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CABINET (8th November 2011)

Exploring a suitable Option for the Gunnersbury Park Estate

Report by: Cllr Corinna Smart, Lead Member for Gunnersbury Park

1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet:

- 1.1 note progress on the Gunnersbury Project
- 1.2 Agrees an option of a phased delivery of the core assets under one project programme.
- 1.1 Agrees that Phase 1 of that programme should be the submission of grant applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in February 2012 for the Parks for People Programme and March 2012 under the Heritage Grants programme

SUMMARY

Approval was given at Executive on 18th January 2011 to develop an option for the Gunnersbury Park regeneration project.

This report presents detail of that Option and a change in the submission details to the HLF

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow jointly own the buildings and land at Gunnersbury Park and manage the Park via the Gunnersbury park Joint Advisory Panel.
- 2.2 Day to day management of the Park is delegated to the London Borough of Hounslow, which has in turn outsourced the management of the majority of the Park to John Laing Integrated Services Limited.
- 2.3 Approval was given at the Hounslow Executive meeting on 18th January 2011 and the Ealing Cabinet meeting of 21st December 2010 to progress the Gunnersbury Park Regeneration Project in order that an application might be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 2.4 The Heritage Lottery Fund is the most likely body to have significant funding available for this project. The Council has designated S106 funding (Scheme No.11) of

£250,000, and subject to final confirmation by legal services, will be used to support any suitable development work on the Gunnersbury Park Estate. London Borough of Ealing has agreed an allocation of £5 Million from its capital programme that can be used as match funding for an application.

- 2.5 An options appraisal has confirmed that a vast amount of resources are required and that a holistic solution is not possible without significant enabling development. The enabling development proposed in the options appraisal was unacceptable to the Ealing Administration.
- 2.6 Both councils have adopted the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Gunnersbury. It confirms the significance of Gunnersbury and that if a way forward is not identified the heritage will be increasingly at risk and eventually lost to future generations. An option will be progressed within the guidance of this document.
- 2.7 A Project Board has been established as a decision making body for the Project Team. It is composed of lead members and officers from the London Borough of Hounslow, the London Borough of Ealing and English Heritage.
- 2.8 A Community Advisory Panel has been established by recruiting local people to provide expertise, support and encouragement to the project and act as ambassadors and advocates. It is hoped the panel will be able to communicate with the public through focus groups and events and have a key role in levering in funding from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), public, charitable, corporate and private sponsorship.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Consultants have been appointed to develop proposals. Up to £500K will be spent on the preparation of a round 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). This will include full structural and condition surveys of the major buildings so that critical repairs and refurbishment can be prioritised.
- 3.2 Following a recommendation of the CMP, the consultants have also completed a Museum feasibility study, (appendix 1). This has shown the museum collections are extensive and significant. Refurbished Galleries within the Large Mansion are the best way to unlock the potential of the Museum. It will create an outstanding new Visitor Experience and hub for learning and participation by the local communities that will be attractive to HLF funding opportunities.
- 3.3 A high level cost estimate of £48Million has been produced based on surveys to date. There is insufficient funding for a holistic refurbishment at this stage. The Project requires breaking down into a manageable phased delivery of the core elements under one project programme. A suggested 15-year programme will coincide, on completion, in 2026 with the celebration of Gunnersbury's centenary as a public park. Three phases are outlined in Appendix 2
- 3.4 **Phase 1**
The first Phase of this Programme will include an application for funding to the HLF. It will be used to fund the refurbishment of the Museum within the Large Mansion and the core heritage landscape. (Appendix 3)
 - 3.4.1 At the Project Board meeting on the 23rd June 2011 based on feedback from key stakeholders it was decided the Project should not pursue the major Heritage bid

outlined in the Executive report of January 2011 and instead submit two applications to the HLF:

- A Heritage Grant Application (under £5m) submitted in March 2012
- A Parks for People Application submitted in February 2012

3.4.2 The Heritage Grant application will focus on the Large Mansion and the Museum service and its Collections. It will:

- Conserve and restore the architectural heritage of the Large Mansion House and interpret the rich history of Ealing and Hounslow
- Conserve the Museum collections of Ealing and Hounslow and display them in order to attract new audiences. (Audiences to be confirmed through Consultation and engagement strategy)
- To strengthen the Museum education service and promote new opportunities for learning and engagement with audiences.

3.4.3 The Parks for People application will focus on the 'core' heritage landscape of the Park. It will:

- Restore the 'core' heritage landscape of the Park and enhance the setting of Key heritage assets such as the Large Mansion, Temple and Orangery. This will include signage and interpretation.
- Conserve and enhance existing facilities, including the Boating Lake and Coronation Café, and facilitate an excellent range of visitor attractions and activities appropriate for its role as a West London 'destination' park.
- Strengthen partnerships with Stakeholders to improve the management of the Park and develop strong education, activity and volunteering links between the Park, the Museum and the wider community.

3.4.4 The funding of these applications is tabled in Appendix 4 the maximum funding available from HLF for either bid is £5 Million. The £5 Million match funding from London Borough of Ealing is split between the two bids. Further funding will need to be identified to meet the anticipated expenditure for this phase and is shown as unsecured funding.

3.5 **Phase 2**

Funding for critical repairs to the Small Mansion will be identified in the first phase. This will enable the building to be brought back into use for community groups and continue to be used by the Museum Education Service. Although this may prove an acceptable short-term plan the building needs major refurbishment. A long-term viable option needs to be explored for the small mansion.

3.5.1 An initial property appraisal suggested that development opportunities for the Small Mansion were limited and recommended conversion to residential. However this is the least preferred option of English Heritage and would probably result in a conservation deficit of £2Million. (The conservation deficit is the difference between the cost to refurbish the property and its likely market value.)

3.5.2 Since this initial property appraisal a number of enquires have been received regarding its use as a School. This opportunity will be explored.

3.5.3 Opportunities to restore repair the remaining structures and landscape will continue to be explored in this phase.

3.4 **Phase 3**

Since there is insufficient capital funding to tackle all assets sports facilities will proceed on a separate timeline to the Heritage assets. A sports strategy and the different funding opportunities available will be fully explored. LBH has £261,000 available for these facilities as a result of an insurance settlement for fire damage.

- 3.5 Reports were taken to the Gunnersbury Park Joint Advisory Panel on the 23rd September to seek views on the option of a phased delivery of the core assets under one project programme and included the detail of the phase 1 application to HLF. General support of this proposal Minutes not yet available

4.0 NEEDS ANALYSIS

4.1 Phase 1

Once the principle of a phased delivery of the core assets under one project programme is agreed by Hounslow and Ealing Cabinets a Project Delivery Plan can be developed to define and direct the Project detailing the project objectives, key deliverables, resource requirements and costs of the project. This will be concurrent with the preparation of a round 1 bid to the HLF. An outline timetable is included as Appendix 5 up to a round 1 bid to the HLF.

- 4.2 A successful round 1 bid would allow the further development of proposals including planning permission and listed building consents and a submission of a round 2 bid in Feb/March 2014.

- 4.3 An initial programme of consultation and engagement activities has been delivered prior to the submission of our round 1 bid. This has helped develop our proposals for the project development stage of phase 1 if the bid is successful. This has included:

- Providing information and engagement opportunities at The London Mela, the Acton Carnival and the Brentford Festival
- Exploring opportunities to improve the management and maintenance of the estate with John Laing Integrated Services (JLIS) and Continental Landscapes, its Sub_Contractor.
- Exploring Potential partnership opportunities with a range of local community organisations including Capel Manor College
- Trialing activities, focus groups and workshops with new and existing audiences. E.g. bat walk, tree walk, pond dipping, mini beast safari, fishing, making pin hole cameras, community picnic and museum tour, pop up arts and gardening project, developing a pod cast tour of the park and costumed interpretation of estate buildings.

- 4.4 A detailed programme of consultation will build on this start and be developed for the project development phase. This consultation will involve working closely with the Gunnersbury Park Advisory Panel and other stakeholders as part of this process.

4.5 Phase 2 and 3

Cushman and Wakefield, Ealing councils property advisors, have been engaged to act as consultants on opportunities and Soft market testing as potential sustainable uses for the vacant buildings. This will include the Small Mansion, the Stables, sports opportunities and the lodge buildings. Sustainable use for all buildings are essential in order to deliver the whole programme and will be developed in phase 2 and 3

- 4.6 The proposed phase 1 will require only limited changes of use and no enabling development. Since Gunnersbury is designated as Metropolitan Open Land any change of use of the heritage assets for example the Small mansion or Stables in

phase 2 and 3 will require Planning advice and may be called in by the Mayor and be referred to the Secretary of State.

- 4.7 Legal advice has been taken as to as the nature of those issues including third party rights arising from the freehold ownership of Gunnersbury Park. Legal advice has also been received on the impact of the management arrangements with, and the licence to use granted to John Laing Integrated Services Limited over most of the estate, and of the various leases and licences known to this Council at the site.

The freehold interest is subject to third party rights and obligations contained in the freehold Conveyance of 1925 from Marie De Rothschild to the London Boroughs of Acton and Ealing, in a series of sales of part of Gunnersbury Park in 1926 and in various the Wayleave Agreements and Access Agreements granted between 1944 to 2002, and finally the within the outsourced Management Agreement and Licence to Use in favour of John Laing Integrated Services Limited, part of which is sub-contracted by John Laing to Continental Landscapes Limited. In planning refurbishment and redevelopment works in Phase 1, note will have to be taken of the advice received with appropriate forward planning to alter or to terminate any of the rights and obligations referred to above.

The advice as to those matters affecting the freehold estate includes within its scope, a covenant dating back to 1925, when the London Boroughs of Ealing and Acton purchased the freehold estate. The covenant restricts the potential present and future use of the land at the Park to that of a public park or sports ground. It states that buildings on the estate must be used for an ancillary purpose to the use of the land as Public Park or a sports ground. That Restrictive Covenant has been modified by application to the Lands Tribunal on three occasions in 1969, 1986 and 1996 respectively. On the first occasion in 1969, the Restrictive Covenant was modified so as to permit the use of the ground floor of Gunnersbury House (now known as the Small Mansion) as a training centre for local authority park staff and teaching staff and on the second occasion in 1986, the Restrictive Covenant was modified so as to permit the use of the Small Mansion as accommodation for an art gallery and studios/crafts workshops. The last modification occurred in 1996 when the Nursery at the Park was permitted to be used as a Commercial Nursery for the Wholesale Trade, and, part of the ground floor at the Small Mansion and part of the garden adjoining the Nursery were permitted to be used as a Horticultural Training and Education Centre. Further applications may be necessary before the Lands Tribunal for a modification of the Covenant once the future use of the Park is better defined, something which will be easier to ascertain after planning permission is granted. .

Account needs to be taken in terms of forward planning, of the rights of those in occupation under Leases and Licences at the site. These are potentially significant to proposed refurbishment and development plans in that they affect the ability of both Ealing and Hounslow Council to obtain vacant possession of, or to gain access to property so let or licensed.

- 4.8 The Council are in the process of adopting their Local Development Framework. This document will provide the planning framework up until the completion of this programme and could allow the council to have clearly identifiable criteria for assessing any applications for the site and any Community Infrastructure Levy and/or S106 which might be awarded towards this project and the activities it deliver during phase 2 and 3.

- 4.9 The project will review the potential future governance options such as establishing a trust or other non-profit distributing organisation model as part of a sustainable business plan. The Community Advisory Panel might be a mechanism with which to explore this possibility.

5.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

An Initial Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed.

6.0 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMENTS

- 6.1 The Assistant Director Corporate Governance has been consulted and his comments are included in the body of the report

7.0 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER COMMENTS

- 7.1 This report does not commit the Council to any further expenditure at this time.
- 7.2 As it stands the report identifies a significant funding gap in the proposals of £4.26m. LB of Ealing have committed to contributing £5m in funding and to date Hounslow has made a contribution of £0.25m. Hounslow has a further £0.25m in funding which is ring fenced for Gunnersbury Park.
- 7.3 Under phase 1 of programme, see paragraph 3.4.1, the Council intends to submit grant applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in February 2012 for the Parks for people programme and March 2012 under the Heritage Grants programme. If successful, this will enable the scheme to move onto Phases 2 and 3. A further report will be required by the Cabinet on the outcome of the grant applications.
- 7.4 If there is a successful outcome to the financing requirements of Phases 2 and 3, this will enable the Gunnersbury Park Regeneration Project to be completed as outlined in the Executive meeting on 18th January 2011.

Background Papers:

- **Conservation Management Plan Chris Blandford Associates 2008**
- **Options Appraisal Jura Consultants 2009**
- **Consultation on Options Appraisal Jura Consultants 2009**
- **Report to Executive 18th January 2011**

This report is relevant to the following wards/areas:

Isleworth and Brentford Area Committee
Chiswick Area Committee

Appendix 1 Executive Summary of Museum Feasibility Study (Attached)

Appendix 2 Outline Phased development programme

	Phase1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Buildings	Refurbishment of Large Mansion and Museum Stables (pending outcome of survey) Critical repairs to Small Mansion	Refurbishment of other listed structures including Temple, lodges and walls and developing options for Small mansion and Stables.	Remaining Structures inc Farm changing rooms
Landscape	Refurbishment of Priority Heritage Parkland inc Orangery plus other key park features including boating lake, signage and interpretation (appendix 3)	Refurbishment of 'desirable' parkland assets Including Potomac Lake and Japanese Garden (Appendix 3)	'Other' Parkland projects including Walled garden / Capel Manor, woodland biodiversity
Timescale	2011– 2015 development 2015 start on site	2015-2019 2019 start on site	2019 – 2023 2023 start on site
Cost	£17m	£15m	£10.5m
Potential Funding Sources	Heritage Grant Ealing Council English Heritage	Hounslow Council Enabling Development Trusts S106/CIL	HLF Sporting organisations

Appendix 3 Map of Estate showing core Heritage areas (Attached)

Appendix 4 Funding Breakdown for first phase delivery*

Source of Funding	Percentage	Amount £,000
<i>Heritage Grant</i>		
Ealing Council	29	3, 000
HLF	46	4, 800
Unsecured funding from other grants, trusts and S106	23	2, 400
Other; e.g. Volunteer time and non cash contributions	3	285
<i>Sub Total</i>		<i>10, 485</i>
<i>Parks for People</i>		
Ealing Council	18	1, 500
HLF	57	4, 700
Unsecured funding from other grants, trusts and S106	22	1, 860
Other; e.g. Volunteer time and non cash contributions	3	240
<i>Sub total</i>		<i>8, 300</i>
<i>Phase 1 total</i>		
		<i>18,785</i>

Nb

Surveys are currently taking place to verify the cost estimates for this phase. English Heritage has supported these surveys both financially and in officer support.

The funding from Ealing Council is shown split between the two bids and assumes that 500K has been spent in the preparation of a round 1 bid.

Any S106 contribution from Hounslow Council, including the £250,000 identified to date could meet some of the unsecured funding in either bid.

Unsecured funding will need to be identified during the development phase of a project (18 months-2years) following a successful Round 1 bid to HLF

An element of Volunteer time and non-cash contributions has been included as an estimate at this stage.

Appendix 5 Timetable

Action	Date
Completion of museum feasibility study	Completed June 2011
Project Board to agree Option	Agreed 23 June 2011
Project Board to agree Master plan	Agreed 15 September 2011
Gunnersbury Park Joint Advisory Panel meeting	Option Presented 23 September 2011
Consultation with key stakeholders and development of activity plan and test activities	Ongoing April-October 2011
Completion of Structural and condition surveys	October 2011
Review Surveys, scope priority repairs, Consider Options including the marketing of the small mansion.	October 2011
Submission of Pre-applications to HLF	October 2011
Ealing Cabinet to agree option	8 November 2011
Hounslow Cabinet to agree option	8 November 2011
Develop proposals, programming and cost evaluations for Round 1 submission for heritage bid and Parks for people master plan,	November 2011
Complete Full Draft Proposals for Round 1 submission including outline business plan, activity plan and public consultation	December 2011
Project Board to agree Round 1 Submission	TBA
Submit HLF Round 1 Heritage bid	March 2012
Submit HLF Round 1 Parks for People bid	February 2012
Gunnersbury Park Joint Advisory Panel meeting	TBA

Appendix 6 High Level Risks

Description	Mitigating actions	Owner	Due date
Failure to achieve HLF grant funding	Pre consultation has taken place with HLF and future consultations with HLF and EH to ensure bid complies fully with their criteria	Project Team	Throughout project
Failure for stakeholders to agree on master plan (15-year programme)	Full structural and condition surveys on major buildings. Detailed master planning and prioritisation with specialist advice and input from English Heritage. Regular project meetings held to discuss issues. Clear governance in place with Advisory Panel	Project Team	Throughout project
Failure to achieve sufficient Private Sector Investment/Interest	Soft market testing of vacant buildings. Advertising and exploration of recent opportunities for the small mansion. Catering feasibility study Market testing and business planning to be undertaken. Advice sought from specialists	Project Team	On-going
Failure to gain planning permission for works	Close working relationship with both council's conservation planners established	Project team	HLF Round 2
Failure to get agreement to break covenant clause	Legal will be asked to look into this at an early stage in the project's life cycle	Project team	HLF Round 2