

Item 5 - Management Sub-group report
Mousehold Heath Conservators
30 March 2012

Notes from Mousehold Heath Working Group

Monday 27 February 2012 14:00 – 16:30 Wymer Room City Hall

Present:

Cllr David Bradford, Chairman (DB)
Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton (JB-C)
Chris Southgate (CS)
Margaret Bush (MB)

Nigel Hales (NH)	Mousehold Heath Warden
William Stewart (WS)	Mousehold Heath Warden
Paul Holley (PH)	Natural Areas Officer

Tony Jones (TJ), Tim Mellors (TM) and Linda Abel (LA) from Norwich City Council were also present to provide an update on the Connect 2 cycle route proposals.

1. Apologies

Cllr Jenny Lay
Cllr Stephen Little (SL)
Lenny Stamp

2. Connect 2

TJ gave a brief overview of progress on Connect 2. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) would go out in March for the proposed works on Gurney Road.

LA described the Gurney Rd proposals in detail. There would be 'gateways', marked by coloured tarmac, for a 20 mph stretch that would be traffic-calmed with 'cushions' and two speed tables. The footpath on the north side of Gurney Rd would be extended to 3m width, the extra width being built into the roadway, not the heath.

CS said that at the stakeholders' meeting a safety issue had arisen regarding the corner of Gilman Road and Mousehold Avenue during a safety audit by Norfolk County Council. DB asked for more details of the junction arrangements here.

ACTION: Connect 2 team to action and provide further details.

DB said that some minor works on the heath might be permissible if there was a key safety reason. He also suggested a site visit. NH felt that the access

gate to the Fountain Ground should be considered, as many people crossed Gurney Rd at this point. He suggested removing the existing gate so that people would be encouraged to use a new access point further east along Gurney Rd.

CS said that publicity arrangements should be in place to 'sell' the Connect 2 proposals to the public and forestall any negative reaction. TJ agreed, and added that he had discussed this with the Council's communications team. CS said that the scheme's wider advantages, especially for providing a safe crossing of Gurney Rd, for which the Conservators had long championed, should be highlighted in any Connect 2 publicity.

ACTION: The communications team to be contacted with regard to a press communication about the Connect 2 programme from the Conservators.

TM said that he had visited Mousehold Heath with MB and NH to identify any archaeological or other landscape features that might be affected by the Connect 2 proposals. It was felt that the impact would be very low, especially as a 'minimal' constructional approach will be adopted. PH had advised that the chemistry (pH) of any imported aggregate material should be compatible with the site's ecology. TM advised that a site meeting with the council's arboricultural officer and PH had been arranged for 28 February to consider any possible impacts of the scheme on trees.

Lon term path maintenance issues were still being addressed, and it was hoped to use future Growth Point funding for this purpose.

3. Notes from last meeting

These were approved.

4. Earth Heritage Trail

WS updated progress on this project. A mini-excavator would be needed to expose three of the geological faces identified by Tim Holt-Wilson; the cost of this work would be approximately £300. This expenditure was approved by the working group.

ACTION: WS to update the remaining Conservators on this project.

CS asked if items such as trail way-marked posts were included in the project costs. WS would check on this, and NH said that the posts would be installed by volunteers to keep costs down.

5. Other matters discussed

Ranger's House: PH said that the former Ranger's House had been fully secured and had now been offered for sale on the open market.

Pavilion: PH had not yet received any update on the Pavilion lease and repairs. DB asked if an officer from Asset & City Management could attend the next full Conservators' meeting to provide a progress update.

ACTION: PH to request this.

Fountain Ground changing rooms: PH had been informed that the council was currently in dispute with High Cross, the supplier, over several issues, notably the electricity supply. It was now proposed that the council would pay for the electricity connection and aim to recover the costs from High Cross. DB suggested that further negotiations with High Cross, the supplier, should take place to see if the current dispute could be resolved.

Mottram Memorial: NH has been compiling options with costings for a future Conservators' meeting.

ACTION: NH to attend the Conservators' meeting on 30 March to report progress.

Memorial bench: NH said that a resident had requested if a bench could be installed on Mousehold as a memorial for her late husband with funding being provided. However, the funds available would not be sufficient to cover the cost of a bench to the current style and standard used. This was discussed.

NH suggested possible compromises whereby either an inscription could be mounted on an existing bench, or a new basic bench more appropriate to a natural area could be provided. DB approved taking these options to Mrs Grant to seek her agreement.

New pond: WS presented a brief report on a possible new pond on Mousehold. DB requested that WS produce a report for the next full Conservators' meeting on 30 March.

ACTION: WS to produce report.

Britannia Rd car park: WS reported that the recent car park work had been well received, and it appeared to have had at least some success in addressing previous anti-social behaviour issues here.

Jubilee tree planting: CS asked if there were any areas suitable for planting a commemorative copse for the Queen's Jubilee. It was felt that this would not be appropriate for Mousehold, but alternative sites elsewhere in the city would be suggested.

6. Date of next meeting

PH would circulate proposed meeting dates for the remainder of 2012.