



## London Borough of Enfield

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<b>Report Title</b>	Boundary Brook Park Improvements Project
<b>Report to:</b>	Councillor Chinelo Anyanwu, Cabinet Member for Public Spaces, Culture and Local Economy and Cllr Rick Jewell, Cabinet Member for Environment
<b>Date of Report:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023
<b>Report Number</b>	ECPLC2324_005
<b>Directors:</b>	Cheryl Headon, Acting Director of Leisure, Parks and Communities
<b>Report Author:</b>	Ian Russell <a href="mailto:ian.russell@enfield.gov.uk">ian.russell@enfield.gov.uk</a>
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	Ponders End and Jubilee Wards
<b>Classification:</b>	Part 1 Public

### Purpose of Report

1. It is proposed to enhance the walking and cycle route along Boundary Brook Park with sustainable drainage features to reduce flood risk. This will be achieved by converting an existing asphalt car park into a new pocket park, extending the existing park and creating a new main entrance at Hertford Road, and installing amenity features, such as seating, signage and natural play elements. The proposals also include creating a new wetland habitat at Cuckoo Hall Recreation Ground and river restoration measures to enhance 700 metres of the Boundary Brook watercourse, reducing flood risk and improving water quality.

## Recommendations

1. Approve the works to extend Boundary Brook Park by converting an existing car park to a landscaped green space, with associated amenity improvements and sustainable drainage measures. To restore the Boundary Brook watercourse to a more natural state and create a new wetland in Cuckoo Hall Recreation Ground (Charlton Road Park).
2. Accept up to £190k of external funding from project partners to cover the full cost of the current phase of works and seek additional funding for later phases of work (river restoration and wetlands).
3. Delegate authority to the Head of Parks and Open Spaces to authorise the placing of orders through any of the Council's existing relevant term contracts or to invite and evaluate tenders/quotations and, where suitable tenders/quotations are received, to authorise the award of contracts for the works as appropriate in compliance with the Council's procurement rules.
4. Delegate authority to the Head of Parks and Open Spaces to approve the Council entering into any agreements needed to implement the proposals contained within this Report.

## Background and Options

1. Boundary Park is a linear park that runs alongside Boundary Brook (also known as Boundary Ditch) for over 700 metres from the Hertford Road towards the Lea Valley Railway Line where it joins with Cuckoo Hall Recreation Ground (sometimes referred to as Charlton Road Park) to form a single contiguous open space (further information regarding the location and layout is provided in Appendix 1).
2. The main entrance to the park is currently hidden behind a car park, it is therefore significantly disconnected from the Hertford Road and does not welcome people into the park. The park is highly linear in nature, with a maximum width of just 20 metres, and runs behind the rear of properties on Sandhurst Road, at certain times of year the vegetation can become quite dominant obscuring sightlines – in combination these factors can contribute to a sense of isolation for park users and may encourage anti-social behaviour.
3. This section of Hertford Road is also prone to flooding due to its low-lying nature and close proximity to Boundary Brook which runs below the road in a culvert. Recent rainfall events have highlighted the vulnerability to flooding of shops and other businesses at this location. Highway flooding has occurred several times in recent years and in some cases has been very close to impacting properties, even when the contributing rainfall was not considered to be particularly extreme. There is also a significant flooding problem at the east end of Boundary Brook on the A1055

Meridian Way where highway flooding has also occurred several times in recent years causing significant disruption to this busy route.

4. A range of potential improvements to the park have been identified to address these issues. The proposed project is being carried out in phases as described below:
  - **Phase 1** Footpath improvements and Sandhurst Road entrance works – this phase was completed in 2022/23 and has already led to a significant increase in people using the footpath
  - **Phase 2** Hertford Road entrance improvements with flood alleviation measures and provision of amenity features along Boundary Brook including seating, natural play and signage
  - **Phase 3** Boundary Brook river restoration measures and Cuckoo Hall Wetlands
5. This report is seeking approval for Phase 2, which has secured funding and is ready to commence on site. It is also seeking approval for Phase 3 subject to confirmation of detailed design and funding as described below.
6. The proposed park extension and entrance improvements will make the park more visible and welcoming – encouraging more visitors and improving sightlines will contribute to an enhanced level of passive surveillance, discouraging anti-social behaviour and making people feel safer. Bringing more greenery to Hertford Road will also improve the streetscape, benefitting visitors to the local shops as well as the park. The businesses themselves are also likely to benefit from the expected increase in footfall associated with the improvements.
7. The new Boundary Brook Park entrance is designed to alleviate flooding issues on the Hertford Road by creating a depression where excess water can be stored during periods of heavy rainfall that would otherwise accumulate on the highway and threaten local properties. The water stored here will slowly drain back into the Boundary Brook after the storm has subsided. Replacing traditional drainage with green infrastructure Sustain Drainage Systems (SuDS) will also help to mitigate the impact of pollution from road runoff on the river.
8. Phase 3 of the proposal will deliver additional improvements to the river, and reduce flood risk further, by restoring natural features to the channel and creating an additional flood storage area in the form of a wetlands area. The proposed river restoration measures involve naturalising the bed and banks, where space permits, by creating berms and meanders. This will slow the flow creating better habitat for wildlife and more interesting features for people to see. The proposed wetlands at Cuckoo Hall Recreation Ground would be created by enhancing and extending an existing swale that runs southwards along the length of the park. It will form part of a network of wetlands being created in urban parks across Enfield that reduce flooding, by storing excess water during extreme rainfall events, mitigate the impact of urban pollution, by capturing and breaking down a wide range of pollutants such as hydrocarbons, nitrates and phosphates, and create habitat for a wide range of wildlife including insects, amphibians and birds. Enhancing the river and creating the

wetlands will create a green corridor providing residents with a continuous connection to the watercourse and its wildlife that were previously hidden. This approach is supported by Enfield Council’s Climate Action Plan, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Blue and Green Strategy.

9. The initial proposal for the project was generated following a meeting onsite with local Councillors and members of the Friends of Boundary Park group in July 2021. This early engagement identified the key elements of the project which have since been developed by officers working on the scheme with continued engagement with the public at key stages. A public consultation was carried out in early 2022 to seek further input from local residents, businesses and park users. The consultation ran from 23<sup>rd</sup> February to 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022, it commenced with an onsite consultation event and was supported by information provided online and via leaflets delivered to local addresses.
  
10. In total 34 responses to the consultation questionnaire were received for the Boundary Park proposals. 9 responses via the online questionnaire and 25 at the in person consultation event. The outcome of the consultation generally showed strong support for the proposals. 62% of respondents agreed with extending Boundary Park up to the Hertford Road and replacing the existing car park with a new greener entrance. 85% of respondents either partially or fully supported the proposal to create a new wetland at the eastern end of Boundary Park.
  
11. Another key suggestion that came out of engagement with the Friends group and other residents is that local people would prefer to change the name of the river. Its official name is currently Boundary Ditch but this is not considered to be a very attractive name and does not make the location sound appealing, it is therefore proposed to change the official name to Boundary Brook which aligns with many other watercourses around Enfield such as Salmons Brook and Pymmes Brook. To reflect the linear nature of the park alongside this watercourse it is also proposed to change the name of the park to Boundary Brook Park. If adopted, these new names will henceforth be used on all future signage and maps.
  
12. Funding for the proposals is derived from two external sources: the Greater London Authority (GLA) Grow Back Greener fund and developer contributions received through Section 106 payments. The table below summarises the costs and funding sources for Phases 2 and 3 of the proposal.

<b>Phase (Year)</b>	<b>Cost Estimate including fees/ contingency</b>	<b>LBE Capital Contribution</b>	<b>Non-capital Funding Secured</b>	<b>Funding Gap/External Funding Sought</b>
Phase 2 (2023/24)	£190k	£0k	£50k (GLA) £140k (S106)	N/A
Phase 3 (2024/25)	£150k	TBC	TBC	£150k

13. The works are planned to be carried out using one of the Council's existing framework contracts. If this is not possible, a procurement exercise will be carried out and contracts for the works will be awarded as appropriate in compliance with the Council's procurement rules.
14. A funding contribution up to £80,000 towards Phase 3 is sought from the Environment Agency but is yet to be confirmed – the feasibility work that is required to secure this funding, which includes hydraulic modelling to gain a better understanding of flood risk, will be carried out in 2023/24. Additional funding will be sought from S106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), both of which are funded by development taking place across the borough. The final approval for the Phase 3 works (wetlands and river restoration measures) will be subject to authorisation by the Director for Leisure, Parks and Culture and recorded using a Record of Decision (ROD) notice.
15. The main option considered as an alternative to this scheme is to do nothing which would lose an opportunity to attract funding, significantly improve the park for people and wildlife, encourage people to use active transport options such as walking and cycling, reduce flood risk and make Enfield more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

### **Preferred Option and Reasons For Preferred Option**

16. The key benefits of the proposals can be summarised as follows:
  - Connects and enhances green open space alongside a watercourse to a busy urban area and encourages more active travel as well as space for nature
  - Creates a more varied landscape with diverse natural features including new and improved habitats for wildlife which provides enhanced interest for park users, thereby encouraging more people to visit and spend more time when there
  - Improves public understanding and perception of urban drainage issues through community engagement and provision of interpretation features
  - Improvements to blue-green spaces and the collaborative approach to development and delivery of the project provides opportunities for volunteering in the local area

### **Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies**

17. The proposal is closely aligned with Priority 1 of the Council Plan, which aims to enhance biodiversity and protect our parks, open spaces, woodlands, watercourses, wetlands, trees and shrubs. By improving biodiversity, reducing the impact of pollution and flooding and encouraging people to spend more time in Enfield's parks and open spaces it also contributes to measures in the Council's Climate Action Plan, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Blue and Green Strategy.

## **Financial Implications**

### Summary

18. The report is requesting approval to proceed with Phase 2 of the works to enhance the walking and cycling route along Boundary Brook Park and install sustainable drainage features to reduce flood risk.
19. The estimated cost of Phase 2 works is £190k and will be funded from GLA grant and S106 money. There is an allocation for this within the 2023/24 capital programme approved by Full Council in February 2023.
20. The report also seeks approval to proceed with Phase 3 of the works, subject to securing funding. Estimated cost of Phase 3 is £150k. Applications have been made to secure funding from the Environment Agency, and other funding will be sought from S106 and CIL balances.

### Revenue Budget Impact

21. Some of the works will increase the amount of green space in the area and as a result there will be increased maintenance costs, estimated to be £1,000 a year. There are other works replacing some of the wild plants which will reduce maintenance requirements, which may mitigate against the increased cost.
22. There will be £1,000 additional cost on the revenue budget, which may be less should other works result in a reduction of maintenance costs.

### Capital Budget Impact

23. There are no changes to the capital programme. These costs were included within the 2023/24 capital programme approved by Full Council in February 2023.
24. There is an allocation of £190k for works to Boundary Brook park in 2023/24 and an indicative allocation of £150k for 2024/25 which will be confirmed as part of the 2024/25 capital programme budget setting process.
25. These works are funded through £50k of GLA grant and £140k of S106 money and are reflected within the capital programme in 2023/24.

### Borrowing Impact

26. Works are fully funded from non-borrowing sources. No impact on borrowing.

### Taxation

27. The council will reclaim all VAT on expenditure through its regular submissions for input VAT. No other known tax implications.

### Accounting Treatment

28. Costs will be accounted for in compliance with the Councils capitalisation policy. Any costs that cannot be capitalised will be charged to the revenue budget.
29. All costs identified on Boundary Brook project will contribute towards the construction of new non-current assets and enhancement of the public pathways, parks, public realm, and flood alleviation measures, and extend the useful life of the assets and therefore meet the criteria for capitalisation.

### **Legal Implications**

30. The Council has a general power of competence under section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that individuals may do, provided it is not prohibited by legislation and subject to Public Law principles. The proposals in this report are compliant with the Council's general power. In addition, section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits local authorities to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of their functions.
31. Furthermore, the recommendations in this report will enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty as a Risk Assessment Management Authority (RMA). The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires RMAs to act in a manner that is consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The proposals in this report implement the actions identified in the latter.
32. Officers must be mindful of any conditions attached the external funding being utilised for the projects.
33. When procuring goods, works or services in connection with the recommendations in this Report, officers must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and, where relevant, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
34. The Council must at all times also adhere to the Duty of Best Value in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999.
35. All legal agreements arising from the matters described in this report must be approved in advance of contract commencement by Legal Services on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance.

### **Equalities Implications**

36. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to support the project.
37. The Equality Impact Assessment demonstrates that the project is expected to have a positive impact on Enfield residents. To ensure that

the proposal is inclusive of all protected groups, the final designs will be reviewed by architects to ensure accessibility and safety.

38. We will refer to Enfield Council's Consultation and Engagement guide to ensure we are being as inclusive as possible for all the local community, offering equal opportunities for people to take part if they wish to, with an equal chance to participate between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We will review those participating during future consultation processes to ensure it is inclusive of protected groups.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Implications**

39. The proposed schemes align with Enfield's Climate Action Plan (2020), specifically the action to "Increase blue green infrastructure across the borough" by creating wetlands and other sustainable drainage features. Replacing impermeable surfaces such as concrete and asphalt with green spaces mitigates climate risks such as flooding, by reducing rainfall runoff, and excess heat caused by the urban heat island effect, by providing evaporative cooling. Replacing the car park will encourage more sustainable modes of transport to Boundary Brook Park, contributing to the improved air quality in the area.
40. Wetland schemes improve resilience to climate change, which is important because significant areas of Enfield are at high risk, especially in the east of the borough. They also have benefits in terms of carbon emissions (trees and grasses absorb carbon dioxide) and air quality (filtering atmospheric pollutants).

### **Public Health Implications**

41. Climate change has been described an existential crisis and as the greatest threat to health of the public in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Efforts to mitigate and slow this are welcomed. It will be particularly useful to combat this through encouraging walking and cycling as a lack of physical activity is a significant contributing factor to long-term conditions which themselves cost the NHS 70% of its budget.

### **Property Implications**

42. This proposal repurposes vacant hardstanding General Fund land which will better utilise the poorly used car park. Its use in a wetland scheme means that this land cannot be used for any other operational or investment use or development.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

43. These schemes will be designed in accordance with the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015, and industry good-practice standards, to be safe for members of the public. The proposals do not discriminate between vulnerable adults and children, and therefore do not have significant safeguarding implications.



### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

44. The proposal has been discussed with the Enfield Public Safety Centre Manager and an agreement has been made that this project will fund a new CCTV camera mounted on to an existing lamp column on the Hertford Road with the ability to monitor the proposed new Pocket Park area at the Hertford Road entrance.

### **Maintenance Implications**

45. Extending Boundary Brook Park by converting the existing car park to a green space, presents an increase to future maintenance costs within this relatively small area. The additional cost of maintaining the new area of park is estimated to be £1,000 pa, which is based upon existing grounds maintenance schedule of rates.
46. Improvements to the existing area of Boundary Brook Park which includes seating, natural play, signage and planting does not increase maintenance requirements. By replacing some of the existing vigorous vegetation such as brambles with plants that require less maintenance, such as wildflower meadow, will reduce maintenance demand and therefore mitigate some of the increased maintenance at the new park entrance.
47. Regarding the wetlands proposed to be constructed in Phase 3, the cost of maintaining wetland areas is similar to the existing green space (i.e. cutting with hand tools on average every 3 years rather than typically 10 times a year with a mechanical mowers) so there is not considered to be any significant impact on overall costs.

### **Procurement Implications**

48. Procurement Services notes that delegated authority has been granted to the Head of Parks and Open spaces to place orders or carry out procurements and award contracts in relation to the delivery of this project.
49. The use of existing frameworks must be in line with the framework, and be in line with Council Governance and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules
50. Any procurement carried out will need to be in line with the Council Governance and Contract Procedure Rules.

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### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Boundary Park Consultation Document  
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Boundary Brook Park

### **Background Papers**

N/A