



SAUGHTON PARK AND GARDENS MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS April 2015



The Vision

The Saughton Park Restoration Project aims to restore the park to its former glory as a major visitor destination which showcases horticulture excellence and offers exceptional recreational and visitor facilities, opportunities for learning and volunteering and engenders a sense of pride in the neighbouring communities.



Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

- HLF *Parks for People* first round grant awarded July 2013
- Project development budget: £537k
 - HLF Development Grant: £392k
 - Council contributions: £141k
 - Volunteer contributions: £4k
- Funding to enable development of master plan proposals and second round bid application
- HLF mid-way project gateway review on 12 March 2015 awarded a pass



HLF Outcomes

HLF *Parks for People* Outcomes the master plan will deliver:

1. The heritage will be better managed
2. The heritage will be in better condition
3. The heritage will be better interpreted and explained
4. The heritage will be indentified / recorded
5. People will have developed skills
6. People will have learnt about heritage
7. People will have volunteered time
8. The local community will be a better place to live, work or visit
9. More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with the park's heritage



Project Management

- Council Project Team appointed
 - Linda Anglin: Saughton Project Manager
 - Peter McDougall: Saughton Development Officer
- Project Steering Group and Project Board established
- Working in partnership with The Royal Caledonian Horticulture Society (The Caley)
 - Saughton to be their new operational base
 - Learning and education programme to be offered
- Friends of Saughton Park established in April 2014
 - History and Community Garden sub-groups established
 - Funding raising capability
 - Edinburgh College of Art competition to design new logo
 - Winning design by Claire Louise Robertson



Design Team

Design team appointed:

Landscape Architects:	Ironside Farrar Ltd
Architects:	Sutherland Hussey
Landscape Historian:	Peter McGowan Conservation
Conservation Architects:	Richard Shorter Architects
Structural Engineers:	David Narro Associates
M&E Consultants:	The Keenan Consultancy
Activity Planners:	CFP
Business Planners:	Jura Consultants
Interpretative Planner:	Rachel Hunter



Surveys and Assessments

- Topographic Survey
- Arboriculture Survey
- Condition Surveys of Walls, Buildings and Structures
- Ecological Phase 1 Surveys
- Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment
- Initial Drainage Assessment
- Asbestos Survey
- Public Utilities Review and Drainage Survey
- Accessibility Review
- Micro-hydro and Ground Source Heating Feasibility Review
- Green travel plan



Consultation and Engagement

- Demographic data research
- Strategic and policy context research
- Stakeholder workshops and meetings – 108
- Public events, activities and communications – 99
- Public consultations – Dec and Mar
- Visitor Satisfaction Survey – 358 completed
- Schools Questionnaires
- Visitor Counts
- Visitor Observations
- Volunteer Survey
- Volunteer Interviews



Visitor profile

- Visitor Numbers circa 460,000
 - Only 1/3 visit Walled Gardens
 - Average visit between 30 minutes and 2 hours
 - 3 output areas within 1km are within 20% most deprived areas in Scotland
- Main audiences
 - Families and young people (using sports pitches and skate park)
- Main reasons for visiting
 - Play area
 - Enjoy outdoors / flowers & trees / peace & quiet
 - Walking and Relaxing
- Barriers to use
 - Accessibility
 - Lack of facilities and lack of awareness of what park has to offer
- Target audiences
 - Minority ethnic groups
 - People with disabilities and people with long-term illness
 - Local and citywide residents



Consultation feedback

- Visitor surveys indicated that only 10.8% rated the park as very good
 - Just under half rated it as good while a third rated it as average
 - Vast majority 86.1% wanted to see café/refreshment facilities and public toilets
- Over half wanted to see community and event space, learning and education zone, plant sales and indoor and outdoor seating for the café
 - Nine out of ten either strongly agreed or agreed that high quality visitor facilities would make them likely to visit the park, improve their enjoyment of the park and would visit more frequently
- There was wide support for a range of events and activities, with Christmas and winter themed events and outdoor markets rating the highest
 - There is considerable potential and enthusiasm for using the park as a resource by a wide range of agencies to benefit individuals and the local community
 - Layout of the park means it is particularly inclusive and has the potential to become an exemplar model for inclusive design
 - Key to running a sustainable volunteer programme that benefits both volunteers and the park is staff to recruit, training and support volunteers



A hidden gem

- Valued as a local & regional destination
- Link with the wider green network and Water of Leith
- Long tradition as a public open space
- Strong cultural & heritage value
- Investment needed to protect this valuable asset and unlock its full potential



The Essence of Saughton Park

Conservation Management Plan (Report P McGowan 2014)

The essential character and features of Saughton Park and Gardens, with priority for conservation, are considered to be:

- **Entrances:** poor visitor arrival & pressures on car parking
- **Connections:** confusing path within walled gardens, lack of links between recreational zones, Walled Gardens & Water of Leith
- **Royal Promenade:** lacking definition
- **Walled Garden:** compartments are of key landscape importance
- **Saughtonhall:** the lost building should be addressed maximising understanding & awareness of the loss of key historic features
- **West Gates:** significant heritage not recognised
- **Exhibition Bridge:** prominence of Gorgie Road entrance
- **Planting:** diversity of planting in walled garden required in parallel with a clear and robust structure



Design objectives

Successful redevelopment of the park must consider local needs and opportunities and:

1. Create a new destination park
2. Maintain a heritage and conservation focus
3. Maximise support to The Caley (operations / training / education)
4. Secure local community benefits
5. Build in flexibility for future change / development
6. Establish resilient operation, management and maintenance regimes



The Master Plan

- Introduce new café/toilet facilities
- Establish training / community space at the Stable block
- Refurbish the Winter Garden
- Reintroduce the Bandstand
- Interpret Saughtonhall
- Better connect Walled Garden to park boundaries
- Better support active lifestyles



Park Buildings & Facilities Overview



Stable block, courtyard and café



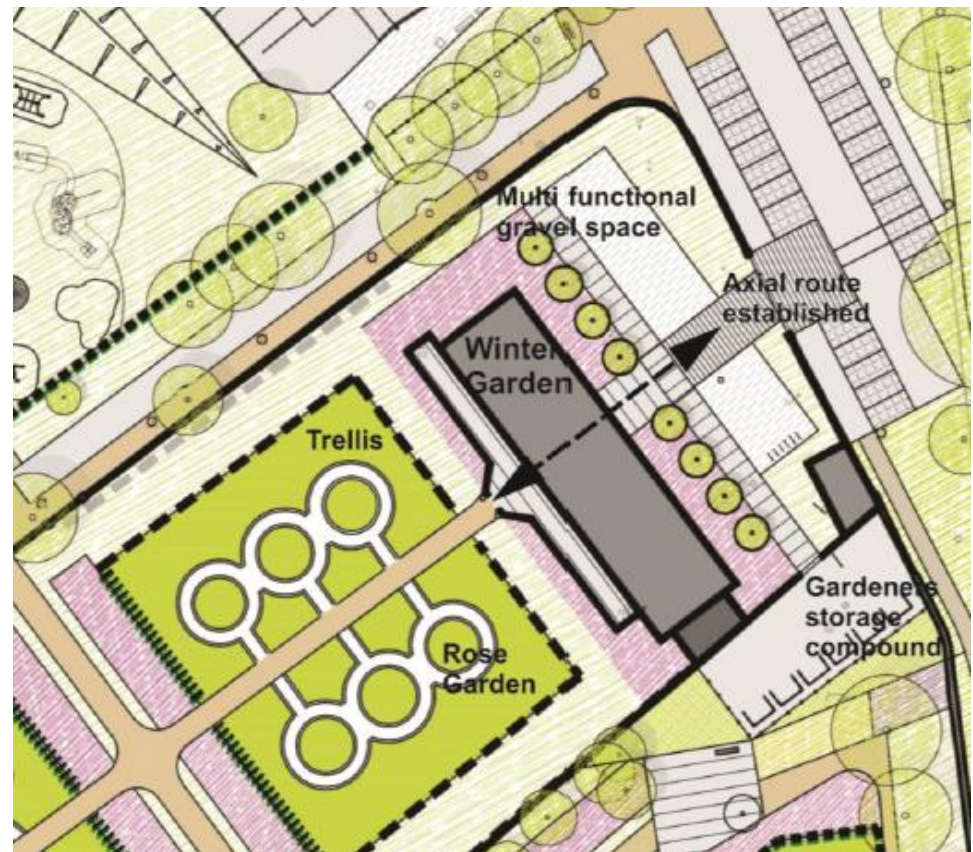
- Central courtyard for markets, school groups & events
- Kitchen Garden resource for café visitors / The Caley / volunteers
- Café overlooks the former Saughtonhall site – strong visual connection will be made

Kitchen Garden



The Winter Garden and Rose Gardens

- Eastern punctuation of Rose Garden
- Improved arrival point and entrance centralised
- Replacement of discoloured polycarbonate cladding with glass
- Improved internal layout
- Rose Garden altered to incorporate trellis work and climbing roses
- Companion planting to minimise weed growth
- Prolonged interest through seasons



Winter Garden



Restoration Works

- Restoration of Walled Garden Walls
- Strengthening of Walled Garden compartments & axial views
- Rebuilding the bandstand
- Restore the Sundial & reintroduce Lectern Sundial
- Upgrades to surfacing & boundaries of historic Main Drive
- Restoration & conservation of the Stable Block
- Restoration of the Royal Promenade Axis
- Upgrades to Gorgie Road Bridge 1908 Exhibition access



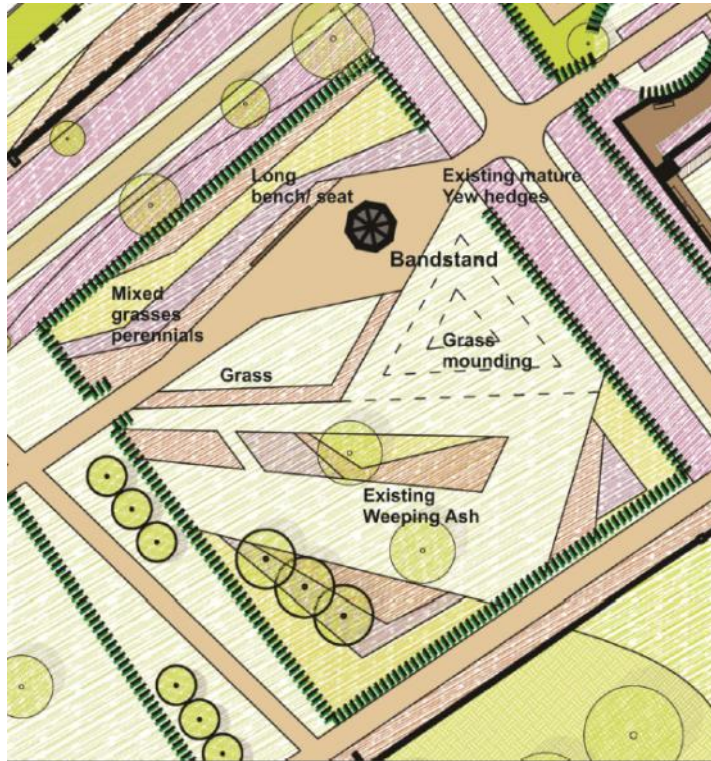
Main Drive View



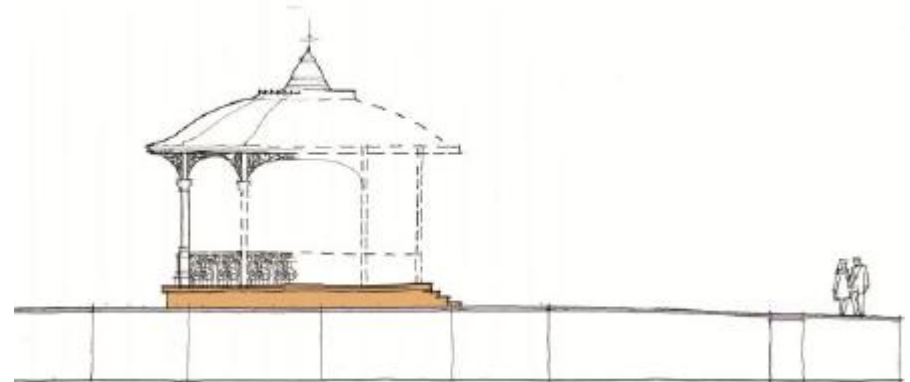
Grand Avenue



Bandstand



- Re-instate the Lion Foundry Model No. 23 originally erected on site in 1909
- Locale within mid southern compartment directly off north / south axis
- Hardstanding enables use of temporary seating for organised events
- Loose mixed grasses and perennials
- Mounding and grass spaces enable spill out seating
- South facing bench / seating encourages use
- Existing Weeping Ash as incorporated within southern space



Bandstand



New Physical Works

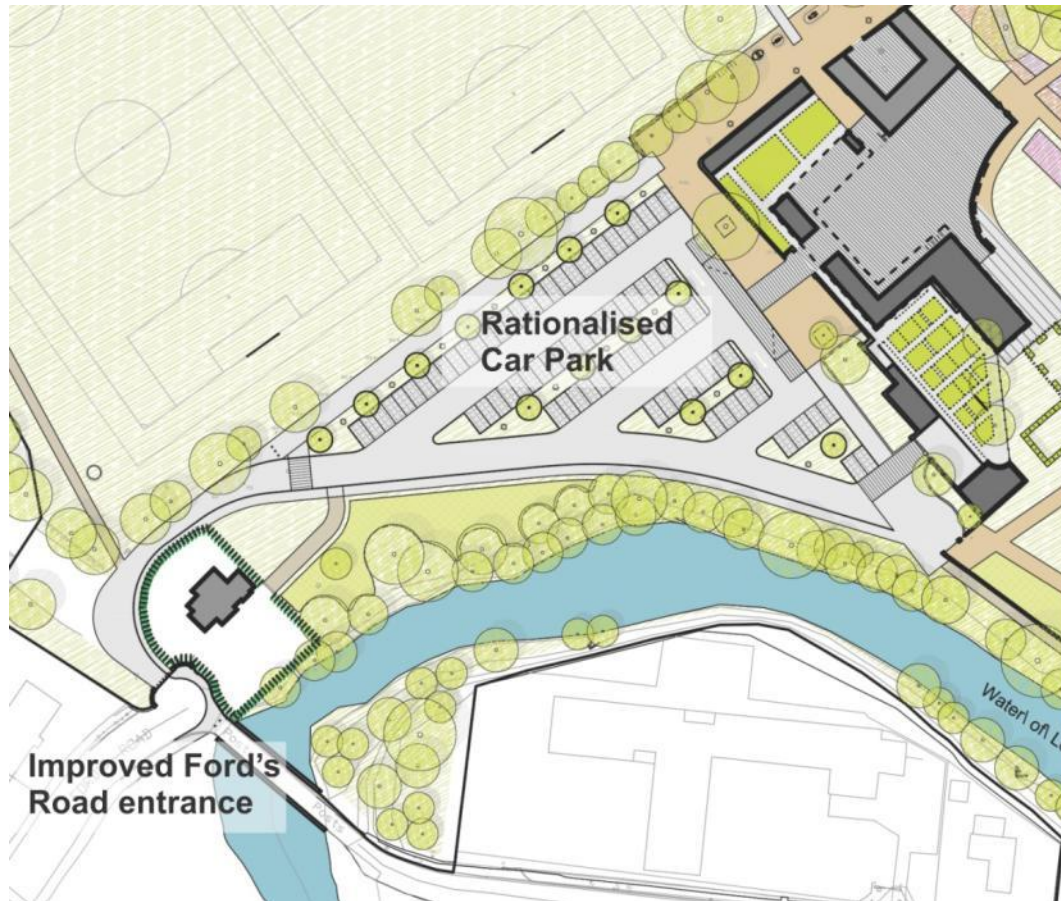
- Entrance walling defining arrival points
- Car parks rationalised & formalised
- Cycle parking at all key facilities
- Clearly marked footpath / cycleway crossing points
- Orientation signage & map
- Biodiversity enhancements
- Picnic tables, grass mound seating & viewpoint seating
- Circular running & walking routes
- Drainage works
- Outdoor fitness equipment & increased play park area



Entrances - Issues



Entrances - Solutions



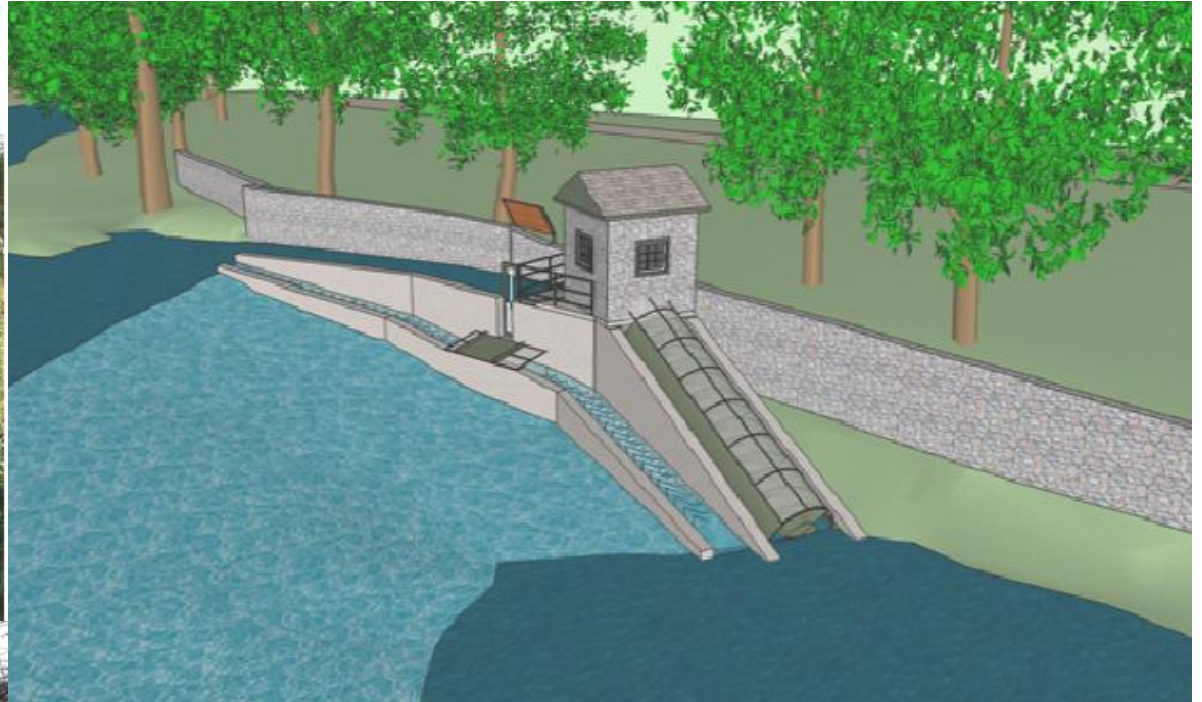
Water of Leith *Living Landscape*



Water of Leith Viewpoint



Water of Leith Micro-Hydro Scheme



Interpretation Planning

- Poor visitor information and interpretation
- Lots of interest expressed during Development Phase
 - FoSP History sub-group
 - History Festival activities
 - Stories and memorabilia
- Overarching theme: Revealing the origins of Saughton Park
- Main storylines:
 - History of the Hall and Grounds
 - Garden therapy
 - Scottish National Exhibition
 - Park history
 - Horticulture and links with Caley
 - Natural History

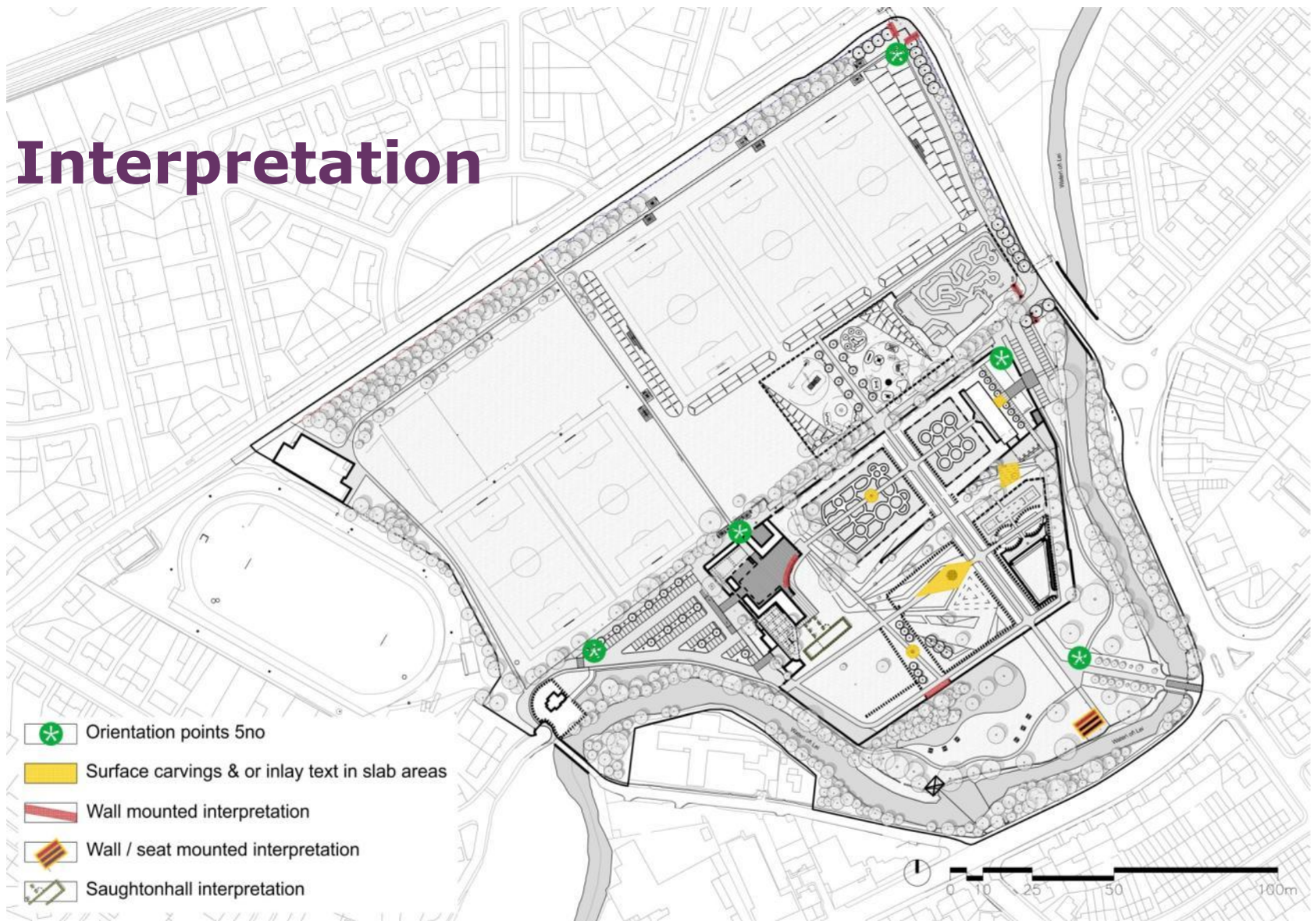


Interpretation Approach

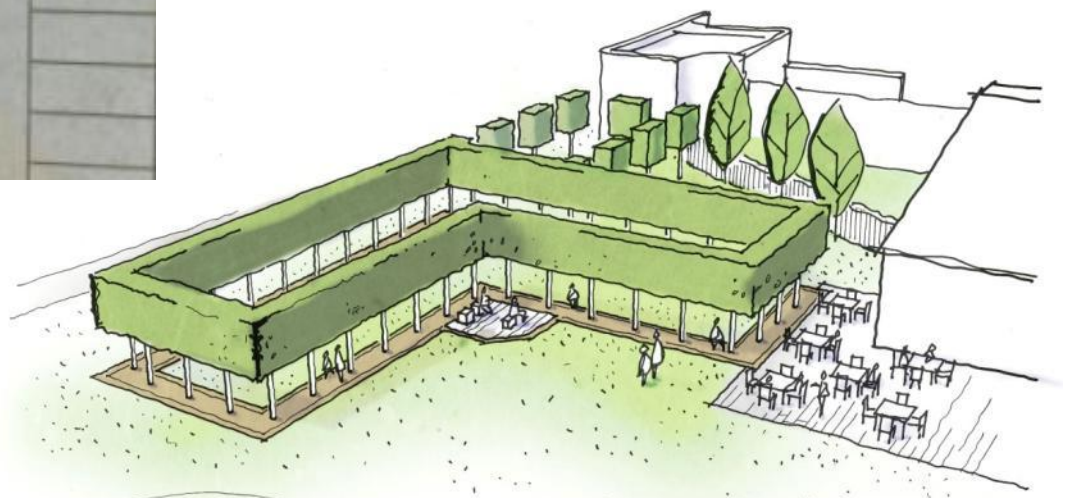
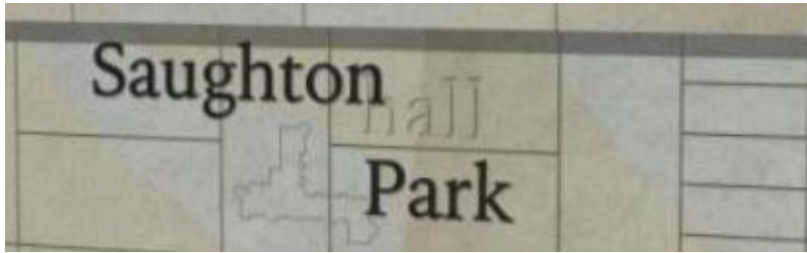
- Heritage Exhibition to celebrate re-opening of park
- Site of Saughtonhall marked out
- Display of archaeological finds probably in or near café
- 'Story of Saughton' Interpretation Panels probably in courtyard
- Interpretation at key points of interest
- Temporary interpretation, e.g. Demo Garden onion beds and links with WWII
- Winter Garden interpretation, labels and captions
- Printed materials available as paper copies or web based, audio downloads, activity sheets, etc
- Activities to include history walks & talks, events to celebrate History Festival, etc
- Possible art work in future (subject to funding)



Interpretation



Interpretation



Tree and Woodland Management

- Detailed tree survey carried out
- Overall good quality tree condition and management
- Heavy reliance on mature sycamore population
- Strong long term landscape framework offered by young established woodlands on north perimeter
- Restricted rooting environment may respond to aeration treatment / grass free strip / woodchip mulch
- Replacement programme introducing wider variety of species should be initiated



Management Planning

- 10 year costed Management & Maintenance Plan being developed
- Restructure of existing staff to ensure sufficient site based resources in place post-construction to protect historic asset



Activity Planning

AIM 1: Celebrating the heritage of Saughton Park

- By providing opportunities for park users to learn about the built and social heritage of the park, documenting people's memories of Saughton Park for future generations to learn from and organising activities and events which celebrates the park's rich heritage.



AIM 2: Promoting horticultural excellence

- By providing a centre for anyone to learn about horticulture through formal and informal learning activities in a park where horticultural displays inspire and where a top class volunteer Gardening Gang provide a high level of support to the park's craftsman gardeners.



AIM 3: Creating a welcoming park for all

- By making the park more inclusive and welcoming, providing useful information to help plan visits and by making people more aware of what the park has to offer.



Activity Planning

AIM 4: Putting the community into the centre of park life

- By getting the people who use the park involved with key decisions about the park, by working with volunteers to looking after the park and by creating a park which becomes a valuable focus and resource for community life.



AIM 5: Developing a vibrant cultural programme

- By putting Saughton Park on the cultural map of Edinburgh, holding events and activities which reflect the interests and diversity of the local community and developing a unique Saughton Park festival which celebrates all that the park has to offer.



AIM 6: Getting fresh air fit

- By providing excellent opportunities for fresh air fitness, encouraging everyone to get moving and providing activities to suit all levels of fitness.
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Business Planning

- Market Analysis
 - Local market 24,119
 - Within 30 minutes drive 667,716
 - Day trip market 1,871,635
- Marketplace
 - Five nearby local parks but facilities do not compare in range or quality
 - Few local café facilities nearby
 - Few community venues nearby
- Income streams
 - Café lease
 - Winter Gardens wedding photography and private hire
 - Stables Community Venue community and corporate hire
 - Courtyard markets and event
 - Bandstand events
 - Schools Programme



Business Planning

- Income potential
 - Café lease between £45,000 and £55,000
 - Additional income between £5,250 and £20,600
 - Total minimum £50,250
 - Total maximum £75,600
- Micro-hydro
 - Potential to bring in £16,000 if all power exported
- Proposed spend
 - Community & Volunteer Development Officer
 - Cleaning and maintenance
 - Funding for free event and activities



Next Steps

- External matched funding £200k to be secured
- Master plan proposals to be finalised
- HLF Plans to be completed
 - Master plan drawings
 - Conservation Management Plan
 - Management & Maintenance Plan
 - Activity Plan
 - Business Plan
 - Interpretation Plan
 - Cost Plan
- Council's second round bid application to be submitted 1 September 2015 with decision due in December.
 - Estimated project budget £5.4m
 - £3.8m HLF bid for 70% of costs





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See [website](#) for more details

