quality, vehicle movements, levels and height of the new dam structures. The Group has also made several helpful suggestions, including the relocation of one of the passing bays to avoid conflict with the public at Highgate No. 1 Pond, installation of fences and earth bunds to protect tree roots, and the addition of a banksman on foot behind the delivery vehicles. This was initially piloted as a trial but the intention is to continue it throughout the programme, to increase the safety and confidence of Heath users during the project. (Appendix 1, photographs 9 and 10).

A series of guided walks has been taking place to coincide with work starting at each pond. Members of this Committee, the Community Working Group and the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group are invited to attend these walks (the next being scheduled for Monday, 20 July), and further walks will be arranged for the general public.

### **Communications during construction phase**

13. A wide range of communications are being employed to keep Heath users and the wider public informed on the Project. Signs, alerting people to construction vehicles, have been placed at the main entrances, and information boards have been erected at work compounds. (Appendix 1, photograph 11). The Ponds Project blog <https://hampsteadheathpondsproject.wordpress.com/> is regularly updated with news on the Project together with photographs of activity on the Heath. The website, [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/pondsproject](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/pondsproject), is being kept up-to-date and the Heath's social media feeds are being used to send information out. A weekly email update is also being sent to a list of subscribers and leaflets have been produced for staff to hand out to the public when appropriate. Heath staff will be regularly briefed by email and through face-to-face briefings, so they are able to answer questions and direct the public to sources of further information.
14. A time-lapse camera has recently been installed at the Model Boating Pond. This will provide a live feed to the works happening at this location, which will be accessible from the internet. Once this live internet feed has been set up, the link will be publicised to all stakeholders.

### **Ladies' Pond**

15. During the detailed design for the Project, the supporting slab of the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing facility was assessed and shown to be in poor condition. It was agreed that the replacement of this slab would be carried out as part of the Ponds Project. The Partnering Team is working together to develop a plan for minimising the disruption that this additional work will have on the programme. The contractor is investigating the use of innovative construction techniques to speed up the delivery of both the new slab and the new changing facility, which may include some level of prefabrication or the use of alternative construction materials. However, it is expected that the appearance and layout of the proposed facility will be as per the design submitted in the Planning Application.

16. The design of the new deck will meet the requirements of the new building and take on board the recommendations made in the review of lifeguarding and infrastructure arrangements at the swimming ponds, following the fatal incident at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond in August 2013. The City have met representatives of the Kenwood Ladies Pond Association and reassured them that the agreed internal design of the changing rooms will remain, and by shortening the construction time of the building, the aim is to keep both slab and building works within the original programme.

### **Separate work related to the Ponds**

17. There are two overflow pipes that, during normal conditions, transfer water from the Bird Sanctuary Pond into the Model Boating Pond. These pipes were due to be inspected on site during the Ponds Project works and retained. However, earlier this year 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. A CCTV survey was carried out, which showed that the failure had occurred in only a short section of pipe near the outfall. Remedial works are being planned in co-ordination with the Ponds Project and will be carried out as soon as possible, whilst remaining particularly alert to the potential for disturbing nesting birds.

### **Conclusion**

18. The Partnering Team are pleased with progress and continue to meet on a regular basis. The works are progressing in accordance with the programme and dry weather since commencement has been a bonus. The range of information on the Project has been well received by the public and the blog is being viewed over 100 times a week. Complaints are reported to the Community Working Group on a monthly basis and are being managed effectively.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Photographs of the works to date.
- Appendix 2 – Monitoring data provided to the Community Working Group.

### **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](http://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](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/committees)

### **Jennifer Wood**

Ponds Project Liaison Officer

T: 020 7332 3847

E: [Jennifer.wood@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.wood@cityoflondon.gov.uk)