

ITEM 5

Administration and Management Report

1. Acid Grassland Restoration Project: Final Phase

- 1.1 In 2018 the Board agreed a project to restore acid grassland and heathland habitats on a number of parcels on land on the Golf Course and Seven Islands Pond sub-sites of the Common. Funding for the project was provided by the Mitcham Common Environmental Trust.
- 1.2 By March 2020 the first phase of the project had been completed. The final phase, which will involve the clearance of scrub and trees on the parcel shown on the attached map, followed by the removal of soil and seeding with acid grassland species, will be completed within the next few months.

2. Dog Control: Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)

- 2.1 As reported at the September Board meeting, from 13 August 2020 all Merton's parks and open spaces, including Mitcham Common, are controlled by a Dog Control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO).
- 2.2 The PSPO replaces the previous Dog Control Orders and includes dog fouling, dogs on leads, exclusion areas and a restriction on the number of dogs that can be walked by one person. The maximum number of dogs that can be walked by an individual is now four.
- 2.3 For the past few months, compliance with the restriction on the number of dogs that one person can walk has been monitored. Officers are of the view that two dog walkers who regularly visit the Common, are not complying with the Order. Accordingly it is recommended that enforcement action is initiated.
- 2.4 Although the PSPO was only recently adopted, the application process started over two years ago and the justification for a specific PSPO has to be revisited every three years.
- 2.5 Merton Council will be consulting on the renewal of the existing PSPO in the near future. The consultation will also consider whether a new dog licensing scheme, that permits a limited number of professional dog walkers to walk up to 6 dogs, should be explored. Such a licensing scheme would have implications for Mitcham Common.
- 2.6 The results of the consultation will be discussed at a future Board meeting.

3. Beddington Lane: Replacement of Medium Pressure Gas Mains

- 3.1 Due to ongoing leakage and safety concerns the mains running the length of Beddington Lane has been classified as high risk by HSE. Accordingly the existing mains must be decommissioned and replaced. This work is being driven and overseen by Sutton Council.
- 3.2 The first phase of this works is to excavate the mains junction located on the edge of the Common adjacent to Brookmead Road. The attached plan gives the location of the works. This will involve a deep excavation to expose the mains and undertake the work required to enable the replacement of the first section of mains alongside Brookmead Road.
- 3.3 The section of mains located on the Common is subject to an existing wayleave agreement which allows for the maintenance and replacement of this asset. Nevertheless the agreement requires that the Mitcham Common Conservators are advised and consulted on the planned works. To that end in November the Manager attended a site visit with the contractor, Forefront Utilities, who will undertake the work.
- 3.4 The section of the Common where the work will take place is not ecologically sensitive. However a short length of footpath on to the Common at the junction of Beddington Lane and Brookmead Road will have to be re-routed for the duration of the works.
- 3.5 As described in 3.2 the excavation on the Common will be deep and several metres wide. This will generate a large volume of soil which, rather than take off-site, the contractor has requested permission to store on the Common. The Chair has agree to this concession and a facility licence has been signed.
- 3.6 Ground preparation for the work on the Common will be undertaken in December and the phase of the project that impacts on the Common will commence in early January 2021 and take six weeks to complete. Thereafter the Common will be reinstated.

4. Merton Council's High Court Injunction: Persons Unknown Occupying Land or Depositing Waste

- 4.1 As previously reported, the injunction applies to greenspaces in Merton, including Mitcham Common.
- 4.2 Recent legal decisions have confirmed that Merton's injunction is no longer tenable and following a court hearing on 2nd November 2020 the Council are required to complete the following actions:

The existing Injunction Order must be discharged immediately.

By 20th November 2020, the Council must remove all copies of the Injunction Order from the protected sites, and we must confirm this to the Court by 25 November 2020

By 20th November 2020 the Council must publish a notice on its website confirming that the Injunction has been discharged, and we must confirm this to the Court by 25 November 2020.

- 4.3 Merton has advised that they will be joining in the action that is scheduled for January 2021 to have the injunction renewed although this will be for a much reduced number of high risk sites and the decision is likely to go to the Court of Appeal.

5. Management Plan: Quarterly Work Programme

- 5.1 The programme covering the period January to March 2021 will be uploaded to the website in the near future.

Martin Boyle
November 2020



Annotations
Polygon2
Merton Borough Map
Merton Borough Boundary
Outside Merton Borough

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Mitcham Common Seven Islands Pond Sub-Site Parcel 2 Restoration Project
2020/2021

Scale = 1 : 2823.660



MERTON COUNCIL



Mitcham Common

Annotations



Merton Borough Map

Merton Borough Boundary



Outside Merton Borough

B272



B272

Beddington Lane

Brookmead Road

Brookmead Road

Oakmead Road

Homemead Road

Redhouse Road

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Beddington Lane Location of Replacement Gas Mains Works on Mitcham Common

Scale = 1 : 1409,940



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