

London Borough of Enfield

Portfolio Report

Report of: Doug Wilkinson – Director of Environment & Operational Services

Subject: Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery Project

Cabinet Member: Cllr Rick Jewell – Cabinet Member for Environment

Executive Director: Sarah Cary – Executive Director – Place

Ward: Cockfosters, Ridgeway, Whitewebbs

Key Decision: 5565

Purpose of Report

1. It is proposed to investigate opportunities for landscape restoration measures in rural areas of Enfield by working with land managers in parks and tenanted farms to evaluate the potential restoration of rivers, wetlands, woodland and grassland habitats with the ambition to reduce downstream flooding, improve water quality, create and improve habitats for wildlife and reconnect people with nature. The project aims to build on and draw together existing projects including Enfield Chase Woodland Creation and Salmons Brook Natural Flood Management, as well as working towards delivery of a long-term Landscape Recovery scheme.
2. This report follows the Cabinet Report on the Enfield Rural Catchment Project that was approved in February 2019 (Report No 167, Item 12) which proposed using Natural Flood Management techniques, including landscape restoration, to reduce flood risk to urban areas downstream, and Portfolio Reports PL 19/107 P and PL 22/081 P which proposed the creation of 80 hectares of woodland. This report has been prepared in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement.
3. The Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery project has been awarded £563k by the Environment Agency to carry out the Project Development Phase (PDP).
4. The aim of the Project Development Phase (PDP) grant is to support the development of a series of plans in preparation for delivery of the Implementation Phase of the Landscape Recovery scheme, these include:
 - Project Management and Governance Plan – agreement on the processes and services that will support delivery of the scheme

- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy
 - Stakeholder Engagement Plan – raise awareness of the project among local stakeholders and enable them to raise their views
 - Site Access Plan – review existing access and identify opportunities for improvement, includes development of a recreation and health infrastructure strategy
 - Blended Finance Plan – agreement of how and what private and public funds are involved in the project
 - Land Management Plan – a description of what the project is expecting to achieve across the whole site over the lifetime of the agreement and beyond, including analysis of potential carbon emission reductions and offsetting opportunities
5. The project will be carried out in partnership with several organisations. The lead partner will be Thames21, other key partners include tenant farms (such as Capel Manor College/Forty Hall Farm, Beech Barn Farm and Botany Bay Farm), Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, London Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency, Natural England and The Rivers Trust.
 6. The Project Development Phase is planned to commence in April 2023 and run for 18 months to September 2024. Initial activities will include establishing collaborative partnerships, identifying stakeholders, scoping out requirements for baseline surveys and developing the plans listed above in preparation for delivery of the Landscape Recovery Implementation Phase.
 7. Further information regarding the project is provided in the Background section.

Proposals

8. The Cabinet Member for Environment approves the proposal to investigate opportunities for landscape restoration across rural areas of Enfield by working with project partners to deliver the Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery Project Development Phase.
9. Accept £563k Project Development Phase grant funding from the Environment Agency and seek additional funding contributions where appropriate to the aims of the overall project.
10. To delegate authority to the Head of Parks and Open Spaces to authorise inviting and evaluating tenders/quotations and, where suitable tenders or quotations are received, to award contracts as part of the delivery of the project in compliance with the Council's procurement rules.
11. To continue to work with Strategic Property Services and other internal teams, and external partners to explore opportunities and develop plans for future landscape restoration measures. Subsequent reports will be submitted to seek approval for future governance arrangements and implementation of the project following completion of the Project Development Phase.

Reason for Proposals

12. The proposal supports the delivery of objectives in Enfield Council's Climate Action Plan, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, Blue and Green Strategy and emerging Local Plan.
13. The proposal will contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change by identifying and developing opportunities to reduce carbon emissions and capture carbon through the use of landscape restoration measures such as woodland and wetland creation
14. The proposal will also help to adapt to the impacts of climate change by progressing the delivery of Natural Flood Management measures, such as increasing floodplain connectivity and creating wetlands, that reduce flood risk and increase drought resilience by storing more water in rural landscapes.
15. Improved water quality in Enfield's rivers by promoting natural landscapes that reduce pollutants.
16. Enhanced biodiversity by supporting the creation of a wide range of natural habitats including wetlands, woodlands, grassland, scrub and wildflower meadows.
17. The proposal supports increased opportunities for recreational activities such as walking and enjoying nature, by improving access to Enfield's greenbelt land, with associated benefits to public health and well-being. The creation of varied landscapes with diverse natural features and improved access would also provide enhanced interest for visitors, thereby encouraging more people to visit and spend more time when there.
18. The proposals include carrying out a Heritage Landscape Assessment as it is recognised that understanding the heritage of the landscape is considered essential to delivering a project that is sensitive to this aspect.

Relevance to the Council Plan 2020-2022

19. The project is closely aligned to Priority 2 of the Council Plan, which aims to promote safe, healthy and confident communities. The project is working towards the improvement of accessibility and quality of blue green spaces. The project also helps with the Council's climate resilience by working with nature which is a key theme in the current Council Plan.
20. The project provides opportunities to work in partnership with different teams within the Council, as well as different organisations such as Thames21, Wildlife Trusts, the Environment Agency and Natural England. These partnerships help in promoting Enfield widely to ensure that the Borough receives the maximum benefit from national, regional and sub-regional programmes which will enhance Enfield's reputation across London and beyond.

Background

21. The Landscape Recovery scheme is one of 3 new Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) that are being introduced by the Government to replace existing subsidies for farming and land management. It will complement the Sustainable Farming Incentive, which will support action at farm level to make farming more sustainable, and Local Nature Recovery, which will support action at local level to make space for nature alongside food production.
22. The Landscape Recovery scheme is for landowners and managers who want to take a more radical and large-scale approach to producing environmental and climate goods on their land. The goal of this scheme is to enhance landscapes and support ecosystem recovery through long-term, large-scale, land use change and habitat restoration projects.
23. Enfield Chase has been selected as one of 22 large-scale Landscape Recovery pilot projects being delivered across the country and the only London borough. Each pilot is focussed on one of two themes – recovering and restoring England’s threatened native species or restoring England’s streams and rivers. The Enfield Chase project is focussed on the water theme which considers opportunities for improving water quality, biodiversity and adapting to climate change. The project could involve measures such as restoring water bodies, rivers, and floodplains to a more natural state, reducing nutrient pollution, benefitting aquatic species, and improving flood mitigation and resilience to climate change.
24. As well as investigating opportunities for landscape recovery measures such as the reconnection of floodplains and restoration of rivers, wetlands, woodland and grassland habitats, the project will also consider long-term management arrangements including the potential for rewilding through the reintroduction of species that contribute to long-term landscape restoration (such as beavers and grazing cattle). People focussed measures such as improved access and other amenity features will also be evaluated as part of the overall plan.
25. The area under consideration covers a large swathe of greenbelt land in the north-west of Enfield (see map in Appendix 1). In the middle ages most of this land was part of the Enfield Chase royal hunting forest. Much of this forest has been lost in modern times through urbanisation and conversion to farmland; however, there are still some significant, if fragmented, remnants of the historic woodland landscape throughout the area.
26. This area includes parkland that is owned and managed by Enfield Council, such as Trent Park and Forty Hall, as well as Council-owned tenanted farmland. In the latter case it is proposed to work with the tenant farmers who manage the land to develop proposals that meet the overall aims of the Landscape Recovery scheme whilst also meeting the individual tenant’s business requirements. Tenant farmers that have not yet agreed to participate in the Project Development Phase will be invited to join during the early

stages as the project will be strengthened through increased collaboration and coordinated activity across the whole area.

27. A breakdown of how the Project Development Phase grant funding of £563k will be allocated is provided in the table below.

Organisation	Amount	Description
Enfield Council	£155k	Project management and related costs
Thames21 (lead partner)	£185k	Collecting evidence and carrying out stakeholder engagement
Other project partners and consultants	£223k	Carrying out baseline surveys and feasibility work, carbon analysis and developing the finance model

Main Considerations for the Council

28. The project is an opportunity to develop a coordinated plan to manage a significant proportion of rural Enfield that has potential to benefit people and wildlife and address the impacts of climate change.

29. The project has attracted significant levels of funding from partner organisations and, through the delivery of related projects such as Enfield Chase Woodland Creation, has demonstrated high levels of public support. The earlier phases of woodland creation have facilitated the formation of the Friends of Enfield Chase community group, who are playing an integral part in planting and establishing the woodland. The project also helps to support these groups in reconnecting with nature and will create opportunities for many others to do so.

Safeguarding Implications

30. There are no direct safeguarding implications to children, young people and vulnerable adults from these proposals. Development of the proposed Site Access Plan will consider implications for safeguarding.

Public Health Implications

31. Climate change is the greatest threat to human health of the 21st century. The project contributes to the efforts of the Council to mitigate climate change.

Equality Impact of the Proposal

32. Corporate advice has been sought in regard to equalities and an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to support the project.

33. The Equality Impact Assessment demonstrates that the project is expected to have a positive impact on Enfield residents, and has identified several mitigation measures to further recognise opportunities to reduce inequalities.

34. It should be noted that any contracts awarded should include a duty on the successful applicant to assist us with meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

35. The Council has committed to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030 and Carbon Neutral Borough by 2040. Natural offsetting through green infrastructure – including wetlands, tree planting and expansion of the natural environment was a key strategy of the Council's Climate Action Plan.

36. As reported by the IPCC, the effects of change are now unavoidable, and we must be prepared for climate hazards including a future with extreme weather, heat waves and flooding events. In addition to mitigation through carbon sequestration this proposal supports adaptation of the borough and the ability to respond to climate hazards and extreme weather events such as flooding.

37. Landscape restoration projects that provide natural sequestration of carbon and include opportunities for carbon accounting, together with current mitigation measures and biodiversity net gain units, are very important to the council and borough carbon neutral targets.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

38. The following key risks relate to not implementing the project:

- Loss of approximately £563k of external funding to Enfield
- Loss of opportunity to increase biodiversity and wildlife habitat
- Loss of opportunity to cooperate with the local community and other stakeholders
- Loss of opportunity to reduce flood risk and offset carbon emissions
- Loss of opportunity to contribute to the Council's developing greenbelt strategy
- Loss of opportunity to better interpret and reveal borough's heritage

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

39. The level of risk attached to the Project Development Phase is low as the grant funding is to support the development of a series of plans in preparation for delivery of the Implementation Phase. Enfield Council is not committed to delivering the Implementation Phase although it is expected that it will be strongly in the Council's interests to develop and deliver this successfully as the alternative would be for each land manager, including the Council, to develop their own land management plan. This would cost the Council more money and result in a lack of a coordinated, strategic approach across the area with fewer benefits for people and the environment.

40. There is a small risk of reputational damage to the Council if the Implementation Phase did not go ahead.

Financial Implications

41. The Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery project has been awarded £563k by the Environment Agency to carry out the Project Development Phase (PDP).
42. The project will be entirely funded by the Landscape Recovery Project Development Phase grant (there is no requirement for match-funding from Enfield Council). A breakdown of how the funding will be spent is provided in the table below.
43. This is a revenue project to undertake feasibility work, stakeholder engagement, baseline surveys, consultations and development of finance model.
44. A breakdown of how the Project Development Phase grant funding of £563k will be allocated is provided in the table below.

Organisation	Amount	Description
Enfield Council	£155k	Project management and related costs
Thames21 (lead partner)	£185k	Collecting evidence and carrying out stakeholder engagement
Other project partners and consultants	£223k	Carrying out baseline surveys and feasibility work, carbon analysis and developing the finance model
Total	£563k	

45. Environment Agency grant funding of £155k will be used to fund revenue project management costs. This consists of £85k for 1 FTE PO2 post, to be recruited on a fixed 18-month contract basis, £50k contribution towards the costs of new Head of Rural Transformation (HOS2) post, and £20k for other spend (including legal costs).
46. The remaining £408k Environment Agency grant is planned to fund feasibility work (stakeholder engagement, baseline surveys, evidence collation), this will be contracted out to suppliers, in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) and the Public Contracts Regulations (2015) (see procurement implications).
47. All funding will be claimed retrospectively, based on evidence of spend incurred. Planned spend is in accordance with the terms of the Environment Agency funding agreement, and the risk of grant funding being withheld is therefore deemed to be low.
48. The funds will be used for early feasibility spend only. The Council is not committed to further spend beyond this.

Legal Implications

49. 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.

50. 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.
51. As the project is being delivered in partnership with Thames21, rather than commissioning them to act as a supplier of services, procurement rules do not apply to Thames21. The new subsidy control rule set out in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) have also been considered and it has been concluded that Thames21 would not be considered to be acting as an economic actor in the context of the proposed partnership. Further, any advantage conferred on Thames21 is not selective as the fund was open for applications from all eligible applicants and was awarded based on the meeting of grant requirements. Accordingly, the grant awarded to the Enfield Council and Thames21 partnership under the Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery Project falls out of the subsidy control regime.
52. All legal agreements arising from the matters described in this report must be approved in advance of contract commencement by Legal Services.

Workforce Implications

53. This project will be managed through a combination of in-house staff within the Parks and Open Spaces and Strategic Property Services teams, supported by external partners and consultants such as Thames21. Additional Enfield Council staff will be required to deliver the Project Development Phase – the grant funding allows for the cost of a Project Director at 0.4 FTE (this will be used as a contribution to the new Head of Rural Transformation post as described in Financial Implications) and a Project Manager at 1.0 FTE. New staff will work alongside existing team members already working on related aspects of the project. Any additional staffing resources required for this project will be recruited in accordance with Enfield's processes.

Property Implications

54. There are no property implications at this stage of the Landscape Recovery project as no land transaction or change of use is involved.

Procurement Implications

55. It is expected that any procurement required to implement this project will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) and the Public Contracts Regulations (2015). This project has yet to go through the Procurement Services Assurance Process.
56. At the end of the sourcing process, authority to award any contract will be sought in line with the CPR's and Council's Governance. The Service Area shall ensure this procurement activity takes place via the Council's e-Tendering portal and will be promoted to the Council's Contract Register, and the upload the executed contracts/agreements.

57. All awarded projects must be promoted to Contracts Finder to comply with the Government's transparency requirements. Contact Procurement.procurement@enfield.gov.uk for any support.
58. For contracts over £100,000 the CPR's state that the contract must have a nominated contract owner in the Council's e-Tendering portal.
59. For contracts over £500,000 the CPR's state that the contract must have a nominated Contract Manager in the Council's e-Tendering portal and there must be evidence of contract management, including, operations, commercial, financial checks (supplier resilience) and regular risk assessment uploaded into the Council's e-Tendering portal.
60. The scoping of the procurement exercise has yet to take place, so it is not clear what route to market will be used for this procurement.

Options Considered

61. Do nothing: This scheme is part of a series of improvements to improve the biodiversity and amenity value of Enfield's rural land. To do nothing will lose an opportunity to attract significant funding to the London Borough of Enfield, improve the environment, for both people and wildlife, and reduce flood risk to local residents and infrastructure. In addition, by not proceeding with this proposal the Council would miss an opportunity to make a positive contribution to reducing borough-wide carbon emissions and addressing the world-wide climate emergency.

Conclusions

62. This report recommends approval of the proposal to investigate opportunities for landscape restoration across rural areas of Enfield by working with project partners to deliver the Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery Project Development Phase.
63. This recommendation follows the successful delivery of previous phases of work including the Salmons Brook Natural Flood Management and Enfield Chase Woodland Creation projects. Further phases will be developed and delivered subject to the approval of future reports.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Enfield Chase Landscape Recovery Map
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

N/A