

London Borough of Haringey

Parkland Walk Greenway: Design Study and Ecological Mitigations Strategy

Notes from Stakeholder Consultation Meeting, 3rd Feb. 2007

Date: Saturday 3rd Feb 2007 **Time:** 09.30-13.00 hrs

Venue: Highgate Library, and then on site

Present:

Terry Husband	Concord Neighbourhood Association
Shirley Husband	Concord Neighbourhood Association
Paul Fluckiger	Haringey Ward Panel
Sally Geeve	Resident
Cllr Lyn Weber	LB Haringey
Cllr Greg Foxsmith	LB Islington
Cllr David Winskill	LB Haringey
Robert Brewer	Resident
Fiona Alty	Resident
Oliver Baker	LB Islington (Conservation Officer)
Richard Myers	LB Islington (Conservation Officer)
Penny West	Resident
David Warren	Resident
Michael Poteliakhoff	Haringey Cycling Campaign
Chris Mason	Resident
Ralph Crisp	Highgate Ward Panel
David Bevan	Former Conservation Officer, LB Haringey
Cllr Justin Portess	LB Islington
Cllr Bob Hare	LB Haringey
Bob Goldsmith	LB Haringey (Neighbourhood Manager)
Cathy Edis	Resident
Jenny Downy	Met Police, Highgate
Martin Hall	LB Haringey (Recreation Services)
Maurice Richards	LB Haringey (Transportation Team)
John Kingsford	LB Haringey (Traffic and Road Safety Group)
Tim Moore	Mayer Brown Ltd
Jon Riley	Ecology Consultancy Ltd
Rob Gallagher	Mayer Brown Ltd

Circulation:

Malcolm Smith	LB Haringey (Transportation Planning)
Cllr Neil Williams	LB Haringey
Cllr Ron Aitken	LB Haringey
Cllr Brian Haley	LB Haringey
Cllr Ed Butcher	LB Haringey
Cllr Laura Edge	LB Haringey
Cllr Richard Wilson	LB Haringey
Cllr Gail Engert	LB Haringey
Cllr Martin Newton	LB Haringey
Cllr Jonathan Bloch	LB Haringey
Cllr Sheila Ranger	LB Haringey
Cllr Julia Williams	LB Islington
Cllr Fiona Dunlop	LB Islington
Dawn Miles	Friends of Parkland Walk
Paul Ely	LB Haringey (Recreation Services)
Jane Rowe	Friends of Parkland Walk
Stephen Rigg	Friends of Parkland Walk
Robert White	Haringey Cycling Campaign
Sgt. Leon Christodoulou	Met Police
Sgt. John McGrath	Met Police
Sgt. Paul Saunders	Met Police
Sam Elikwu	Met Police
Sgt. Bob Stevenson	Met Police

Purpose of meeting:

To inspect the Parklands Walk, consider issues along the walk, and discuss the scope and options for the design and ecological mitigations strategy

Notes

SUMMARY OF GROUP 1 DISCUSSIONS:	
	<p>Group 1:</p> <p>Paul Fluckiger Maurice Richards Jenny Downy Terry Husband Shirley Husband ?? ?? Tim Moore (notes)</p>
	Motorcycle nuisance
PF + others	Parkland Walk is used for joy-riding by motorcycles and mopeds. Also used as 'escape route' for burglars on motorbikes / mopeds. Can gates / controls be put in to prevent motorcycle access ?
	Make fences metal with deep foundation – so that they cannot be easily broken down to allow motorcycle access.
	Maintenance of trees
Residents	Density and height of trees has led to loss of amenity of gardens on north side of Parkland Walk.
	Disused Playground
	Noted that playground was well used in past.
	Some simple, robust activity equipment could be provided. Slide ? Swing ?
	Signage / Access

	Off route signage is inadequate.	
	Greater advertisement of route is required.	
	Provide more plans / maps / information points to illustrate features of Parkland Walk.	
	Entrances / access points are not inviting - often overgrown with weeds, slippery, handrails broken.	
	Simple 'feature' entrance signs would mark/brand 'Parkland Walk'.	
MR	LBH looking for accesses to the Walk to comply with the Disabilities Discrimination Act if reasonable, but accepting that is unlikely to be possible at many access points.	
	More / replaced handrails would be of benefit.	
	Path is used by a large number of mothers with pushchairs. Improved access arrangements welcomed.	
	Surface and Alignment of Path	
Many	Like 'natural' look and feel of path.	
	Opportunities to make path meander would restrict speed of cyclists.	
	Do not make path too smooth as this would encourage speeding by cyclists.	
	Prefer 'grey' colour of crushed concrete materials (rather than 'pink' of sub-base or 'yellow' of gravel).	
	Subsidence of path noted at ends of bridges. Creates very muddy areas.	
	Drainage	
	Puddles, ponding and mud are a problem; causing width of path to spread and damage adjacent plants.	
	Make sure that path is cambered to shed water to sides.	
	Some drain pipes exist along route, originally put in for railway. Are there record drawings ? Can existing drains be cleaned and made to work ?	
	Look for possible ponds / wet areas to make as features.	
	Security	
Many	Path should not be lit (generally).	
	Some lighting outside the access points could be provided.	
	Avoid dark corners or areas of poor sightline – to reduce risk of mugging.	
	Bridges over roads are used by muggers as 'lookouts' for spotting targets.	
	Route is used as access and escape route for burglars to rear of adjacent properties.	
	Encroachment of rear garden fences into Parkland Walk area should be taken up as issue by Council and measures taken to prevent.	
	Lancaster Road	
	'Making the Difference' works are planned for this area. Soil currently spills from Parkland Walk onto the road / footpath.	
	Bridges	
	General maintenance of structures needs to be considered. Plants, trees growing into brickwork. Stitching and re-pointing required.	
	Graffiti	
	Nobody likes – but accept is inevitable ! Create graffiti areas ?	
	Foxes	
	Foxes are very numerous and a nuisance for residents. Control would be welcomed.	
	Dog Waste Bins	
	Dog mess not seen as a major issue, but bins would encourage dog-walkers to clear up.	
	Dog waste bins should not be coloured red – not in keeping with green park.	
	SUMMARY OF GROUP 2 DISCUSSIONS:	

	Group 2: David Bevan Richard Meyers Oliver Burke Jenny Downy ?? ?? Jon Riley (notes)	
	General comments	
Group discussion with local residents at start of walk	A short initial discussion in which some key issues arising from upgrading the track bed were briefly outlined <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved surfacing will lead to increased use by motor cyclists, both trail bikes and stolen mopeds, the latter burnt and left A better surface will result in faster cyclists which will interfere with use by pedestrians The acceptability of proposals is dependent on the width of the upgraded track Will there be designated pedestrian and cycle lanes? 	
DB	General points made by DB at the start of the walk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Enquiry in 1978 which resulted in a refusal to allow development of Parkland Walk (for housing?) made reference to the site being a <i>walking</i> route. While the proposal is not likely to cause significant harm to the ecology of the site it could damage the experience of Parkland Walk. A fully cycle-compatible route is likely to require a minimum width of 3 metres, too much in relation to the point above Consideration should be given to installing gates to restrict motor bike access, addressing inadequate signage and the mixture of styles currently present, and allowing a sufficient budget for ongoing maintenance. 	
	Crouch End Hill Entrance	
Various	This entrance was noted as being a major access point to the walk for the surrounding community but this was not matched by the quality of access and lack of signage to the site from the surrounding streets. The railway sleeper steps from Crescent Road are liked but they are not adequate – there should be step-free access. The steps from Crouch End Hill are disliked by all. While improvements are needed the view that any new infrastructure should not “over-sanitise” the walk was expressed. Further reference to the mixed signage in the adjoining section of the walk was made.	
	Safety and policing	
JD	The site poses problems in terms of policing because the nature of walk means that requests for backup cannot be met as quickly as they can in surrounding streets.	
	Watercourse east of Stanhope Road	
DB	This was confirmed as mains water some 10 years ago, the possibility of using a wet drain to divert water away from the path as a habitat would be worth pursuing.	
	Species records	
DB	While the constituent habitats in Parkland Walk are generally species poor, over 300 species of plant have been recorded (over a number of years?) so in total the site is quite species rich. The following areas were noted as supporting a relatively diverse plant assemblages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An area supporting a reasonable diversity of woodland wild flowers including 3 species of violet was noted either side of Northwood Road Bridge. An area of wetland flora was noted in the area adjoining Colwick Close 	

	<p>off Hornsey Lane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Florence Road grassland which supports a range of neutral grassland and naturalised plant species The locations of further plant species including sea mallow, lady fern and black spleenwort were also noted. <p>All the above species or species assemblages are of interest at the site or borough level and some such as sea mallow are restricted to the path edge and may be vulnerable to the proposed works.</p>	
RM	The acid grassland at Mount Wood Road supports 3 notable invertebrate species, one of which is a UK red data book species and nationally scarce, but the area in which they occur is not likely to be affected by the proposals	
	Protected species	
DB	No established bat roosts are known on site; there are no records for badger; slow worms recorded in 2003 in the vicinity of Northwood Road. Some areas of apparently good reptile habitat (e.g. close to Blythwood Road where large trees were felled), are of recent origin and may not have been colonised by reptiles.	
	Former stepped access from Stapleton Hall Road	
?	The steps alongside the former ecology centre building used to be well used by local people.	
	South of Stapleton Hall Road	
DB	The path is narrow in many places – an increase to 3 metres would be noticeable	
	Habitat management	
DB	Florence Road grassland previously been maintained as open habitat is being invaded by bramble and young trees. Renewed ongoing management would restore this area. Proposals to recreate ruderal habitat may not work due to nutrient enrichment caused by dog faeces.	
	SUMMARY OF GROUP 3 DISCUSSIONS:	
	<p>Group 3:</p> <p>Greg Foxsmith Justin Portess Bob Hare David Winskill Cathy Edis Michael Poteliakhoff Rob Gallagher (notes)</p>	
	Tunnel at Western End, and Connecting Path	
DW	Could one of the old tunnels be opened up for use?	
RG	Tunnels are possibly important bat roosts.	
MP	Perhaps the tunnel(s) could be used as an interpretation point by visitors?	
MP	Suggested a new path on the north side, to connect to Shepherd's Hill.	
BH	Shepherd's Close is closed off, but a path might be possible past some garages.	
RG	Possible issues of land ownership, and whether a public right of way is available.	
	Disused Playground	
BH	Not a good location for a playground. Who owns the land?	
JP	Would like to see exercise bars for joggers located here.	
CE	Liked the 'wildness' of this location.	

BH	Noted a risk of putting too many activities into a limited space.	
	Path Surface and Layout?	
CE	Likes it as it already is – it is like a country walk. Only need is to add gravel, where the path is muddy.	
MP	The northern section of Parkland Walk (Muswell Hill Road to Muswell Hill) has been constructed in crushed gravel – MP favoured this approach here.	
BH	Likes the winding path and the existing situation. Gave two specific suggestions: (i) avoid long straight stretches (instead, keep the existing meandering character); (ii) at the muddy sections, keep to the original track (i.e. go through the mud, rather than changing the alignment).	
GF	Noted the briefing pack on the Parkland Walk that had been prepared, to raise awareness and interest in the Walk.	
CE	The muddy path gives the Walk a more natural feel.	
BH	The northern section of Parkland Walk has a good fill, with a 6 inch base and fine aggregate on top. However, he does not think the edgings are very suitable.	
	Bridge at Stanhope Road	
JP	Suggested a possible location for runners' exercise bars here.	
BH	Noted raised concrete obstacle on west side of bridge.	
RG	Bridge parapets may need to be raised.	
CE	Noted raised concrete edge on east side of bridge – needs a smooth approach.	
CE	Suggested that a telephone number is displayed (on the Walk) so that local people can ring in to report damage.	
CE	Considers that personal security is still a big issue along the Walk, but the situation is improving, due to (i) more police visits; (ii) more people using the Walk.	
	East of Stanhope Road	
Passing jogger	Requested the group to keep the path soft (e.g. fine gravel), otherwise it is hard on the feet for joggers.	
CE	Commented on the stream crossing the path. Said it comes from a leaking tap on the private land at the garages – she had seen the source and reported it.	
JP	Noted that YMCA hostel has been closed, and the site will be redeveloped by the Housing Corporation.	
CE	Asked if Greenway funds would be available for planting improvements?	
RG	Confirmed that some funds would be available, as part of the ecological mitigation measures.	
DW	Suggested that there is scope to associate schools / education with the Walk. For example, there is a lodge in Highgate Wood – something similar could be done here. There are plans to extend Coleridge School – perhaps this could be linked with the Walk in some way.	
	Crouch End Hill	
RG	Suggested removal of derelict wooden steps from Crouch End Hill down to the old platform.	
DW	Disagreed – it provides a useful link to/from a busy road.	
BH	Suggested using railway sleepers (a pair, 5 feet apart) to stop motorcycles. Other types of motorcycle barrier can prove difficult for bicycles with panniers.	
RG	Would these be needed at all entrances to the Walk?	
JP	Felt not all entrances, but Holmesdale Road especially – police say motorcyclists are using the Walk as a crime run.	
DW	Suggested that the derelict building at the Crouch End Hill bridge might be	

	brought into use – e.g. as a study centre.	
MP	Suggested allowing the Crescent Café to rent the grass space as a garden area to the café.	
DW	Preferred to keep the area as it is.	
All	Agreement that the café could be encouraged to bring the disused building into use, and advertise it through (i) sign; (ii) inclusion on cycle/walking maps.	
Crescent Café Owner	The owner of the Crescent Café confirmed that he currently rents the building (under Crouch End Hill bridge) from the Council, and uses it for storage.	
	Adventure Playground, west of Crouch Hill	
JP	Suggested allowing/commissioning graffiti artists here (as a way of coping with the graffiti problem in a constructive way). Also suggested introducing a climbing wall at the side arches.	
DW	Suggested introducing a skateboarding facility at the grass amphitheatre on the east side of the footbridge.	
CE	Felt there was sufficient skateboarding provision elsewhere, and thought it wasn't needed here.	
DW	Noted that the adventure playground was damaged and wasn't being used now.	
BH	Expressed doubts about introducing a climbing wall here – supervision and safety regulations would be important. He preferred to see an informal play area here.	
CE	Noted that there is a big climbing facility available at Stoke Newington.	
BH	Noted that graffiti spraying was only in this part of the Walk. Wasn't keen on commissioning graffiti works – felt the existing graffiti was quite well done.	
CE	Felt that any commissioned graffiti works would themselves be covered by other graffiti.	
All	Different views of present graffiti expressed: e.g. 'fine the way it is'; 'eyesore'; 'I like the randomness of it'.	
DW	Noted that the grass bank used to be an amphitheatre.	
CE	Suggested a tree with a rope would be a great facility here.	
GF	Noted the Cape Project close by – encouraging football, and scope to encourage cycling on the Walk.	
DW	Had good contacts with local skateboarding group, and could provide contact details if requested.	
DW and JP	Both felt that improvement/development of facilities needed to be considered here.	
CE	She comes this way frequently, and never sees the facilities being used. Also thinks the skateboard facility is a major eyesore.	
BH	Suggested that an analysis is needed of the overall provision of youth & play facilities in the area. Also favours informal play facilities here, such as a simple rope swing, or a slide down the slope.	
GF	Noted that young children love the walkway.	
JP	Emphasised the need for younger age groups to be involved in the consultations and design process for the Parkland Walk.	
	Stapleton Hall Road	
DW	Should the steps to the Community Centre (north side) be re-instated?	
BH	Noted that there is a good access on the east side of the bridge.	
John Cherry (local resident)	(In passing): Commented that the wooden steps were installed about 10 years ago, but had now rotted. However, local people did not particularly miss them (with a good access on the other side of the bridge).	
	Eastern Section	

RG	Are surface improvements needed here?	
DW	In some places the brick rubble surface is a standing proud and a hazard. Also, good signage is needed at all the access points.	
	COMMENTS MADE AT CONCLUDING SESSION:	
TM	Summarised feedback from Group 1.	
	Path Surface	
MP	Would like the Walk surface to be reasonably comfortable for cyclists – not too bumpy, and not too muddy.	
DB	Risk of fast-moving cyclists (if surface is too smooth).	
CE	There is a slight incline (downhill from west to east), which could increase cyclists' speed.	
RG	Perhaps use rough strips to act as 'rumble strips' for cyclists (to deter speeding)?	
MP	Feels that we should treat cyclists as acting sensibly and responsibly.	
DB	Noted that at the public inquiry held on the Parkland Walk in 1978, the Inspector had given walkers priority, and there had not been any mention of cyclists. However, he felt sure a way forward was possible.	
?	Requested that recycled materials be used in the path construction.	
TM	The implementing authorities are duty-bound to use recycled materials as far as possible.	
	Disabled Access	
MR	Noted that improved access arrangements for the disabled would also benefit mothers with pushchairs. The Walk would also provide a good facility for MENCAP groups in future.	
BG	Access steps should be at a gentler gradient (i.e. zig-zag, rather than straight up), where possible. Also noted bushes obstructing forward visibility, in some places.	
	Security Issues	
?	Asked if there was consensus that no lighting should be introduced along the Walk (except possibly at the entrances)?	
MR	Confirmed that any lighting improvements would be confined to nearby streets close to the Walk entrances – this would help to reduce the crime threat at the entrances.	
CE	Commented that there had been a definite improvement in safety in recent years.	
BG	Urged caution about where lights and benches were located, as these might encourage groups of people to loiter at these locations.	
MR	Noted that LB Haringey was working with the Safer Neighbourhood Panels, and looking at specific drug dealer problems.	
?	Suggested gateway treatments at some entrances to the Walk, to discourage crime / people loitering.	
JP	Mentioned the suggestion for railway sleepers to prevent motor cycle access.	
MP	Suggested wheelchair users could have keys to open access gates to the Walk.	
	Encroachment	
TM	Mentioned the issue of encroachment onto the Walk (from adjacent properties).	
DW	Advised that LB Haringey Property Services should carry out a survey, to assess the level of encroachment.	
MR	Confirmed that this issue would be reported to LBH Directors.	

TM	Asked whether any issue had arisen of tree canopy affecting neighbouring properties?	
JR	Did not think trees should be felled for the sake of gardens.	
?	Recommended a compromise approach – in some places, houses were shaded all day long.	
?	Said that's what residents had bought into, when they purchased the property.	
BG	Any particular problems could be highlighted in the study.	
	Ecology	
JR	Summarised key findings relating to ecology – e.g. presence of slow worms (a protected species); no badgers present; no well-established bat roosts (along the Walk itself); lots of foxes. Need for the natural character of the Walk to be preserved.	
	Education and Youth Participation	
DW	Mentioned the potential resource at the Crouch End Hill access (i.e. the café and unused building) as a possible focus for educational activities. It is well-sited, being half-way along the Walk and easily accessed from Crouch End Hill.	
DW	Also suggested that local head teachers and the Cape Project should be included in the e-mail lists, and kept informed of the project.	
BG	Friends of Parkland Walk are involved in a project to try and get children and schools more involved in the Walk.	
?	An Education Pack has been produced on the Walk, and should be launched this year.	
JR	Islington Council may move a local school (<i>name?</i>) (there is currently a design competition for rebuilding the school,) hence a lot of access issues will need to be considered here.	
?	LB Haringey Coleridge Primary School is going to expand, and will be one of the largest in the country – again, scope for improving linkages with Parkland Walk.	
	Path Width and Design	
LW	Asked for people's views on path width.	
MR	Not in favour of segregated paths. Would like to see the Walk as a leisure route, with shared space for pedestrians/cyclists.	
All	General consensus on a 3m wide path.	
MR	In some muddy places the path is currently 5m wide, but when the path surface is improved, the path width will decrease, and the muddy sections will be replaced by new plant growth. As a user of the Walk, he would not want to see it turned into a 'cycle motorway'.	
TM	The proposed arrangement will be very similar to what we have at the moment.	
MR	The path will have an average width of 3m, but at the eastern end, some of the brambles will need to be cut back to improve the sightlines.	
	West End of Parkland Walk	
RG	(Giving feedback from Group 3): Proposal for creating a new path on north side to Shepherd's Close / Shepherd's Hill.	
?	Issue of allotments.	
JP	Reminder about the possible siting of joggers' exercise equipment at the west end.	
LW	Perhaps it could be sited where the skateboard park is now?	
	Furniture and Public Art	
?	Asked whether public art could be included in the Walk proposals?	
MR	Agreed that it could be considered, and a reference made to it in the meeting	

	minutes. LBH Recreation Services would be best placed to advise on whether it could be included.	
All	General support was given at the meeting to the provision of some public art on the Walk.	
LW	Asked about the provision of benches – wooden benches are more attractive, but more vulnerable to fire damage.	
?	Thick, hefty oak slabs are more durable (<i>for example, as used on the northern section of Parkland Walk</i>).	
TH	Seating areas generate litter, hence locate litter bins with the seating.	
	Next Steps?	
MR	The next stage of consultation on the project will be a 'round table meeting', to consider draft proposals.	
BG	Asked if a copy of the plans could be placed in Highgate Library.	
DW	Likewise, Hornsey Library.	
LW	Would like to see the project publicised in the Council news.	
BG	Could include information (about the project) in the mailing to residents in three weeks' time.	
?	Felt the proposed timetable might be too tight (to allow for consultations).	
MR	Some of the ecology work may be carried out at a later date. By April LBH hopes to have reached some agreement on project proposals, prepared a rough budget estimate and identified some works for early implementation.	
CE	Could some funds be used for planting?	
MR	Yes.	
JR	Would like allow natural re-colonisation where appropriate.	
?	The Walk is a nature reserve. We should deal with the worst (areas) first, including drainage. A management plan was needed.	
MR	The project will look at ecological mitigation measures, and update the 2000 management plan.	
JR	We need to focus on restoring the open habitat on the south side, which is where most invertebrates occur.	
?	Need to improve the way marking to and from the Walk.	
DW	Are there examples of Greenway development from other parts of London?	
MR	The Parkland Walk is unique – he's not aware of any other 'model' that could be replicated here.	
DW	Proposed that LB Haringey should help the Friends of Parkland Walk (South) with administrative support, as a 'pump priming' exercise to help the group get started.	
BG	Agreed, and will look into it.	
All	The most suitable time and venue for the next consultation meeting would be a Wednesday evening at Hornsey Library. (NOTE: Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 28th March, at 7pm)	

Meeting notes prepared by:- Rob Gallagher / Jon Riley / Tim Moore
Date: 20th February 2007