

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/2020 REPORT NO. PL 19/154 P

ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PORTFOLIO DECISION OF:

Cllr Guney Dogan Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability

Agenda – Part:

KD Num: KD5046

Subject: Four Hills Public Realm Improvements

Wards: Chase

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The aim of the Four Hills Public Realm improvements project is to create a more desirable environment for the Four Hills Housing Estate through the construction of rain gardens, wildflower swales and natural play features which will enhance the space for residents.
- 1.2 Rain gardens and other SuDS features will be used to reduce surface water runoff in Enfield Town catchment and improve the quality of water discharging into Saddlers Mill Stream.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve the proposed public realm improvements as described in this report at the following locations (see Appendix 1):
 - Four Hills Estate (location 1)
 - Blossom Lane (location 2)
 - Wetherby Road (location 3)
- 2.2 Accept funding from the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (as shown in Table 1) and seek additional funding both internally and externally from partner organisations identified in this report. Delivery of the scheme will be on a phased basis as funding is secured.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Head of Highway Services 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 award contracts for the works as part of the delivery of the Four Hills Public Realm Improvements in compliance with the Council's procurement rules.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Saddlers Mill Stream watercourse flows beneath Enfield Town in an underground culvert. The catchment is highly urbanised with a large proportion of impermeable areas which can generate significant levels of surface water runoff during extreme rainfall events. If the capacity of the underground drainage system were exceeded, the resulting flooding would follow an overland flow route that approximates the original line of the watercourse. This could result in several hundred properties in the Enfield Town area being flooded. Modelling has shown that the most effective way to mitigate this flood risk is through installing at source sustainable drainage measures throughout the catchment. Enfield Council's Watercourses team have identified that using existing Council owned housing land to construct Green Infrastructure Sustainable Drainage Systems (GI SuDS) such as rain gardens and swales is an effective way to attenuate surface water runoff and reduce flood risk. The approach of retrofitting SuDS to existing housing estates is supported in Enfield's Local Flood Risk Management strategy. The Four Hills Estate is the largest housing site in the Enfield Town catchment making it one of best opportunities to implement GI SuDS.

3.2 The Four Hills Public Realm Improvements focuses on landscaping and amenity enhancements on Blossom Lane, Wetherby Road and the green space adjacent to Lavender Hill. These include:

- The delivery of rain gardens (on Blossom Lane) and wildflower swales (on Four Hills Estate and Wetherby Road) to reduce the risk of surface water flooding and improve biodiversity
- Reconfiguration of the current footpath layout on Blossom Lane to improve access to Gordon Hill Station
- Use excavated material to construct natural play features on the green space adjacent to Lavender Hill
- Improve pedestrian access by constructing a new footway and resurface existing surfacing on the Four Hills Estate

3.3 Local residents were consulted on the proposals on 26th October and 6th November 2019 (see appendix 2 for consultation document). Concept designs were sent out and comments from 20 residents were received:

- 19 were positive about the scheme (95%)
- 1 were negative about the scheme (5%)
- 2 responses asked for no public seating directly outside flats (10%)
- 4 requested improved accessibility along Blossom Lane (20%)

The consultation results are being used to inform the final designs. In response to the consultation all proposed informal seating in the rain gardens directly in front of flats on Blossom Lane have been removed.

- 3.4 The consultation identifies inadequacies in the footway along Blossom Lane – the existing route is convoluted and encourages pedestrians to walk in the carriageway for long sections. The design improves the footway running along Blossom Lane by providing drop kerbs and a shared surface where the footway crosses the car park entrances.
- 3.5 The first part of the works will involve constructing rain gardens on Blossom Lane directly in front of the housing estates (see location 1). Rain gardens will be formed by converting existing asphalt surfacing into green planted areas, creating shared front gardens for residents. The rain gardens will help to alleviate existing drainage capacity issues and reduce the likelihood of localised flooding on the estate, which has occurred several times over the past few years.
- 3.6 Wildflower swales will be created on the green areas on the Four Hills Estate (see location 2) and on the green space in front of Wetherby Road (see location 3). Roof runoff will be diverted into wildflower swales and will be slowly released back into the drainage system providing surface water storage in the Saddlers Mill Stream catchment. Swales will be planted with a mix of wildflowers and grasses improving biodiversity on the estate and producing a more interesting environment.
- 3.7 All excavated material from the creation of wildflower swales will be retained on site and used for landscaping improvements. The design includes the creation of play mounds and play on the way features on Lavender Hill. These features will enhance the existing playground.
- 3.8 Below is a table summarising the funding secured:

Table 1: Funding summary

Funding	Source	Amount	Secured	Spend Profile				Location
				2019/20		2020/21		
				Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	
London Strategic SuDS Pilot	Thames RFCC	£150k	Yes					1, 2 & 3
Major Works	LBE Housing	£100k	Yes					1 & 2
Section 106	LBE	£50k	Yes					1 & 2
LBE Capital Funding	LBE Highway	£50k	Yes					1, 2 & 3

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Do Nothing: The scheme aims to reduce surface water flood risk in the Enfield Town catchment, which is exacerbated by the impermeable nature of the area. To do nothing will lose the opportunity to create a more resilient drainage system and improve the public realm. This would also mean the loss of opportunity to access external funding.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Reduced surface water flood risk as highlighted in Enfield's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2016).
- 5.2 Improved water quality in Enfield's rivers by removing harmful pollutants from the drainage system.
- 5.3 Enhanced biodiversity, aesthetics of the housing estate and amenity by planting a wide variety of species.
- 5.4 Improved accessibility and renew footways to ensure DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance.
- 5.5 Improved public understanding and perception of urban drainage issues and sustainable drainage.
- 5.6 Inspiring more Green Infrastructure SuDS development and collaborative approaches to public realm projects across the borough.

6. COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The total cost of the proposed public realm capital work is £350k. This is funded from existing approved capital budgets and grant as detailed in Section 3.8, Table 1. The relevant 2020/21 capital budgets form part of the 2020/21-2029/30 approved 10-year capital programme

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 The Council has power under section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything individuals generally may do providing it is not prohibited by legislation and subject to Public Law principles. There is no express prohibition, restriction or limitation contained in a statute against use of the power in this way.
- 6.2.2 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 local authorities may do anything, including incurring expenditure or borrowing which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of their functions.

- 6.2.3 In addition, the Flood Water Management Act 2010 gives Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) various responsibilities relating to the management of local flood risk in order to provide preventative measures to mitigate against damage that can be caused by floods in the local area. The public realm improvements mentioned in this report will assist with allowing the Council to meet their obligations and comply with its duties under the 2010 Act.
- 6.2.4 The Council will need to ensure that any procurements carried out under this proposal comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (where applicable) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 6.2.5 The Council will need to ensure that the terms and conditions of any grant funding which it is in receipt of are acceptable, and officers should liaise with Legal Services in this regard. The proposal represents a Key Decision as overall it involves expenditure of £250,000 or more. Officers will therefore need to comply with the governance process in respect of Key Decisions.
- 6.2.6 The receipt of grant funding by the Council does not appear to be in breach of EU State Aid rules as set out in the Treaty for the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) Article 107 (1) as the Council is not an undertaking engaged in economic activity.

6.3 Property Implications

There are no property implications to this report as there are no properties or leases involved.

7. KEY RISKS

- 7.1 The following key risks relate to not implementing the project:
- Loss of opportunity to reduce flood risk downstream and compliance with an action in Enfield's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
 - Loss of attraction of up to £150k of external funding to Enfield
 - Loss of opportunity to increase biodiversity and wildlife habitat
 - Loss of opportunity to cooperate with the local community

8. INTERNAL DEPARTMENT IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATION

8.1 Highways and Housing

The proposals have been discussed with the Housing Grounds Maintenance Officer. It has been agreed that although the proposals will require a change in the pattern of maintenance activities, the overall cost of future maintenance will not be significantly increased and can be accommodated within the current H.R.A. budget.

9. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES – CREATING A LIFETIME OF OPPORTUNITIES IN ENFIELD

9.1 Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods

By reducing flood risk, improving the public realm and improving infrastructure for walking and cycling this project contributes to the aim of creating good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods.

9.2 Sustain strong and healthy communities

This project has potential to significantly improve the green environment in the Four Hills area. Making it easier for residents to walk and cycle improves quality of life and supports independent living. Additionally, increased walking and cycling can lead to increased passive surveillance with associated community safety benefits. Reducing flood risk and pollution also helps to sustain strong and healthy communities.

9.3 Build our local economy to create a thriving place

Improving infrastructure for walking and cycling encourages residents to use local businesses and supports the local economy.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

An equalities impact assessment has been conducted on the proposals ensure that the scheme remains fully accessible by all members of the community and supports the council to meet the Public-Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010. It should also be noted that the any contracts awarded should include a duty on the successful applicant to assist us with meeting our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.

11. PERFORMANCE AND DATA IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of the scheme will satisfy actions derived from the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy by reducing surface water runoff rates (Objective 4) and helping to protect existing properties from flooding (Objective 5).

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The scheme 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.

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 These improvements to the environment will reduce risk of flooding, improve the environment and encourage local residents to walk thereby increasing the physical activity on offer in Enfield.
- 13.2 This is in addition to the less tangible but still significant public health gains that will be accrued through maintaining and increasing green infrastructure.

APPENDIXES

1. Location Plan
2. Four Hills Public Realm Improvements – Consultation Document