

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Stanmer Park – Permission to Consult on Master Plan in Preparation for Heritage Lottery Fund Grant Application</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14 January 2014</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Jan Jonker</b>	<b>Tel: 29-4722</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Stanmer Estate and Country Park is an important 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape with many historical features and buildings. It is used for recreation, sport and leisure space as well as land for food growing. It is home to residents in Stanmer Village and is an operational base for a number of businesses and organisations. It lies within the National Park, has significant conservation value and is home to three Scheduled Ancient Monuments and ten Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.
- 1.2 The land was purchased by the Brighton Corporation (now BHCC) in 1947 principally to protect the aquifer water supply.
- 1.3 The Council is working with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in partnership with other stakeholders on a Master Plan for the park to help prioritise restoration and improvement works in the estate over the next 10 years. The proposals will include restoration of the council owned, Grade II Listed Home Farm buildings for a number of uses potentially including a SDNPA area office and a visitor centre.
- 1.4 It is proposed to submit a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to help deliver the Master Plan once finalised. This report summarises the progress made to date on the project, sets out proposed governance arrangements to oversee its delivery and seeks permission to consult on the Master Plan.
- 1.5 On completion of the consultation, the proposed final Master Plan will be brought back to this committee for sign off and for final approval to submit the HLF bid. If the bid is successful the time-scale to start of works on site would run to 2017.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Committee notes the progress made to date on the Stanmer project
- 2.2 That Committee grants permission to consult on a Master Plan for Stanmer Park

2.3 That Committee approves the proposed governance arrangements for the management of the project through to submission of the funding bid.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Stanmer Park is a popular public country park and a nationally significant eighteenth century Grade II landscape. It also forms the setting for the Grade I listed Stanmer House, Grade II\* Stable Block and 16 other Grade II listed buildings. Situated in the South Downs National Park, Stanmer Park's beautiful woodland walks and extensive open land provides an important area for residents across the city and visitors, with many using it for walking, enjoying nature, sports and other leisure activities. It also hosts a number of events through the year.
- 3.2 Stanmer Park is a working landscape accommodating farming, grazing and food growing. It is home to residents in Stanmer Village and cottages around the estate. It is positioned over part of the aquifer which provides water for the city.
- 3.3 Stanmer Park has significant potential to encourage eco-tourism, promote sustainable growth, encourage people to access the countryside and improve health and well being and create new jobs tying in with the council's objectives as the lead partner in the Biosphere project. It is one of the key gateways to the Downs linking it to the city and the sea.
- 3.4 There is no long-term plan for the Estate and different aspects of it are managed by different departments or organisations. Without a coherent plan and management arrangements the park's full potential can not be realized and it risks going into further decline. Stanmer Conservation Area, the farm buildings (Home Farm) and the park is on English Heritage's 'Heritage At Risk' register, which include historically important sites which are suffering from neglect, decay or inappropriate change. The At Risk designation means that the SDNPA as the planning authority or English Heritage can serve notice on the council to put measures in place to prevent further deterioration.
- 3.5 In April 2012 Cabinet approved a recommendation for a project team to look into the feasibility of refurbishing the Home Farm traditional agricultural buildings as a focal point and visitor attraction for the park and gateway to the Downs. The Cabinet report also confirmed that work had commenced on a Master Plan for the Stanmer Park to ensure a holistic approach to any development proposals and that the use of the buildings are considered in the context of their wider environment.
- 3.6 Substantial progress has been made which is summarised in the paragraphs below.
- 3.7 In August 2012 Land Use Consultants produced a Landscape Vision for Stanmer Park. The study included an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the future of the park and set out a vision based on present usage and on research and previous studies regarding its history and evolution. The report was produced in consultation with key stakeholders. A copy of the report is available in Members Rooms.

- 3.8 In June 2013 the Parks Projects Team undertook an information gathering exercise to determine how people used Stanmer Park, what was important to them, what they liked about the park and what they would like to see changed. A copy of the main findings of this work is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.9 In August 2013 the Development Appraisal for the Home Farm complex was completed, funded jointly by BHCC and SDNPA. The report identifies the opportunity to bring the Home Farm complex back in to use as a vibrant and successful scheme at the heart of Stanmer Village forming the main attraction to the estate, a major gateway to the National Park and a facility for benefit of the public and local community. It could include retail use including a local food outlet, workshops, offices and community space. The SDNPA currently have an Area Office close to Stanmer Village in a portacabin shared with the council's Animal Welfare and Pest Control Teams. This building is in a poor state of repair and the SDNPA have expressed an interest in locating the future office and visitor centre within the Home Farm complex following its restoration.
- 3.10 *Preparation of Master Plan and Submission of HLF Application*
- 3.11 There is now a significant evidence base to inform a Master Plan for the park. The Plan is being developed by the Council (City Parks and Property & Design) together with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). Stakeholders including the Stanmer Preservation Society are closely engaged in the process. The aims of the plan are to restore and protect its historic buildings and landscape, enhance its natural features and address issues such parking and improving accessibility. This report seeks permission to consult on the Master Plan in March and April 2014. An outline of the proposed consultation plan is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.12 On completion of the consultation the final Master Plan will be brought back to this Committee for sign off and to seek approval for its submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of a Parks for People grant application. That report will include an outline business plan for the park (on going resource requirements and potential income) should the bid be successful and it will consider any alternatives should the bid not be successful.
- 3.13 The key mile-stones for the project from now until the start of redevelopment works assuming the bid is successful are outlined in the table below. The time-scales are largely driven by the amount of work involved in preparing a high quality HLF funding bid, which is a two stage process, and by the limited windows of opportunity for submitting applications.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Date</b>
Consultation on Stanmer Master Plan Proposals	Mar – April 14
Finalise Master Plan	May 14
Committee approval to submit HLF Funding Bid	Jun 14
Submission of Stage 1 Bid	Aug 14
HLF decision on Stage 1 Bid	Dec 14
Submission of Stage 2 (Final) Bid	Aug 15
HLF decision	Dec 15
Preparation for Construction	Jan 16 to Dec 16

### 3.14 Project Governance

3.15 The time-scales detailed above are very tight given the amount of work and consultation and engagement that is involved in the preparation of a strong funding bid. Currently there are numerous stakeholders involved in the management of Stanmer Park and the preparation of the bid, the main ones being Property & Design, City Parks, and the SDNPA. Effective governance is a key to ensuring project deadlines are met. Integrated governance arrangements also need to be put in place for the future management of the park to demonstrate a cohesive management approach part of the bid submission.

3.16 The project would be managed under the council's Major Project Governance process amended to reflect the partnership with the SDNPA. The proposed governance arrangements are summarised in the table below.

<b>Body</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Decision making Committees	BHCC Council Committees (Environment, Transport & Sustainability and Policy and Resources as appropriate) SDNPA Committees – Planning and Policy and Program	Responsible for strategic and commercial decisions
Member Board	Elected Members from BHCC and SDNPA	To receive updates, and opportunity for councillors to input in to project direction.
Project Sponsors & BHCC Major Projects Programme Board	Director of Environment, Development & Housing (BHCC) Director of Operations (SDNPA)	Responsible for championing the project and accountable for delivery
Project Board	Interim Head of City Infrastructure/ Head of Projects & Strategy (BHCC), Head of Property & Design (BHCC) Area Manager and Estates Manager (SDNPA) Supported officers involved in the delivery of the project Administered by BHCC	Overseeing project progress and reacting to any strategic issues
Project Managers	Led by: City Parks Project Manager (BHCC) Estates Manager (BHCC) Area Manager and Cultural Heritage Strategy Lead (SDNPA)	Responsible for delivering the Master Plan and associated proposals. Team will engage more widely as appropriate with specialist officers, partners and organisations
Stanmer Stakeholder Board	Consisting of key stakeholders including the Stanmer Preservation Society	To have an overview of progress and feed in to design discussions before

		proposals are taken to public consultation.
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#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 This report seeks permission to consult on proposals for the Stanmer Master Plan. The consultation would consist of direct mail out of questionnaires to 6,000 residents across the city, a number of exhibitions, site based surveys of park users and meetings with key stakeholders. An outline of the consultation plan is attached as Appendix 2.
- 4.2 The findings of the consultation would be brought back to this committee for consideration.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The remaining work to complete the consultation and produce the Management Plan to a standard suitable for the first stage HLF application is approximately £60,000. Match funding to prepare the second stage bid, if the first stage is successful, would be in the order of an additional £120,000. This would be funded from existing Parks Project revenue budget.

Developing the Master Plan for Stanmer Park will support the Heritage Lottery Fund grant submission for the restoration and improvement works at the park. Resource implications in terms of match funding for the bid and future maintenance of the park will be considered in a future report seeking sign off on the Master Plan and approval for submission of the bid.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford* *Date: 10/12/13*

##### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 As the SDNPA is the local planning authority for Stanmer Park, any planning permissions or listed building consents required as a result of the Master Plan's proposals would fall to be determined by that Authority. The Council as freehold owner of much of the Stanmer Estate has granted a number of leases in the Estate. It will be important to ensure that the proposed consultation captures the views of those affected.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert* *Date: 10/12/13*

##### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The proposed consultation will ensure that under represented groups are proactively contacted to respond to the consultation. The Master Plan itself will be subject to an equalities impact assessment. Improving access to the Estate and providing inclusive activities will be one of the key objectives.

##### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The proposed development of the farm buildings at Stanmer and the development of the Stanmer Park Master Plan fit with the Downland Estate policy, Biosphere objectives to encourage conservation, sustainable social and economic development, tourism and education and research to enhance the natural environment.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The proposals to develop Home Farm will reduce the risk of vandalism, squatting and trespass.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The project risks are low at this stage. If the grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund is unsuccessful alternative sources of funding for delivery of the master plan will be explored. Preparation of the Master Plan and funding bid will require joint working and resources from Property & Design, City Parks and the SDNPA.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The proposals support healthy lifestyles by promoting access to Stanmer Park and the Downs and encouraging outdoor activity associated with their use and enjoyment.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The proposals support the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy by creating a more sustainable city and enhancing the environment. The proposals will contribute to local Eco tourism, a stronger visitor experience between the city and the South Downs, local food production, sustainable transport solutions, protection and enhancement of the city's natural environment including support for the Downland Estate policy and Biosphere Reserve bid. In addition the proposed services will promote learning, healthy lifestyles and support community cohesion.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 HLF funding is considered to be the most appropriate fund to apply for given the nature of the project. Match funding opportunities are being explored as well as alternative funding streams should the bid be unsuccessful.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The proposed Master Plan and restoration of Home Farm will contribute to the objectives of the refreshed Downland Estate policy developed in partnership with the SDNPA to provide a range of services and accommodation to attract visitors to Stanmer, improve their enjoyment of the park and provide a gateway to the Downs that fits within the developing Master Plan for the Park.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Results of Information Gathering
2. Consultation Plan

**Documents In Members Rooms**

1. Landscape Vision for Stanmer Park
2. Development Appraisal for Home Farm