

To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: Local Nature Reserve Update: Land transfer at Gartcosh Local Nature Reserve, Frankfield Loch and restoration of Cambusnethan Local Nature Reserve.
From: HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS		
Date: 16 AUGUST 2016	Ref: KF/VA	

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. To seek committee approval for additional land to be taken into the Environmental Assets portfolio at Gartcosh Local Nature Reserve and Frankfield Loch and to notify committee of progress to enter into agreement with Network Rail to undertake works at Cambusnethan Local Nature Reserve (LNR) to restore the woods to Special Area of Conservation standard.

2. Background

2.1. Gartcosh Nature Reserve was transferred to the council in 2006 for the purposes of protecting the population of great crested newts which had been translocated there from the former steelworks in 2004. The site is now thought to have the largest population of great crested newts in Scotland. It also a well used local greenspace asset.

2.2. Planning permission has been granted for a link road through the nature reserve to support the Gartcosh Gleboig Community Growth area, Planning Ref: (14/02445/FUL). To allow this project to go ahead a licence was granted by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to translocate Great Crested Newt from the footprint of the link road. The licence required additional habitat in mitigation and to provide and monitor underpasses to allow continued movement of newts through the reserve.

2.3. In order to accommodate the required additional habitat areas, acquisition of mitigation land utilising City Deal funding, as part of the Glenboig Link Road project, is being progressed in relation to two of three designated sites. These acquisitions were approved at Policy & Resources (Regeneration & Infrastructure) Sub-Committee on 19 May 2016. Title to a third area of land will be transferred to NLC at no cost by the Glenboig Consortium of landowners at a later date.

2.4. Planning permission was granted for residential development at Frankfield Loch (N/06/00345/FUL) and as part of this process a section 69 agreement is being progressed to transfer title to the land for the purposes of management as a local nature reserve. It is anticipated that Frankfield Loch will be designated as a local nature reserve once transfer of title is complete and appropriate infrastructure is in place.

2.5. Both Gartcosh Nature Reserve and Frankfield Loch lie within the Seven Lochs wetland park project area and will contribute to the vision of the wetland park. There is scope in the future to continue to improve these sites as focal wetland sites for local community use.

2.6. Cambusnethan: urgent railway slope stabilisation works are required at a site at Garriongill on the West Coast Main Line. These works lie within the Garrion Gill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Clyde Valley Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Scottish

Natural Heritage (SNH) have advised North Lanarkshire Council that it is not possible to ascertain that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site and mitigation will be required. SNH have agreed that a 10 Hectare site at Hall Gill within Cambusnethan Local Nature Reserve (LNR) offers an appropriate opportunity to secure compensatory mitigation for these works and Network Rail has approached the council to enter into agreement to undertake works at this site.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1. Gartcosh: a Mitigation Management Plan (MMP) has been agreed with the Glenboig Consortium of landowners, SNH, and council officers from Greenspace, Estates and City Deal to satisfy the conditions of the protected species licence. Delivery of the MMP requires the council to take title to three distinct land extensions to the reserve (North, Central and Southern) and to maintain a newt wall protecting the animals from road traffic and development impacts.
- 3.2. The reserve extensions are approximately 8ha in total. Landscape designs include ponds, wetland habitat, woodland meadows and paths. Once completed they will be managed by Greenspace Development as contiguous parts of the local nature reserve and will be an important greenspace asset for the growing community living and working close to the reserve.
- 3.3. The Mitigation Management Plan includes estimates of the costs of maintenance tasks over 20 years and apportions these between the developers and the link road development. A total commuted sum of £167,664 has been agreed.
- 3.4. Frankfield: the whole area agreed for transfer is approximately 38ha. It is anticipated that the area will be transferred in October 2016.
- 3.5. A Habitat Management Plan has been drawn up by the developer in consultation with Greenspace Development and this will guide management of the reserve. Some of the land within the transfer areas is within Glasgow City Council (GCC) boundary but form a rational land management unit. GCC have been consulted on management of these areas and we will continue to work together on the development of the reserve through the Seven Lochs partnership. Initial capital infrastructure has been installed by the developer and this includes paths, signage and newt walling.
- 3.6. Agreement has been reached with the developer to transfer title to the land at Frankfield Loch, at no cost to the council, along with a commuted sum of £340,000, to allow maintenance and management of the reserve by the council. This will be guided by a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) agreed with the developer and any unforeseen costs will be met from this fund and the HMP amended accordingly. The maintenance contribution will be transferred to the council at the date of the title transfer.
- 3.7. Cambusnethan: a draft 25 year compensatory habitat management plan (CHMP) for a Habitat Regulations Scheme of Compensatory Measures at Hall Gill, Cambusnethan, has been drawn up as part of a Section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 Agreement between Network Rail and North Lanarkshire Council in relation to planning application 15/01916/FUL: Full and Temporary Works to Stabilise Embankment and Tree Removal Works, Garrion Gill Overtown Road Waterloo Wishaw North Lanarkshire.
- 3.8. This plan has been agreed by Scottish Natural Heritage, Network Rail and officers in Planning and Development and Greenspace and offers an opportunity to restore the LNR to a more natural standard by removing invasive and alien species and encouraging natural regeneration.

- 3.9. Initial works will be undertaken by Network Rail contractors with ongoing works being taken on by the council's arboricultural service. Responsibilities are to be agreed once further detail on works has been agreed with Scottish Natural Heritage and will be subject to review over the fifteen year period of the plan.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. Gartcosh: the full costs of the establishment of the reserve extensions, and additional habitat and walling associated with the Link Road, over 20 years, has been agreed in the MMP as £167,664.

This has been split between the parties as follows:

- City Deal funding £101,118 (Northern extension, Central extension and Link Road habitats and walling)
 - Doug Riddell Consulting £16,021 (Buffer between development and existing LNR)
 - Doug Riddell Consulting, NLC and Banks £50,525 (The Glenboig Consortium) (Southern Extension)
- 4.2. Frankfield: agreement has been reached between officers in Planning and Development and Taylor Wimpey that £340,000 will be transferred to the council to meet the ongoing costs of reserve management. This will be guided by a Habitat Management Plan agreed with the developer, but any unforeseen costs will be met from this fund and the HMP amended accordingly. The full maintenance contribution will be transferred to the council at the date of the title transfer (anticipated to be October 2016)
- 4.3. Cambusnethan: all works required by the CHMP in the LNR will be fully funded by Network Rail

5. Corporate considerations

- 5.1. Management of Local Nature Reserves contributes to regeneration priorities in the Local Plan particularly local outcome 'Enhanced network of greenspace and woodland for local communities and wildlife'.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. Committee approves the addition of three extensions to Gartcosh Local nature reserve to be managed in accordance with the MMP and fully funded by a commuted sum.
- 6.2. Committee approves the transfer of land at Frankfield Loch to Environmental Assets portfolio with future management fully funded by a commuted sum.
- 6.3. Committee notes the work undertaken to allow works agreed in the draft CHMP to proceed at Cambusnethan LNR and gives approval to continue to work with Network Rail and SNH to secure the Section 69 agreement.



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