

Report to Cabinet
20 March 2013
Report of Head of citywide services
Subject Bowthorpe open space investment plan

Item

7

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval for an investment plan to guide the creation and improvement of open spaces in Bowthorpe.

Recommendation

To approve the open space investment plan for Bowthorpe.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority “City of character and culture” and the service plan priority to create a successful new neighbourhood at Three Score.

Financial implications

The funds required for each project and the source of those funds is listed in the spreadsheet in appendix 1. The capital cost has been estimated using a standard methodology. Given that many of the projects will not be implemented for several years it will be necessary to increase the costs to account for inflation. Maintenance costs have been worked out on the basis of the recent grounds maintenance contract and include 15 years maintenance contributions. Each capital project will be managed in accordance with the council’s project management processes. A project will only commence when a project initiation document has been approved and there is confirmation that funding is available.

Ward/s: Bowthorpe

Cabinet members: Cllr Bert Bremner and Cllr Deborah Gihawi

Contact officer

Ben Webster, planning services

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Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. Bowthorpe has been developed since the early 1970s as the largest urban extension to the west of Norwich and the first two neighbourhoods, Clover Hill and Chapel Break, are complete. Part of the third and final neighbourhood, Three Score, is also complete. Fresh plans for the final phase of Three Score on land between Bishy Barnaby Way and Clover Hill Road have been submitted by the council and will be reported to the planning applications committee for determination on 14 March.
2. An investment plan is needed to make better use of the range of underused open spaces in Bowthorpe, provide for the needs of residents of the Three Score development and mitigate its impact on surrounding open spaces such as the marshes. This plan features a series of projects to improve existing open spaces and create new ones (including allotments and play facilities) so that the council can use its funds and land in the most effective way.
3. Those projects that are required by the Three Score development and on the development site itself will be secured through a condition on the planning permission and provided by the developer of each parcel of land. Funds for those projects that are necessary to mitigate the impact of the development but are outside the development site would be secured through a section 106 legal agreement.

The investment plan consists of a proposal map ([click here](#)) and a project list (see appendix 1). It has been informed by the following analyses:

- a) topography;
- b) spaces with a protected designation for their nature conservation;
- c) the role of different open spaces;
- d) the location of formal and informal play sites and their suitability for different age groups;
- e) data evaluating the quality and catchment areas of play spaces;
- f) paths, cycle routes, bus services close to open spaces; and,
- g) housing and employment areas, schools, libraries, health centres, shopping, community centres, places of worship and development sites.

This analytical work has helped to identify the main open space deficiencies and needs in Bowthorpe, which include allotments, a section of the Yare Valley Walk and a link from the Southern Park to Colney. The plan seeks to provide these facilities along with new provision at Three Score and improvements to other spaces. As the planning application for the Three Score development has not yet been determined, any improvements proposed as part of that development are clearly subject to the consideration of the application by the planning applications committee.

Consultation

4. A draft of the following proposals was presented to Bowthorpe residents at an event on 23 November 2011 and displayed in Roys supermarket in the Bowthorpe Centre for twelve days. This resulted in a small number of comments that have been taken into account in the production of the plan. The draft was considered by the GNDP design review panel on 8 December 2011 and the Three Score development has been the subject of extensive public involvement, which is detailed in the planning application documents. This plan has been developed in parallel with the plans for Three Score.
5. Through the Three Score project we will be investigating innovative approaches for community management of local facilities (potentially including open spaces), such as through a community development trust, and this might be extended to open spaces in the existing parts of Bowthorpe through asset transfer.
6. Local residents, businesses and community groups in Bowthorpe will be consulted during the design and implementation of each project that forms part of this investment plan.

The investment plan

7. A successful neighbourhood needs a variety of good quality open spaces to provide for different needs – parks, allotments, community gardens, playgrounds and woodland. They should be connected so that animals, insects, birds and people can move comfortably between them. If they are popular and well used the incidence of vandalism and fears for personal security that currently affect some of the spaces are likely to be reduced. Bowthorpe is fortunate to have the River Yare wrapping round it to the south and west. The land slopes towards the river and offers long views across the valley to Colney and the UEA. The marshy land close to the river has a high ecological value and is protected.
8. Historic Bowthorpe is centred on Bowthorpe Hall and the ruins of the church of St Michael and All Angels. The parkland to the east of Bowthorpe (map reference 14) lies within the conservation area but has lost some of its character over the years. The Three Score development is due to be built to the east of the parkland and the number of people using it will increase. It is therefore appropriate for the development to pay for the restoration of the parkland through the section 106 agreement attached to the development. The work would include restoring the tree avenue leading to the hall, installation of perimeter estate railings, upgrading paths and creating wildlife habitat. The total budget is £93,500.
9. The first phase of Three Score has already been completed and it surrounds an open space near The Runnell (18), which is divided into quarters by two paths that run north-south and east-west. This is not a coherent space, it lacks an appropriate centrepiece and contains a tired multi-use games area in one quarter. The north-south path that connects it to the Bowthorpe Centre and the Southern Park also needs work – namely to reconfigure the fencing that makes cycling awkward and to improve the paths and verges around the church ruins. The combined budget for creating the park and play space and maintaining it is £269,000, to be paid for using £144,000 of banked S106 money that has already been allocated to the project by

cabinet and £125,000 available from a property transaction in 1999. No legal contract or spend deadline can be found but a committee decision on 22 April 1999 indicates that the money was intended to be spent on the maintenance of the Southern Park and other open spaces in the southern part of the existing Three Score neighbourhood. This can include The Runnel.

10. The middle of the new Three Score development is proposed to be formed by an attractive multi-use community green (3) that is linked to the existing woodland to the north and a proposed shop and bus route to the south. It will have great views across the Yare Valley to the south and to Bowthorpe Hall in the west. The park would contain extensive play opportunities for children. The budget for creating and maintaining the space is £434,800 and would be required by a planning condition attached to the planning permission for Three Score. At the northern entrance to the Three Score development a village green (1) is proposed. This too would be required by condition and the budget is £111,002. A community garden would be created in the north east sector of the Three Score development (2), next to the proposed care home. A budget of £54,000 would be needed and it would be covered by a planning condition on the Three Score development.
11. There are several existing areas of woodland within and adjacent to the Three Score development. The shelter belt (7) that runs east-west across the northern part of the development site, the Marlpit (8) on the western edge and the L-shaped double hedgerow (9) in the south west corner require extensive management and enhancement at a combined cost of £235,700, which would be covered by a condition on the planning permission. Conditions would also cover the provision of street trees (10) within the development at a cost of £112,500 and the green link (4) between the community green and Marlpit at a cost of about £78,850. Bunkers Hill Wood (17) lies just outside the eastern edge of the proposed development. It needs woodland management and path works at a cost of £57,000, which would be included in the section 106 for Three Score. A strip of land that runs down the entire eastern edge (11) of the proposed Three Score development site past Bunkers Hill Wood needs to be conserved for its biodiversity and is not proposed to be developed. This work has been valued at £64,375 and would be required by a planning condition. The northern edge of the proposed development along Earham Green Lane is similarly environmentally sensitive and work valued at £62,250 would be required to be carried out by planning condition.
12. Bowthorpe does not have any allotments and a commitment was made by the council's executive (now cabinet) on 13 December 2006 to provide some in association with the Three Score development. The allotments would be for existing residents on the waiting list and new residents of the Three Score development. A site was identified on New Road adjacent to Charter Wood. The land is owned by the city council but is within South Norfolk Council's area. This site is difficult to reach from Three Score and Clover Hill so a better site has been identified next to the community centre in Chapel Break (22).
13. The open space here is currently underused, although occasional events take place, people walk dogs and kick balls around. The draft proposed that the entire space be converted to allotment use but consultation with the managers of activities within the community centre resulted in a modification of the proposal so that only the southern half of the space would be converted.

14. There is a car park next to the community centre which is usually empty at weekends and in the evening when allotment holders are most likely to park there. It is also at an intersection of cycle routes and near bus stops. Having the community centre and schools on the doorstep of the allotments would present opportunities for supporting growing activities by pupils and users of the centre and sharing tools and equipment. £134,851 will be needed for this project from the city council's non-housing capital programme if it is to proceed. There is no financial allocation for this work, therefore it will need to be considered alongside other projects for inclusion in a future Capital Programme.
15. The Yare Valley Walk follows the river from Harford Bridges to the car park at the north end of Bowthorpe Southern Park. The Southern Park (19) is a well-used recreation area next to the nature reserves at Bowthorpe and Earlham marshes. The Norwich Urban Fringe Project manages the marshes on behalf of the council and Bowthorpe Southern Park is managed by the council's parks and open spaces team. The growing population of Bowthorpe combined with the existing population of West Earlham will place increasing pressure on the walk and marshes and therefore work is needed to improve and extend paths, plant copses of trees, renew fencing to contain grazing and extend and link walking routes to create bigger circuits. There is an opportunity to install a small footbridge over the river connecting to an existing public footpath in Colney leading up to Watton Road. This would provide a more direct route on foot to Norwich Research Park and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.
16. Management plans exist for the marshes and one has recently been completed for the Southern Park. Some work has been completed over the winter in the Southern Park in line with the management plan and a further £81,399 is needed over the next 15 years from the 1999 Southern Park contribution. An allowance for path works on Bowthorpe and Earlham Marshes (15) of £66,500 is proposed to be made in the Three Score section 106 agreement. An extension of the Yare Valley Walk (16) to the north of the car park up to the point where the river loops south west is planned at a cost of £90,690 and is proposed to be included in the Three Score S106 agreement. This might link to Bawburgh Lakes, which are privately owned, at some point in the future.
17. There is a gap between the southern edge of the proposed Three Score development (12), which is built above the area at risk of flooding, and the River Yare. This area needs to be carefully designed as an area rich in wildlife that blends with the marsh and allows cyclists and walkers to pass through. Vehicles will not be allowed there. The work has been valued at £101,868 and it would be a requirement of the Three Score planning condition.
18. The water draining off the southern part of the Three Score development is proposed to be captured in two lagoons in the south-west part of the site (6). These will be designed to be ecologically rich and to visually blend in with the surrounding landscape. The cost of the associated landscape works has been valued at £92,150 and will be required by a planning condition. A swale feature linear park (5) will also be created by condition, at a cost of about £91,950. The swale will provide both a physical and visual link between the development and the river valley beyond.
19. The Bowthorpe Heritage Garden project has shown how a group of motivated local people can create an attractive space. The plan has identified four spaces that could be redesigned in association with local people to offer them the opportunity to create

similar spaces. These are Waldegrave (26) and Rawley Road (27) where there are two unused semi-circular expanses of turf; and Harry Barber Close (20) and Smeat Street (21) where play equipment was removed a few years ago as a result of ongoing vandalism and not properly remediated. A total of £80,000 has been made available from the Housing Revenue Account in 2013/14 to help pay for Harry Barber Close. Smeat Street would cost about £72,250 and is likely to be a priority for HRA funding in future years. There is no budget for Waldegrave and Rawley Road, which would rely on fundraising from community groups if they are going to happen. These projects would be facilitated by the council. It would be essential for a community group to come up with a viable plan that demonstrated how the spaces would be looked after without council help before the council agreed to work being undertaken.

20. The Three Score proposals do not include any formal sports provision because of the difficult topography, the closeness of sports provision at UEA and Bowthorpe Park and the proposal to improve the multi-use games area at the Runnell. It is desirable to improve some of the facilities at Bowthorpe Park but it not considered necessary or justifiable to fund this through the section 106. The proposed works are as follows: an improved bowling green and pavilion (23) (£130k), improved tennis courts (24) (£143k) and an enhanced multi-use games area (25) (£94k) at Bowthorpe Park. There is no financial allocation for this work, therefore it will need to be considered alongside other projects for inclusion in a future Capital Programme.

Summary of project costs and funding sources

Ref	Name	Capital works	Capital fees	Maintenance (for 15yrs)	Total	Funding source
1	Three Score Village Green	85,000	12,750	13,252	111,002	Three Score Planning Condition
2	Three Score community gardens	47,000	7,000	0	54,000	Three Score Planning Condition
3	Three Score Community Green	268,000	40,000	126,800	434,800	Three Score Planning Condition
4	Community Green - Marlpit link	51,000	5,100	23,750	79,850	Three Score Planning Condition
5	Three Score Swale Feature Linear Park	63,000	9,450	£19,500	£91,950	Three Score Planning Condition
6	SUDS lagoons and surrounding landscape	61,000	9,150	22,000	92,150	Three Score Planning Condition
7	Three Score Shelter Belt	154,000	23,000	58,700	235,700	Three Score Planning Condition (n.b. for street trees the condition will be attached to permissions on reserved matters applications)
8	Marlpit					
9	Double hedgerow					
10	Three Score Street Trees	60,000	tbc	52,500	112,500	Three Score Planning Condition
11	Three Score eastern edge	45,000	5,250	14,125	64,375	Three Score Planning Condition
12	Three Score southern edge	71,000	10,650	20,218	101,868	Three Score Planning Condition
13	Earlham Green Lane	35,000	5,250	£22,000	£62,250	Three Score Planning Condition
					£1,440,445	Three Score Planning Condition Sub-total
14	Bowthorpe Historic Parkland	60,000	9,000	24,500	93,500	Three Score S106
15	Bowthorpe & Earlham Marshes paths	50,000	7,500	9,000	66,500	Three Score S106
16	Yare Valley Path northern extension	68,000	10,200	12,490	90,690	Three Score S106
17	Bunkers Hill Wood	40,000	6,000	11,000	57,000	Three Score S106
					307,690	Sub total: Three Score S106
18	The Runnell	163,000	25,000	81,000	269,000	Banked S106 £144k, Southern Park contribution £125k
					144,000	Sub total: Banked S106
19	Southern Park	57,000	8,550	15,849	81,399	Southern Park contribution
					206,399	Sub total: Southern Park contribution
20	Harry Barber Close community garden	60,000	9,000	11,000	80,000	Housing Revenue Account
21	Smeat Street community garden	55,000	8,250	9,000	72,250	Housing Revenue Account
					152,250	Sub total: Housing Revenue Account

22	Chapel Break allotments	90,000	13,500	31,350	134,850	City Council Capital Programme
23	Bowthorpe Park bowling green and pavillion improvements	130,000	tbc	tbc	130,000	City Council Capital Programme
24	Bowthorpe Park tennis court improvements	142,810	tbc	tbc	142,810	City Council Capital Programme
25	Bowthorpe Park multi-use games area improvements	94,229	tbc	tbc	94,229	City Council Capital Programme
					501,889	Sub total: City Council Capital Programme
26	Waldegrave community garden	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	Community led external fundraising
27	Rawley Road community garden	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	Community led external fundraising
	Total	1,950,039	224,600	578,034	2,752,673	

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	20 March 2013
Head of service:	Adrian Akester
Report subject:	Bowthorpe Open Space Investment Plan
Date assessed:	4 March 2013

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good open spaces will ensure that people want to buy houses in Bowthorpe meaning that the Three Score development will be more profitable.
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Open spaces will be more overlooked and less prone to vandalism.
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good open spaces and play will make the residents of Bowthorpe happier and healthier.

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities will be provided that Bowthorpe lacks, but are provided in other parts of Norwich, such as allotments.
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It will become easier to get around on foot and bike.
Natural and built environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The new and improved spaces will be designed to a high standard.
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tree planting will help clean the air.
Sustainable procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

The health and wellbeing benefits are especially compelling.

Negative

None

Neutral

Issues

It will be important to try and ensure that the design of the open spaces services the needs of existing and new residents through careful consultation.