

**Diamond Jubilee Orchard Project – recommendations****1. Introduction**

This project was last reviewed in February 2013 (Report 2013-04). The ground-breaking ceremony was held in July 2013, and building work is now progressing well. The new homes may be completed and the Diamond Jubilee Orchard (DJO) site transferred to Carlton Parish Council (the PC) in March 2014. The Carlton Gardening Group (CGG) has met three times, and has organised working parties to carry out preliminary site clearance work, and plant five large standard trees and the northern boundary hedge. The PC has decided to apply for an Awards for All (A4A) Grant for the landscaping works, including a surfaced path.

The DJO Project was reviewed by the CGG at a meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September, resulting in this report, which includes detailed recommendations and a proposed project timetable.

**2. Site constraints and developments**

There has been a delay in finalising the s278 agreement with LCC Highways, so the PC's entrance is being used for all deliveries instead of the new access road. More hard core has been laid, and there will be more site compaction than envisaged. The contractor has agreed to restore this area, and it has been agreed that a written agreement will be prepared about the condition of the DJP site on handover.

The new homes have been built on one level, to enable Plots 5-8 to be connected to the sewer, so the western part of the DJO will be sloping and on made-up ground. In addition, a soakaway is to be constructed along part of the southern edge of the DJO, so this part of the DJO site will be subject to differential compaction. It may be advisable to adjust the final planting positions of some of the DJO fruit trees to avoid the soakaway.

**3. Design and specifications****(i) inspection of northern hedgerow and planting up of gaps**

**Recommended:** that the northern hedge be inspected in October/November and the gaps planted up with species other than hawthorn as required by H&BBC. Some parishioners have offered to pot on self-set holly, and suitable plants are often available at bargain prices from local outlets and markets.

**(ii) planting of eastern boundary hedge**

**Recommended:** that the CGG plant all this hedging providing that the whips for the part on NCHA land are supplied or paid for by WD/NCHA.

**(iii) planting of eastern boundary trees (T4, T5)**

The PC has agreed to supply two container grown specimen trees; H&BBC has requested different varieties from those shown on the landscaping plan.

**Recommended:** that the Project Manager be asked what had been agreed, and that these two trees be planted by the CGG. It is noted that T5 might need to be moved back behind the visibility splay.

#### **(vi) construction of path**

The path will be surfaced and laid by a contractor if the A4A grant is approved, and this will be the most costly part of the project. The A4A application will require three written quotations or estimates.

#### **(a) sub base**

There is a problem in that the finished ground level opposite Plots 4-6 will be much higher (500-800mm) than the existing subsoil surface, so the new path will need deep foundations or laying on a sub-base of compacted hardcore.

#### **(b) surface**

The Project Architect has kindly supplied a drawing and specification for the path, comprising concrete edgings set in concrete haunching. This will need modification to include the areas for the picnic table and seat, and path edgings around the parking area.

**Recommended:** that details of the finished ground levels be obtained, a site inspection made and the details discussed with WD as soon as possible. PC to consult parishioners with relevant expertise and finalise design, specification, table of quantities, prepare quotation documentation and estimate costs.

**Recommended:** if the A4A grant is not approved, the path will have a loose stone surface and be laid by the CGG.

#### **(vii) installation of new gate and posts**

**Recommended:** that a 10' timber gate with timber posts be installed, and set back from the highway to allow a vehicle and small trailer to stop off the road. PC's current grounds maintenance contractor be asked for advice on distance (? 6m).

**Recommended:** that post and rail fencing be erected on either side of the access drive, that this be backed by new hedge planting; and that the gate be secured with a combination padlock.

#### **(viii) cultivation and seeding of orchard area**

**Recommended:** that the site be cleared of weeds and cultivated over the summer of 2014, with grass seeding scheduled for September 2014. It is not yet clear what the final site level will be, particularly in the western part of the site. Differential settlement is to be expected, and final levelling cannot take place until the new path had been laid. The spring meadow mix may not be suitable for sowing in Sept, and if so sowing may need to be delayed until March/April. If part of A4A grant, sowing must take place before April 30<sup>th</sup> 2015.

**(ix) planting of orchard trees (T8 - T13) and shrubs (S1-S4)**

**Recommended:** that the planting of the orchard trees be timetabled for Oct/Nov 2014. Planting positions may need to be changed because of the position of the soakaway.

**Recommended:** that one additional tree, to be the Shackerstone Apple (*Malus Dumelow's Seedling*) be incorporated into the planting scheme if there is room.

**Recommended:** that the shrub planting be timetabled for Nov/Dec 2014 if the ground has settled; otherwise Feb/Mar 2015.

**(x) installation of four hedgehog boxes**

**Recommended:** that the four hedgehog boxes be purchased ready-made from a suitable supplier.

**(xi) installation of picnic table and seating**

**Recommended:** that a picnic table and benches be installed on the site of the cement silo base near to the eastern end of the site. Designs and suppliers to be investigated.

**Recommended:** that a seat with adjacent space for a wheelchair be installed in the western part of the site; the position to be considered at the next site visit and suitable designs investigated. The site will be overlooked, so vandalism is considered unlikely.

**(xii) installation of signage**

**Recommended:** that signage be kept to the minimum and to comprise one sign at each entrance reading '*Welcome Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard*', and one information board similar to the Millennium Sign at a place to be decided. Detailed designs to be prepared in consultation with parishioners with appropriate skills (for example woodcarving, metal signmaking).

**(xiii) construction of two reptile and amphibian refuges**

Construction to comprise a rectangular hole 1.5m x 1.0m x 1.0m deep filled with coarse rocks, rubble, slabs and similar material so as to provide underground hibernation spaces. The centre of the top of the refuge needed to be 0.3m above ground level, possibly with sides made of dry walling or loose rubble with gaps to allow access. The refuge might be covered with a windrow, wood pile or bug hotel.

**Recommended:** that WD be invited to excavate the two holes and provide fill material.

**(xiv) planting of bulbs**

**Recommended:** that bulb planting should be deferred until the meadow areas have become established – probably until Aug/Sept 2015.

**(xv) creation of wildlife habitats (log piles, bug hotel?)**

**Recommended:** that the creation of additional wildlife habitats in the form of log piles or a bug hotel be considered as a construction project for young people in late 2014 or early 2015.

**4) Matters requiring discussion/specification with WD**

**Recommended:** that the matters listed below be discussed with WD (numbers relate to list in (3i-xv) above).

- (ii) planting of eastern boundary hedge
- (iii) planting of eastern boundary trees (T4, T5)
- (iv) restoration of site office area, PC access
- (v) creation of car parking area
- (vi) construction of path
- (xiii) construction of two reptile and amphibian refuges
- (ix) planting sites for orchard trees T8-13 and shrubs S1-4.

**5) A4A grant application**

**Recommended:** that the project start date be 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014; that the application be submitted in January 2014; that documentation be prepared and estimates for the construction of the path be sought as soon as possible.

The proposed project start date allows time for unexpected delays and for the land purchase to be completed, but does not preclude levelling and cultivation work on the site by CGG volunteers before the start date.

**6) Provisional project timetable****2013**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| Oct | Cut back weeds, inspect northern hedge and order additional whips required; check plants grown by parishioners.<br>Discussion with WD – topics in (4) above.   |
| Nov | Complete planting of northern hedge<br>Trimming of western hedge, removal of rubbish and dead wood; decision on whether to thicken up with new plantings; cutting back of pollarded ash trees by CGG.<br>WD to remove eastern boundary hedge before March 2014; build access road; set out visibility splays<br>PC to prepare quotation documents for contractors for path construction. |

**2014**

- Jan PC to submit application to HLF Awards for All grant scheme.  
Project start date 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014.  
Removal of site office; partial restoration of contractor's car park; site levelling; erection of garden fencing by WD  
? construction of reptile/amphibian refuges  
Fencing of eastern boundary by WD  
Installation of new gate and post and rail fencing by PC  
Planting of new eastern boundary hedges  
Planting of T4 & T5
- Feb WD currently expects to complete building work by the end of Feb 2014.  
NCHA expects to complete sale of CDJOP land to PC during March
- April PC to consider quotations for path construction; delegate authority to instruct contractor to Clerk/Chair
- May 1<sup>st</sup> May - Project start date for A4A grant  
Contractor to start work on new path (if grant awarded)  
Topsoil to be levelled up with path and cultivated
- July Install picnic table, benches, seat, signage, 4 hedgehog boxes.
- Sept Sow grass - wildflower meadows (check timing for sowing – may be better in March 2015)  
Consideration of management plan by CGG; decision on what work to be carried out by contractors and what by volunteers  
? hedges to be let grow with view to layering after 5 years  
PC to draw up any grounds maintenance contracts for 2015  
Collection of material/construction of bug hotel involving young parishioners - ? stall at fete
- Oct Plant shrub borders  
Planting of DJO trees T8-13, ?T14  
? by parishioners ? inauguration ceremony

**2015**

- June First cut wildflower meadow by volunteers  
? Opening ceremony/party/BBQ
- Sept ? CGG entry into Horticultural Show; ? stall at fete  
? public event of some kind, possibly to include harvesting of first fruit/jam making  
Bulb plantings
- Nov Replacement of any dead trees

C J Peat 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013