

Report Title: **Report of the Director of Property & Regeneration, Alexandra Park and Palace**

Report of: Kerri Farnsworth, Director of Property & Regeneration, Alexandra Park and Palace

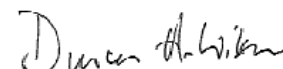
### 1. Purpose

1.1 To advise members of the Statutory Advisory Committee and of the Consultative Committee on a number of areas relating to property and regeneration at Alexandra Palace and Park.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 That the SAC and CC Board express views and advise the main Board on these matters as appropriate, in particular on the Park Development Activities set out in Section 9.

Report Authorised by: **Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive Alexandra Palace and Park**



Contact Officer: Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive Alexandra Palace and Park

### 3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 HLF Project Progress
- 3.2 Fabric Conservation
- 3.3 Park Update
- 3.4 Update from Regeneration Working Group (RWG)

### 4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

4.1 N/A

### 5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

5.1 N/A

### 6. HLF Project Progress

#### Key Stakeholder Relationships

6.1 Following discussions, it has been agreed that AP's relationship with the BBC now needs to be formalised by way of a Memorandum of Understanding due to the extent of interrelationship between the HLF project and the BBC. This is being progressed currently with senior staff within the BBC.

- 6.2 Relationships with other key stakeholders such as the Science Museum Group (including National Media Museum) and the BFI remain positive. At this stage these relationships do not require formalisation, but this does not rule out the possibility and/or need to do so in the future.

### Design and Consultation

- 6.3 A number of surveys and investigative works - essential to fill gaps in existing available data and knowledge - have been procured, completed and/or are underway. The outputs have been used and will continue to be used to guide design development and associated cost testing over the next few months.
- 6.4 The design is currently at the end of RIBA workstage 2 - concept design (previously known as RIBA Stage C). A full presentation on the current iteration of the design of the HLF project will be given at the meeting under a separate agenda item.

### HLF Professional Team

- 6.5 The final two appointments to the professional team have now been made:-
- i) Tricolor has been appointed as the external experts to assist the AP Community & Learning team and Barker Langham with the delivery of the required Activity Plan.
  - ii) James White from the British Film Institute (BFI) has been appointed to lead the delivery of a Collections Management strategy and plan

The work programme for each of these appointments has been dove-tailed into the existing HLF project programme.

### HLF Project Programme

The key milestones within the HLF programme are as follows:-

up to July 2014	development & testing of design (incl formal HLF Stage C review)
up to Sept 2014	consultation and preparation of Activity Plan stakeholder consultation on design <i>NB. where possible consultation on the design and the activity plan will be delivered together</i>
late-Sept 2014	2-week statutory public consultation (req'd for planning application)
Nov 2014	completion of RIBA Stage D design; formal Board sign-off; submission of Planning / Listed Building / Conservation Area applications
Dec 2014	submission of Round 2 HLF funding application
March 2015	decisions on Planning / Listed Building / Conservation Area applications
March/April 2015	HLF Stage 2 funding decision ( <i>NB. decision on consents req'd before HLF decision can be made</i> )
spring 2015	technical design & tender package production (part 1) contractor OJEU procurement part 1 (pre-qualification)
spring – autumn 2015	technical design & tender package production (part 2) final contractor OJEU procurement & appointment
winter 2015	construction commences onsite

## 7. Fabric Conservation

### Surveyor to the Fabric

- 7.1 The Surveyor to the Fabric, Purcell, has now completed the final version of the 10-year Fabric Maintenance Plan (FMP). A copy will be brought to the meeting for members to view, but it is not intended to circulate copies due to file size and production costs (the files are >10mB in total and printed document is 140 pages of colour-coded plans, drawings & narrative at A3 size).
- 7.2 The key headlines from the FMP have not changed since last reported to the last meeting of this Committee on 8 April 2014.
- 7.3 The sum total of investment advised over the 10-year lifespan of the FMP is £36m: note that this does not include professional fees and costs of 'known unknowns' (eg. asbestos removal), all of which could add a further 15-20% to costs. The FMP has identified work packages in order of priority over each financial year over the next 10 years.
- 7.4 The HLF project will deliver for approx. 30% of the required investment. Some Priority 1 projects have already been delivered (eg. Transmitter Hall refurbishment; repair of the VA/PA system) and many others are underway (North Wall; roof repairs; repair/restoration of lifts; replacement of fire detection & alarm system, etc). AP staff are also actively seeking the potential for drawing in other external investment to deliver priority investments in future years.

## 8. Utilities

### Water Mains

- 8.1 Thames Water have now completed their works in the SE of the Park and have reinstated the ground.

## 9. Park Update

### Dog Control Orders update

- 9.1 A dialogue has re-commenced with LBH Officers on Dog Control Orders (DCOs). It would be possible to amend the Borough's DCOs to reflect the specific recommendations made for Alexandra Park; however, the Council would only be willing to make these amendments if there was a form of enforcement in place.
- 9.2 The Council's Enforcement Officers do not currently have capacity to work at Alexandra Park except if the Trust is willing to fund overtime working for specific cases. As an alternative, The Trust is currently investigating whether the contracted site security staff working for the Palace can become *Authorised Persons* so they can administer Fixed Penalty Notices in the same way as a council Enforcement Officer can.
- 9.3 In addition, the Council have now supplied the designs for their standard dog control signage, which means that new signs can be produced to promote the existing DCOs within the Park.

### Update on Campsbourne Section 106 project

- 9.4 The Campsbourne Section 106 - which is an environmental and access improvement scheme for the SE corner of the Park being led by LB Haringey - received full planning consent in May. Unfortunately contractor tenders for the scheme came back £20k above available budget, and so LBH officers are looking to value engineer the scheme to reduce the scope and hence costs to bring it in within the available budget envelope. LBH have assured that AP staff will be involved in this process.
- 9.5 As soon as a scope & price within available budget is achieved, the works can commence onsite. The current programme for the works is 12-14 weeks, so it is likely to be autumn at the earliest before the works will be completed.

### Campsbourne Dinosaurs Playgroup

- 9.6 The Council has agreed to fund dilapidations up to the value of £75,000 to the building in the Campsbourne area of the Park used by Dinosaurs Playgroup'. The Playgroup were originally attached to Campsbourne School (primary) meaning the facility was managed via LB Haringey, but that relationship ended a few years ago. The Trust is currently preparing tender specifications in order to procure contractors for required the work packages. It is expected that the work will take place over the summer period.
- 9.7 The Trust has now agreed with LB Haringey that the Trust will procure & manage delivery of the works and will invoice LB Haringey as each work package is delivered. Discussions are now underway to provide Dinosaurs Playgroup a formal lease as a tenant of the Trust. Drawing up a new lease is expected to cost in the region of £5,000 + VAT and disbursements. A final recommendation on the detailed lease terms will be made to the APPCT Board for Section 36 (Charities Act) approval.

### Planning Applications

- 9.8 *The Garden Centre:* The planning application by Capital Gardens Limited was granted permission on 17 April 2014. There were no onerous conditions. Details will be reported to a future meeting once the operator has confirmed the proposed project timeline.
- 9.9 *345 Pre-School:* The application for change of use and alterations to the garden discussed at previous meetings has been submitted and has now been granted permission. The after-school club is likely to start in September on Wednesday only, the weekend use still required the logistic arrangements to be confirmed internally by 345 pre-schools and the garden improvement work requires fundraising. Final arrangements will be made by AP staff in due course.
- 9.10 *Little Dinosaurs:* The application for changes to the garden and alteration to one section of the external wall was granted permission on 16 June 2014, with a number of minor conditions. The various elements will be implemented over a number of years. Initially the alterations to the wall of the building will be carried out before the coming winter. The details of the artificial grass and the new climbing frame location will be agreed before work commences on these items. A copy of a plan showing the new climbing frame locations is attached as Appendix 1.

### WWI Park Poppy commemoration

- 9.11 After a slow start due to the weather, the WWI poppies are now starting to emerge. A further sowing was undertaken in late-April to both re-disturb the ground (which poppies like to stimulate germination) and extend the in-flower duration.

### Park Development Projects

- 9.12 Two projects are being developed by AP staff for the Park.

#### *Urban Orchard at AP*

- 9.13 Discussions are underway with the Urban Orchard Project (formerly the London Orchard Project) to develop a community orchard in the Railway Field in the Grove. The Urban Orchard Project works in partnership with communities to plant, manage, restore and harvest orchards in urban areas to help citizens to rediscover the pleasure of eating home-grown fruit and nuts. It was originally established in 2009 as a London project, but now is active across Great Britain, and has restored and/or created over 50 orchards since that time, including in the Borough.
- 9.14 At present there is no confirmed proposal, but as and when one is agreed the details will be put in front of this Committee.

#### *High-level Adventure Course / Go Ape*

### Background

- 9.15 AP has been in discussions with a company called Adventure Forest Ltd, who trade as 'Go Ape', who have been developing unique outdoor adventure activities involving high-level zip wires since 2002. They are the only international multi-site provider of such facilities & activities, with 29 active sites in the UK. Go Ape have an excellent track record in terms of user enjoyment, safety and environmental performance, with over 4 million users since they started.
- 9.16 The company set up and operate 'tree top adventures' - namely, courses made up of a series of high-level platforms and zip wires located high up within the tree canopy. They are designed so that anyone over 1.4m in height can take part. They have since developed their offer to include courses specially designed for under-10s/those of shorter stature, and other related activities such as electric Segway forest adventures.
- 9.17 Go Ape have facilities in many locations across England, Scotland and Wales. They originally focused on established forests in rural areas - having agreed a multi-site arrangement with the Forestry Commission in 2003 - but have increasingly been developing facilities in more urban locations, including at Trent Park in LB Enfield (which staff from AP have visited) and Tilgate Park in Crawley. They are currently in negotiations to develop a number of facilities in urban areas, including one in a large local authority park in South London, for which they are about to submit for full planning consent.
- 9.18 Go Ape offer their services to the general public on both a pre-booked and 'turn up & go' basis, although they strongly encourage pre-booking (which account for 85-90% of their business). They can also host group bookings, for example for school-groups, birthdays, anniversaries and corporate events such as team building, etc.

Go Ape will also work with groups with special needs to facilitate visits where possible - as illustrated by their oldest visitor to date, a 96-year old blind woman.

- 9.19 Operating seasons for their facilities vary with demand and local seasonal weather patterns, but generally are open from March to December. Courses do not operate in darkness, and so open after dawn and close by dusk. There is a high concentration of on-site staff at all of their facilities to ensure customer safety and enjoyment.

#### Go Ape Proposal for Alexandra Park

- 9.20 Having thoroughly researched several location options within the Park, Go Ape and AP staff have developed a preferred option to develop a facility in the NE of the Park, around the slope opposite the deer enclosure and in the wooded area behind the Lakeside Cafe. The proposal incorporates some large London Plane trees on the carriageway, which have a relatively open canopy and so are not well-known of hosting nesting birds. A few medium-sized branches may need to be removed as part of the installation, but care will be taken not to significantly alter the shape of the crown of these trees. The secondary woodland strip behind the Lakeside Café has become populated by self-sown ash and sycamore saplings and currently receives very little proactive management. The tree work required for the installation of the zip-wires will be targeted to remove these weed species and improve the quality of the woodland overall. An illustration of the appearance of the facility is given in Appendix 1.
- 9.21 Go Ape are conservatively estimating annual visitor numbers as 35,000-40,000, and estimate that up to 20 posts could be created at AP, should visitor numbers build up in the way anticipated over the next 5-10 years. Go Ape have prepared a full proposal along with supporting evidence & impact assessments, including visual amenity, user numbers, traffic and noise which are included at Appendix 1. In summary both Go Ape and AP staff are confident that the additional visitor movements created by the facility could be absorbed by existing public transport and car parking provision to/from and onsite, in conjunction with Go Ape's established system of monitoring & managing visitor transport modes via advance bookings. The Go Ape facility requires no machinery, and so the only additional noise generated is the sound of the participants as they use the zip-wires.
- 9.22 AP staff feel that the proposed facility, delivered by a well-known and reputable operator such as Go Ape, would provide an additional, unique and exciting attraction which would draw additional visitors to the Park and encourage a higher level of multi-purpose trips. Some of the activities Go Ape provide - for example Segways - are already available in the Park and are complementary to others eg. tree-climbing, specialist nature walks & trails, etc. Opportunities for promotional cross-selling of opportunities - for example a 'day out'-style ticket which could combine Go Ape with mini-golf, ice-skating, boating, etc - are high. The operator of the Lakeside Café is supportive of the proposal.
- 9.23 Go Ape have a successful track record of working in partnership with a number of statutory and non-departmental bodies (NDPBs) such as the Forestry Commission, Natural England and English Heritage, which demonstrates their commitment to delivering high-quality experiences with lowest possible impact upon both their host environments and the wider environment. They are also committed to sourcing as many goods & services locally, and hence maximising the local benefit of their business.

- 9.24 Go Ape have had informal discussions already with both English Heritage and with relevant officers from LB Haringey authority about the possibility of developing a facility within the Park at Alexandra Palace. This has guided their options analysis and the development of the proposal attached at Appendix 1. We will also consult the HLF case officer who dealt with the Park Improvement Project.
- 9.25 From the information provided and dialogue with key stakeholders (such as English Heritage) to date, AP staff feel confident that Go Ape have a full understanding of the requirements of AP, including giving due regard to the conservation and ecological sensitivity of the Park and Palace.
- 9.26 The endorsement of the SAC-CC to progress this proposal and for a planning application to be made is therefore sought.
- 9.27 Negotiation on commercial terms for the arrangement with Go Ape is underway and final details will put before the next APPCT Board on 22 July for approval alongside the proposal at Appendix 1.

## **10. Update by Deputy Chair of Regeneration Working Group (RWG)**

- 10.1 There has been one formal meeting of the RWG since the last SAC-CC, in June. The Regeneration Strategy Workshop held in April was attended by some members of the RWG, including the Deputy Chair, Rick Wills (APTL Board member).
- 10.2 The majority of the June meeting was given over to 2 items: i) an update on the outcome of the recent elections and impact upon LB Haringey governance structures and APPCT Board membership; and ii) an update on the development of concept designs for the HLF project. The latter was warmly received, with support for formalising the key relationship with the BBC (which is being progressed).
- 10.3 Forward meetings of RWG will align with key dates in the Regeneration programme over 2014/15.

## **11. Legal Implications**

- 11.1 The Council's Assistant Director Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and has no comments.

## **12. Financial Implications**

- 12.1 The Council's Chief Financial Officer notes the contents of this report and has no additional comments to make.

## **13. Use of Appendices**

- 13.1 Information in support of the Go Ape proposal referred to in Section 9 of this report.