

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2024/25
Decision No.
2540

Record of Decision by Executive

Monday, 3 June 2024

Portfolio	Streetscene
Subject:	Holly Hill Woodland Park Restoration
Report of:	Director of Neighbourhoods
Corporate Priority:	Leisure Opportunities for Wellbeing and Fun; Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment

Purpose:

The report seeks approval for a capital programme allocation towards a programme of improvements to Holly Hill Woodland Park to preserve and enhance this important heritage, ecological and recreational site.

Holly Hill Woodland Park is a 19th century water garden designed by Henry Milner in the 1880s, superseding an earlier design by Joseph Paxton. The park consists of a number of terraced lakes and ponds. The waterfalls, cascades and grotto are made in Pulhamite – a patented anthropic rock material invented by James Pulham that was widely used for rock gardens and grottos in the last quarter of the 19th century.

This 36-hectare woodland park is Fareham's largest public open space and, as such, is an important site for the Council's carbon mitigation, in addition to the many recreational and health benefits that the site provides.

In 2021, the Executive approved an interim mitigation scheme focusing on green space provision and enhancements in the Borough to relieve recreational disturbance in the New Forest and, as part of this scheme, a landscape architect was appointed to oversee a design masterplan for the management, restoration, conservation and enhancement of the pond, sunken garden and lake system of Holly Hill Woodland Park.

Findings from the initial survey work showed that much more work than was originally considered necessary would be required to stabilise the banks, rebuild important historical landscape features, and slow down the silting of the lakes. This work would also help to reduce any future safety risks on site that are likely to develop without this intervention.

An Expression of Interest was submitted to the National Heritage Lottery Fund in February 2024 and the Council has now been invited to submit a full application for the project.

Options Considered:

As recommendation.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive:

- (a) supports initial public consultation and the submission of an application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the important heritage and infrastructure features at Holly Hill Woodland Park;
- (b) approves a new capital allocation of £2,046,000 for the restoration works at Holly Hill Woodland Park;
- (c) approves the use of £425,000 of unallocated S106 contributions that have already been received and are relevant for this project and £436,000 in future CIL receipts, in addition to the £195,000 New Forest mitigation funding already allocated, to match fund the Major Works Scheme if the lottery application is successful; and
- (d) approves the use of up to £425,000 of unallocated S106 contributions, in addition to the £195,000 New Forest funding already allocated, for silt removal works on the site and the sunken garden refurbishment, should the lottery application be unsuccessful.

Reason:

To undertake a programme of improvements at Holly Hill Woodland Park that will enhance the visitor experience, preserve one of the largest and most visited open spaces in Fareham and deliver the objectives of the Council's interim New Forest mitigation scheme, adopted in 2021.

Confirmed as a true record:

Councillor SD Martin (Executive Leader)

Monday, 3 June 2024