



**LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**  
**AUTHORITY MEETING**  
**25 APRIL 2019 AT 14:00**

**Agenda Item No:**

**10**

**Report No:**

**A/4267/19**

**SECTION 14 OF THE LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK ACT 1966  
PROPOSED ADOPTION OF  
PARK DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES AND  
PROPOSALS FOR AREAS 6, 7 AND 8 OF THE REGIONAL PARK**

Presented by the Head of Planning and Strategic Partnerships

**SUMMARY**

The report recommends the adoption of strategies and proposals for the Park Development Framework. These include Strategic Policies, Proposals for the northern half of the Regional Park from the M25 motorway north to Ware, Hertfordshire, a Landscape Character Assessment and Strategy and supporting documents including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Evidence Base. These together with the Area Proposals already adopted for Areas 1-5 (East India Dock Basin to the M25) comprise the Park Development Framework. If these are adopted by Authority the Park Plan (2000) will be revoked. Each of these documents has been the subject of consultation with other statutory bodies and the public. In addition a change is proposed to the adopted Proposals for Area 5 on Glasshouses to be consistent with the draft Proposals for Areas 6 and 7.

The Park Development Framework identifies how the Authority will manage and develop the Regional Park as required by Section 14 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 during the period 2019-2035. A diagram included in Appendix A to this report explains the relationship of each document within the 'Framework'. Appendix B to this report contains the final draft of the strategic policies. Within the body of the report are links to the consultation schedules and all other documents.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Members Approve:
- (1) adoption of the following documents which comprise the Park Development Framework; Strategic Policies, Area Proposals for Areas 6, 7 and 8, Landscape Strategy, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Evidence Base;
  - (2) to revoke Parts 1 and 2 of the Park Plan (2000);

and

- (3) adoption of new proposals for glasshouses for Area 5 of the Regional Park.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 1 To satisfy the requirements of section 14 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 (the Park Act) the Authority embarked on a process of revising the Park Plan (2000) through a new plan, the Park Development Framework (PDF). This involved producing detailed location specific proposals for all land within the Park. Initially this commenced with a focus on Area Proposals as replacement for Part 2 of the adopted Park Plan. To date these have been adopted for the Regional Park from East India Dock Basin to the M25 Motorway, Areas 1-5 (Papers A/4127/11, A/4165/13 and A/4218/15). Draft proposals for the remainder of the Regional Park from Waltham Abbey north to Ware, Areas 6, 7 and 8 have been through two rounds of public consultation. This resulted in a series of proposed revisions which were agreed by the Park Development Framework Panel at several meetings. The proposals and officer responses to each of the comments received were subsequently agreed by the Regeneration and Planning Committee in January 2019 (Paper RP/27/19). This recommended that the proposals be considered by Authority for adoption.
- 2 Following Counsel's advice, it was agreed that the strategic policies contained within Part One of the Park Plan required updating to reflect the changing context of the Regional Park and to accommodate the Authority's adopted Corporate Land & Property Strategy. In line with the Authority's statutory duty as a public body the strategic policies are required to be covered by a Strategic Environmental Assessment; this is a requirement of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Both of these documents were informed by an Evidence Base.
- 3 The Policies constitute a 'plan' for the purposes of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which outlines priorities that could affect the integrity of European Sites including the Lee Valley Special Protection Area. On the advice of Natural England, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening process was undertaken for the Strategic Policies. In turn this led to the completion of an Appropriate Assessment. These documents were agreed for the Authority to consider at the Regeneration and Planning Committee in January 2019 (Paper RP/25/19).
- 4 Linked to this work, officers commissioned a new Landscape Strategy, given that landscape is the defining component of the whole Regional Park and that the Landscape Character Assessment which informed the Park Plan dated from 1996.
- 5 The full suite of documents was subject to consultation with the statutory bodies, 340 organisations and stakeholders between 18 April and 30 May 2018. 198 individual comments were received which were considered by the PDF Panel and then referred to the Regeneration and Planning Committee in January 2019 (Papers RP/24/19 and RP/25/19). The principal documents are explained in more detail below.

## **STRATEGIC POLICIES**

- 6 The strategic policies are required to replace Part 1 of the adopted Park Plan (2000). They seek to provide a framework required to address issues which increasingly impact on the Regional Park which include pressure for new housing and infrastructure.

The policies are divided under the following 9 headings:

- Making effective use and management of land;
- Conserve and enhance the Park's landscape character, key views and openness;
- Conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the Regional Park;
- Conserve and enhance the Park's Biodiversity;
- Protect and improve and make best use of the Regional Park's water spaces;
- Increase the attractiveness and use of the parklands and venues to support the health and well-being of visitors from all communities;
- Influence major new development within and adjacent to the Regional Park to ensure that it is protected and enhanced;
- Improve entrances and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and via public transport; and
- Protect and enhance the Regional Park's contribution to managing flood risk.

The policies will inform Authority decisions on the management and development of its estate, support decisions on planning consultations and provide a background to the submission of funding bids from third parties including Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy. The final draft of the Strategic Policies is included in Appendix B to this report.

## **LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY**

- 7 The Regional Park has a unique landscape having been largely man-made following an extensive programme of remediation and restoration of areas of land formerly used for industry and infrastructure and for sand and gravel extraction. In this context the adoption of conventional landscape character areas fails and the purpose of the character assessment and strategy is, in the first instance, to recognise the intimate scale of landscape which the Regional Park has through the identification of specific landscape character types. The strategy identifies 12 landscape types dispersed throughout the valley in over 38 areas. The assessment identifies the positive landscape character of each area and through a series of guidelines informs how these qualities can best be preserved or improved. The Landscape Character Areas and Guidelines can be found via this [link](#) here.

## **AREA PROPOSALS**

- 8 The draft Proposals for the area of the Regional Park extending north of the M25 Motorway to Ware, Areas 6, 7 and 8 include Lee Valley White Water Centre, River Lee Country Park, Fishers Green, Nazeing Lagoons, Glen Faba, Amwell Nature Reserve and Stanstead Innings. This is the area of the Regional Park where it merges into the countryside of both Essex and Hertfordshire.
- 9 The proposals seek to enhance and improve the positive attributes of each area

with specific proposals designed to improve access, enhance habitats, develop infrastructure for events, improve landscape and address flood mitigation.

- 10 Furthermore, the proposals establish a very clear public statement of the Authority's intent for areas both with and beyond its estate. Together with the framework established by the strategic policies they provide a rationale to substantiate the Authority's position in relation to competing proposals from housing, glasshouses and infrastructure including Cross Rail 2. The Proposals for Areas 6, 7 & 8 can be found at [link](#) presented in their final format.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- 11 Supporting documentation to the Strategic Policies includes an Evidence Base document, which identifies key features of the Regional Park and the challenges it faces; a Strategic Environmental Assessment, which provides an evaluation of options for the identification of policy; and the Habitats Regulations Assessment, which includes an Appropriate Assessment evaluating draft policies and their potential impact on the Natura 2000 sites located throughout the Regional Park. These documents can be found at [link](#).

## **AREA 5 PROPOSALS FOR GLASSHOUSES**

- 12 The consultation programme on the draft Proposals for Glasshouses within Areas 6 and 7 of the Regional Park led to considerable opposition from the Glasshouse industry. This coincided with the Authority's legal challenges in the High Court and Court of Appeal. To address this point a revised set of policies for Glasshouses has been produced which is included in the Proposals for these two areas. Although the industry has maintained its objections to the revised proposals, they do reflect a step change in approach from one, which amongst other aspects, referred to the possibilities of compulsory purchase of sites.
- 13 Area 5 includes an area of glasshouses along Sewardstone Road which was the subject of so much concern from the Lea Valley Growers Association. Although the Proposals were adopted in 2013 it is proposed on grounds of completeness that this is amended to be consistent with that for the other two areas of the Regional Park. The Lea Valley Growers Association, Essex County Council and the District Council have been informed of this proposed change. The draft Glasshouse proposals for Areas 6 and 7 and the revised proposal for Area 5 are included in Appendix C to this report for consideration. If adopted this will replace the adopted proposal.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14 Environmental implications have been considered as part of the PDF process.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 15 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

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

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17 Section 14(1) of the Park Act requires the Authority to prepare a plan setting out proposals for the future management and development of the Regional Park. The strategic policies form part of the PDF and once adopted will replace the Park Plan's (Part 1) strategic policies for the Park.
- 18 The Authority has a legal requirement under Section 14(1) of the Park Act to consult with the local planning authorities and any appropriate statutory bodies. The Authority during the process of revising the Section 14(1) plan proposals agreed to extend this to include as many stakeholders as possible. This has enabled it to consider a wider range of views and responses received before making any decisions on revisions to its draft proposals.

## RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 19 The adoption of each of these documents provides a transparent and robust framework to guide the Authority's decision making. This reduces the risks of challenge.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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

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## BACKGROUND REPORTS

None

## PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Authority	A/4127/11	Section 14 - adoption of Area 2 Proposals	October 2011
Authority	A/4165/13	Section 14 - adoption of Proposals for Areas 3,4 and 5	May 2013
Authority	A/4218/15	Section 14 - adoption of Area 1 Proposals	January 2015
Regeneration and Planning Committee	RP25, 26 and 27/19	Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 proposed draft policies, draft Landscape character and assessment and strategy and Proposals for Areas 6, 7 and 8 – River Lee Country Park - Ware	January 2019

**APPENDICES ATTACHED**

- Appendix A     Diagram indicating relationship of each document within the 'Framework'
- Appendix B     Strategic Policy document
- Appendix C     Adopted and Proposed policy for Glasshouses for Area 5

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- PDF                     Park Development Framework
- the Park Act         Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966
- HRA                    Habitat Regulations Assessment