

LEISURE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - 13 MARCH 2019

PART I - DELEGATED

6. DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME LNR, CROXLEYHALL WOODS, SOUTH OXHEY PLAYING FIELDS AND THE WITHEY BEDS LNR (DCES)

1. Summary

- 1.2 To provide to the Committee, for approval, details of the draft management plans for Rickmansworth Aquadrome Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Croxleyhall Woods, South Oxhey Playing Fields and The Withey Beds LNR

Public consultation has been carried out and the summary of comments received provided for each of the management plans together with any appropriate suggested amendments.

2. Details

- 2.1 The current management plans for Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods and The Withey Beds LNR are all about to expire. South Oxhey Playing Fields has never previously had a management plan in place to guide its strategic management and so its Management Plan is a new one. It is anticipated that this will ultimately result in an additional Green Flag application in 2020-21.

- 2.2 The Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR draft Management Plan (Appendix 1) went out to public consultation recently. The main comments (See Appendix 2) were of a minor nature and have been taken account in proposed amendments. There was a request for a further play area to be considered near to the café, which TRDC have undertaken to look into and also a request for open swimming at the lakes. The Council itself will not be running open swimming but is not against open water swimming at the Aquadrome providing any organisation wishing to organise such sessions has the appropriate health and safety measures, risk assessments and insurance policies in place.

Croxleyhall Woods draft Management Plan (Appendix 3) went out to public consultation recently. The main item of contention (see Appendix 4) is the proposal in the draft plan to remove the steps in compartment 3. As a result of the consultation it is now proposed to look to replace the steps early within year one of the plan.

South Oxhey Playing Fields draft Management Plan (Appendix 5) went out to public consultation recently. A number of comments were received (Appendix 6), the most significant of which were relating to the route of Park Run on the grassed areas and drainage provision. TRDC will ensure they consult with Park Run organisers when drawing up detailed proposals for drainage and/or footpath improvements in this area.

The Withey Beds draft Management Plan (Appendix 7) has attracted comments from several sources (Appendix 8). The main comment was that opening up access may negatively impact on wildlife. The site is a Local Nature Reserve and therefore we are obliged to provide reasonable access.

Draft Management Plans together with summary documents of comments received are Appendices to this report and will be made available electronically to Members of the Committee.

3. Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To recommend to the Committee that the Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods, South Oxhey Playing Fields and The Withey Beds LNR draft Management Plans be adopted as proposed, where necessary as amended following public consultation.

4. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is entitled Draft Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and this is due to be formally agreed by Full Council in May. The relevant aims and objectives are:

1.1 We want to maintain high quality neighbourhoods and reduce the eco-footprint of the District.

1.1.2 Maintain the number of accredited open spaces, parks and woodland areas

2.5 We will reduce health inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles, support learning and community organisations.

2.5.1 Improve and facilitate access to leisure and recreational activities for adults

2.5.3 Provide a range of supervised leisure activities and facilities for young people.

- 4.2 The impact of the recommendations on this/these performance indicator(s) is:

To continue to enhance and improve the sites of Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods and The Withey Beds LNR for both biodiversity and people using the sites; and significantly enhancing and improving an additional site at South Oxhey Playing Fields with an aim to bring this up to Green Flag quality.

- 4.3 The purpose of this proposed policy is to continue to enhance and improve open space sites across the District and to achieve a fourth Green Flag site by 2021.

- 4.4 The proposed policy will impact on the following performance indicators:

4.4.1 LL34 To maintain accreditation for Green Flag

4.4.2 LL32 To manage the TRDC woodland estate to an assured standard

4.4.3 LL35 To ensure that all of our key parks and open spaces are in positive management.

4.4.4 CP02 Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces.

- 4.5 The impact of the recommendations on this/these performance indicator(s) is:

4.5.1 To maintain Green Flag at three sites in 2019 and 2020 and to increase this to four sites in 2021;

4.5.2 To manage TRDC woodland estate to an acceptable standard

4.5.3 To ensure that all of our key parks and open spaces are in positive management, i.e. that we have a current adopted management plan in place which we are implementing and reviewing every five years;

4.5.4 To ensure that the satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces remains at 92%.

5. Legal, Community Safety, Public Health, Communications & Website, and Health & Safety Implications

5.1 None specific.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The Council has existing budgets for the on-going maintenance of its woodlands and Local Nature Reserve sites. Additional external funding bids will be made as appropriate with assistance from Countryside Management Service in order to implement aspects of management plans where the costs exceed the existing maintenance budgets. If necessary future capital bids may be made for individual projects for consideration by Members.

7. Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No
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8. Staffing Implications

8.1 Existing staff resources will take the projects forward. This will include working in conjunction with the Countryside Management Service under the existing arrangements.

9. Environmental Implications

9.1 The environment at Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods, South Oxhey Playing Fields and The Withey Beds LNR will be enhanced and improved for both wildlife and people.

10. Public Health implications

10.1 The environment of Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods, South Oxhey Playing Fields and The Withey Beds LNR will help reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging informal leisure activity.

11. Customer Services Centre Implications

11.1 All relevant information will be placed on the TRDC and ParksHerts websites as appropriate.

12. Risk and Health & Safety Implications

12.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

12.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Leisure and Landscapes service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Habitat deterioration	Loss of value to wildlife	To ensure appropriate management of site.	Treat by approving and adhering to the Management Plans	4
Habitat deterioration	Loss of value to the general public	As above	As above	4
Loss of LNR designation for Rickmansworth Aquadrome and The Withey Beds	Loss of designation	As above	As above	4
Management of Croxleyhall Woods to a standard below UKWAS	Loss of value to wildlife and people	As above	As above	4

12.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Remote ----- ▲	Low	High	Very High	Very High
	4	8	12	16
	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Likelihood	3	6	9	12
	Low	Low	Medium	High

	2	4	6	8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact			
	Low -----> Unacceptable			

Impact Score

- 4 (Catastrophic)
- 3 (Critical)
- 2 (Significant)
- 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

- 4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
- 3 (Likely (21-79%))
- 2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
- 1 (Remote (≤5%))

12.4 In the officers’ opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

13. Recommendations

13.1 That the Committee approve the report and that:

The draft management plans for Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR, Croxleyhall Woods, South Oxhey Playing Fields and The Withey Beds be adopted.

Report prepared by: Julie Hughes, Principal Landscape Officer

Data Quality

Data sources:

Draft Management Plan documents

Summary tables of comments provided by members of the public and interested groups

Data checked by: Julie Hughes, Principal Landscape Officer

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers - None

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

1. Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR Draft Management Plan
2. Rickmansworth Aquadrome LNR Summary of responses and recommendations
3. Croxleyhall Woods Draft Management Plan
4. Croxleyhall Woods Summary of responses and recommendations
5. South Oxhey Playing Fields Draft Management Plan
6. South Oxhey Playing Fields Summary of responses and recommendations
7. The Withey Beds LNR Draft Management Plan
8. The Withey Beds LNR Summary of responses and recommendations