

Edinburgh Open Space Strategy – Start of Project

Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership

25 May 2009

Purpose of report

- 1 To refer to the Neighbourhood Partnership details of an open space strategy for Edinburgh which sets out the vision and aims for open space in the City.

Main report

- 2 On 26 February 2009, the Planning Committee considered the attached report by the Director of City Development detailing an open space strategy for Edinburgh. The Strategy aimed to ensure that a coordinated approach was taken to protecting and developing the city's network of open space.
- 3 The Committee agreed:
 - 1) To approve the report as the basis for the preparation of an open space strategy for Edinburgh.
 - 2) To refer the report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee for its approval on the same basis.
 - 3) **To refer the report to the Neighbourhood Partnerships and consult on whether they wished to participate in the preparation of a separate Action Plan for their area.**

Recommendation

- 4 That the Neighbourhood Partnership consider the report.



John Sturt
Council Secretary
13.05.09

Appendices	Report by the Director of City Development
Contact/tel/Email	Ben Wilson, Principal Planner, Local Planning Policy 0131 469 3411, ben.wilson@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	City wide
Single Outcome Agreement	N/A
Background Papers	None

Edinburgh Open Space Strategy – Start of Project

Planning Committee
26 February 2009

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the preparation of an open space strategy for Edinburgh.

2 Summary

- 2.1 The proposed open space strategy aims to ensure that a coordinated approach is taken to protecting and developing the city's network of open space. A comprehensive audit of open space is being carried out to inform the strategy.
- 2.2 The strategy will be used to inform planning decisions on loss and provision of open space, and will include an action plan identifying proposed changes to specific spaces and sites in the city.
- 2.3 This report sets out the project timetable, responsibilities and reporting. The project will require the involvement of several Council departments and the neighbourhood teams.

3 Main report

Background

- 3.1 In February 2008, the Planning Committee considered a report on Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 11: Open Space and Physical Activity. The broad focus of SPP 11 is to ensure that local authorities take a coordinated and strategic approach to protecting and developing an open space network and promote access to sport and recreation. The SPP established a new requirement for local authorities: to undertake an open space audit and prepare an open space strategy.
- 3.2 The city already has strategies for some types of open space, listed in Appendix 1. Some are under review. There is also an Open Space Framework approved by the Planning Committee and the Council Executive in November 2005 which is intended to co-ordinate those strategies.

3.3 The Framework sets out a vision and aims for open space as follows:

Vision

To deliver quality and sustainable open space for the City of Edinburgh that continues to contribute to environmental well-being, economic prosperity and quality of life.

Aims

- 1 To create a network of open space (green and civic space) that knits the city together.
- 2 To improve the mechanisms for funding and management of open space.
- 3 To improve the quality, quantity, accessibility and enjoyment of open space.
- 4 To improve the mechanisms for protecting open space.
- 5 To obtain even greater benefits for all from the city's existing and new open spaces.
- 6 To provide opportunities for all those who live in the city to lead healthy and physically active lifestyles.
- 7 To promote the city locally, nationally and internationally.

3.4 The present project will take forward the relevant aims and actions of the Framework as well as meeting the requirements of SPP 11.

Role and Scope

3.5 The open space strategy will be the first of its type for Edinburgh. It will be used to:

- inform planning decisions on the provision of open space in new development
- inform planning decisions on proposals involving the loss of open space
- identify actions for changing and improving existing open spaces.

3.6 The audit and strategy will aid the interpretation of relevant local plan policies, in particular ECLP policies Os 3 and Hou 3, which deal with new open space provision, and ECLP policies Os 1 and 2, which deal with loss of open space and playing fields. There is also potential for the strategy to provide a guide for future investment in open space and to allow decisions on use of Council land to be taken within a strategic context.

3.7 The work will address the urban area and the main rural west settlements.

Open Space Audit

- 3.8 The strategy will be founded on an understanding of the current open space resource. This will be achieved by completing an audit of existing open space. This work consists of:
- classification of all open spaces, using definitions set by Scottish Natural Heritage, provided in Appendix 2;
 - an assessment of the quantity and distribution of different types of open space; and
 - an assessment of the quality of those spaces.
- 3.9 The first of these stages has been carried out in draft form. Although the classification of open space types needs to be consistent with national definitions, in some cases there will be potential for stakeholders to disagree with classification decisions. It is therefore proposed that the draft audit be the subject of public consultation to allow comment on those classifications before the strategy itself is prepared.
- 3.10 There is already some information available on the quality of types of open space. For example, a 'Green Flag' assessment of parks and gardens has recently been carried out. Further qualitative assessment of these and other types of open space may be required prior to consultation.
- 3.11 Consultation on the draft audit provides an opportunity to gather further information on the quality and use of open spaces directly from the relevant communities and users. In some parts of the city community groups have already done work which can be used for this purpose.
- 3.12 Where appropriate, it is proposed to make use of existing information rather than carry out new assessments. However, since the audit will be used to inform planning decisions, it is important that there is a minimum level of consistency in information across the city.
- 3.13 The consultation process will be designed to seek input from relevant equalities groups.

Open Space Strategy

- 3.14 Once the audit is complete, the information gathered will be analysed as follows:
- analysis of supply and demand
 - identification of standards for quantity, quality and accessibility
 - identification of where supply of different types of open space exceeds or fails to meet standards
 - identification of priorities for change in open spaces
 - identification of potential actions, including those already committed through the development plan and development management processes.

- 3.15 The findings of this analysis will form the draft strategy and action plan. It may be appropriate for some or all of this analysis to be carried out for each neighbourhood partnership area as well as for the whole city.
- 3.16 The draft strategy and action plan will be the subject of a second public consultation process.

Timetable

- 3.17 The following timetable is proposed:

2009	May	Report draft audit
	May-July	Public consultation
	August	Report and publish final audit
	August – October	Analysis
	October	Report draft strategy and action plan
	October – December	Public consultation
2010	February - April	Report and publish final strategy and action plan
2010+		Implement and monitor action plan
2015		Review and update strategy every five years.

Reporting and Decision-making

- 3.18 Government guidance emphasises that open space strategies should be prepared corporately, with the full involvement of relevant Council departments. Practice elsewhere identifies an important role for elected members.
- 3.19 The proposed arrangements for decision making and key inputs from within the Council are set out diagrammatically in Appendix 3.
- 3.20 The project steering group consists of officers from Planning, Services for Communities (Parks and Greenspace) and Corporate Property and Contingency Planning. As work progresses, there will be significant input from Children and Families, Corporate Services (Culture and Sport), SFC (Housing) and the neighbourhood teams.
- 3.21 Future reports on the Strategy will be submitted for joint approval by the Planning Committee and the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, as it will cover matters such as the quality and management of existing open space which are beyond the scope of planning control.
- 3.22 It is proposed that the Neighbourhood Partnerships be closely involved in the two consultation processes. It is also intended that the Action Plan be structured to allow specific projects and the selection of priorities for change in open spaces, for example from one type of open space to another, to be agreed at a Neighbourhood Partnership level following consultation. Where such an action also has direct implications for a particular Council service, for example Culture and Sport or Children and Families, it may need to be reported for approval by the relevant committee.

3.23 At this stage it is intended for there to be a single Action Plan document, but consideration will be given to the alternative of preparing a separate or appended document for each Neighbourhood Partnership area.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The cost of preparing the audit and strategy and carrying out consultation will be met by existing budgets for development planning and the budget for Services for Communities. The strategy and action plan are likely to identify projects along with their potential cost and funding sources.

5 Environmental Impact

5.1 The project will be screened to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the strategy is required.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Work has begun on the first open space strategy for the city, as required by national planning policy. It will ensure a coordinated approach to open space provision and protection and is an opportunity to identify specific proposals for change in open space provision.

6.2 The next stage will be the reporting of a draft audit for consultation, intended to be ready in May 2009.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) approves this report as the basis for the preparation of an open space strategy for Edinburgh; and
- b) refers this report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee for its approval on the same basis as recommendation a); and
- c) refers this report to the neighbourhood partnership for their information.



Dave Anderson
Director of City Development

Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 List of strategies for different types of open space in Edinburgh 2 Classification of open space types 3 Project responsibilities diagram
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Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	<p>Supports National Outcome 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.</p> <p>Supports Local Outcome – There are more attractive and accessible green spaces across the city.</p>
Background Papers	<p>Scottish Planning Policy 11: Open Space and Physical Activity, report to Planning Committee, 28 February 2008</p> <p>Finalised Open Space Framework for Edinburgh, report to Planning Committee, 3 November 2005</p>

Appendix 1**Existing Council strategies relating to open space**

Strategy	Approval Date	Review Period
Open Space Framework for Edinburgh	November 2005	-
Pitches Strategy	March 2005	-
Access Strategy	February 2003	-
Allotments Strategy	November 2002	Review due to report at 5 May 2009 TIE Committee
Edinburgh Public Parks and Gardens Strategy	March 2006	-
Green Flag assessment of Parks and Gardens	June 2008	-
Play in Partnership: a Play Strategy for the City of Edinburgh	April 2001	Review underway
Public Realm Strategy	On-going	-
Edinburgh Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2004 -2009	2004	By 2010
Urban Forestry Strategy	1991	On-going

Appendix 2

Classification of open space types

	Type	Classification	Sub-classification
6. Open Space (as defined in PAN 65 Annex 1)	6.1 Public Parks & Gardens		
	6.2 Private Gardens or Grounds	6.21 Private gardens	6.211 Large Private Gardens & Grounds
			6.214 Private Pleasure Gardens
		6.22 Schools	
		6.23 Institutions	
	6.3 Amenity Greenspace	6.31 Residential	
		6.32 Business	
		6.33 Transport	
	6.4 Playspace for children & teenagers		
	6.5 Sports Areas	6.51 Playing Field	
		6.52 Golf course	
		6.53 Tennis court	
		6.54 Bowling green	
		6.55 Other sports	
	6.6 Green corridors		
6.7 Natural/semi-natural greenspace	6.7 Other semi-natural greenspace		
	6.74 Semi-natural park		
6.8 Other functional greenspace	6.81 Allotments		
	6.82 Churchyards		
	6.83 Cemetery		
	6.84 Other		
6.9 Civic space			
7. Other open land	7.1 Farmland		
	7.4 Utility		

This classification system is based on that in Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space (May 2008). It has been adjusted to take account of the characteristics of Edinburgh's open spaces. It is the basis of an audit of Edinburgh's open space resource.

Appendix 3

Project Responsibilities

