Our Aim for

**Landscape and Heritage**
A Park landscape that embraces the physical, cultural and social heritage of the area

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**Why do we think it is important?**

- The landscapes of the Park provide a setting for every event and activity within the Park; it makes a key contribution to the quality of the visitor experience.
- The landscape is one of the defining features of the Park; it is what helps make it unique.
- The Park forms a valuable green ‘corridor’ through built-up urban areas, creating large zones of ‘natural’ landscape, that contributes to the East London Green Grid.
- The landscape and views of the Park are of benefit not just to users, but also to people living and working nearby, as well as those traveling through.
- Heritage assets, buildings and places, located throughout the Park are a reminder of its rich history and industrial heritage.

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**In this section:**

**Objective 5.1 – Landscape**
An integrated Park character that celebrates local distinctiveness

**Objective 5.2 – Heritage**
Protect and celebrate the heritage of the Park
Landscape and Heritage

Objective 5.1 – Landscape

An integrated Park character that celebrates local distinctiveness

Where are we now?
The existing landscape of the Park is a complex terrain of diverse character. From the urban, post-industrial landscape of the Lower Lee Valley to the remnant flood plains of Hackney and Tottenham Marshes, from the intricate water and woodland landscapes of the River Lee Country Park to the expansive rural areas to the north and east; the Park is very much defined by its landscape, whether from within its boundaries, or from the neighbouring terrain.

A Landscape Assessment and Strategic Landscape Vision was prepared for the Park in the late 1990’s, and this study informed the policies and proposals embodied in the Lee Valley Regional Park Plan (2000) and continues to be the basis for enhancing the landscape of the Park.
Landscape and Heritage
Landscape Baseline

Legend
- LVRP Boundary.
- Boundary of Landscape Character Area - National.
- Area covered by Local Landscape Character Assessments.
- LVRPA Land Ownership.
- Other Land Ownership.

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What do we want to achieve?

To provide a great landscape: a place that looks, smells, sounds and feels special to be in. We believe that the landscape comprising elements such as the waterways and reservoirs plays a vital role in delivering a high quality visitor experience.

To understand and support the Park’s ecological habitats.

To offer a landscape that supports sporting and recreational opportunities, as well as social and cultural activities, today and for the future.

We believe there are two distinct aspects to the future development and management of landscape in the Park: -

1. An integrated landscape

We want the landscape to help define the Park as an entity and place. We want visitors to recognise when they are in the Park and to know that it provides a varied, quality landscape that extends from Ware to the Thames.

We believe that there are some key landscape elements that, with careful development and management, can be used to provide a sense of integration throughout the Park: water and waterways, ecology and habitats of the river valley, the rich industrial heritage, and the contrast between the ‘natural’ landscape of the Park and its urban boundary. We also believe that the future development and management of the Park infrastructure can help integrate the landscape: through the design of signage, furniture, visitor facilities and pathways, although care will be needed not to over manage and loose the sense of wilderness found in some of the Park’s landscape.

2. Celebrating local distinctiveness

We want to ensure that the distinctive local landscape characters that contribute so much to the unique qualities of the Park are celebrated and strengthened. We believe this can be achieved through the careful integration of the Park wide landscape elements with the local landscape qualities. We want to define and enhance the local landscape character while mitigating detracting elements, and developing the unifying Park wide landscape elements sensitively and respectfully.
How will we deliver?

For the whole Park

We will

• Undertake a Landscape Assessment and develop a Strategic Landscape Vision, incorporating an Historic Environmental Characterisation study for the Park. This work will provide a coordinated framework that will allow us to
  • Identify which landscape elements can be used to build a unified Park landscape.
  • Identify areas of distinctive character within the wider Park.
  • Identify existing landscape strengths to be protected, and those to be mitigated.
  • Identify visual and physical areas that have inadequate access.
  • Recognise the importance of the landscape experience within and beyond the Park boundaries, including
    • Park landscape as experienced from within the Park.
    • Park landscape as experienced from outside the Park (e.g. views into the Park).
    • The landscape beyond the Park as experienced from within the Park (e.g. landscape character adjacent to Park boundaries and more distant views beyond the Park).
  • Provide guidance for future development and management of the Park landscape.
• Continue to implement the landscape policies and proposals set out in the Lee Valley Regional Park Plan (2000), until a new Strategic Landscape Vision is published.

• Prepare comprehensive design guidelines for those key landscape elements that can create a unified Park wide character. These will include guidance on signage, furniture, visitor infrastructure, as well as grounds’ management and maintenance.

On our estate

We will

• Undertake a long-term investment to implement the Strategic Landscape Vision for the Park.
• Integrate the delivery of the Strategic Landscape Vision across site management, facility business and future development plans.
• Acquire land where existing or proposed uses compromise the Landscape Vision for the Park, and which cannot be mitigated by other means.

Working with others

We will

• Work with other landowners and managers within the Park to:
  • Assist in the delivery of the Strategic Landscape Vision.
  • Encourage adoption of our design guidance to unify the Park wide landscape elements.
• Deliver other landscape enhancement initiatives e.g. the Upper Lee Valley Landscape Strategy.
• Make sure that any developments within or adjacent to the Park are contributing positively to the strategic Landscape Vision (through planning consultee roles and proactive partnership working).
Landscape and Heritage
Landscape Proposals

Legend
- **LVRP Boundary.**

**Park Plan 2000 - Landscape Proposals**
- Landscape conservation area.
- Landscape enhancement area.
- Landscape investment area.
- Areas outside the scope of the 1996 Landscape Assessment.

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Landscape and Heritage
Objective 5.2 – Heritage
Protect and celebrate the heritage of the Park

Where are we now?
The Regional Park is a significant heritage resource with sites of national importance for industrial, social and cultural history. Although it includes records of settlement from pre-historic and medieval times its heritage is predominantly linked to the area’s industrial past. This includes the Park’s waterways (Lee Navigation and the River Lea), pumping stations and water locks and mills.

A number of ‘heritage attractions’ have been developed within the Park, providing good access, interpretation, events and visitor facilities. Other sites within the Park have heritage value but due to limited access, interpretation, and the absence of visitor facilities, these are largely to be enjoyed from a distance. There are also self-guided walks and cycle routes that follow key heritage attractions throughout the Park, and along the waterways.
What do we want to achieve?
To ensure future development and management of the Park respects and celebrates the rich history of the Lee Valley.

To protect and/or reuse the Park’s historic buildings, infrastructure and landscapes.

To interpret creatively the extensive social and cultural history of the area, including the changing land use and role of the valley.

How will we deliver?
For the whole Park
We will
• Undertake an Historic Environmental Characterisation study as part of a Landscape Assessment, and develop a Strategic Landscape Vision for the Park.

On our estate
We will
• Maintain, and where possible enhance, heritage at existing key sites: -
  • Myddelton House
    Implement the Heritage Conservation Management Plan in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will include restoration of the kitchen garden and improvement of the visitor infrastructure.
  • Rye House Gatehouse
    Prepare and implement an Heritage Conservation Management plan for the site.
  • Waltham Abbey Gardens
    Prepare and implement an Heritage Conservation Management plan for the site.
  • WaterWorks
    Continue to develop an interpretation of the historic water supply infrastructure.

• Gunpowder Park
  Prepare and implement an interpretation of the former munitions land use.
• East India Dock Basin
  Continue to develop an interpretation of the historic trading role of the basin.
• Work with partners to identify other areas of heritage interest (both remnant built features and social and cultural heritage) within our estate. To protect and interpret those areas wherever possible.

Working with others
We will
• Ensure that the Park’s heritage sites form a complementary and coordinated part of the Park wide offer. These include:
  • Royal Gunpowder Mills
    Support the Royal Gunpowder Mills Trust to develop a visitor attraction that integrates with the wider Park offer.
  • Walthamstow Reservoirs
    Support Thames Water aspirations to develop a visitor attraction at the Reservoirs. This will include highlighting the historic significance of the water supply networks within the Lee Valley
  • Three Mills
    Support the 3 Mills Trust’s work to develop and restore the Mill structures.
  • Waterways
    Work with British Waterways and other partners to protect and interpret the rich history of the waterways in the Lee Valley.
• Facilitate and coordinate joint programmes for the marketing and promotion of heritage features within the Park.