

Black Park Spatial Plan & Landscape Management Plan

Project Overview

2019-2021

Introduction

Project Summary

This submission covers the consecutive and connected commissions to prepare a Spatial Plan and a Landscape Management Plan for Black Park Country Park in Buckinghamshire.

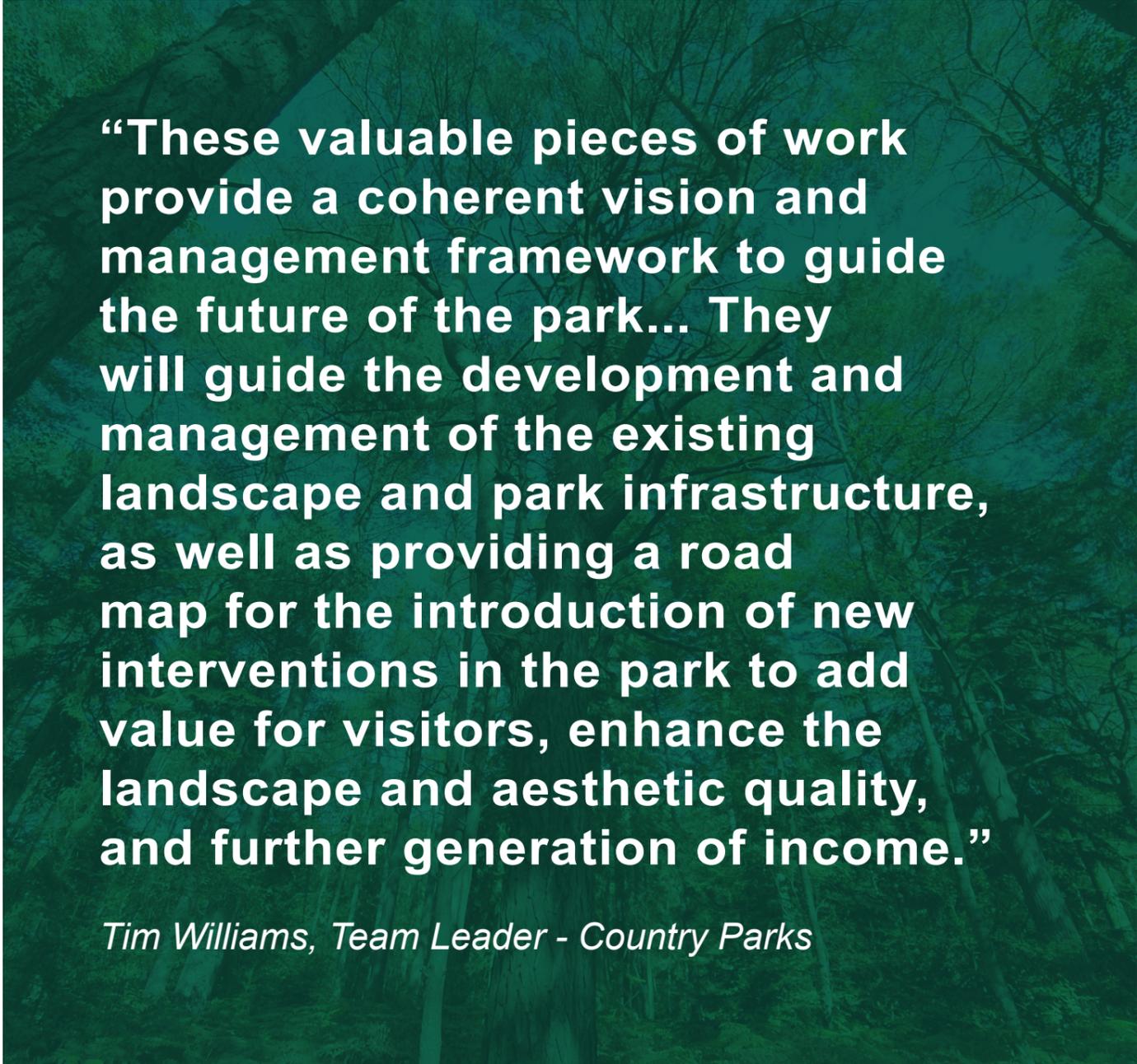
Black Park Country Park is a 217 hectare forested park located just to the north-west of Slough and close to the western fringe of Greater London. The park has seen a significant increase in visitor numbers in the last 15-20 years, which along with a range of external factors has placed increasing pressure on the park and those tasked with managing the landscape.

Buckinghamshire Council Country Parks Team commissioned The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd to work with them to establish a new landscape vision for the park, and to support delivery of this vision through the preparation of a Spatial Plan and Landscape Management Plan.

The Spatial Plan is being used by the Country Parks team to guide future decision making on infrastructure improvements and new projects. It provides a framework to ensure that the future development of the park is well planned, timely, coherent and in keeping with the character of the park. It includes a concise package of statements, plans and tabular information, which together set out the vision for the park up to 2070, and the strategy for the delivery of interventions for the period 2020-2040.

The Landscape Management Plan provides an overarching management framework within which previously disparate management information is brought together. It sets out the management context, establishes site-wide landscape management policies and details landscape management priorities for each of twelve character areas. The practical delivery of these priorities is supported by a suite of detailed management operations.

The documents are fully coordinated and together provide the tools required by the Country Parks Team to guide the future development of the park.



“These valuable pieces of work provide a coherent vision and management framework to guide the future of the park... They will guide the development and management of the existing landscape and park infrastructure, as well as providing a road map for the introduction of new interventions in the park to add value for visitors, enhance the landscape and aesthetic quality, and further generation of income.”

Tim Williams, Team Leader - Country Parks

A Beautiful and Diverse Landscape

The Opportunity

“Black Park is a gem within Buckinghamshire’s Green Infrastructure network, providing a valuable resource for the County’s residents, visitors from further afield, wildlife and the film/television industry. It has a unique and varied history and is an asset to be treasured and protected.”

Tim Williams, Team Leader, Country Parks

Located close to several major urban centres, including Slough to the south-west, the areas around Heathrow to the south-east, and the west London urban fringe, Black Park provides a place for local populations to escape urban life, and to enjoy opportunities for recreation, adventure and education.

The park is blessed with a great diversity of landscapes, which together create a wonderful space to meet and socialise, as well as providing visitors genuine opportunities to explore and connect with nature. The park is also an important ecological resource, with 15ha of land designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a further 66ha designated a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

Black Park Lake is the dominant landscape feature in the southern portion of the park. On busy days the paths to the western end of the lake throng with visitors enjoying the lakeside environment, cafe and ice cream kiosk. To the eastern end of the lake, the character is quieter, with paths passing by reedbed, twisted tree stems and gravelly pools.

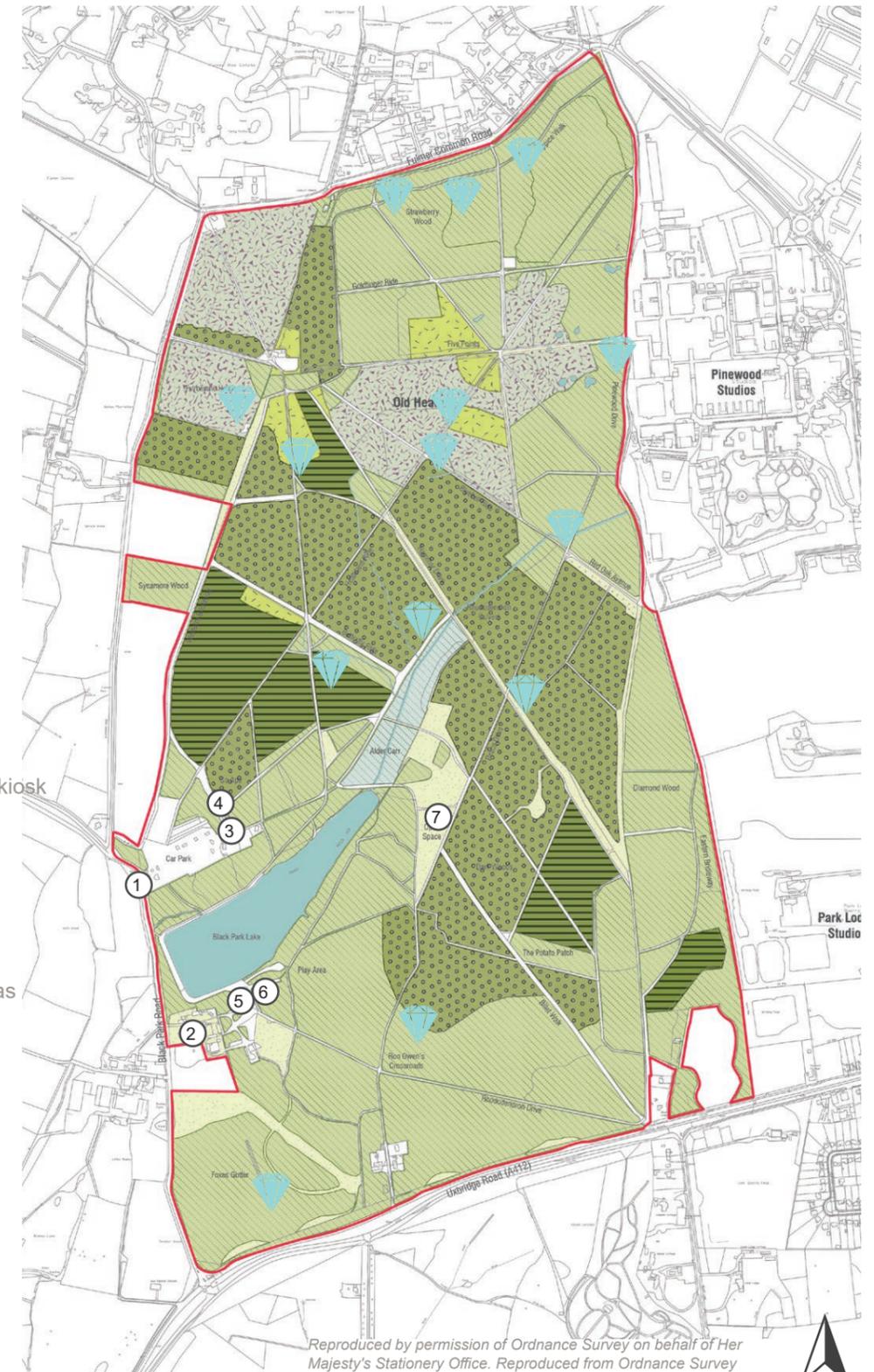
Extending eastwards and northwards from the lake are the central plantation coniferous woodlands. These woodlands include the area of Dark Wood, where stands of Black Pine tower over the forest tracks below. These create a unique atmosphere that is loved by visitors and film makers alike.

Heading further north, woodland eventually gives way to wood pasture and then to open heathland. This

transition from enclosed shaded forested track to the open sunlit landscape of the heathland is one of the joys of a long walk around the park. Here visitors can stroll through heather with only the grazing cattle for company and the chorus of heathland birds drifting on the wind.



- KEY
- SSSI
 - Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
 - Dense coniferous woodland
 - Open coniferous woodland
 - Open mixed woodland
 - Scattered trees
 - Heathland
 - Open land
 - Wet woodland
 - ① Main vehicular entrance
 - ② Country Parks Team offices
 - ③ Main pedestrian entrance & kiosk
 - ④ GoApe entrance
 - ⑤ Cafe
 - ⑥ Emma Sallis play area
 - ⑦ Open space
 - ◆ Locations identified by staff as hidden gems



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LAND COVER, DESIGNATIONS & HIDDEN GEMS

A Landscape Under Pressure

The Challenge

Between 2002/3 and 2018/19 annual visitor numbers to Black Park increased by more than 200%. Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, the park has seen a further steep increase in visitor numbers, with the park anticipating a more than 50% rise in visitors during the period.

In addition to behavioural changes as a result of the pandemic, a number of other drivers are anticipated to maintain the upward trend in visitor numbers, including:

- New housing within the park's catchment area;
- New visitor attractions close to the park;
- Improved access (public transport, cycle and on foot);
- Growing interest in healthy lifestyles, 'connecting with nature' and life-long learning;
- Interest in existing visitor attractions, e.g. GoApe; and
- New visitor facilities and attractions.

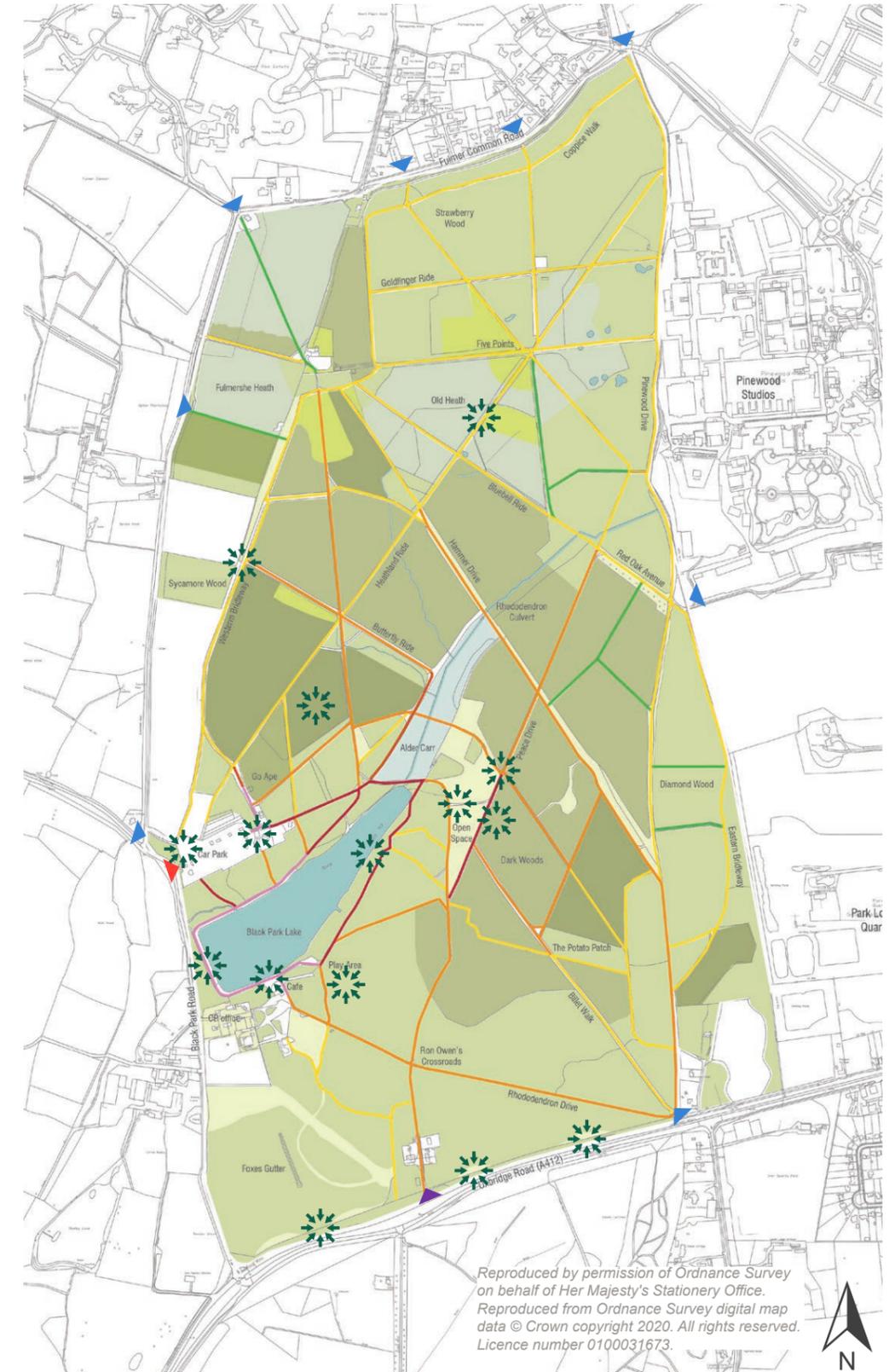
In addition to its popularity with visitors, Black Park is also frequently used as a filming location. Pinewood studios sits immediately adjacent to Black Park, and since the studios first opened in the 1930s, film crews have been drawn to the variety of atmospheric landscapes within the park. During the 1950s to 1970s, the park was used as a set in a number of Hammer Horror Films, and more recently the park has been used as a location for Bond films and the Harry Potter series.

The increase in visitor numbers and increasing interest from film crews is creating a number of pressures. These include increased congestion (particularly around the lake) and threats to key park assets, including the mature tree stock, grassland areas and visitor infrastructure. These impacts must be addressed in parallel with increasing environmental pressures (e.g. climate change, invasive species and pests and diseases).



KEY

- ▶ Vehicular access (public)
- ▶ Vehicular access (staff/contractor only)
- ▶ Pedestrian entrance
- Very high use path
- High use path
- Medium use path
- Low use path
- Very low use path
- ✻ Locations identified by staff as pressure points



ACCESS POINTS, HIERARCHY OF PATHS & PRESSURE POINTS



Project Brief

Spatial Plan

Facing the combined challenge of enhancing visitor experience, managing increasing visitor numbers and protecting the landscape character and sensitive ecology of the park, Buckinghamshire County Council (now part of the unitary authority - Buckinghamshire Council) approached The Environment Partnership (TEP) and PSC Ltd to explore options for the development of a new spatial plan to guide forward planning and decision making within the park.

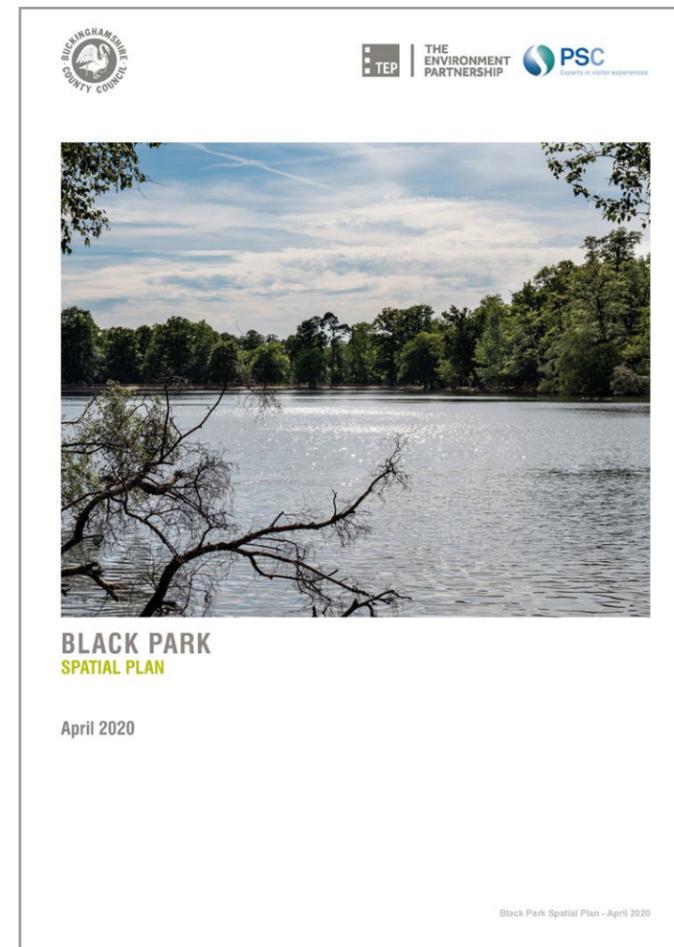
Discussions and site visits were held during the Spring of 2019, during which time the conversation started about how best to balance often competing aims. Of particular concern was the need to better reconcile the Country Park's role as a key recreational resource, its remit to be self-financing and its status as a nationally important site for wildlife.

In July 2019 Buckinghamshire County Council's Country Parks Team formerly commissioned TEP to develop a Spatial Plan for Black Park. Work to develop the Spatial Plan was guided by the following objectives:

- To collate, map and analyse data on key landscape features, their condition and patterns of use;
- To analyse existing information on the experience of visitors and other users;
- To identify existing pressure points, areas of conflict, possible future threats and gaps in management practices;
- To develop a clear vision for the landscape and to agree strategic objectives covering visitors' experience of the landscape, landscape management and nature conservation;
- To prepare a Spatial Plan to guide decision making on future projects and actions; and

- To make recommendations for the development of landscape management practices to support the delivery of the identified projects and actions.

The Spatial Plan, published in April 2020, established two new geographic divisions of the park. Three zones and twelve character areas were defined as part of the work.



Landscape Management Plan

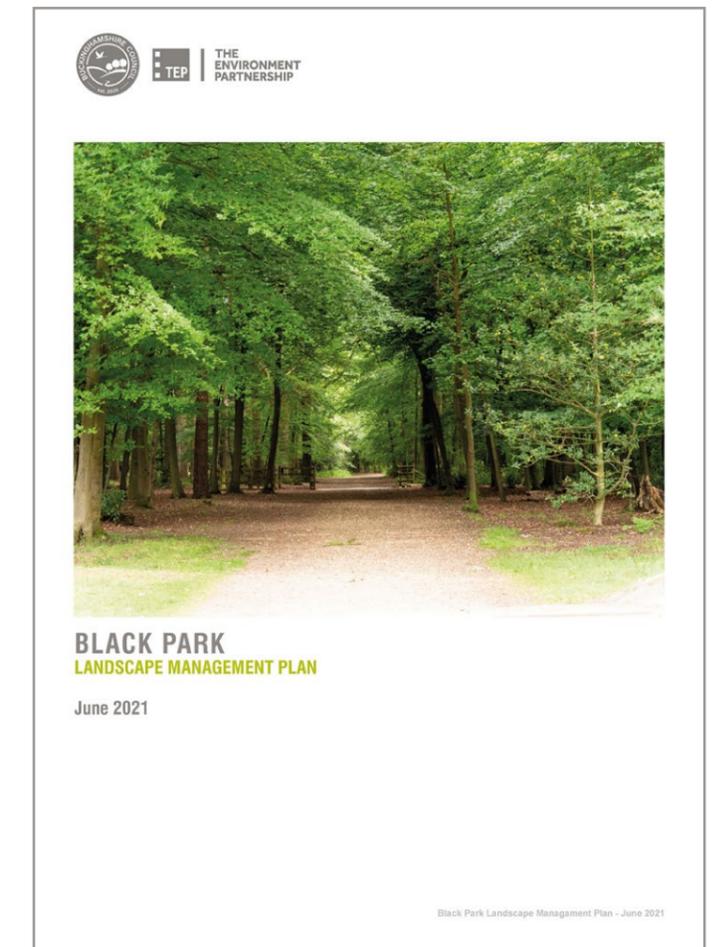
The need for a unifying Landscape Management Plan was established as part of work undertaken during 2019/20 to prepare the Spatial Plan for the park. This work included a desk review of existing landscape management information and a series of workshops with park staff at which existing landscape management plans and processes were reviewed.

In July 2020 The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd were commissioned to work with the Country Parks Team to develop a unifying Landscape Management Plan for the park. The agreed aim was to establish a framework for efficient and effective decision making across the park, with clear messaging from high-level management policies, through the setting of management priorities for different areas of the park, to a suite of practical management operations.

Six key tasks directed the development of this Landscape Management Plan. These are as follows:

- **01: Management context**
Review and document the management, policy, historical, social, ecological and aesthetic contexts.
- **02: Management policies**
Establish management policies for thematic areas (e.g. visitor experience, ecology, filming etc.) and for key landscape features (e.g. the lake, rides, clearing etc.).
- **03: Character area assessment**
Assess the significance and condition of each character area against criteria under four key landscape values - historical, social, ecological and aesthetic.
- **04: Management priorities by character area**
Agree the overarching management intention and establish the management priorities for each character area .

- **05: Management operations**
Develop a suite of landscape management operations to support the delivery of the identified policies and priorities.
- **06: Prepare the Landscape Management Plan**
Collate, review and agree task outputs.



Developing a Detailed Understanding of the Park

Data Review and Site Surveys Workshops

Both projects began with detailed desk reviews of existing park data and the park's local and regional context. Documents reviewed included infrastructure/landscape surveys, designations, existing management plans, policy, and data from biannual visitor experience surveys.

In order to gain a first-hand understanding of how people use the park and to verify data reviewed as part of the desk assessment, TEP staff - supported by students from the University of Greenwich - undertook 4 days of on-site survey work. Surveys of visitor numbers at selected survey points and observation of patterns of use and visitor pressures were undertaken on two sunny days during the August holiday peak.



COMPILING NOTES AFTER A DAY'S SURVEYING

At each stage of the development of both plans, park staff - from the Head of Country Parks and Green Spaces through to Rangers delivering work on the ground - were engaged and their comments, ideas and experiences incorporated into the developing documents.

During the development of the Spatial Plan, two full-day workshops were held with a cross-section of staff. In the lead up to the workshop all Country Parks Team members provided detailed response to a series of questions (right). These responses were then used as the basis for discussions at the workshop. A detailed workshop record was prepared capturing all views expressed by staff. This was issued alongside the Spatial Plan.

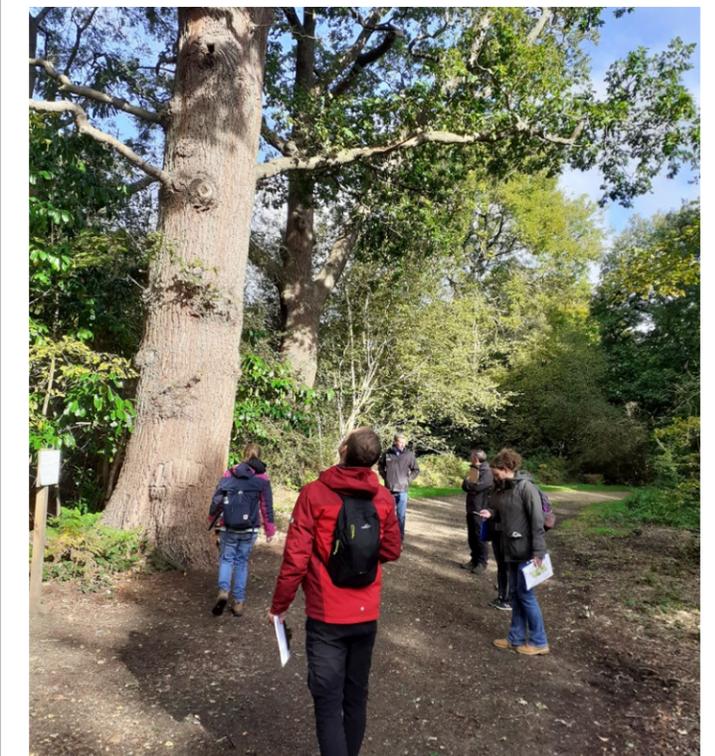


WORKSHOP PLAN EXTRACT

- Q1. Where is your favourite location in the park and why?
- Q2. Where is your least favourite location in the park and why?
- Q3. Are there any places in the park that might be considered "hidden gems"?
- Q4. What qualities distinguish the park from other large parkland areas in the County, i.e. give the park a uniqueness?
- Q5. Which areas of the park do you think are most under pressure from visitors?
- Q6. Which areas of the park do you think are under utilised?
- Q7. Which areas of the park should be protected at all costs?
- Q8. Which areas of the park cause you most difficulties in your job?
- Q9. Are there any existing landscape management approaches, park management processes or types of infrastructure that create issues?
- Q10. What visitor behaviours (e.g. dogs off leads, swimming in the lake etc.) cause you most problems and/or threaten the quality of the park?
- Q11. Are there any particular demographic groups that you feel aren't adequately catered for in the park?

Assessment Days

To support the development of the Landscape Management Plan, three full days of onsite assessment work were undertaken. TEP's team of Landscape Managers, Aboriculturalists, Ecologists and Landscape Architects joined with members of the Country Parks Team - including the Country Parks Team Leader and Black Park's Head Ranger - for the assessments. The significance and condition of the landscape was assessed under four headings - historic, ecological, aesthetic and social. As a consequence of the collaborative approach adopted and the trust developed during the development of the Spatial Plan, it was possible to reach a consensus view for all elements of the assessment.

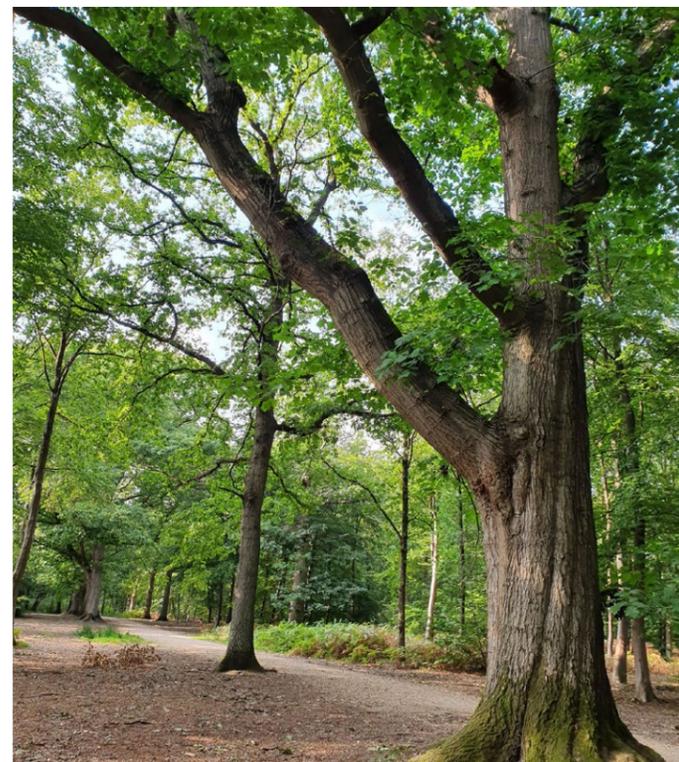


SURVEY TEAM WORKING IN STRAWBERRY WOOD

Historical Context

Langley Estate

Black Park was originally part of the historic Langley Estate. The estate was first mentioned in the historic record in the 13th Century, with reference made to a medieval deer park. The land formed part of Fulmershe Heath, heathland being prevalent in the area at the time. From at least 1607, the area of Black Park was divided from the formally managed Langley Park side of the estate by a fence. The A412 Uxbridge Road now runs along this divide, separating Black Park from Langley Country Park. Both parks are managed by Buckinghamshire Council's Country Parks Team.

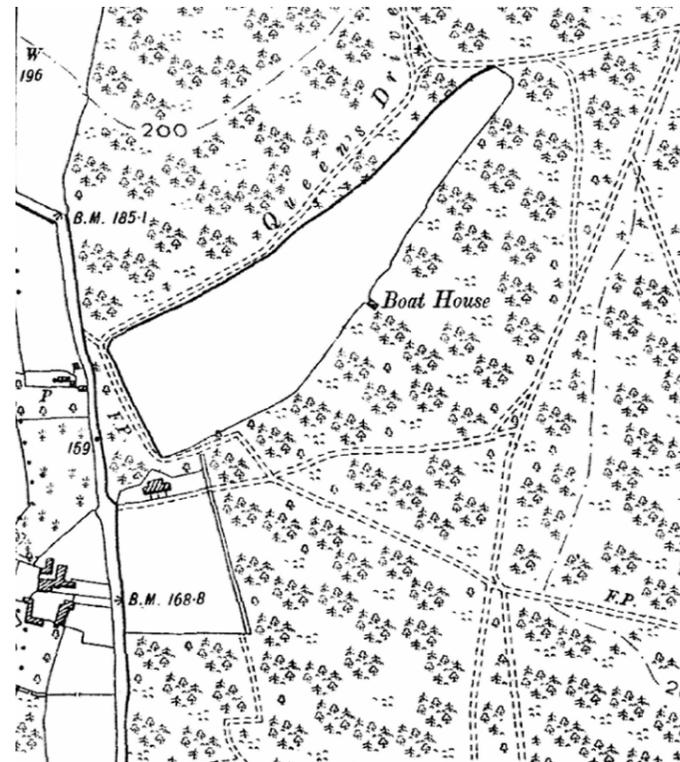


RED OAK AVENUE

Forestry

During the 18th Century the land now forming Black Park was drained and planted with coniferous trees. During the 1700s the stream running through the park was dammed to create Black Park Lake, with the outflow powering a mill located immediately downstream (now within Rowley Farm immediately west of the park). The original outflow, pipework and turbine all still remain.

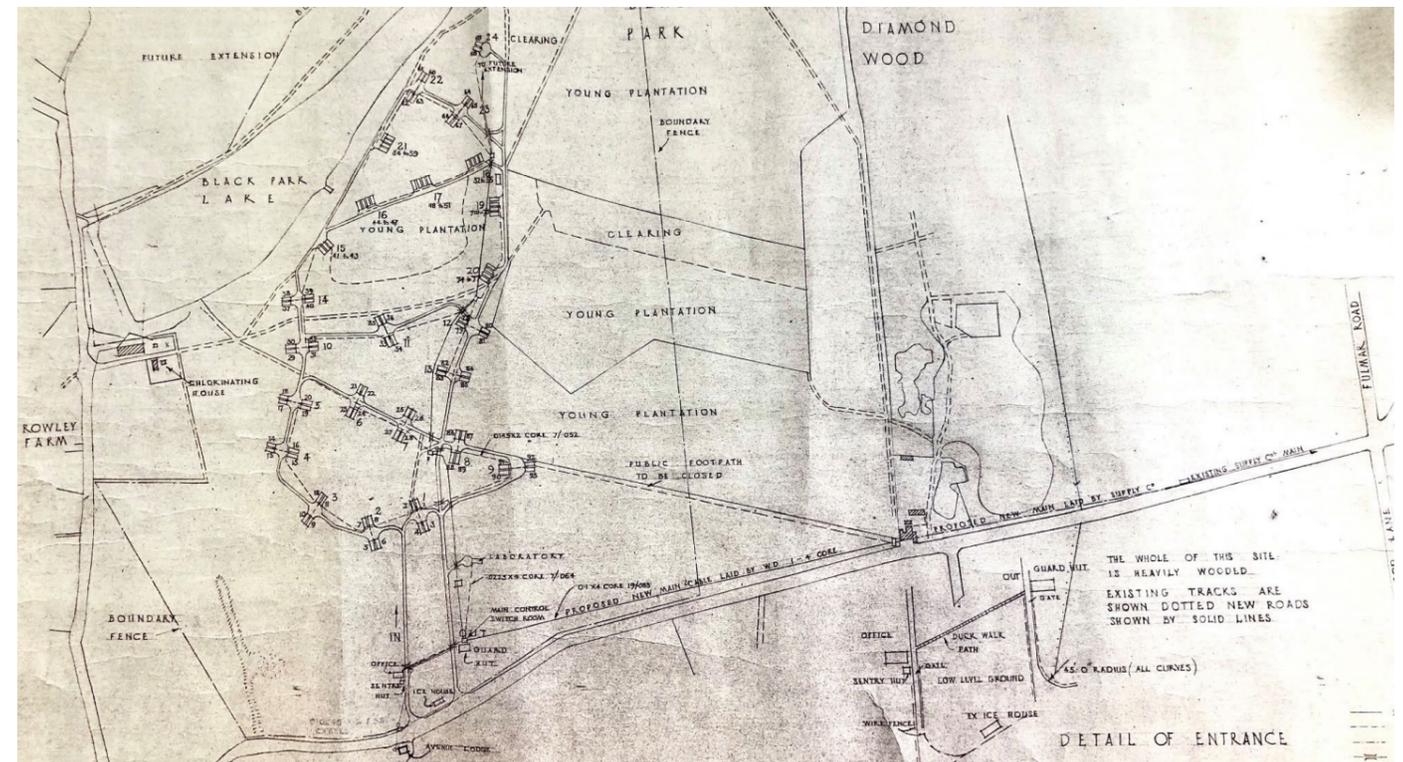
At some point Black Pine (*Pinus nigra*) was introduced as a timber tree. It is from this tree that the park derived its name. Commercial forestry continued as the dominant use through the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.



PLAN OF BLACK PARK, 1900

World War II

During World War II the park was used as a base for troops and for munitions storage. A plan of the WWII base is shown below. Some of the original military tracks remain in the form of asphalt paths in the land south of the lake, along with remnants of the military huts and assorted debris (e.g. kerbs). The Military base's main control switch room is located in the south-west corner of the park adjacent to Black Park Cottages. This is the only intact building surviving from the base, and has some of its original switch gear in place.



PLAN OF WORLD WAR II MILITARY BASE

Country Park

After the end of World War II, Buckinghamshire County Council acquired the freehold to the land from the Langley Estate, and in 1970 Black Park became one of the first sites in England to be designated as a Country Park. Until the 1980s, the park continued to operate primarily as a commercial forest, with the transition towards a more visitor orientated space taking place during the 1980s and 1990s. This transition saw the introduction of a play area, toilets, a visitor centre and offices, and an education centre.

Regional Context

Connectivity

Private car is the dominant means of transport used by visitors traveling to Black Park, with greater than 95% of the respondents to visitor surveys indicating that they traveled to the park in this way. The site is easily accessible by car. The A412 which runs to the south of the park links Black Park to Slough and Uxbridge (both approx. 15mins drive) with easy onward links to the M4 and M25.

Public transport links with the park are very poor, with the only bus stop accessible via a safe footpath being on Swallow Street in nearby Iver Heath. This bus stop is served by the number 3 bus, which provides a regular 7-day a week service between Slough and Uxbridge. However, the 1.95km walk to the lakeside cafe and the £5.00 adult single fare from Slough (Oct 2019), makes travelling to the park by bus unattractive.

As illustrated in the plan opposite, there are a number of local, regional and national pedestrian and cycle routes that pass close to the park. These include National Cycle Network Route 61, the London Loop and Beeches Way long distance paths, the Colne Valley Trail and local leisure cycle routes connecting the park with other major green spaces to the west. However, accessing Black Park via these routes is difficult and hazardous, with all of them requiring cyclists and pedestrians to cross the busy A412 Uxbridge Road. The absence of a safe bridge, subway or controlled crossing is believed to be off-putting for most.

The improvement of cycle, pedestrian and public transport connectivity is a key regional concern, with both the Colne and Crane Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy (September 2019) and the All London Green Grid River - Colne and Crane Area Framework 10, identifying the provision of a safe crossing between Black Park and Langley Park (immediately to the south) as key to enabling car-free access and opening up Black Park to new audiences.

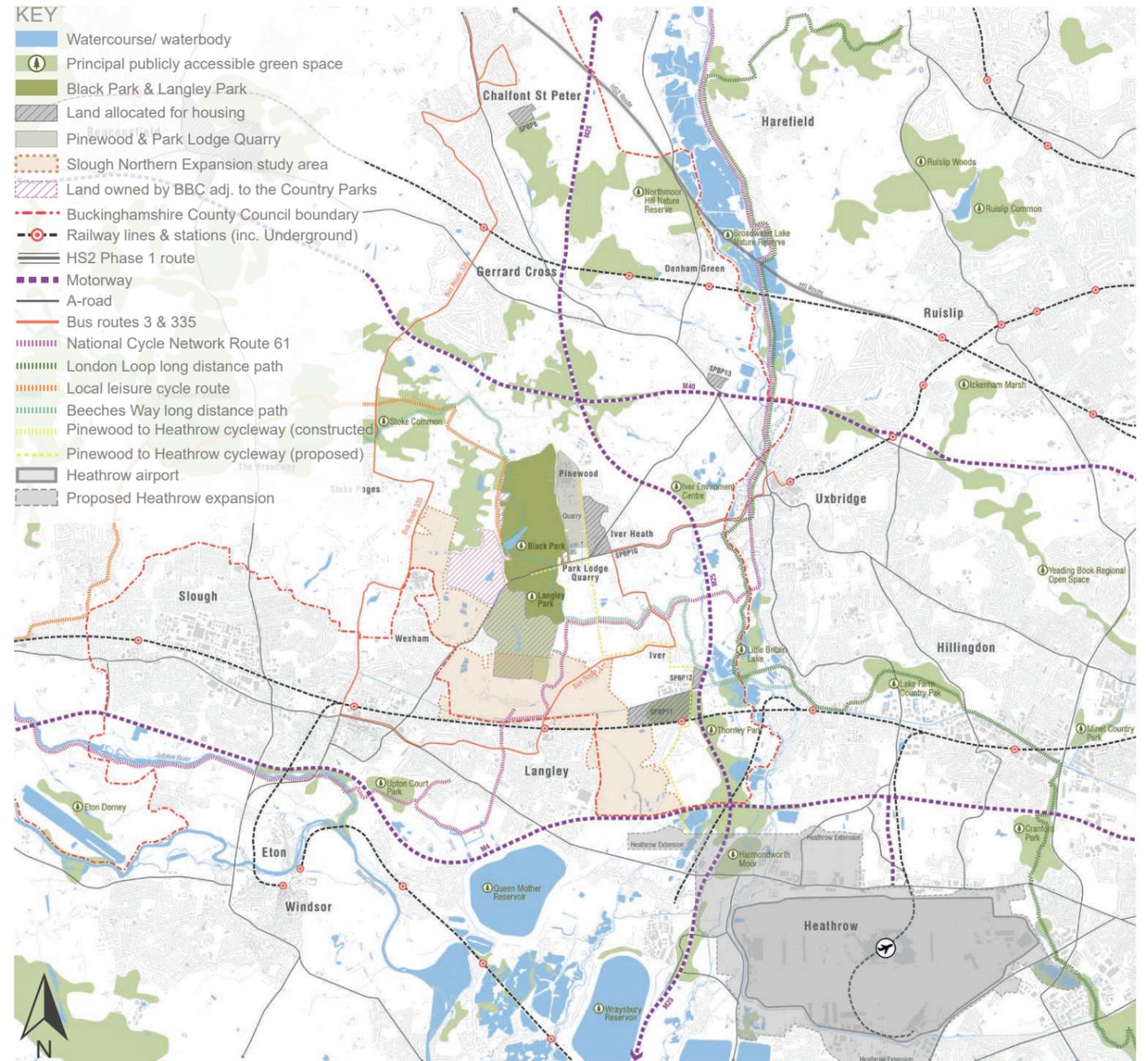
Development

The proposed Heathrow Expansion and the route for High Speed 2 (HS2) are both within 7km of Black Park. They are two of the biggest civil engineering projects in Europe and, as noted in the Colne and Crane Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy, are likely to cause significant cumulative effects on the landscape in the region.

Black Park lies in the South Bucks area of the county. In 2020 South Bucks District Council - previously the Local Planning Authority for this area - became part of the new Buckinghamshire Council single unitary authority. Since the establishment of the new authority, there have been a number of changes to the status of plans and strategies, including the withdrawal of the recently completed Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan 2036. Although there remains some uncertainty with regards site allocation, it is clear that considerable housing pressures exist in and around Black Park, with a number of sites being considered for development. This includes a study commissioned by neighbouring Slough Borough Council that looked at the northern expansion of Slough (c. 10,000 homes) into the South Bucks area. The study area (shown on the adjacent plan) extends north from Slough up to the southern edge of Langley Park.

Pinewood Studios lies immediately adjacent to the north eastern boundary of Black Park. In 2016, the studios completed their third major expansion, with 100,000m² of new facilities. In late 2020, Pinewood submitted an outline planning application for a new "Screen Hub" on land to the south of the studios, currently occupied by Park Lodge Quarry. If the plans are approved the fields immediately to the east of the park will be replaced with a 35,000 sq ft international visitor attraction, new film production facilities and an educational and skills hub.

The cumulative pressures from these developments, if not managed carefully, could have a significant detrimental impact on the park's character and sensitive habitats.



SPATIAL PLAN | REGIONAL CONTEXT PLAN (2019)

Social Context

Visitor Profiles

The Country Parks Customer and Commercial Team regularly commission visitor surveys to better understand visitor demographics and the reasons given for visiting the park. The following key themes and patterns are apparent in the survey results:

- Greater than 95% of visitors travel to the park by car.
- 81% of visitors spend between 1-4hrs in the park
- Families with young children (under the age of 12) are a key visitor demographic (>50% of visitor groups).
- The top five reasons for visiting the park are: (i) To walk the dog (19%); (ii) To use the play area (19%); (iii) To walk and enjoy the natural setting (16%); (iv) To visit GoApe (6%); and (v) To exercise (5%).

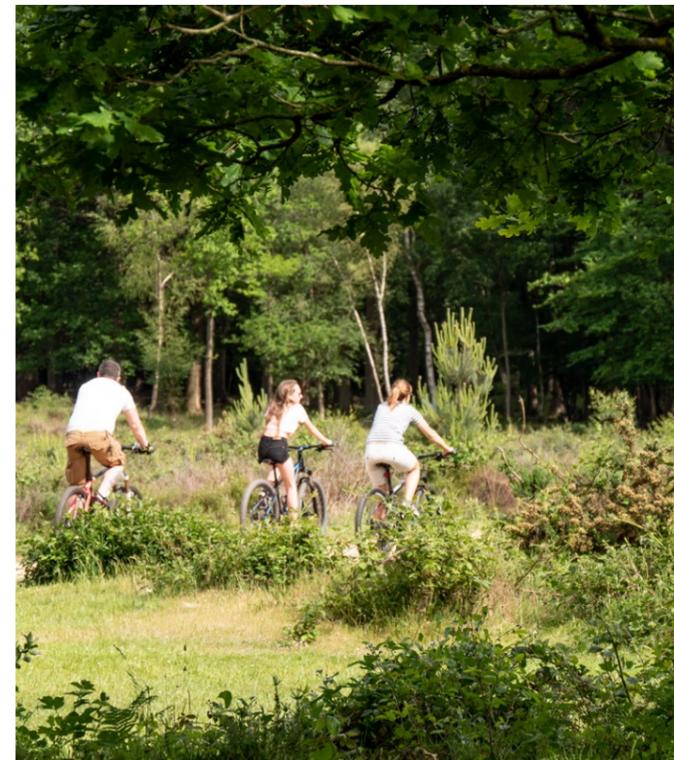


EMMA SALLIS PLAY AREA

Paths & Trails

A number of national, regional and local pedestrian and cycle routes pass close to or through the park. These include National Cycle Network Route 61, the London Loop, Beeches Way long distance path and the Colne Valley Trail.

The park provides many miles of beautiful woodland tracks and trails for use by pedestrians and cyclists, with opportunities for informal play and wildlife spotting. There are also several advertised visitor trails, including an Orienteering Trail, a Habitat Trail, and a 5km distance marked route. The latter is used for the weekly 5km free to participate park run, organised by Park Run UK.



HEATHLAND TRAIL

Visitor Attractions

The following visitor attractions are present within the park:

- A lakeside cafe with indoor and outdoor seating, and views out over the lake;
- *Emma Sallis play area* - lakeside playground equipped with play equipment for children aged 2 – 10;
- Tree-top high ropes and nets courses operated by GoApe;
- Guided segway adventures along Black Park's trails, operated by GoApe;
- Bike hire, providing visitors the opportunity to explore Black Park's trails by bike; and
- The open space at the northern end of lake provides space for picnics, frisbee and ball games.



TREE-TOP NETS COURSE

Events and Activities

A range of events and activities are held throughout the year. These include a week-long self-led trail in school holidays, bespoke themed trails (e.g. the Halloween Terror Trail), open air cinema, Santa's grotto, and themed sessions led by external providers (e.g. Awesome Animal Handling).

The Country Parks Team run Forest School sessions for toddlers and pre-schoolers under the banner "Tots Go Wild". Sessions are held twice a week during term time.

Black Park Shed - a charitable community initiative - provides a space for people to meet while enjoying a range of activities based mainly around woodwork.



FOREST SCHOOL

Ecological Context

Designations

Black Park is a site of national importance for wildlife, with two parcels of land within the park being designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Black Park SSSI designation covers the central area of lowland heath (“The Old Heath”) and the mature Alder Carr immediately north of the lake. The SSSI citation for Black Park notes that both habitats are rare in the county and support specialised communities of plants and animals. For example, the areas of wet heath are home to good numbers of the nationally rare Roesel’s bush cricket, and the Alder Carr includes areas of water-logged sphagnum bog.

Habitats

The following habitats are present within the park:

- **Mixed woodland** - Large areas of mixed woodland are present around the lake, in the compartments to the south of the park, and in the areas to the north and east of the heathland.
- **Coniferous plantation woodland** - The central areas of the park are dominated by stands of coniferous plantation woodland.
- **Wet woodland, including Alder Carr** - A narrow band of wet woodland extends north-west from Black Park Lake along the feeder stream. The southern section is designated a SSSI and is characterised by mature Alder Carr woodlands with areas of standing water and sphagnum.

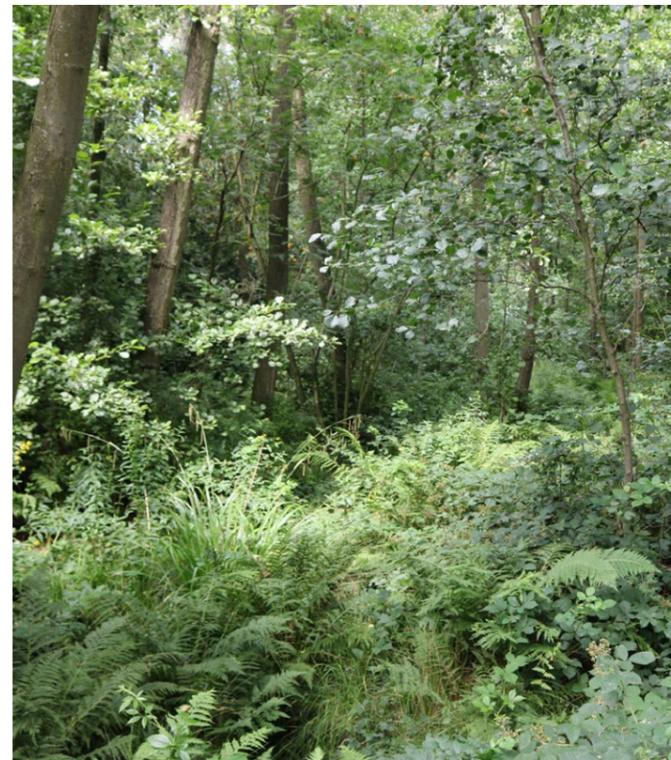
- **Lowland heath, including scrub and ponds** - There are two areas of heathland within the park. The ‘Old Heath’ which is designated a SSSI, and Fulmershe Heath, which is undergoing restoration works.
- **Wood pasture** - To the perimeter of the Old Heath, areas of wood pasture are developing through the thinning of woodland and the introduction of cattle.
- **Lake & reedbed** - Black Park Lake is a six hectare waterbody providing good habitat for resident and over wintering waterfowl.

Climate Change

Climate change will increase stress on the habitats within the park. Rangers already believe that prolonged dry spells are increasing the water stress on the park’s trees, which combined with the impacts of pests and diseases and age are contributing to an accelerated loss of mature specimens. This is a particular concern for the parks many beautiful tree-lined avenues and the characteristic emergent Scots pine canopy which creates a ‘rainforest’ quality to the mixed woodlands surrounding the lake.



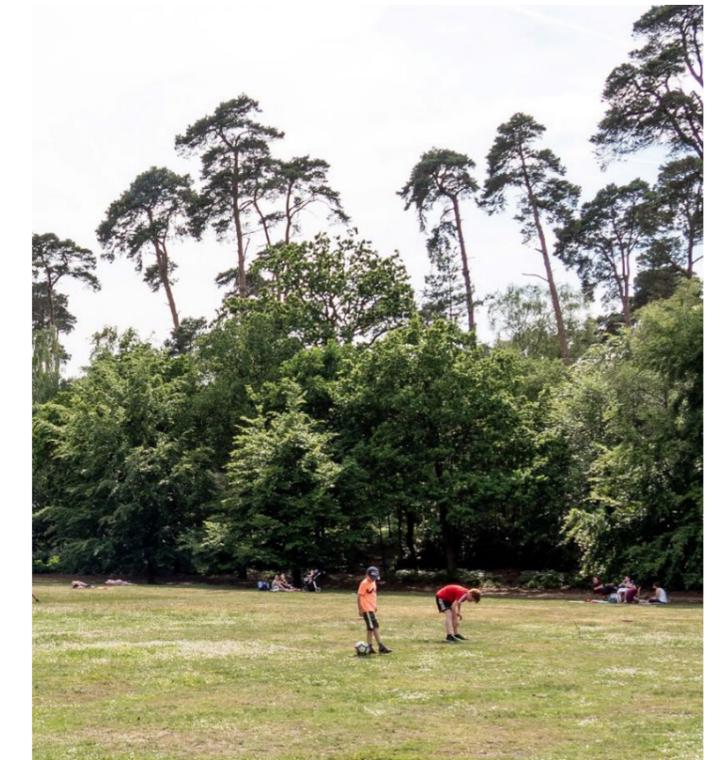
HEATHLAND POND



ALDER CARR



LAKE & REEDBED



MIXED WOODLAND WITH EMERGENT SCOTS PINE CANOPY

A Landscape Vision for the Park

Vision

It was agreed with the Country Parks Team at the first project workshop that the Spatial Plan should consider a 50 year time frame. It was felt that this would support a level of ambition not possible over a shorter period; would allow the team to consider longer-term structural changes to land cover and habitats; and would encourage discussions regarding the implications of longer-term environmental changes, including the impacts of climate change. The vision and strategic objectives were developed to establish a strategic framework for decision making which addresses the full 50-year time frame.

The vision, which is set out below, was developed with the Country Parks Team and draws on their knowledge, experience and passion for the park.

A high quality landscape that retains the park's essential mixed character of open water, mature stands of pine, mixed woodland and heathland.

A landscape that combines a core social space for visitors to meet, eat and play, with a hinterland providing opportunities to escape, explore and connect with nature.

A model of best practice for the delivery of recreation, nature conservation, environmental education, and healthy lifestyles.

Strategic Objectives

- To proactively and positively address increasing visitor numbers.**
Visitor numbers have broadly doubled over the last 15 years and it is anticipated that they will continue to grow. This has put elements of the park infrastructure and fabric of the landscape under significant strain. Actions should be taken to both encourage visitors to explore beyond the core lakeside areas and to improve infrastructure in the core zone, so that it is better able to cope with high visitor numbers.
- To broaden the visitor offer spatially, seasonally and demographically.**
This objective recognises the desire to encourage a greater number of visitors to explore the beauty and tranquillity of the landscape beyond the core lakeside areas, to support year-round opportunities for recreation and to increase provision for groups who are currently under-represented.
- To protect and enhance the landscape character and ecology of the park.**
Providing careful stewardship of habitats and landscape character areas will remain a key priority for the Country Parks team. Conservation efforts should be informed by empirical evidence derived from surveys, and should encompass environmental education goals as well as practical ranger-led conservation efforts. Improving landscape resilience to climate change and addressing the risks posed by pests and diseases must also be central to any conservation strategy.
- To ensure that new interventions are planned, coherent and strengthen the park's identity**
The park's identity derives from its history, the variety of its habitats and character areas, and the quality of the visitor experience. These elements can all be weakened by unplanned and piecemeal development. The Spatial Plan sets a framework within which new interventions can be sensitively integrated within the park, but this must also be supported by a similarly co-ordinated approach to the design and delivery of individual interventions and site-wide infrastructure.
- To ensure that developments are underpinned by clear landscape management objectives, targets and processes, and are resourced appropriately.**
The successful delivery of the Spatial Plan must be underpinned by a landscape management plan that reflects the strategies introduced within this document and the pressures experienced on the ground. The quality of the landscape is paramount to the future success of the park and appropriate resources must continue to be dedicated to its management.
- To generate income in a way that protects the fundamental landscape qualities of Black Park and respects other park users and the park ecology.**
The self-financing remit of Buckinghamshire County Council's Country Parks, requires the parks to generate income. It is recognised that this cannot be at the expense of the park's fundamental landscape qualities, not least because it is these qualities that attract visitors and commercial activities to the park.

Establishing a New Spatial Framework

Zones & Character Areas

The Spatial Plan project was instigated, in part, because of a concern that new projects were being progressed without a coherent site-wide strategy to tie them together, and that the approach to landscape management was overly reliant on the knowledge and skills of individuals and teams rather than being founded on a documented long-term plan. To address these concerns, the Spatial Plan breaks the park down into a series of smaller geographical units designed to support both strategic site-wide decision making and the co-ordinated delivery of individual projects and landscape management actions.

Three zones - core, intermediate and outer - have been established. These reflect a combination of physical travel distance from the park's main entrance, visitor numbers, intensity of use and conservation status. The

zones provide the opportunity to assess, at a strategic level, the suitability of interventions and management approaches against these key characteristics.

The zones provide a structure for strategic site-wide decision-making. However, each zone is not sufficiently homogeneous to guide the design of individual park improvement projects or to establish landscape management priorities and actions. With this in mind, 12 character areas were defined in the Spatial Plan. Each character area shows a high degree of consistency in land cover, landscape character, the nature and intensity of use, and nature conservation status.

Interconnected Routes & Wayfinding

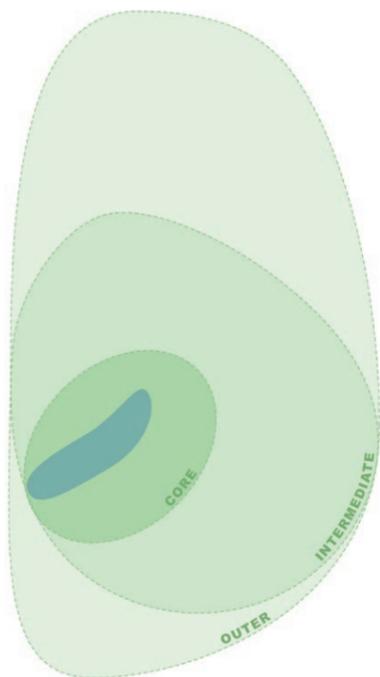
A key objective of the Spatial Plan is to encourage a greater number of visitors to explore the park beyond the core lakeside area. This objective is supported by the results of visitor experience surveys, which confirm interest in more distance marked trails and opportunities to "engage with nature".

To address the size of the park - it can take 30mins to walk from the cafe up to the heathland - and the diverse visitor demographic, the Spatial Plan introduces the idea of "interconnecting routes". The aim is to provide interconnecting distance-marked and themed trails that enable users to find the best route for them.

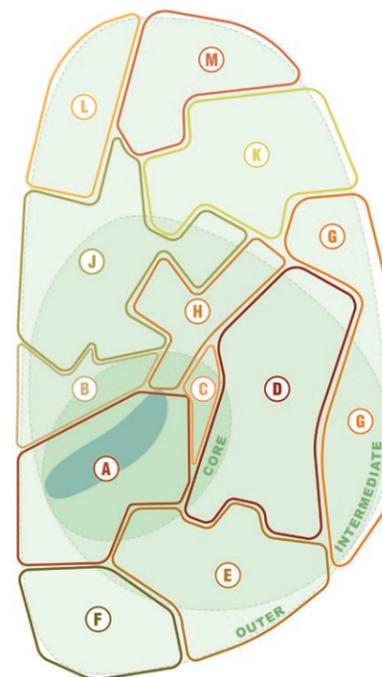
In such a large and diverse parkland environment successful wayfinding is key to a positive visitor

experience. Wayfinding can be supported in a number of ways including signage, the provision of landmark features, and through the use of a consistent materials palette along key routes. All of these items are addressed in the Spatial Plan.

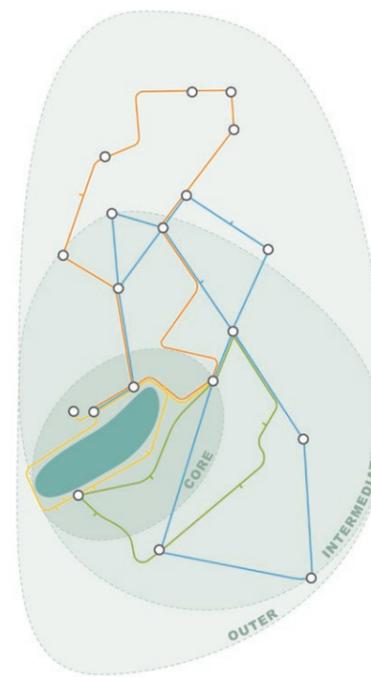
Black Park is full of curious and evocative names, including Dark Wood, Fulmershe Heath, Goldfinger Ride, The Potato Patch, Starfruit Pond etc, with each name referencing a key historical and/or ecological characteristic of the park. The Spatial Plan seeks to strengthen the connection between these names and key locations, routes and nodes to further support wayfinding and to strengthen the park's identity.



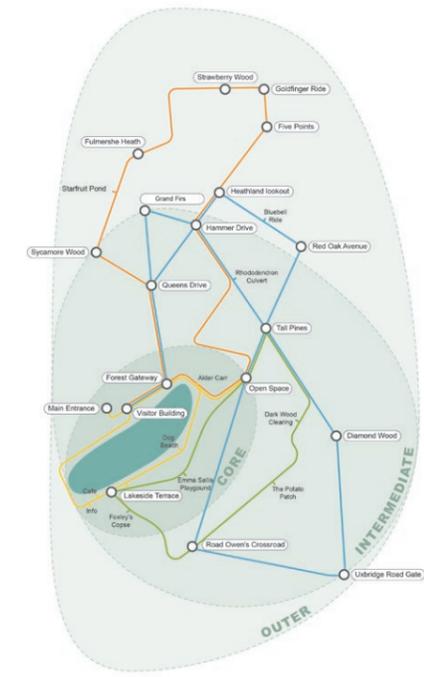
ZONES



CHARACTER AREAS



INTERCONNECTED ROUTES



WAYFINDING

Spatial Plan Interventions

Mapping

The Interventions Plan opposite shows all of the proposed interventions discussed and agreed with the Country Parks team throughout the preparation of the Spatial Plan. The word 'intervention' was chosen rather than 'project' because some of the items relate to longer-term management actions rather than to discrete projects.

The interventions are grouped into eight categories as follows:

- Regional Connections (RC);
- Access & Movement (AM);
- Visitor Facilities (VF);
- Landscaping (L);
- Play (P);
- Waymarked Trails (WT);
- Visitor Attractions (VA); and
- Other Commercial (OC).

These categories reflect the Country Parks Team's desire to develop the visitor experience, to continue to protect and strengthen the parks habitats and landscapes, and to improve connectivity with adjacent green infrastructure.

KEY

Zones

- Core
- Intermediate
- Outer

Regional Connections (RC)

- Pedestrian & cycle connections
- - - Pedestrian & cycle links

Access & Movement (AM)

- ✳ Vehicular access improvement
- ▬ Path upgrades
- ▬ Rationalise layby provision

Visitor Facilities (VF)

- 📍 Visitor facilities

Play (P)

- 🎡 Play equipment | Playground
- ▬ Natural play area

Landscaping (L)

- ▬ Landscape improvements
- ▼ Erosion mitigation
- 🌲 New tree-lined avenues

Waymarked Trails (WT)

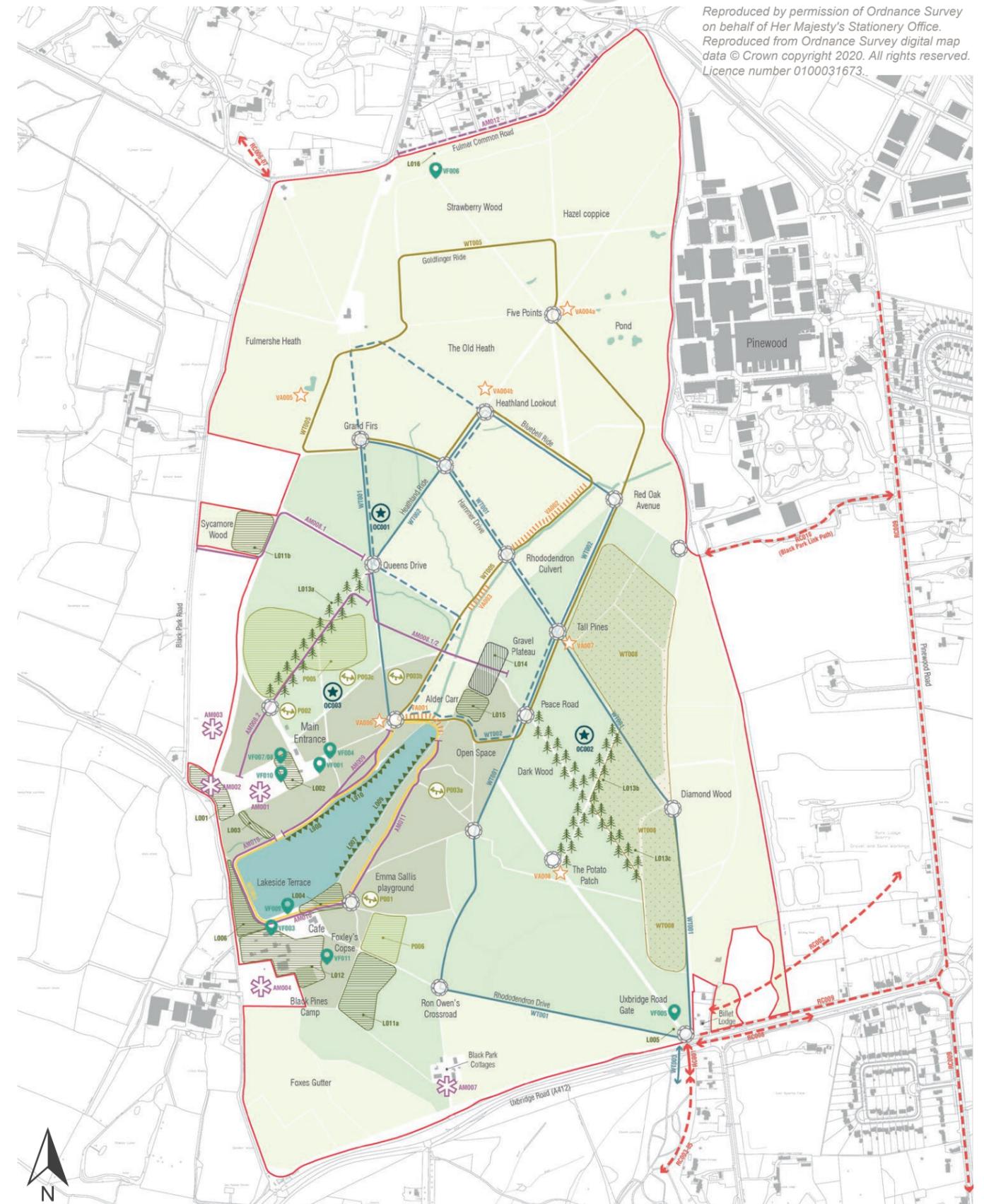
- ⊙ Nodes
- 2km loop - walk, run, cycle
- 5km loop - walk, run, cycle
- Lakeside trail
- Habitat trail
- ▬ Off-track cycling allowed

Visitor Attractions (VA)

- ▬ Boardwalk
- ★ Viewpoints & sculpture

Other Commercial (OC)

- ★ Small event space



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SPATIAL PLAN | INTERVENTIONS PLAN

Spatial Plan Interventions (cont.)

Characterisation

Each individual intervention within the Spatial Plan is assigned a code, which is used to cross-reference to a detailed characterisation of the intervention within the Interventions Table. This table provides a short description of each intervention along with information regarding the zone within which it is located, its anticipated time frame for completion and interdependencies with other interventions.

The timescales identified in the Interventions Table are indicative and give a sense of likely near-term and mid- to longer-term actions.

The Intervention Table also uses a series of short quick reference strategic objectives. These provide a simple, high-level assessment of the contribution of each intervention towards achieving the landscape vision and strategic objectives established for the park. The quick reference strategic objectives are as follows:

INCREASE RESILIENCE
ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCE
STRENGTHEN IDENTITY
IMPROVE WAYFINDING
PROTECT SENSITIVE SITES
FOCUS RESOURCES

BLACK PARK SPATIAL PLAN
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B6. INTERVENTIONS TABLE CONT.

Ref	Intervention		Programming		Interdependencies	
			Park	Code	Development stage	Timeframe for completion
BP	L002	Main pedestrian entrance - from car park <small>The existing gated entrance between the car park and kiosk does not serve as a welcoming introduction to the park. The space is congested, unattractive, dominated by the kiosk and GoApe, and undersells the beautiful park beyond. Wayfinding is unclear. The extension of the car park (AM003) and to a lesser extent layout and efficiency improvements (AM001.02), would provide the opportunity to introduce a widened attractively designed landscape buffer between the car park and the park proper. The positioning, orientation and design of the Visitor Centre (VF001) and its relationship to the main entrance needs very careful consideration to ensure that it resolves rather than reinforces the issues with the existing park entrance.</small>	Spatial Plan	0-5 years	AM001-003 AM008 VF001 VF007-008	AM001.02 or AM003
BP	L003	Secondary access point(s) - from car park <small>Any changes to the car park (AM001-003) and associated landscaping (L001-002) should emphasise the main park entrance as the key node for park wayfinding and visitor facilities (car park payment, dog wash, bike wash etc.). However, for regular visitors to the park, secondary entrances providing easy access to the north and south remain important, and also play a role in reducing congestion at the main entrance. The focus for secondary access points should be on providing simply designed and robust path connections, and essential visitor information.</small>	Spatial Plan	5-10 years	AM001-003 AM010 L001-002	None
BP	L004	Lakeside terrace <small>The landscape running along the lakeside from the cafe to the play area is heavily used and would benefit from a consistent/coherent landscape design that connects the main facilities, celebrates the lakeside location, and improves wayfinding both within the space and to areas of the park beyond. The area includes a small ice cream kiosk which is positioned on a small concrete plinth. The proposed landscape works could better integrate the kiosk with the surrounding paths and landscape. The design should be considered alongside the proposed mitigation for lake edge erosion (L007), path improvements (AM010) and connections to new facilities in the adjacent landscape, e.g. new play destinations (P003a) and the proposed Woodland Play Zone (P006).</small>	Spatial Plan	5-10 years	AM010 VF003 P001 P006 L007	None
BP	L005	Improved park entrance (SE) <small>With the anticipated increase in visitors accessing the park from the east/south-east (RC001-005 & 008) entrance improvements should be considered to support the sensitive integration of new access points and wayfinding. The existing entrance connects with 3 key axial paths heading west (to the cafe and play area), north-west (to the open space) and north (to Diamond Wood and heathland beyond). The improvements should further emphasise these axes as well as accommodating new points of access, most significantly the proposed link across the A412 to Langley Park (e.g. RC001).</small>	Spatial Plan	10-15 years	RC001-005 RC008 AM007 VF005	None
BP	L006	Dam wall landscaping <small>Hard and soft landscaping improvements to improve the visual appearance of the landscape at the western end of the lake, undertaken in support of, and in line with, the existing Reservoir Dam Vegetation Management Plan (Feb 2018).</small>	Spatial Plan	5-10 years	AM010 VF003 L004	None
BP	L007	Lake erosion mitigation - S <small>Marginal planting and associated erosion control measures to address erosion issues along the south side of the lake.</small>	Survey & investigation	0-5 years	AM011 VA001 L009	None
BP	L008	Lake erosion mitigation - N <small>Marginal planting and associated erosion control measures to address erosion issues along the north side of the lake.</small>	Survey & investigation	0-5 years	AM009 VF001 L010	None
BP	L009	Lake access for dogs - S <small>Formalise/manage dog access to the lake as part of the proposed erosion mitigation works (L007).</small>	Feasibility	0-5 years	L007	None

SPATIAL PLAN | INTERVENTIONS TABLE EXTRACT

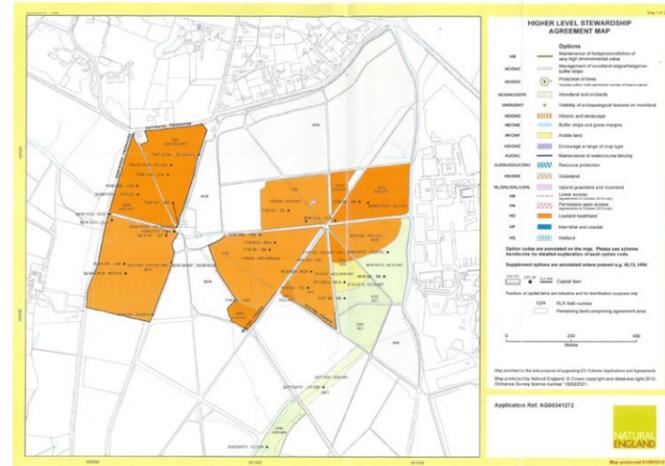
Unifying Landscape Management Information

Existing Information

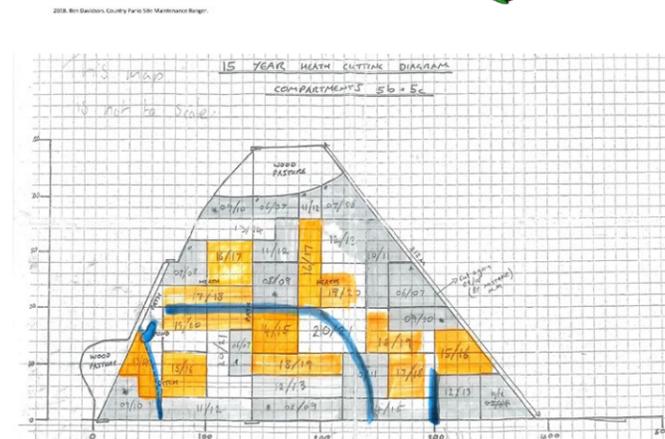
A review of existing landscape management information was undertaken as part of the development of the Spatial Plan. This included discussions with the Country Parks Team at two workshops held in Autumn 2019. The following conclusions were drawn from the review:

- A number of the existing landscape management documents have expired and require updating along with the evidence base (e.g. ecology surveys) that inform the recommendations contained within them.
- The management recommendations contained within the plans are, in the main, 'light touch' and limited detail is provided on the actions to be taken or management operations required on the ground.
- Whilst the quality of management is clear, the lack of both a clear vision and detailed management prescriptions hinders the delivery, monitoring, evaluation and evolution of management practices.
- Management is not as proactive as it could be and the lack of a documented site-wide strategy hinders decision-making on the allocation of resources to management and maintenance projects.
- Much of the detail for maintenance operations is held as personal knowledge. Therefore, approaches can be inconsistent and there is no documented standard used to guide new recruits.

Following the review it was agreed with the Country Parks Team that work should be undertaken to establish a single unifying Landscape Management Plan for the park. This would be tied in to the vision and strategic objectives established in the Spatial Plan and would establish an overarching framework for landscape management within the park.



Black Park Ride Management Plan

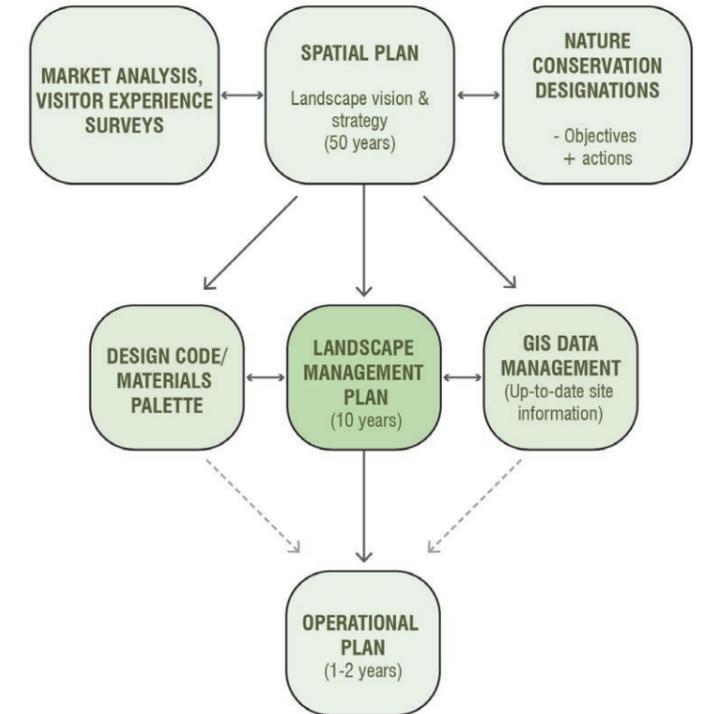


EXTRACTS FROM EXISTING LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Management Plan Scope

The Landscape Management Plan does not replace or duplicate management information agreed with external bodies, or existing detailed operational plans (e.g. Black Park Ride Management Plan). Instead the plan provides an overarching structure within which previously disparate management information is brought together. In this way, existing and future detailed operational plans are tied in to an agreed suite of site-wide management policies and character area specific management priorities.

As set out in the Spatial Plan, the Landscape Management Plan forms part of a suite of documents that will guide the future development of the park. The adjacent diagram sets out the relationships between the Landscape Management Plan and these other documents and data sources held by the Country Parks Team.



PROPOSED SUITE OF COUNTRY PARKS TEAM DOCUMENTS & DATA SOURCES



HEATHLAND MANAGEMENT



RANGERS AT WORK

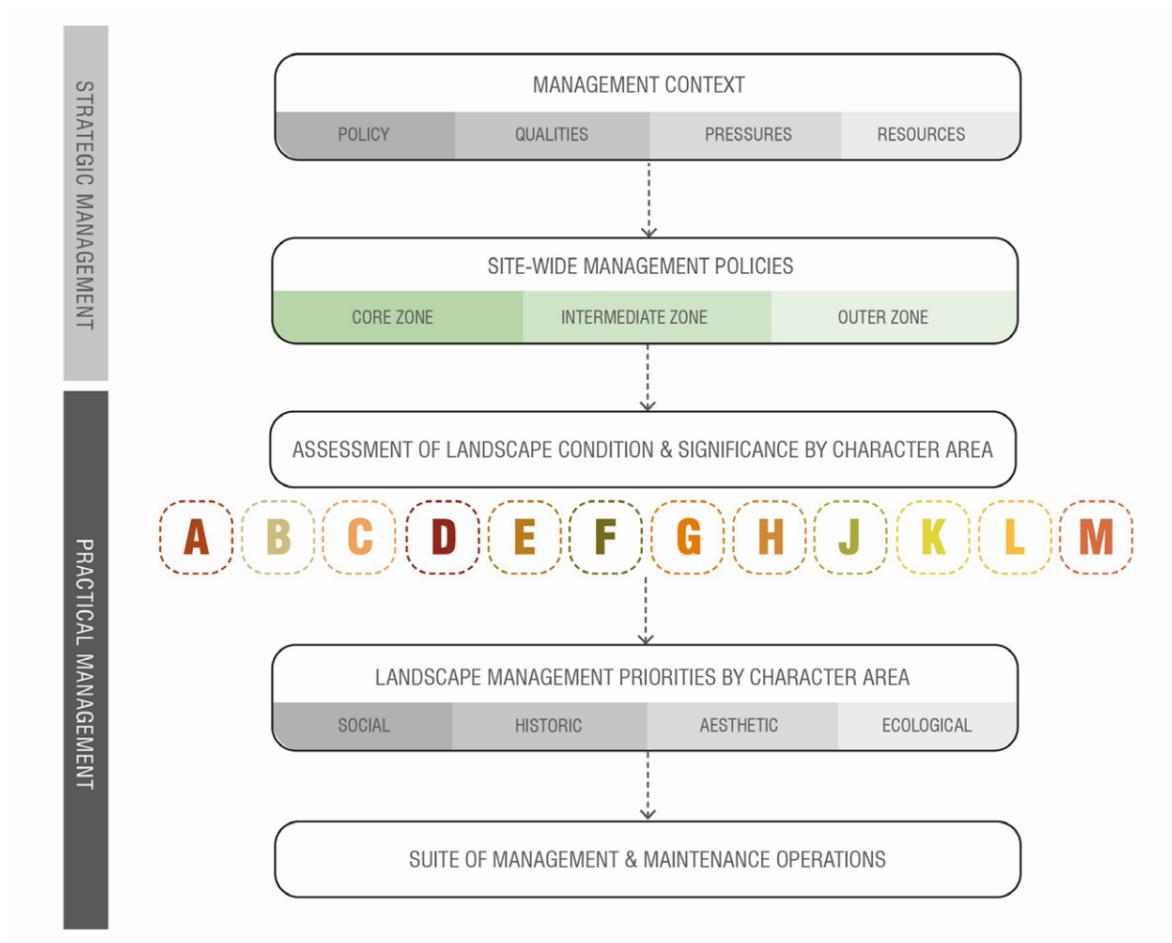


Co-ordination of Landscape Management Policy & Practice

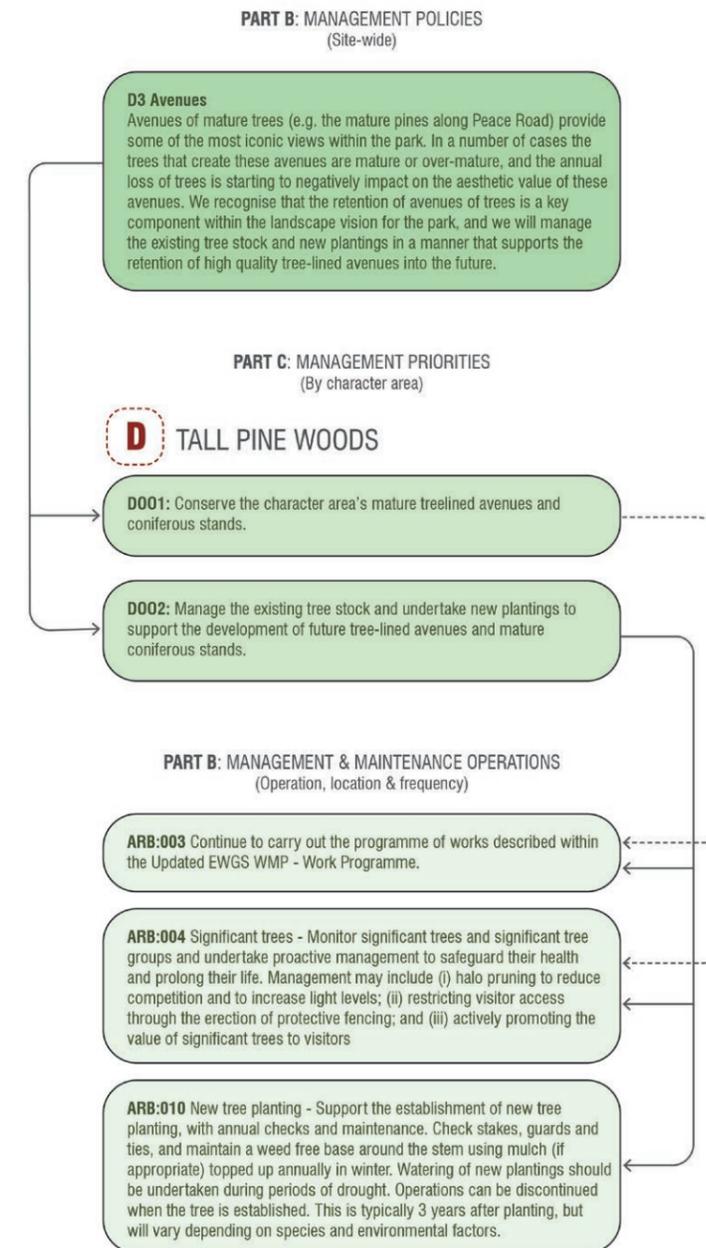
Establishing a Hierarchy of Management Information

TEP devised a structure for The Landscape Management Plan comprised of five sections, Parts A-E. Part A of the plan provides the management context, including summary information on the operational setting, and the historic, social, ecological, and aesthetic qualities of the park. Parts B, C and D detail the specific executable content of the management plan, i.e. the management policies (site-wide), management priorities (character area specific) and management operations.

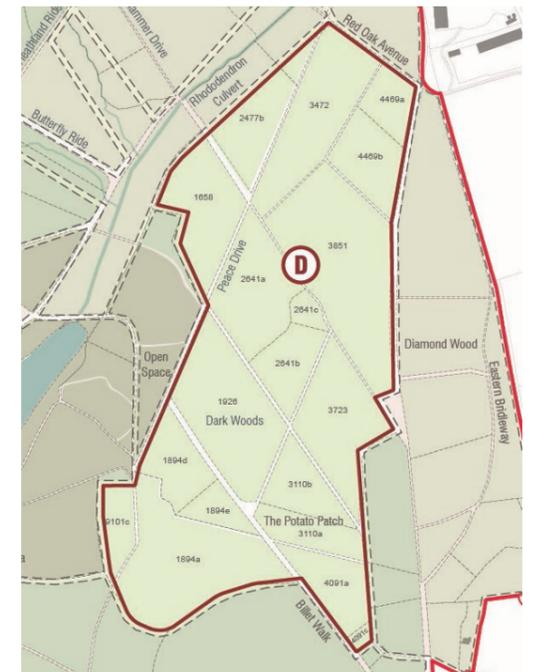
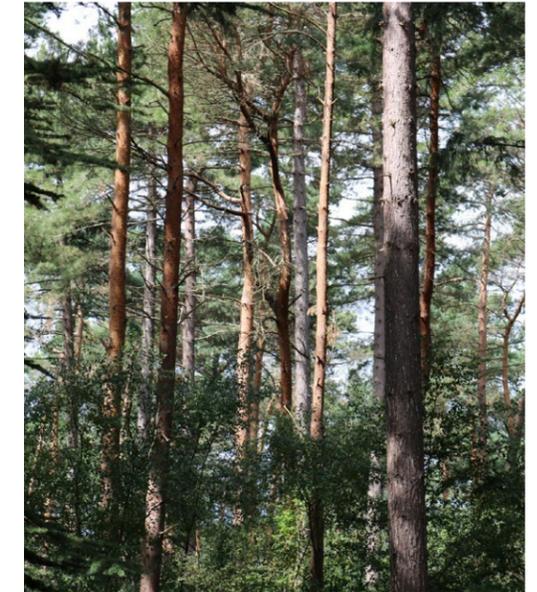
The policies, priorities and operations each have a unique code allowing them to be linked and/or cross-referenced. An example of how this cross-referencing works is provided in the adjacent diagram. In this way, whether the reader is responsible for strategic delivery or practical “on-the-ground” implementation, it is clear how the delivery of one element of the plan contributes or relates to others.



MANAGEMENT PLAN STRUCTURE



CROSS-REFERENCING BETWEEN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN



CHARACTER AREA PLAN | TALL PINE WOODS

Management Policies

Site-wide Management Policies

The Landscape Management Plan sets out site-wide management policies for landscape management themes (e.g. visitor experience & nature conservation) and key landscape features (e.g. the lake & rides).

The policies form the top-tier in a hierarchy of landscape management information, with landscape management priorities by character area and management operations sitting below.

The content of the policies was developed in consultation with members of the Country Parks Team and relevant Council Officers, and was informed by a review of national, regional and local policies, strategies and best practice guidance.

The adjacent plan extract highlights the scope and presentation of the policies. A full list of the policy headings is provided below.

- Visitor experience
- Nature conservation
- Heritage
- Trees
- Drainage & hydrology
- Soils
- The lake
- Grassland, ride edges & clearings
- Filming
- Visitor attractions & events
- Climate change
- Pests, diseases, invasives & biosecurity
- Resources

Policies

BLACK PARK LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

H2 Rides

We will manage rides to support the establishment of diverse, open and light-filled woodland-edge habitats. This will support nature conservation aims as well as creating a varied landscape for the enjoyment of visitors.



RIDE EDGES

H3 Clearings

We will manage clearings to support nature conservation aims, to provide opportunities for low-impact events and activities (e.g. Forest School) and to create informal picnic sites.

J. FILMING

J1 Access

We will provide safe access routes for authorised vehicles approved for use in film productions. Existing and any future new routes will be managed to reduce conflicts between vehicles and park visitors, control vehicle speeds, ensure adequate sight lines for drivers and pedestrians, and to avoid damage to adjacent vegetation above and below ground.

J2 Protection

We will ensure that the nature of filming activities permitted and the environmental protections put in place by film crews fully reflect the significance, condition and sensitivity of the proposed film location. The details of permitted activities and environmental protections to be put in place will be agreed in writing with the Country Parks Team and any other relevant statutory bodies (e.g. Natural England).

J3 Reinstatement

We will ensure that reinstatement proposals submitted by film crews enable the film location to be left in the condition

in which it was found. Where re-instatement activities require support from the Country Parks Team, such activities will be fully detailed and costed within the Film Location License.

J4 Managing long-term impacts

The long-term environmental impacts of filming will be monitored. Where signs of degradation (e.g. soil compaction, tree health problems and infrastructure deterioration) are identified, we will restrict access for filming for an appropriate 'rest period' and/or undertake landscape remediation activities to address the identified problems. Allowance will be made within Country Parks income generation and reserves to fund works to address the long-term impacts of filming.

K. VISITOR ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

K1 Access

We will maintain safe and accessible routes for all visitors attending events and paid for visitor attractions.

K2 Arrival & circulation spaces

We will ensure that arrival and circulation spaces are maintained to a high standard, provide an attractive welcome for visitors, and meet relevant safety and accessibility standards.

K3 Protection

We will put in place measures to protect the environment from pressures created by those running and attending activities and events within the park. Where activities and events are run by external providers, the details of permitted activities and environmental protections to be put in place will be agreed in writing with the Country Parks Team and any other relevant statutory bodies (e.g. Natural England).

K4 Reinstatement

We will ensure that re-instatement works undertaken post-event or following the cessation of a visitor attraction, return the location to the condition it was found in prior to the event or the establishment of the visitor attraction.

K5 Managing long-term impacts

The long-term environmental impacts of visitor attractions and events will be monitored. Where signs of degradation (e.g. soil compaction, tree health problems and infrastructure deterioration) are identified, we will restrict access for events and/or work with providers to identify alternative locations for

attractions. The impacting use will be stopped or restricted for an appropriate 'rest period', during which time required landscape remediation actions will be undertaken.

L. CLIMATE CHANGE

L1 Carbon storage

We will consider the carbon storage potential of existing habitats on site and the role that landscape management approaches (e.g. tree management) and interventions (e.g. new planting) can play in enhancing carbon storage.

L2 Energy use

We will take steps to reduce energy consumption associated with landscape management and explore opportunities to use renewable energy sources.

L3 Water conservation

We will take steps to reduce reliance on mains water supply for landscape management operations, so as to reduce the park's contribution to the threats of water scarcity and drought.

L4 Habitat resilience and adaptation

We will manage the park's habitats to enhance their resilience to the effects of climate change and to support the adaptation of wildlife communities.

L5 Tree health and climate change

We will monitor and assess changes to tree health and develop specific adaptive actions in response. This may include identifying alternative species better suited to the changing climate, or changes to landscape management approaches to support the health of existing trees.

M. PESTS, DISEASES, INVASIVES & BIOSECURITY

M1 Pests, diseases & invasive species

We will be proactive in our efforts to monitor, control and, where feasible and appropriate, remove existing pests, diseases and invasive species.

M2 Biosecurity

We will implement biosecurity measures to limit, where possible, the introduction and spread of plant pests and diseases. This will include measures to (i) reduce the risk of importing pests and diseases, (ii) control outbreaks when they arise, and (iii) increase the resilience

of the environment, e.g. through species selection and management approaches.

N. RESOURCES

N1 Time & capital expenditure

We will capture sufficient data on time and capital expenditure to inform decision making on changes to management priorities, approaches and operations. This data will cover key management operations, e.g. inspection and cleaning of welfare facilities, car park management and maintenance, path maintenance, heathland restoration etc., so that the resource impacts of changes to physical infrastructure, visitor attractions and landcover/habitats can be assessed.

N2 Resource impacts of changes to infrastructure, visitor attractions & landcover/habitats

Prior to significant changes in physical infrastructure, visitor attractions, or landcover/habitats (e.g. habitat creation works), we will assess the management resources required over the short and medium term, and compare this against projected resource availability. This information will be used to inform decision making on the suitability of the change and how the change can best be accommodated.

N3 Resource impacts of long-term landscape changes

We will document annually changes in the landscape both positive (e.g. improved habitat condition) and negative (e.g. landscape degradation), and use this information to guide decision making on management priorities and investment in long-term land remediation and/or replanting works.



HEATHLAND MANAGEMENT

Site Assessment and Management Priorities

Site Assessment

For each of the twelve character areas a two-stage assessment was undertaken.

The first stage involved a largely desk-based assessment of landscape significance. This included a review of the existing landscape management information, data collected during works to prepare the Spatial Plan, and contextual information gathered in relation to the site's history, ecology, aesthetics and social value.

The second stage saw TEP's team join with members of the Country Parks Team for three days of on-site assessment work. This work provided an opportunity to verify aspects of the significance assessment, but primarily addressed the condition of the landscape. As with the assessment of significance this was framed around the historical, ecological, aesthetic and social qualities of each character area.

Each character area was given a score of High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L) for significance and condition. The likely trend, i.e. whether significance and condition were increasing/improving or reducing/worsening was also considered. The results were then summarised as per the example below. These results and the data that fed into them were then used to determine the agreed management direction, the overall management intention, and the management priorities (see adjacent extract).

THEME	ASSESSMENT		CHANGE
	Significance [Trend]	Condition [Trend]	
Social	M [+]	L [=]	↑
Historic	M [=]	L [=]	↑
Aesthetic	M [+]	M [-]	↑
Ecological	H [=]	M [=]	↑



BLACK PARK LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

REF	MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES
H001	Continue to safeguard the SSSI and LNR designated areas and manage them so as to maintain or improve their conservation status.
H002	Continue and intensify efforts to establish wet woodland species in the northern section of the character area outside of the SSSI designation. Restrict access where necessary to protect existing and new plantings, and undertake works to adjacent trees to support the establishment of target species.
H003	Maintain the current woodland density and character within the Alder Carr, with works including cyclical coppicing of mature Alder.
H004	Outside of the SSSI, continue woodland management - including periodic thinning - to promote a varied age structure and to support the development of a more diverse ground flora.
H005	Take steps to further develop the character of the main stream and its tributaries, for example through the creation of pools and riffles.
H006	Restore streamside vegetation, including areas of bluebell, by restricting access to certain areas.
H007	Identify and protect 'dark corridors' along bat flight paths, and protect these sensitive areas during filming.
H008	Increase standing deadwood and habitat piles in areas away from visitor routes.
H009	Continue to restrict and/or eliminate bracken, rhododendron, bamboo, skunk cabbage and Himalayan balsam within the woodland compartments, with a particular focus on areas within the SSSI and LNR.
H010	Undertake path improvements to the main north-south route through the character area, so as to create a reasonably even surface that is passable at all times of year. This should include providing a dry route (stepping stones or bridge) across the stream that crosses the path in wet weather. Path works should be sensitively designed so as not to compromise the particular streamside character of the path.
H011	Upgrade the boundary fencing to the south-east corner of the character area, in order to discourage access to the wet woodland and to improve aesthetics.
H012	Improve identification of, and sign-posting to, the wet woodland. This should include new or improved signage at the southern end of Queens Drive and at Rhododendron Culvert.
H013	Develop interpretation materials to explain to visitors the significance and particular qualities of the habitat, and the protections and management approaches required to maintain its conservation status. This should include temporary signs to explain periods of restricted access in certain areas.
H014	Document, map and share information on the historic features within the character area.

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OVERALL MANAGEMENT INTENTION

Management will focus on consolidating the ecological gains achieved within the SSSI, whilst looking to extend the wet woodland character northwards along the stream.

CROSS REFERENCES

MANAGEMENT POLICIES	MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS	SPATIAL PLAN INTERVENTIONS	EXPERIENCE	RESILIENCE	IDENTIFICATION	CONSERVATION	CHARACTER	QUALITY	CONSERVATION	EDUCATION
B2	-	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
B3, D1, D4	ARB:008	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
B2, D1, D4	ARB:003	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
D1, D4	ARB:003, ARB:008	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
E1	WCO:001	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
E1	WCO:001, WCO:004-005	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
B4	-	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
B2, B3	ARB:013	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
M1	INV:002, INV:003, INV:006, INV:008	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
A2	PAV:002	VA002-003	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
A2, B2	FAC:002, FUR:003	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
A2	FAC:002, FUR:006	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
A4, B5	FAC:007, FUR:007	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
C1	-	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

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A Suite of Landscape Management Operations

Operations

The Landscape Management Plan includes a full suite of the management and maintenance operations required to support the practical management of the park's landscapes. These are laid out in the management plan by landscape feature (e.g. Waterbodies), or theme (e.g. Horticulture).

Within the project brief it was proposed that the management plan would simply cross refer to existing detailed operational information. However, during the project it became apparent that although the Country Parks Team held a wealth of existing information on specific maintenance operations, this information was disparate, sometimes un-documented and in certain cases out-of-date. The decision was therefore taken to pull together existing operational information under one unifying framework. This was then supplemented to fill gaps identified during the desk and on-site assessments. This change of approach provided the opportunity to apply reference codes to each operation, allowing them to be linked to each other, e.g.

- *HORT:001* - Cut amenity grass areas fortnightly throughout the growing season to a height not exceeding 100mm...

is linked with...

- *HORT:002* - Carry out strimming after mowing to finish areas off...

and is associated with...

- *HORT:003* - Proactively manage amenity grass areas through decompaction, seeding of bare patches, removing weeds from within the sward through selective herbicide application, and restricting visitor access where required...

...and linked back to the the identified management priorities and policies. This additional element of work added considerable value to the final output.



BLACK PARK LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

WATERBODIES (WBD) cont.

REF	MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS
WBD:003	Monitor ponds for silt build-up and de-silt as required. Ponds to be de-silted on a five year programme to maintain open water
WBD:004	Provide and replenish deadwood within ponds to enhance their ecological value, by providing an additional food source for invertebrates and amphibians, and opportunities for the establishment of bryophytes. Deadwood can be reviewed annually and topped up as required.
WBD:005	Manage vegetation on the dam wall as detailed in the Black Park Reservoir Dam Vegetation Management Plan.
WBD:006	Reed beds to be maintained annually in either winter or late summer. Winter cuts should be used to make the sward thicker and to protect the wildlife. Summer cuts should be used to open up channels allowing access for water fowl and other wildlife.
WBD:007	Routinely monitor the lake overflow and bridge for vegetation encroachment that may look unsightly and/or could cause damage to the structures. Vegetation should be cut back or hand pulled.

DRAINAGE (DRA)

REF	MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS
DRA:001	Inspect drainage features, including gullies and channels, and maintain free of debris so that are able to function as intended. Any blockage that can not immediately be remedied should be reported to the lead ranger. Any reoccurring drainage issues should be reported to the Country Parks Team management, so that further investigations can be scheduled.
DRA:002	Manage ditches to encourage surface water runoff away from pathways and surfacing and to enhance their ecological value. The Heathland Ditchline Plan will be used in Character Area K to develop a varied age structure within heathland vegetation. The plan specifies annual cuts on a 5 year rotation.

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CHARACTER AREA	LINKED OPERATIONS	REFERENCE DOCUMENTS	FREQUENCY		
			Core	Intermediate	Outer
L, M	WBD:002	-		5 year programme	
K, L, M	ECO:005	-			Annually
A	HORT:010	Black Park Reservoir Dam Vegetation Management Plan	As per plan		
A	-	-	Annually		
A	FAC:002	-	Monthly		

CHARACTER AREA	LINKED OPERATIONS	REFERENCE DOCUMENTS	FREQUENCY		
			Core	Intermediate	Outer
A, B	FAC:002	-	Monthly		
All [K]	-	Heathland Ditchline Plan		Annually	

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The Plans in Action

Plan Implementation

Completion of the Spatial Plan and Landscape Management Plan is the starting point for the delivery of improvements and changes to management that are well planned, timely, coherent and uphold the character of the park. The following objectives were agreed to drive the successful implementation of the plans:

- Raise awareness of the plans within the Country Parks Team, the Council and the general public.
- Undertake a review of the resources and skills required within the team to support implementation.
- Assess near-term interventions and management actions to establish a delivery plan.
- Consult with other organisations, e.g. the Colne Valley Regional Park, to identify areas of overlap and shared priorities.

The Country Parks Team have taken the following actions in support of these objectives:

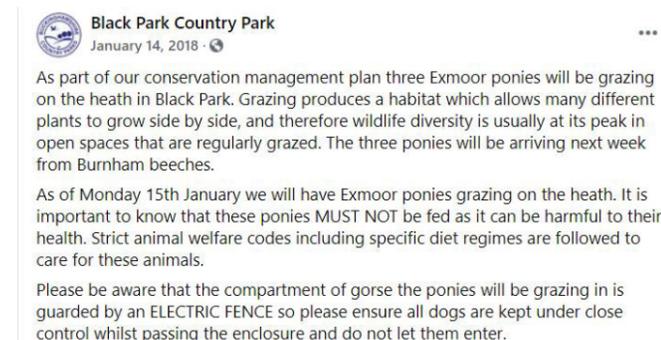
- The Spatial Plan is available on the Country Parks website, supporting engagement with visitors and accountability.
- The visual elements of both the Spatial Plan and Landscape Management Plan have been printed in large format and are displayed in the Country Parks Team offices. This provides a visual reminder of what the team are working towards.
- The Country Parks Team are running workshops with staff this summer, so those who are new or have changed roles can get to grips with the documents.
- Both plans have been used when talking with the local planning authority in regard to the proposed 'Screen Hub' development on land adjacent to the park.

Management Actions



“The documents provide an overarching framework that will guide design, management and investment decisions over the next 50 years. They provide a baseline of where the park is today and a mechanism to identify, understand and respond to current and future pressures through positive and proactive management.”

*Tim Williams
Team Leader, Country Parks*



MANAGEMENT CHANGES | EXTRACTS FROM THE BLACK PARK FACEBOOK PAGE

Reflections

The TEP team members employed on the project have loved working in this beautiful and atmospheric park, and have over the last two years learnt a huge amount through collaborating with a broad cross-section of skilled and committed staff within the Buckinghamshire Council Country Parks Team.

At a time when access to high quality green space has never been more important, the projects have shown the value of stepping back, assessing what we have and establishing a clear and ambitious vision for the future.

For TEP these documents establish a new template for strategic park plans and unifying management plans, and have demonstrated the power of combining consideration of landscape design, planning and management within linked commissions.

For the Country Parks Team, the documents have established a new baseline from which the park can develop and respond to the many external pressures.

We all believe that the park will continue along the path to delivering a high quality landscape of open water, mature stands of pine, mixed woodland and heathland for the enjoyment of all.