

THE ROYAL PARKS BOARD

Date of meeting: 5 November 2019

Subject: Movement Strategy

Prepared by: [REDACTED], Head of Transport and Access

Presented by: [REDACTED]

Issue:

The purpose of this paper is to seek the Board's agreement to the next stages of the development of TRP's Movement Strategy.

Recommendation:

1. **Adopt the draft Vision and Movement Principles – set out at Annex A**
2. **Approve the publication of the survey results from Engagement Phase One (revised document) – set out at Annex B**
3. **Approve the draft Strategic Outcomes for publication and engagement – set out at Annex C**
4. **Agree to the development of park-specific Movement Masterplans, and offer views on park specific proposals – set out at Annex D**

Background:

For many years TRP's transport-related decisions have often been reactive, piecemeal and driven by the agendas of other organisations. As a result, too often the needs of the parks and park visitors have not been at the forefront of decision making.

The absence of a strategic vision and plan has undermined our ability to speak with a consistent and clear voice about the importance of protecting and enhancing the parks' intrinsic qualities and the visitor experience when transport related decisions are made.

The Movement Strategy:

The Movement Strategy aims to set out a high-level long-term vision of how park visitors should be able to travel to and within the parks.

Appended to the strategy will be a series of aspirational projects and proposals across all eight parks that collectively support realising the overall goals of the strategy.

It is expected that the strategy will set out the main movement and access-related issues and opportunities that are relevant to the parks.

Strategy development process:

Original published timeline:



PHASE 1: COMPLETE	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
OPEN ENGAGEMENT ON PRINCIPLES DISCUSSION PAPER + SURVEY WE ASKED PARK VISITORS FOR IDEAS AND SUPPORT LEVELS	EXHIBITION OF DRAFT STRATEGY / PROPOSED OUTCOME LIST ADOPTED PRINCIPLES AND AGREED UPON BIG OUTCOMES	PARK MOVEMENT MASTERPLANS

Engagement Phase One – Complete:

The development of the draft strategy was informed by extensive conversations with the TRP executive and park management teams, and input from the Board and important stakeholders (e.g. the Friends Groups and Metropolitan Police).

This led to sharing the vision and principles with the wider public; this survey was open from 4 June to 14 July 2019 and received a total of **6,956 responses**.

Responses and feedback have been reviewed following the closure of this engagement phase.

Whilst this survey, like most engagement and consultation exercises, is only a sample of the views of park visitors, it does provide a snapshot of park visitor sentiment around key challenges and how we may address them.

Next steps:

With the Board's support, we intend to progress the original outlined strategy development process. We intend to develop the draft strategy that will then be the focus of the next stage of engagement.

Financial implications:

At this stage of the project there are limited financial implications. A small consultancy budget of £50,000 has been allocated to Transport for 2019-20. We are currently in the very early stages of budgeting for 2020-21 and will share with the Board, additionally as part of the budget approval process in February, the level of budget considered necessary, with any implications for future years. Smaller interventions will not require significant funds; however, some larger projects may require additional expenditure all will be subject to normal approval process including the Board if above delegated limits.

Presentational issues:

Developing TRP's first Movement Strategy may give rise to strong views from stakeholders, and there is potential for negative feedback if this is not handled well or if due diligence is not applied.

TRP will need to be aware of these risks. As such, it is proposed that extensive and genuine stakeholder engagement forms a significant part of the strategy development process, in the expectation of building project-specific buy in and on-going support, thereby reducing the risk of presentational issues.

Equality and Diversity implications:

It is expected that by developing and implementing the movement strategy, TRP will have the opportunity to address movement inequality and diversity issues. Accessibility is intended to be a key focus of the strategy, as highlighted by the second principle - *our parks are for people*. The strategy will also need to be alive to the needs of potentially vulnerable user groups including parents with young children and people with disabilities or limited mobility.

Sustainability implications:

This proposal supports and further endorses TRP's sustainability agenda and directly reinforces sustainability as a focus for all future transport and access within, and when travelling to, the parks.

Legal, Compliance and Measurement:

There are no additional legal or governance implications arising from this report. Specific issues that may arise as the strategy is developed, such as speed limit changes or charging for parking in Richmond Park or Bushy Park, which require HMG approval and secondary legislation.

TRP has already consulted on and secured ministerial approval for the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions within the central parks.

Management responsibility:

Accountable:	CEO
Responsible:	Director of Parks
Supporting:	Head of Transport and Access

Annex A

Recommendation One: Adopt the draft Vision and Movement Principles

The Vision and Movement Principles are a key part of the Movement Strategy, that will guide transport and access decision-making. These are developed from, and build upon, both the work completed in 2016 and a range of existing TRP policies.

The primary purpose of the first stage of engagement was to test the draft movement principles (noting principles 1-4 were actively engaged upon and principles 5-7 were not, as they are 'implementation' style guiding principles).

The survey response showed a minimum of 73% support for principles 1-4 across all parks and all user groups (almost 7000 responses).

Draft Vision:

The Royal Parks Movement Strategy will protect the park environments and enhance the park visitor experience.

Draft Movement Principles:

It is expected that the Movement Strategy and these principles will subsume the existing 2016 Transport Principles document.

✓ We will protect and conserve our parks' special qualities

- Any changes or developments that affect the way visitors move within our parks should protect and enhance the heritage, character, biodiversity and listed landscapes of the parks and must result in no net loss of trees or green space.

✓ Our parks are for people

- Our parks are places that people visit for relaxation and recreation, and to escape the busy city. To make that possible, we will prioritise walking within our parks wherever possible.

✓ We will encourage the use of more sustainable ways to access our parks

- How visitors arrive at our parks plays a significant role in how they use and experience them. We will promote and encourage visitors to use active and sustainable modes of transport as their first choice for park visits whenever they can.

✓ Our park roads are not intended to be commuter through-routes for motor vehicles

- Park roads are primarily for the use of park visitors coming to the parks, not for commuters just travelling through the parks. Over time, we will discourage the through-movement of motor vehicles within our parks.

✓ **We will achieve more by delivering key projects through collaboration and partnership**

- The transport and movement decisions of our visitors do not begin and end at our park boundaries. To deliver positive, change we will collaborate with key partners on projects both within and outside the parks, to achieve the best possible outcomes for the benefit of our visitors.

✓ **We will make evidence-based decisions**

- To make appropriate decisions concerning movement, we will use all available and relevant evidence and data. We will monitor and report outcomes against objectives and embed continuous improvement into our approach.

✓ **We will be proactive in our approach to future transport challenges and opportunities**

- The transport world is changing rapidly, and user-expectations play an ever-increasing role in influencing decisions and solutions. We will ensure that we are prepared for these changes and opportunities, so that we can anticipate and respond to change in an informed, considered and prompt way that aligns with our charitable objectives.

Annex B

Recommendation Two: Approve the reviewed publication and sharing of survey results from Engagement Phase One

Sharing the survey results now will allow us to complete the first stage of engagement. We will of course make clear that the survey is only one element in our evidence gathering and future projects may be subject to their own consultations.

Following the last Board discussion, we have revised the reports and removed all reference to the Question 5 ‘top priorities’, given that it had limited statistical value. The remainder of the report remains unchanged and simply shows the survey questions, results as bar charts, and demographic responses.

It is strongly recommended that we share all six park-specific reports, as local users will want to know the results affecting their park.

We have detailed below the options available to TRP with regards to sharing the survey results, together with the corresponding risks and benefits.

Option	Risk	Benefit
1. <u>Recommended Option:</u> Share the reviewed publication of the survey results prior to sharing the draft strategy	Creates opportunity for misguided media attention about TRP’s future intentions	Allows TRP to control the story and manage the media and social media messages Creates distance between survey and draft strategy – acknowledging that the survey is only a single element of our decision-making Closes the loop with park visitors and stakeholders who completed the survey Builds public trust in a genuine process Demonstrates that TRP is living its values (inclusive, open)
2. Share the reviewed publication of the survey results	Creates opportunity for misguided media attention about TRP’s future intentions	Closes the loop with park visitors and stakeholders who completed the survey

together with draft strategy document	Makes it difficult for TRP to control the story and manage the message – no distance between survey and draft strategy so potential for media to undermine the process and narrative by focusing purely on TRP's vision for the strategy	Builds public trust in a genuine process Demonstrates how TRP is living its values (inclusive, open)
3. Do not share the results	Reputational risk – TRP will be seen to be backtracking on what we said we'd do Likely to lose the trust of almost 7,000 engaged park visitors High likelihood of FOI requests High likelihood of negative media attention after FOI release High likelihood of negative social media posts TRP going against its own values of inclusivity and openness	None

Annex C

Recommendation Three: Approve the strategic outcomes for publication and engagement.

The strategy is intended to be a high-level document that incorporates our adopted movement vision and principles and a series of outcomes we want to achieve.

The strategic outcomes together with the principles would inform the projects across each of the parks.

Draft strategic outcomes for discussion:

OUTCOME 1: ENSURE NO NET LOSS OF GREEN SPACE

Protecting the park environment for all park visitors today and into the future and providing landscapes that enhance opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity. As the parks develop and change, we must ensure there is no permanent net loss of green space (by area) from a 2015 baseline, measured year on year. We will continue to protect our precious green spaces by:

- Embedding this principle into all park strategies and projects
- Offsetting any additional hard spaces with new green space
- Where possible, ensuring that proposals seek to increase or reclaim the amount of green space

OUTCOME 2: DEVELOP A VISITOR DISPERSAL AND SIGNAGE PLAN FOR EACH PARK

As the number of park visitors grows, our spaces are put under increased pressures. In order to ensure we protect the parks and enhance the visitor experience we will:

- Develop comprehensive signage plans that include wayfinding, learning and enforcement
- Develop a strategy for visitor dispersal
- Undertake work to understand visitor numbers
- Ensure signage plans in all parks are consistent, but also that the programme is nuanced enough to ensure each park maintains and celebrates its own identity

The benefits of completing this work include:

- Decluttering the parks
- Improved enforcement of park regulations
- Positive behaviour change
- Improved park intelligence and asset maintenance
- Improved visitor experience

OUTCOME 3: PROVIDE SAFE AND COMFORTABLE WALKING EXPERIENCES FOR PARK VISITORS

Walking within our parks will always be our preferred method for visitors experiencing our park environments. Many of the spaces, both within the parks and surrounding our parks, provide a harsh pedestrian and access experience. We intend to enhance the walking experience by:

- Identifying locations where additional crossing points may be required
- Reducing the amount of time people wait for a green light and giving more time to cross at signalised crossings
- Providing appropriate refuge facilities for walking
- Continuing to promote considerate cycling
- Enhancing wayfinding signage

OUTCOME 4: REDUCE VEHICLE SPEEDS THROUGHOUT OUR PARKS

A reduction in speed is proven to increase the safety of all park users. It is also expected to improve the experience of the majority of visitors. We have already introduced a 20mph speed restriction in the outer parks and are currently working towards achieving this across all parks. We will also seek to reduce speeds by:

- Increasing pedestrian crossing points
- Introducing physical infrastructure where appropriate
- Promoting considerate cycling behaviour
- Working with parks police on enforcement

OUTCOME 5: PROMOTE CONSIDERATE CYCLING BEHAVIOUR

A number of cyclists do not demonstrate the behaviour expected by The Royal Parks when riding within our parks. In order to eliminate cycling in non-permitted areas and reduce conflicts between bikes and walkers, we will:

- Continue to promote the pathway code of conduct with pedestrian priority as the key pillar
- Work with Parks Police to reinforce signage and target negative behaviours
- Undertake a behaviour change campaign

OUTCOME 6: SUPPORT PARK VISITORS TO MAKE ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CHOICES

Where possible, we will encourage our visitors to travel to our parks on foot, on a bike or by public transport. To do this, we need to ensure we provide the right facilities in the right places so we will:

- Ensure all park gates are accessible for all people, including families and people with disability or limited mobility
- Explore providing bike parking facilities at key destinations and increase provision if required
- Continue to promote considerate cycling and safety messaging
- Support car free days when and where appropriate

- Develop public transport advocacy plans

OUTCOME 7: REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF THROUGH TRAFFIC WITHIN OUR PARKS

From numerous traffic studies we know that most vehicles using park roads are not stopping within the park but are simply using the park road network as a short cut. By eliminating this traffic, we will:

- Decrease emissions within the park environment
- Increase safety and make the park visitor experience more enjoyable.
- Increase the safety of the park's wildlife and ecosystems
- Reduce wear and tear on our roads and therefore maintenance costs

Working towards the goal of eliminating non-park, car-based traffic within our park, we will:

- Explore opportunities to close or restrict park roads to through traffic
- Explore and implement regular car-free days. Many of our parks already do this (e.g. The Mall is closed on Sundays). We will look to expand and increase these days where appropriate.
- Explore opportunities to use technology to restrict commercial traffic on park roads (e.g. Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras)
- Reprogramme reclaimed spaces for park visitor usage

OUTCOME 8: MINIMISE THE MOVEMENT OF OPERATIONAL VEHICLES WITHIN THE PARKS

There is a limited amount of essential traffic within the parks, which includes TRP service vehicles, concession deliveries, events and waste management. We will seek to consolidate and minimise these vehicle movements and patterns where appropriate by:

- Working with events teams to improve traffic management plans for set up and event patrons
- Optimise waste collection in line with the Sustainability Action Plan
- Continue to reduce staff vehicles where possible.

Engagement Phase Two:

The engagement during this phase will not be vastly different to the first phase and will not require an overly complex survey. As with phase one, we will invite individuals and organisations to respond.

However, it is very unlikely that we would change these outcomes in response to engagement, unless stakeholders give us very compelling reasons why these outcomes are not deserving of adoption by the Board (this engagement phase is intended for the sharing and informing end of the engagement spectrum).

Annex D

Recommendation Four: Agree to developing park-specific Movement Masterplans and offer views on specific park projects.

Park-specific Movement Masterplans:

We intend to develop park-specific movement masterplans; this document will form the basis of implementation and will be guided by the above-mentioned principles and outcomes. It will include the following:

- Detailed site-specific proposals and projects – linked to principles and outcomes
- Rationale and articulated benefits
- Priorities
- Expected timeframes

Simply put, this is the implementation plan which includes the detail of our movement project intentions and how we will achieve them. Again, we will share this publicly, but engagement is for information purposes only, not in order to seek wholesale feedback.

In line with principle five – *We will achieve more by delivering key projects through collaboration and partnership* – we will develop targeted and tailored engagement specific to the projects will be planned for as part of the implementation process (including Trustee and key stakeholder input).

Project Proposals:

We have also developed a series of projects that could form the basis of the park specific movement masterplans for Board discussion (attached).

These projects include a short-term easy win as well as long-term aspirational projects.

It is important to acknowledge that these are proposals which demonstrate the intentions of the projects that TRP could deliver. The proposals are not complete worked-up or costed project briefs. That will form part of the implementation plan at the appropriate time for each individual project.