

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET 22nd March 2011

GREEN SPACE EXPANSION AT GRANVILLE COUNTRY PARK

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND PLANNING

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval in principle to extend green space provision in association with Granville Country Park.
- 1.2 The Green Infrastructure Strategy is in the early stages of development and will provide an overarching framework for green spaces in the borough. It will identify the existing and future green space needs of the local community and guide the Council's planning, recreational, maintenance and other green space delivery services in order to meet these needs.
- 1.3 During the development of the strategy, it has become evident that there are a number of key areas of green space that could be considered in advance of the strategy being formally adopted in April 2012. This includes the formal designation of sites in recognition of their landscape, recreational and educational value. Given the time-scales to formally declare such sites, it is considered prudent to commence the process early.
- 1.4 Granville Country Park is an existing green space which includes an area designated as a Local Nature Reserve which is in the process of being extended. This report sets out a proposal to extend the Country Park further to include an area currently used as a landfill site, which is approaching the latter stages of its operational life. A restoration plan for this part of the site has already been approved by the Council under planning application W2006/0232. This plan aims to create a large area of green space, consisting of woodland, grassland, scrub, reeds and wetlands, that would have a high biodiversity and recreational value. There are also a number of footpaths shown on the plan, although they hold no formal designations such as public rights of way.
- 1.5 The permitted restoration of the landfill site is therefore compatible with its use as a Country Park, subject to all the necessary control measures for closed landfill sites.

- 1.6 The proposal is subject to many factors which will be considered in further detail following approval of the principle, in particular, long-term arrangements for the management of the extended Country Park (including ensuring that an up to date management plan is in place), the preparation of an access plan for Country Park users, and consultation and liaison with the public and adjoining landowners.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Approve the principle of incorporating a wider area of green space into Granville Country Park

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Lifestyles: Creating a sustainable physical environment to support active lifestyles • Environment & Rural Area: Maintaining a Clean, Quality Environment and Public Realm and Protect and Enhance the Green Network and Promote a Sustainable Community for Local People
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The proposal will extend the area of Country Park currently used by the community and must fulfil a number of criteria, including accessibility arrangements which meet the requirements of the DDA.
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Final designation of the proposal as a Country Park is dependant on restoration and aftercare time-scales. However, given the length of time the process takes, this should commence now.	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	<p>This report seeks approval in principle to the extension of the existing Granville Country Park to include land (as shown in green on the attached plan) currently being used as a landfill site under licence to Sita until 31st December 2025. Under the terms of the planning permission the current landfill operator has a further five years to remediate the site, at their own expense. Beyond this period the operator has a responsibility for pollution control (including the management of gas and leachate) at the site for a further 60 years.</p> <p>Under the proposals set out in this report the current landfill site would be included within the designation of Granville</p>	

	<p>Country Park and accredited and managed accordingly with effect from 2030. The costs of managing the site post 2030 will need to be assessed nearer the effective date, but an indicative figure of between £15,000 and £20,000 pa (2010/11 prices) has been provided based upon current knowledge of the site and the anticipated remediation works to be carried out on the site prior to designation. No budget provision exists for the annual maintenance of the site and this will have to be reflected within future budget plans.</p> <p>Officers will investigate funding sources for any further works and will provide a further report as necessary. JAC070311</p>	
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes/No	<p>Work needs to be done to analyse current legal agreements with the landfill operator. It will also be necessary to amend the current designation of Granville Country Park to encompass the new green areas if the old and the new are to be taken together as one extended Country Park. If any legal issues arise as the project proceeds and the responsibilities which might fall upon the Council as a consequence of the proposed extension give cause for concern, these will be addressed and reported to members if required.</p> <p>IR 24/02/11</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	<p>There are a number of disused mineshafts in the area of the existing landfill. These were treated in accordance with Planning Condition 32 (ref: WM94/0424/WR) which was subsequently discharged in October 1998.</p> <p>Other geotechnical issues, such as landfill gas and leachate control, are also included in the restoration planning conditions for the landfill site. They are also subject to other regulatory powers such as the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations which apply for a minimum of 60 years following restoration.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	Muxton

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 In accordance with the Planning Permission (ref: W2006/0232) to restore the landfill site, disposal of permitted wastes is to cease by 31 December 2025 to safeguard the amenities of the area and ensure that the site is satisfactorily restored to an appropriate after use. Following the completion of restoration of soils on the site, there is a 5 year aftercare period to ensure the establishment of the habitat in accordance with the aftercare scheme.
- 4.2 Landfill sites can be restored to a number of after uses, including open spaces, grazing and agriculture. In this instance, given the proximity to the existing Granville Country Park and the value the additional green space would provide, it should be both reasonable and justified to consider this area as an extension to the park.
- 4.3 In planning terms, Country Parks are considered in national planning policy to be a type of open space to be protected and will be displayed on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.
- 4.4 Part of Natural England's criteria for Country Parks is for free and easy public accessibility. The proposed extension should therefore be able to demonstrate good access by many different types of transport. The restoration plan for Granville landfill site includes a network of footpaths and bridleways, and a number of access points. A large car park currently services the existing Country Park off Granville Road. It is not envisaged at this stage that any further car parking would be required as part of the proposed extension.
- 4.5 In terms of public transport, there are bus stops with regular services at Gower Street, St. Georges, Gatcombe Way, Priorslee, and St. Georges Road, Donnington, all of which are approximately 800 metres away. The proposal to extend the Country Park would be located near to residential areas at Redhill, St. Georges, Muxton and Priorslee, and the Donnington Wood employment area, allowing a large number of people who live or work close to the area to be able to access it with the minimal travel time. The proposal to extend the Country Park can therefore demonstrate good accessibility for the public.
- 4.6 The proposal for an extension to the Country Park in this area would also sit well with other nearby and adjoining land uses, which include agricultural fields, woodland, horse paddocks and Muxton Golf Course.

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cabinet minutes from 9th June 2009 meeting (LNR extension)

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report prepared by Stewart Donohue and Rachel Taylor, Environmental Projects Manager, Telephone: 01952 384220

Plan Showing Existing Boundary and Proposed Extension of Granville Country Park

