



LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING

27 APRIL 2017 AT 14:00

Agenda Item No:

9

Report No:

A/4242/17

**PROPOSAL TO DISPOSE OF PART OF
ST PAUL'S FIELD SITE, NAZEING**

Presented by the Director of Corporate Services

SUMMARY

Members will be aware of the Land and Property Strategy adopted at the Authority meeting on 19 January 2017. As part of this Strategy the Land and Property Working Group, together with officers, have identified a number of sites for consideration for disposal deemed no longer required for Park purposes. The site at St Paul's Field was acquired as part of a larger site previously used as gravel workings, with this particular area subsequently landfilled. The site however is sufficiently contaminated by the landfill lying under its surface as to preclude its intended use as open space for the public to enjoy with the cost of remediation to enable this to be possible, prohibitive. Members are asked to declare part of the site as no longer required for Park purposes and therefore surplus to Authority requirements and authorise steps to be taken to dispose on the open market. The intention would be to use part of the capital receipt to enhance the retained part of the site to be used as open space for the public to enjoy, but this would be subject to a further report to Members on any future disposal and also subject to Secretary of State consent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Approve:
- (1) to declare the site shown hatched red on Appendix A as no longer required for Park purposes and surplus to Authority requirements;
 - (2) to market the site for disposal on the open market.

BACKGROUND

- 1 The site known as St Paul's Field was acquired as part of a larger 80ha site known as Nazeing Meads. The Nazeing Meads site was acquired in August 1984 from St Albans Sand and Gravel for £144,000 and is a former sand and gravel workings that was partly landfilled and partly left as open water.
- 2 The site at St Paul's Field is a landfilled area within the Green Belt which is contained in the appendix of sites considered by the Authority's environmental

consultants as part of the Contaminated Land Strategy process. The consultant's conclusion in the latest updated review of these sites in November 2014 is that St Paul's Field presents a moderate to low risk to the Authority based on its current use of being open space closed to the public. The extent of the contamination has meant that since its acquisition as part of the Nazeing Meads site the Authority has been precluded from opening up the site to the public on the grounds of health and safety, with the cost of remediating the site deemed over time to be prohibitive from existing resources.

- 3 The Land and Property Review Working Group has identified approximately 16ha (40 acres) of the St Paul's Field site adjacent to the privately owned nurseries and glasshouses as an area that is potentially surplus for Park purposes. The site identified is shown for indicative purposes hatched red on the attached plan at Appendix A to this report. This potentially surplus land presents an opportunity for disposal on the open market without outline planning consent for a capital receipt. The rationale behind the size and location of the site is that it is located adjacent to existing businesses which may be regarded as potential special purchasers and be willing to offer more than open market value should the site be marketed. A further reason is that the total area available for possible disposal allows the best opportunity to realise the desired capital receipt to support and adequately fund the proposed enhancement works on the retained land and for it to be used for Park purposes which currently is not a viable option.
- 4 It is envisaged that part of the capital receipt received from disposal of part of St Paul's Field that is surplus to requirements be recycled to enhance the 12ha (30 acres) of retained land and waterside area shown hatched green on Appendix A to this report, opening up the previously closed site to the public for their enjoyment. St Paul's Field offers a great opportunity to connect Nazeing Meads with Dobbs Weir and Glen Faba. This north south link will then allow the creation of circular walks plus offering a differing option to the towpath. Therefore the proposals are to create a wide green corridor allowing access to the wider open spaces and better and improved fishing opportunities.
- 5 The Park Plan (2000) includes a series of strategic policies which aim to protect the land and landscapes of the Regional Park for defined Park purposes. These include Policies L1-4 which aim to protect the openness of the Regional Park, safeguard the whole land resources and ensure that land is used in a manner 'that will best achieve the purpose of the Regional Park.' The adopted plan identifies St Paul's Field is within a Landscape Investment Area; this designation is retained in the draft Park Development Framework Area Proposals. The site sits within an area identified as suitable for the enjoyment of water sports and informal recreation in a waterside environment. Proposal 2.2(i) states: The Plan requires a programme of phased remediation to be undertaken to tackle dereliction and contamination throughout proposal area 2.2 to enable public use of the open space and leisure facilities to be provided. This would include the removal (or replacement) of derelict glasshouses and large scale decontamination either side of Nursery Road and on St Paul's Field. In addition the adopted local plan identified the site as lying in the Green Belt.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6 Given that the release of this site from the Authority's estate could result in significant development the local planning authority may request a Screening Opinion as part of the planning process to assess the extent of environmental

impacts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. Any capital receipt is planned to be recycled into enhancement of the retained land hatched green on the plan so as to open the site for the public to enjoy. All financial matters would be the subject of a separate report to Members should the site be marketed and terms agreed for disposal.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9 There are legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. The Authority is able to dispose of any area of land whether in whole or in part when it is no longer required for Park purposes. This must be a properly applied test under Section 21 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 (the Park Act) and all of the facts should be taken into consideration when making a decision to dispose of land. If Members make this initial decision then officers will market the site and a report will come back to Members outlining any offers received and requesting a decision for disposal. Any disposal will require a formal Member decision under Section 21 of the Park Act and Members will again consider the circumstances at the time of that decision and subject to Member approval the Authority will also be required to obtain consent from the Secretary of State. Under Section 22 of the Park Act, the Authority is required to obtain approval for the use of any capital receipt obtained under Section 21 of the Park Act.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10 There are risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. The site is a potential liability to the Authority as it is heavily contaminated and the reason it has not been possible on health and safety grounds to allow public access. Any disposal of the area hatched red in Appendix A to this report would reduce the Authority's potential liability in this respect.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

Author: Nick Powell, 01992 709832; npowell@leevalleypark.org.uk

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

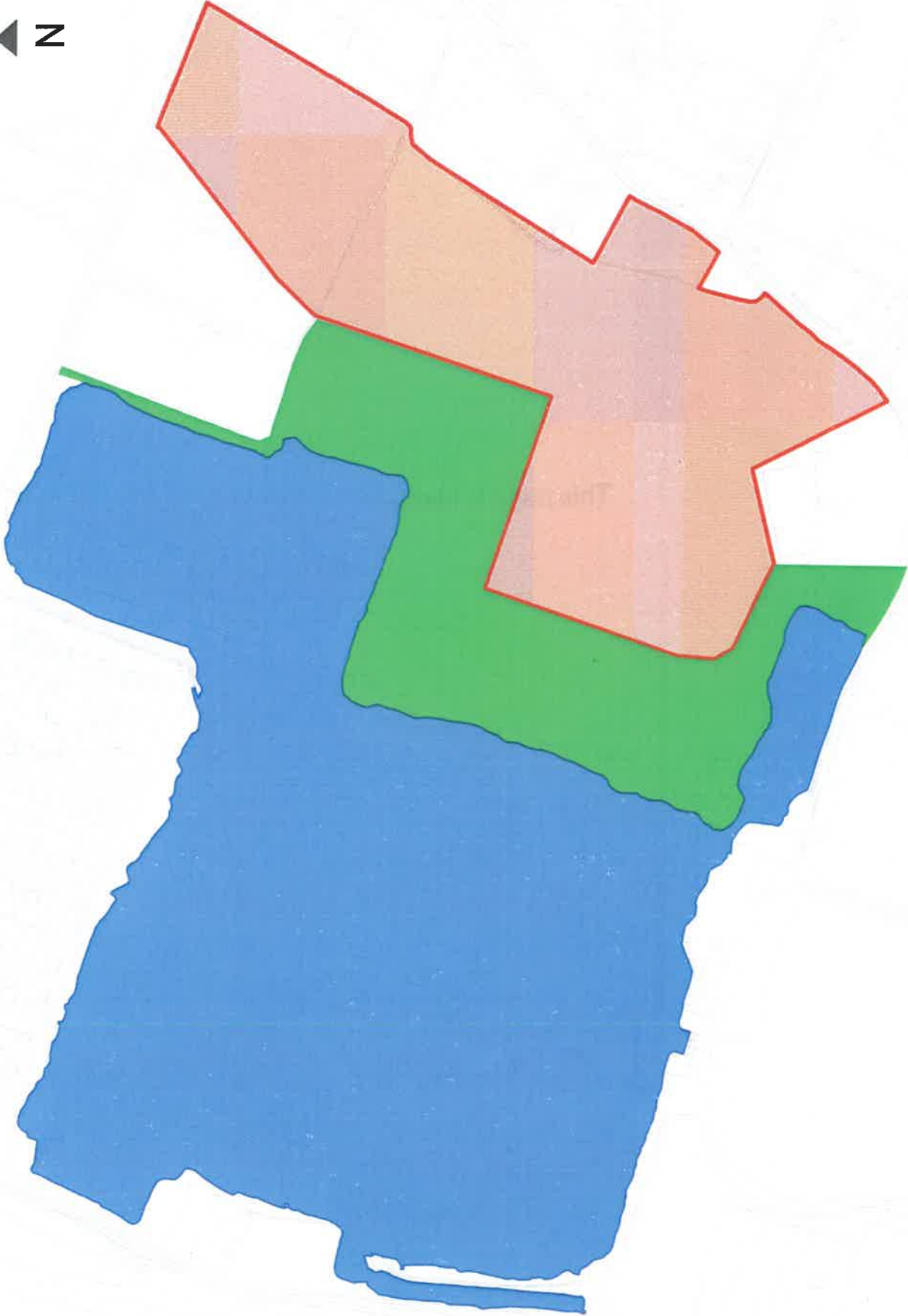
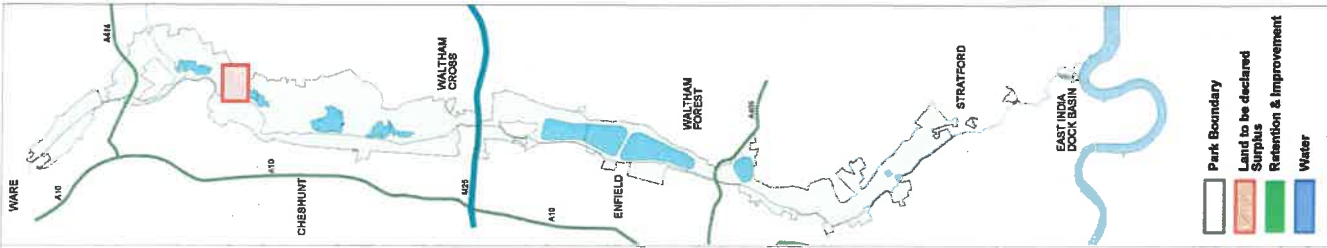
Authority A/4237/17 Draft Corporate Land and Property Strategy 19.1.2017

APPENDX ATTACHED

Appendix A Plan showing the land to be declared surplus hatched in red and the
land retained to be subject to enhancement hatched in green

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

the Park Act Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966



Appendix A : Proposed for Disposal / Retention & Improvement

1:4500 @ A4
12.04.17

Produced by: Corporate GIS (SA)

© Crown Copyright and Database rights 2017. Ordnance Survey 100019982

T:\User Specific Files\Departmental Maps\Property\St Pauls Field\Print Templates\Committee map - Appendix A - v 5 (SA).A4 - 120417-PT



This page is blank