

Hermitage Park Update

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the current development phase of Hermitage Park. It focuses on three options for the park for public consultation in March 2015.

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.2.1 The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee note the content of this report.

Hermitage Park Update

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides the Members attending the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee with an update on the current development phase of Hermitage Park. It focuses on three options for the park for public consultation in March 2015.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee note the content of this report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following a number of Area Committee and Business Day reports, the Heritage Lottery Board met on the 17th December 2013 and the Hermitage Park bid was awarded a first round pass and development grant. Subsequently the Full Council approved HLF terms of grant on 23rd January 2014.
- 4.2 Through the process all groups were supportive of the desire to improve Hermitage Park and the overall general vision and values the Friends of Hermitage Park had presented. This vision which included proposed works was detailed at the Helensburgh and Lomond, Area Committee Business Day on 14th August 2012.
- 4.3 These works include;
- 4.3.1 Restoration of historic fabric including walled memorial garden, pond and gates, old mill remains, Hermitage Well and the Millig Burn paths, bridges and walls,
 - 4.3.2 Restoration/reinterpretation of historic planting, including open up lines of site to improve safety of visitors,
 - 4.3.3 Celebration of heritage through interpretation and community involvement – and upgrading of the paths and drainage to increase access to the Park,
 - 4.3.4 Reconsideration of the recreational elements which include the children's play park, bowling green, tennis courts, putting green and recreational pavilion, shelter and toilets.

- 4.4 These works would meet the wider social needs of the community, allowing for traditional leisure needs, whilst encouraging use of the Park as a location for education and learning. The vision includes a greater heritage and environmental aspect to the Park, with the possibilities of interpreting the heritage and exploring the potential of community gardens, sensory gardens, increasing the habitat for wildlife, birds, etc. and minimising future maintenance requirements.
- 4.5 The timeline agreed between HLF and council officers is as follows:
- 4.5.1 Appoint consultants - 24th October 2014 - COMPLETED
 - 4.5.2 Draft masterplan for consultation - February 2015 - COMPLETED
 - 4.5.3 Final masterplan and all documents - July 2015 – ON SCHEDULE
 - 4.5.4 Second stage application prepared - August 2015
 - 4.5.5 Notification of second stage - December 2015
 - 4.5.6 Works commence on the ground - March/April 2016
 - 4.5.7 Project completes (revenue/interpretation/training) - 2019/2020.
- 4.6 The Hermitage Park Steering Group continues to meet monthly and includes representatives from The Friends of Hermitage Park Association, Schools and Youth, Ministry of Defence, Leisure Services and Helensburgh Community Council. The group is chaired by Tom Murphy, Amenity Services Manager and is governed by a partnership agreement.

5. DETAILS

- 5.1 The HLF Parks for People is a two stage application process. The first stage pass which was awarded includes a development phase to take the project to RIBA Work Stage 3 for the second stage application. The proposed final costs in stage two should not differ greatly from those proposed in stage one.
- 5.2 Work is progressing to schedule with the following milestones met:
- 5.2.1 Gillespies appointed on 24th October 2014 as lead landscape consultant
 - 5.2.2 Initial information gathering with Hermitage Park Users Group and various organisations through Helensburgh, Public consultation day on 5th Dec 2014, and charrette held on 8th and 9th Dec. These fed into the three options developed.
 - 5.2.3 Production of a draft statement of significant and character zones and historical chronology of the park, which guided the three options.
 - 5.2.4 Production of three options for public consultation.
- 5.3 Hermitage Park Options
- 5.3.1 The three options are attached to this report and will be presented to the Area Committee on the day by Gillespies (Appendices 1-3)
 - 5.3.2 A weighted matrix has been developed for the assessment of the options, which include the following criteria:
 - Consistent with HLF objectives
 - Technically achievable

- Affordability
- Supports wider initiatives
- Popular
- Consistent with Councils objectives
- Sustainable
- Objective to increase use

5.3.3 The next step following consultation and subsequent feedback on the three options will be the development of a single plan. This will be submitted for consideration to the Area Committee in April 2015.

5.4 Public Consultation

A consultation programme is attached to this report (Appendix 4) highlighting the methods used to consult.

Three public consultation dates have been scheduled into the programme:

5.4.1 5th Dec 2014 - A 'blank page' exercise gathered initial thoughts on likes and dislikes, which fed into a two day charrette.

5.4.2 27th and 28th Feb 2015 – Three options to be presented in the form of a manned exhibition at Victoria Halls alongside a pop-up event in Colquhoun Square.

5.4.3 29th April 2015 – The final plan to be presented.

In addition, to the three scheduled public consultation dates, continuous discussion and presentations will be delivered through key stakeholders, various groups and organisations throughout Helensburgh including local schools. Consultation will continue through February and March, after which a single plan will be presented.

5.5 Sustainability

All options for the park are being developed with sustainability in mind. The ten year Management and Maintenance plan and Park Business plan will provide detail and evidence of this.

5.6 Play Equipment

All three options propose the re-siting of the current play area. The newly refurbished equipment will be carefully uplifted for either re-use within the redesigned park or for relocation to other suitable sites, with the exception of the old horse which will remain in the park. This is being undertaken through discussion with the Play Park Association.

5.7 Car Parking

As part of the development of the park additional car parking spaces will be created. This could include reconfiguring the car park at Victoria Halls to provide additional spaces and better access to the park. Additional spaces are being considered to the rear of the walled Memorial garden, along Victoria Road. The redesigned car parking will improve safety, be accessible and logically set out.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Following extensive consultation with stakeholders and the general public, which continue to be undertaken, the consultant has developed three options for the park. These three options will be presented for full public consultation. Following which further consultation will be sought with key stakeholders and members of the community, using a variety of media through to March. Feedback on the three options will utilise a weighted matrix system to help prioritise options resulting in a single plan being developed and presented in April 2015.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1	Policy	None.
7.2	Financial	£20,000 has been allocated within the budget process for 2014/2015. A further £280,000 has been secured for budget process for potentially 2015/16.
7.3	Legal	Bound by HLF terms of grant approved by Council 23 rd Jan 2014.
7.4	HR	New staff post funded by HLF.
7.5	Equalities	None but the proposed improvements increase accessibility of the Park to those with mobility problems and visitors with pushchairs.
7.6	Risk	Further match funding must be secured.
7.7	Customer Services	None.

8. APPENDICES

8.1	Appendix One	Hermitage Park Option One
8.2	Appendix Two	Hermitage Park Option Two
8.3	Appendix Three	Hermitage Park Option Three
8.4	Appendix Four	Hermitage Park Consultation Programme

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