

## **Committee: Borough Plan Advisory Committee**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

Agenda item: 4

Wards: All Wards

### **Subject: Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework**

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Andrew Judge, Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability

Forward Plan reference number: 968

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### **Recommendations:**

A. That the Panel consider the report and put forward comments on the draft Framework to be taken into account when Cabinet considers the report in December.

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To present to Cabinet details of the recently completed draft Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework.

## **2. DETAIL & BACKGROUND**

2.1 In the draft Replacement London Plan (October 2010), the GLA proposes to extend a 'Green Grid' approach that has been successfully developed in East London to the whole of London. The Green Grid approach involves creating a network of interlinked, multi-purpose open spaces with good connections to the places where people live and work, public transport, and the Thames to provide an attractive and diverse landscape. The Framework when supported by the Wandle Valley Regional Park Development Board partnership will help deliver improved green infrastructure in the Wandle Valley. This report provides information on the draft Wandle Valley Green Grid (see full document attached as Appendix 1). The Green Grid approach provides a strategic framework for creating, improving, managing and maintaining high quality

2.2 Green Infrastructure (GI) that promotes sustainable transport such as cycling and walking. This approach has been extremely successful in accelerating delivery in East London through the East London Green Grid (ELGG). A London-wide Green Grid can make the capital a more attractive sustainable and prosperous city. The potential benefit to London's economy is significant and can be achieved through a range of outputs that respond to climate change, promote walking, cycling and accessibility, reduce environmental risks to make more sustainable business locations and shape and support growth more generally. A Green Grid approach can also help to promote localism and build a sense of place and ownership by communities.

2.3 The replacement London Plan (October 2009) supports the extension of the Green Grid to the whole of London. The vision of the All London Green Grid (ALGG) is:

*“To create a network of interlinked, multi-purpose open spaces with good connections to the places where people live and work, public transport, the Green Belt and the Thames, to provide a richly varied landscape that will include diverse uses to appeal to all.”* (ELGG Primer, November 2006)

2.4 The expanded programme objectives for the ALGG to achieve the vision and maximise the benefits of the network include:

- increasing access to open space
- increasing access to nature
- managing flood risk and urban heat
- making sustainable travel connections
- enhancing distinctive visitor destinations and boosting the visitor economy
- promoting healthy living
- enhancing green space and GI sector skills
- promoting sustainable food production
- promoting quality of design, management and maintenance
- enhancing heritage features and landscape character
- improving air quality and soundscapes.

2.5 The draft Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework (WVGG) has been prepared on behalf of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Development Board, with sponsorship from Design For London. The Framework identifies current and potential projects in the Wandle Valley that would contribute to improved green infrastructure.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1 The alternative option is not to approve the existing draft Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework in which case the momentum of the WVGG and the

development of a Wandle Valley Regional Park will undoubtedly stall as one of the four main project partners, Merton Council, would not be expressly committed to delivering the process and the strategic opportunities that it presents approves the draft Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework (WVGG).

#### **4. WANDLE VALLEY GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1 The Green Grid process includes the formation of steering groups, with representatives from partners and other stakeholders to develop and implement the Green Grid Vision, objectives and projects, area by area. The ALGG objectives include working with established partnerships, such as that that already exists in the Wandle Valley, through the Wandle Valley Regional Park Development Board, Management Board and the Wandle Forum. The WVGG process was led by Wandsworth Council, with the support of 5thstudio, an architecture firm experienced in the development of GreenGrids.
- 4.2 The Wandle Valley Regional Park transitional period governance arrangements, which came into effect in January 2010, involved setting up a new Development Board, a Management Board and the continuation of the existing Wandle Forum. The Development Board is made up of two elected members from the four local authorities along the River Wandle and the GLA and acts as the executive body, signing off on vision, strategy and finance decisions to undertake the development of strategy and to oversee the work programme. The Management Board, comprising high-level officer representation from the local authorities, land-owners, and statutory bodies, takes the programme management and delivery role, developing strategy and developing the work programme for referral to the Development Board, dealing with long-term planning, resources, reporting on expenditure and progress, overseeing the work of working groups and any consultants. The Wandle Forum, which was set up some years ago, continues to act as the inclusive body that represents the interests of all sectors, especially voluntary and community sectors along the River Wandle. It is the consultative body for any proposals developed by the Management Board and functions to promote the interests and activities of the Regional Park to a wider audience along the Wandle Valley.
- 4.3 Wandsworth Council currently chairs both the Development and Management Boards, with Sutton Council due to take on the role from April 2011. Croydon and Merton Councils are due fulfil these roles for a period of 12 months in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

#### **5. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 5.1 The draft Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework (WVGG) has been prepared on behalf of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Development Board, with sponsorship from Design For London, and has followed a process that has

involved consultation with officers from the four local authorities in the Wandle Valley, Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton and Croydon, as well as from other landowning organisations, statutory bodies and charitable organisations working in the Wandle Valley. The completed draft has also been subject to consultation with members of the Wandle Valley Regional Park Management Board, the Development Board and the Wandle Forum.

## **6. TIMETABLE**

- 6.1 The framework of projects outlined in the WVGG will support the development of the Wandle Valley Regional Park (WVRP). The objectives of the WVGG are complimentary to the vision outlined by the partner organisations working towards the development of the WVRP.
- 6.2 The indicative time period for the component projects highlighted in the Framework is 2010 to 2013.

## **7. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE & PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The WVGG outlines a number of projects that the WVRP partnership bodies are currently progressing. Sources of funding, both external and internal, will need to be identified for the costs associated with any improvement projects outlined in the document.
- 7.2 The projects outlined in the WVGG will be eligible for funding application to the LDA and other potential funding bodies.

## **8. LEGAL & STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no specific legal or statutory issues arising from the contents of this report.

## **9. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES & COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 In supporting the development of the Wandle Valley Regional Park and its green spaces and supporting infrastructure the WVGG will clearly be of benefit in terms of the quality of residents' lives and community well-being as it will be a focus for a variety of activities, events and volunteering opportunities.

## **10. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 In supporting the development of the Wandle Valley Regional Park and its green spaces, the WVGG will undoubtedly be of benefit in terms of crime and

disorder matters via landscape design improvements, infrastructure investments and by improving access and natural surveillance.

## **11. RISK MANAGEMENT & HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no specific risk management or health and safety issues arising from the contents of this report. Appropriate risk assessments that meet the requirements of the Council's safety and strategic risk assessment policies will be conducted at the appropriate stage of each of the component projects.
- 11.2 The greatest potential risk to the Council at this stage concerns its reputation given the momentum already enjoyed in South London by this project and the Regional Park initiative.

## **12. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 Wandle Valley Area Framework 8 document.  
*(NB. The Appendix can be seen in colour on the Council's web-site with the rest of the agenda. Colour copies will be available for inspection at the meeting.)*

## **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 The Wandle Valley Green Grid Area Framework will support the development of the Wandle Valley Regional Park will drive the improvement of green infrastructure in the Wandle Valley, resulting in improved open spaces and quality of life for local residents. The WVGG will underpin improvements in open space management and the development of new open space areas and will support bids for external funding.

## **14. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 14.1 No background papers were relied upon in the preparation of this report.

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