

Appendix C - Summary of Consultative Parks and Open Spaces Strategy Questionnaire and drop-in Surgeries.

The process for consulting on the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy has followed the 8-step process as outlined in NBC's consultation toolkit. This summary outlines one of the key elements of step 6 on the process – planning and doing the consultation.

- The Consultative Parks and Open Spaces Strategy was available to the general public for comment on the NBC website from Wednesday 12th August 09 to Monday 28th September 09.

- The Consultative Parks and Open Spaces Strategy Document and consultation questionnaire was circulated to representatives of:

Public Organisations

Northamptonshire County Council
West Northamptonshire Development Corporation
The River Nene Regional Park
CABE Space
Northamptonshire Police
Primary Care Trust
Environment Agency
University of Northampton

Other Organisations

Northamptonshire FA
Age Concern
Northampton SSP
Northampton MIND
Groundwork North Northamptonshire
BTCV
Southcourt Environmental
Ability Northants
British Waterways
St John Ambulance

NBC:

Planning Policy - NBC
Development Control - NBC
All Councillors
Culture and Leisure
Environmental Services
Environmental Health
Asset Management
Neighbourhood Management
Joint Planning Unit
All Forum Groups

Community Representation of Organisations

Friends of Eastfield Park
Friends of Abington Park

Friends of Hunsbury Hill Park
Friends of Errington Park
Friends of Thornton Park
Friends of Delapre Abbey
Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust
Friends of Bradlaugh Fields
Friends of the Racecourse
Semilong Residents Association
Friends of Dallington Park
Kings Heath Residents Association
Westone Action Group
Bellinge Recreation Ground
Brookside Residents Association
All the Pocket Park Group Representatives in Northampton
All allotment Group contacts NBC have including NAN
Bowling Clubs
Ramblers Association
Northampton Urban Farm Project
Northants Cyclists Touring Club
Canal Partnership
Joint Action Groups for Thorplands and Lumbertubs, Billing and Ecton Brook, and Eastfield.

- Drop in sessions were held on the 15th September from 2pm to 8pm and on the 17th September from 10am to 1pm at Northampton Borough Council's Guildhall.

Responses were gratefully received from the following;

The River Nene Regional Park
CABE Space
Northamptonshire Police
Planning Policy - NBC
Development Control - NBC
University of Northampton
Northampton County Council (on play section)
Hunsbury Hill Park, 'Friends of Group'
Eastfield Park, 'Friends of Group'
Thornton Park, 'Friends of Group'
Wildlife Trust
Southcourt Environmental
Racecourse, 'Friends of Group' (on play section)
Mr Shah
Dr M Weavers

Summary of Responses

Comments	Response
<u>RNRP (Neil Monaghan)</u>	
A number of general comments -	Strategy amended accordingly
Referenced the GI Framework and how this can be used to justify actions in implementation plan	GI Framework has been taken on board through the categorisation of specific sites.
<u>CABE (Howard Price)</u>	
A number of small amendments	Strategy amended accordingly
Suggested a Strategic Framework Plan (similar to Sefton's BC)	An Opportunities Plan is being developed.
Some rewording (more positively) of the improvement policies specifically P&G 5, SP4; FP; policy should include a commitment to undertake a review of grounds maintenance? FP07 should include a period of consultation with local stakeholders	Alterations made to document to incorporate these suggestions.
Suggested including a policy on ensuring that if there is disposal of any NBC owned Parks and open spaces the income from the disposal is used to better Northampton's other green spaces.	Have highlighted this as an issue to management board awaiting response before Cabinet adoption of POSS.
<u>Northamptonshire Police (Sharon Henley)</u>	
A number of small amendments	.
Suggested a number of improvements to Improvement Policies especially highlighting effects on community safety CYP4 reference 'challenging, exciting and risky' play.	Strategy amended a number of Improvement policies accordingly
SM Reference the provision of recycling facilities in parks where cans and bottles are routinely littered.	Referenced
Priorities for action. Make some mention of <u>safe</u> spaces.	Included
<u>Northampton Borough Council (E Arklay, P Lewin)</u>	
A number of general comments and suggested improvements to formatting	Strategy amended accordingly
Some comments on terminology and conciseness of document	Most of suggested changes made
Lacks clear explanation of GI and the relationship to OS	Have tried to improve the linkages throughout
Less repetition of OSSR info	Have addressed need to share some info but have amended copy
Advised reducing the analysis of the consultation	
Consider how the terms 'sustainable' and sustainability are used	Altered text accordingly

Suggest Summary Policy review as appendix	Best practice suggests this is required in main document.
Link Policies to Existing Strategies	Have done this more
Need Implementation Plan	Draft developed
Improve Value Section	Have explained further and increased information in section
Suggested explain how Quality, Quantity and Accessibility Standards guide development	New Improvement Policies on standards incorporated. This work is being coordinated with Development Control and Planning Policy.
NBC Development Control Gareth Jones.	
A number of general comments and suggested amendments to Policy	Strategy amended accordingly
Queried how the policies would be the accomplished	Further discussions held. Development control and Planning Policy would be one of the main mechanisms.
Asked for a guide on circumstances in which facilities would be expected.	Have explained to him further suggesting use of Baseline data and updated audit. Suggested any development over 15 dwellings in line with cut off point to incorporate affordable housing.
Quality standards need explaining	Full explanation to be appended to the Strategy.
Exceptional criteria to allow POS / facilities to be lost	Removed from Policies
Safer Parks – felt there is a place for an improvement policy to ensure that new development provides good quality natural surveillance of new POS and of sustainable links to it, as well as taking any opportunity to secure similar improvements to existing POS / links.	SP1.
University of Northampton Prof. Peter Bush	
A number of general comments	Strategy amended accordingly
Suggests Strategy does not appear to recognise the benefits of parks and open spaces in education	References to education have been incorporated more into the document (refer to SM6
Outlines the need to encourage people to walk and cycle	A number of references have been incorporated (GI1 policy)
Northamptonshire County Council Carole Jones (Play Builder Coordinator)	
A number of general comments	Strategy amended accordingly
Its not clear from the action points in the interpretation plan how we will introduce more natural play opportunities	Made more explicit in the actions
Asked how we might prevent the KFC (kit, fence, carpet) approach to play being installed by developers	Have incorporated a reference in the Play Section

<u>Friends of Hunsbury Hill Country Park (Alan Brown)</u>	
A number of general comments suggesting	Strategy amended accordingly

inclusion of education, culture and historical impact and playing a role in tourism	
Also focussed on issues regarding Hunsbury Hill Park	Extra ref to this in introduction
Suggested the Implementation Plan actually be a Management Plan	Not changed this as Steering group and CABA suggested Implementation Plan designation
Wanted more information in the Summary of Policies section especially local policies	Summary and information suggested largely included in Background Paper – Policy Review
Included /changed consultative draft following suggestions for rewording	In excess of 10 instances
The Implementation Plan is the key delivery agent for this strategy” Alan suggested should be reworded to “The ‘initial’ implementation of a hierarchical Management Planning process cascading from a central overall Management Plan through to Management Plans for individual locations is the key delivery agent for this strategy. Management Plans will be renewed annually and reviewed bi-annually with stakeholders to take account”	We considered but felt this was making the process complicated
Comments on Improvement Policies P&G5, AGS2	Action taken advice from planning on and reworded accordingly
Friends of Eastfield Park (Victor Smith.)	
A number of general comments	Strategy amended accordingly.
Welcome some of the aims and objectives of the strategy particularly the idea of establishing a ‘Friends of Parks’ Forum.	
Concern raised about how the consultation process has not taken into account local people aspirations regarding present and future provision of space.	
Suggest that there is no quantitative information that outlines value of sites	We have added more information on the value section and described how we will value sites.
Suggests the Neighbourhood Park categorisation is a hotchpotch assortment containing parks that don’t fit into the other 3 categories. And concerned that Eastfield Park because of its categorisation as a Neighbourhood Park it will continue to be neglected.	We have suggested by placing Eastfield Park in the Opportunities Plan and in the current actions for the Implementation Plan, ‘Utilise the opportunity of existing S106 funding to raise the quality of Eastfield Park - focus on improving signage, footpath links and promotion of the park’. That Eastfield Park is seen as a key Park and at the forefront of Parks in the Neighbourhood Park category.
Suggests setting out a matrix in which various park functions or activities are listed (e.g sport, recreation, play, relaxation, wildlife appreciation, etc)	This could create a very subjective view of value. Leads to questions about resources available to make this process meaningful, which spaces do you assess 1900+ parks and open spaces sites in the Borough and what makes up the functions e.g. play score low currently for a space, but do you put in score for potential or higher score if a

	lack of play in the area. We did consider this but because of potential resource implications and potential for biases ruled out as option.
Wildlife Trust (Heather Ball)	
A number of general comments	Some of these prompting minor amendments to Strategy document.
Asked about Policy Section	Have explained that this is a summary and there will be a more detailed Policy review in the final document as a Background Paper.
Suggestions on description of natural and Semi-natural open space	Incorporated comments
Commented on map page 15	Removed from Strategy as others commented on this as well.
Suggested it would be worth reviewing the evidence regarding the effects of anticipated climate change on tree species	Agree with this but suggested this would part of a remit for Tree Strategy for the Borough not directly the Parks and Open Space Strategy
Southcourt Environmental (Peter Nalder)	
A number of general comments	Prompting amendments to Strategy document – some already addressed in the Strategy
Questions why no appendices	General comment doesn't require any amendments
Was unhappy with Figs. 3 and 4 as they are unclear	Changes made as others mentioned also
Was concerned that we had excluded orchards	Added in
Friends of Thornton Park (Christine Teulon)	
Suggested NBC have a management plan for maintenance of the main elements of Thornton Park, made available to the 'Friends' group	Implementation Plan action: Individual plans prepared and agreed for all strategic and premier open spaces.
A dedicated Officer to work with and support 'Friends' groups especially when applying for funding.	Implementation Plan action: Provide one point of contact at Northampton Borough Council for groups to access advice on open space and holding community events in local spaces.
Friends the Racecourse (Steve Summers)	
Strategy explains the emphasis on innovative play, but the implementations plan doesn't strike me as very extensive or creative.	Prompting amendments to Implementation Plan
Suggested any flagship young persons play facility should be developed in liaison with the Northampton Play Partnership	Made amendments to this effect in Implementation Plan
P Marsh (Resident)	
Queried about allotments	The query required clarification only no amendments needed to strategy
Resident	
Wanted History and Heritage included and also said Abington Park was a gem.	–It is now more extensively
Mr Shah	

General comment on how addressing DDA	(Pg 39 Tackling barriers to use - We will also promote disability equality and tackle issues that have been identified by disabled people about our policies and in our parks and open spaces.)
Dr M Weaver (Resident)	
Suggested referring to Historic and Archaeological sites more	History and heritage is referenced
Hunsbury Hillfort should be considered as an open-air museum	The Principal Conservation Manager confirmed that the Heritage Conservation Area summary provides the correct in text. Hunsbury Hillfort is not in a conservation area but is a scheduled ancient monument and any development/change to the site would be subject to the rigorous policies of its status as a scheduled ancient monument. Need to acknowledge the educational opportunities of this site.