

Section C: Vision Masterplan and Workplan

C.1 Vision Masterplan Plan 17

The vision masterplan provides a 'picture' of how all the physical objectives might be realised over time, reflecting the aspirations expressed in the vision and aims. The development of activities and management are not shown on the drawing.

Principles that have emerged and guided the masterplan are:

- That the capacity of the park has to be a prime consideration in introducing new facilities, encouraging increased use (wear and tear, muddiness of grass areas), trying to provide for all and holding events.
- That there should be no further fencing off and subdivision of the park, and where possible, physical and visual barriers should be reduced to enhance the sense of space and encourage greater access to underused areas.
- That improvement to layout should reflect the spirit of the original design.
- That park entrances should be welcoming, provide attractive views into the park, have good sight lines, be well designed for physical access and provide information.
- That the character of the park, enlivened by subtle changes in level and enveloped by a canopy of mature trees creating an intrinsically attractive space, is retained and enhanced.

The current disposition of open and enclosed spaces is retained but with the opening up, or potential to open up, area 9.

The principal feature of the vision masterplan is the enhancement of the focus of the park around the fountain and the replacement of the One O' Clock Club building. What is illustrated is the principle of how the layout might develop to resolve current problems and improve the quality of a principal area and important facility in the park. Though the building would have to be the subject of a great deal of study, it is intended that this should be a 'green' building of high quality design and materials, an exemplar and educational tool in itself. It is intended that the building is multi-use, functions throughout most park opening hours and accommodates a multi-purpose space, kitchen, store and toilets, and public toilet(s) accessible externally. In addition to housing the One O' Clock Club, it could serve as a centre for local delivery of the Sure Start programme, language classes, a park information point or ranger office. It is proposed that attached to the building would be the site gardener's base with accommodation or store for community gardeners or trainees. Should the café not go ahead in the present proposed location, it might be desirable that the building accommodates provision for refreshments also.

The existing space around the fountain is constrained. In the proposal the space would be designed and expanded to contain the model village, high quality flower displays, planting and seating, defined by low evergreen hedges and framed and overlooked by the new building terminating the eastern end of the east west path. Together with improvements to the Rose and Lavender gardens and the community garden areas, it is intended that the quality of the planting in this space will establish the park as a beacon of horticultural excellence in Lambeth.

Area 1

This would remain in essence a space of limited use accommodating a change of level and serving as a buffer to South Lambeth Road. Removal of the low railings adjacent to the park paths is likely to encourage informal use particularly in summer, as activity overflows from the central space.

It is likely that restoration of the low boundary wall and reinstatement of railings to the design of those used on Fentiman Road will necessitate removal of the Portuguese laurel boundary hedge. It is proposed that the hedge be replaced with holly maintained to a lower height than the present hedge, retaining the park's sense of enclosure and screening out some of the traffic movement.

It is intended that there would be some new tree planting to replace the cherry trees that are in decline, and that the fairly recent corner shrub beds are removed. Due to its limited physical use, this area could be appropriate for naturalised spring and autumn bulbs planted boldly in drifts to provide a succession of flowering. This would involve amended grass cutting regimes and increase the biodiversity and horticultural interest of the park

Area 2

The central, multi-use, grassed area, which gives the park a sense of space, would retain its present use and character, but it is hoped that the proposed changes to the path route between the Fentiman Road entrance and the northern entrance on South Lambeth Road may ultimately result in removal of the current diagonal gravel path that bisects the area. The aspiration for the path's removal is that it bisects the central space that is a principal component of the original design, constraining its use. The path also gives a directional emphasis and priority to passing through that is at odds with the essential purpose of the park. Restoration of the northern path to its historic alignment would contain the area within the body of the park in accordance with the original design. It would also remove a very uneven, little used section of path tight up against the Lawn Lane boundary that was only laid out following the construction of the Victoria Line in the late 1960's.

It is proposed that the central area in particular be subject to more intensive grass management to improve the quality of the sward. This may involve temporarily fencing off parts of the area in spring or autumn to allow for recovery, de-compaction and re-seeding, and discouraging use in wet weather. It is proposed that, as part of a tree management strategy, the practice of random tree planting encroaching on the space be discontinued and that more structured tree planting be undertaken along the east west path.

Area 3

Proposals are designed to improve use of the space for active recreation. This will involve replacement of tennis court fencing, enhanced maintenance and management of the courts and the introduction of a timber keep fit or trim trail within space that is little used. The trim trail will encourage use of the adjoining paths and if the café goes ahead on the site of the former toilets, this will encourage increased use also.

Area 4

Restoration of the northern path alignment has the added benefit of enabling extension of the existing dog area to provide a proper run and giving dog owners less reason for letting their dogs exercise off lead in the main body of the park. The proposed boundary fence has been aligned so that the Mulberry tree, with seating, is retained within the central space.

Area 5

It is proposed that improvements are made to the multi use games area to reduce noise, that maintenance is improved and that the area is made available for daytime booking. It is felt that these measures will increase use of the facility while abating noise levels experienced by local residents.

Area 6

The spacious quality of the play area would be retained and enhanced with some reconfiguration to allow for improvements to access, adjacent facilities and attractions. In addition to the improvements in play equipment listed under physical improvements, it is proposed that the timber animals in the lower grassed space are not replaced when they deteriorate as they have limited play value. Their demise and removal will enable a larger uncluttered space for children's play.

On the upper level path the metal trellises and associated low walls with seating tend to subdivide the space and, together with the rather unattractive planting along the boundary wall, this sunny open area is less used than it might otherwise be. Although the seats are used and the walls provide opportunities for climbing and balancing, it is proposed that in time the seats, walls and trellises are removed, and any loss of facility compensated for by the opening up of the space, provision of new seating and new planting. On the vision masterplan the planting bed has been defined as a 'community gardening area' to suggest a more creative use and involvement than just a planting bed maintained by maintenance contractors. It could be an area planted and maintained by trainees or volunteers, or a children's garden associated with the nursery, One O' Clock Club and local schools where children can have contact with soil and plants - to grow, plant, water, tend, pick, encourage birds and insects, and use for art/craft work, eating, baking and preserving.

Area 7

This is a reconfigured grassed play space for the One O' Clock Club and nursery, providing a similar but improved facility to that provided at present.

Area 8

The Rose and Lavender gardens provide a quiet, well used but visually cluttered space. The layout has been influenced by former use as two bowling greens with elements of boundary planting, paving and the straightening of the path from Fentiman Road retained. The vision masterplan indicates a

possible resolution of issues, though the development and re-design of the Rose garden could be taken further.

It is proposed that the path from Fentiman Road be reconstructed to follow the spirit of the historic curved alignment, relaxing the mood of the approach, improving sight lines through conifer removal and enabling a slight increase in width to improve access for people and maintenance vehicles. Other proposals involve the removal of the privet hedge west of the lavender garden to open up views, enable use of the space to the west and planting this side of the lavender garden with Miscanthus to match the north and east sides; reducing the number of planting beds and scattered trees, focusing the planting of roses around the pergola, providing picnic benches for general public use and improving the quality of planting and grass maintenance.

Area 9

The narrow space makes a limited functional and visual contribution to the park. Re-alignment of the path from Fentiman Road and removal of a chain link fence and hedge from the One O' Clock Club building and the removal of boundary conifers will increase the space, sense of space, and light. It is proposed that this area could be developed for community gardening – an opportunity for hostel dwellers through the 'Putting down Roots' scheme, NVQ training, school gardens or others.