

**ATKINS**

**Castle Hill  
Conservation Management Plan**

Enhancement Proposals  
March 2006





# Castle Hill Conservation Management Plan

## Enhancement Proposals March 2006

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## 1. ENHANCEMENT OF THE SITE

### Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out a series of proposed enhancement works for Castle Hill that will deliver significant improvements in its overall condition and enhance people's ability to use and enjoy the Site.
- 1.2 This document also briefly discusses possible longer-term enhancements that could deliver further benefits if suitable design solutions can be developed and appropriate levels of funding can be secured.

### Proposed Enhancement Works

- 1.3 The proposed enhancement works have been developed to address key issues facing the Site including:
  - Condition of footpaths;
  - Access across the Site;
  - Erosion;
  - Scrub encroachment;
  - Interpretation and information;
  - Car parking; and
  - Night time anti-social behaviour.
- 1.4 Subject to the formal approval of the agreed capital funding, it is currently anticipated that some of these works will be taken through the detailed design process in the new financial year (2006-2007) with work commencing before the end of that financial year.

### ***Components and Masterplan***

- 1.5 The first phase of the proposed works is presented on the masterplan (see Figure 25) and described below. The proposed works are currently at an outline stage of development and will need to be developed in more detail over the coming months.

- **Resurfacing and landscaping part of the current car parks:** This would include laying a new base course and suitable surfacing to car park (approximately 30 spaces including 2 disabled spaces, using low alkaline materials, i.e. not limestone). In addition, a low earth bund would be established around the area formerly occupied by the public house and its car park to restrict vehicle access to this area. It is important to reduce management issues on this area. This would allow currently reseeded areas a chance to establish themselves which would significantly enhance the character of the Hill.
- **New off-site lay-by parking:** This would consist of a new lay-by car park (approximately 36 spaces) with planting to the rear. The cost includes an estimate for the retaining wall that would be needed for construction of the lay-by car park. This wall should be from the lower ground level and come to bonnet height above the level of the lay-by for safety reasons and to shelter the impact of the cars from a distant prospect. This proposal would need further analysis by a structural engineer, and it should be noted that further geo-technical and contaminated land assessments are required to determine the feasibility and potential cost of this component. The results of these assessments may require revision of the works should significant and expensive issues be identified.
- **Upgrading the path network:** All paths would be a minimum of 1m to 1.5m wide (depending on location). The improvements would include a new base course (with geo-textile underlay where required), timber edge restraints and crushed stone surfacing, it is possible that stone flags may be used in certain areas which have been deemed appropriate. Resin bound stone paths would be supplied leading up to the Tower to facilitate disabled access to the flagged area around the tower. New stone steps would replace the top set of concrete steps at the back of the tower. The steps leading up to the site from the north and south would be re-laid and replaced as appropriate. Low alkaline materials will be used, e.g. not limestone. It is proposed that a barrier will be incorporated at the bottom of the steps leading to Lumb Lane from Victoria Tower in order to improve the safety of users accessing the road.
- **Footbridge over road to facilitate the circuit of the ramparts:** This has currently been specified as a new timber footbridge of approximately 20m span. The installation and design of the bridge would need to be undertaken in a manner that resulted in minimal damage to archaeological remains.

During the consultation it was identified that there is potentially cellaring associated with Hilltop Farm below the ramparts where the footings of the proposed footbridge may be placed. This would have implications for the design and feasibility of the bridge and would need to be investigated further. Also of consideration is the fact that the proposed bridge would need to be of sufficient height to allow the passage of emergency vehicles under it, these requirements could also mean the bridge would not be feasible.

It has also been identified that this proposal does not have the full support of some of the key stakeholders and public who were consulted and will require further discussion and consideration.

- **Repairing erosion and restoring damaged areas:** The areas of erosion have been identified in the Condition Survey (see Appendix 4). These will be addressed using a method and specification agreed with English Heritage and WYAAS and in accordance with the Management Guidance outlined in Section 6 of the Plan. The cost outlined below is therefore indicative.
- **New Amenity Area by the well:** This area would be re-contoured and landscaped to provide a relatively sheltered area for informal gatherings. The use of an “amphitheatre” style design could also result in its use as an outdoor education and events area.
- **Providing new signs at gateways onto the Site:** These would be situated at the principal gateways into the Site i.e. where footpaths come onto the Site and in the main car park. The signs would contain a brief overview of what the site is as well as advising visitors on what activities can and cannot take place on the Site e.g. No metal detecting.
- **Night time closure of the Site to vehicles, including installation of a barrier:** To facilitate night-time closure of the Site a barrier would be established at the bottom of the access road. This would probably be inserted into the road surface to allow vehicles to exit the Site after nightfall but not to enter. The exact specification and nature of the barrier will be determined in the detailed design phase. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will need to be applied for to deliver this component.
- **Interpretation materials on-site:** The lack of interpretation and information on the site has been clearly identified as an issue. The provision of interpretation material is therefore a key component of these works, however this will need to be sensitively installed to maintain the character of the Site and prevent localised erosion around materials. It is currently proposed to install a series of boards on the outside of Victoria Tower using a framework in which the boards could be mounted and removed on daily basis to limit opportunities for vandalism. This would also allow the boards to be updated to reflect changes in understandings about the Hill. In addition, it is proposed to established a limited number (c. 3) static boards at other locations within the site to enhance peoples’ appreciation of the views from the site. This could also include additional material at the top of Victoria Tower. Advice should be sought from relevant authorities as to the most appropriate, durable and vandal-proof interpretation displays. The cost identified below should be considered as a budget allowance as it is not possible to accurately cost the proposals at this stage without further designs.

- **Site furniture such as seats and litter bins:** Allowance has been made for up to 7 seats and 7 litter bins on the site. The exact location of these would be determined at the detailed design phase, although they will need heavy lids to reduce the risk of litter being dispersed by high winds.
- **Improved booth and interior decor for Victoria Tower:** A budget allowance has been set out below to improve the booth at the tower, including the provision of better facilities for the Ranger and other staff. In addition, the allowance should provide for an enhancement of the interior decor and for minor conservation issues identified in the Condition Survey (see Appendix 4) to be addressed.
- **Scrub management:** A budget allowance for scrub management has been made in the costs below. This will be of a limited nature, and will concentrate on managing scrub which is not of specific ecological value. Where works are undertaken on ecologically sensitive scrub areas it will concentrate on low level cutting, and not removal. The exact extent of scrub management remains to be determined at the detailed design stage and as part of the 5 year Management and Maintenance Plan (see Section 6 of the Plan). This will in part depend on the Council's preferred approach to the management of the Zones D, G, H and I (see Section 6 of the Plan).

**Outline Costs**

Component	Estimated Cost / Budget Allowance
Resurfacing and landscaping part of the current car parks	£25,000
New off-site lay-by parking	£45,000
Upgrading the path network	£40,000
Footbridge over road to facilitate the circuit of the ramparts (subject to further discussion)	£15,000
Repairing erosion and restoring damaged areas	£15,000
New "Picnic" Area by the well	£10,000
Providing new signs at gateways onto the Site	£2,000
Night time closure of the Site, including installation of a barrier	£5,000
Interpretation materials on-site	£15,000
Site furniture such as seats and litter bins	£5,000
Improved booth and interior decor for Victoria Tower	£15,000
Scrub management	£5,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£197,000.00</b>

1.6 These outline costs are indicative are based on available information. The detailed design phase could result in a significant decrease or a possible increase in costs. With this in mind it is recommended that a capital budget of at least £220,000 is set aside to cover these works and supply some contingency funds.

1.7 The above costs do not include:

- Professional fees (at least 10 to 15% of capital budget);
- Preparation of text and graphics for the interpretation and signage elements (quotes will need to be sought from appropriate specialist or work sourced from within the Council);
- Any planning fees (to be determined by Council should planning permission be required for the works e.g. Listed Building Consent for works on Victoria Tower);
- Investigation of the extent, cost and acceptability of any works to address the condition of the access road as described in Policy Ac4;
- Any required archaeological investigations or watching briefs (to be determined with English Heritage and WYAAS during detailed design phase); and
- Further studies to examine the possible contaminated land and geo-technical issues for the proposed lay-by parking (quotes will need to be sought from appropriate specialist or work sourced from within the Council).

### **Possible future enhancements and developments**

1.8 As discussed under Policy U9 in Section 5 of the Plan the provision of basic or more comprehensive facilities on the Site (e.g. toilets, shelter, refreshments, educational space, a plant room to enable events and operational facilities for the Ranger) cannot be brought forward until the current situation regarding the site of the former public house is resolved.

1.9 Future proposals to develop basic or more comprehensive facilities would be dependent on the availability of external capital funding (e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund) and would also need to include further public and stakeholder consultation. These include:

- Basic facilities on the hilltop
- Basic facilities off the hilltop
- Comprehensive facilities on the hilltop

- Comprehensive facilities off the hilltop
- 1.10 The basic facilities would consist of toilets, shelter, plant room and operational space within a single-storey small building perhaps located on the Site or adjacent to a new off-site car park (see below).
- 1.11 The comprehensive facilities could include toilets, cafe, flexible educational / events space, operational space and plant room within a single storey building maybe located on the Site or off-site adjacent to a new off-site car park (see below).
- 1.12 The off-site car park could be sited to the south-west of the Hill and could provide c.90 spaces. This would allow the hilltop car park to be relocated and resurfaced as well as reducing vehicle access along the constrained access road. The new hilltop car park would provide disabled access and a drop-off point, but could remain in normal use during off-peak periods. Any new off-site car park would require extensive geo-technical and contaminated land assessment prior to design.
- 1.13 All of the above would require the development of sensitively designed structures and car parks to reduce possible impacts on the character, setting and physical fabric of the Site. Any hilltop proposals would also require an architectural solution that minimised the impact of the building on the character of the hill and its profile when viewed from afar (see Policy FD1).
- 1.14 It should be stressed that all of these possibilities will require considerable further analysis including feasibility studies, detailed design and environmental assessment.





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Further information about Castle Hill and the  
Conservation Management Plan can be found  
on the Council's Website [www.kirklees.gov.uk](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk)