

Wormwood Scrubs Ecological Masterplan

1. The site today

Introduction

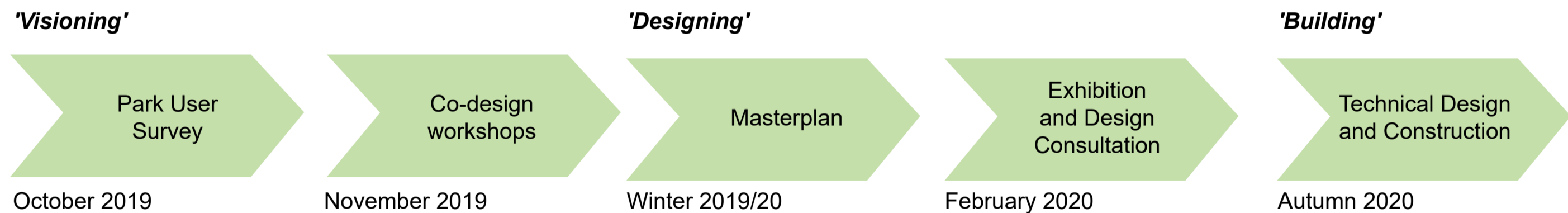
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham are planning ecological enhancements, habitat creation and long term management proposals for Wormwood Scrubs as well as some improvements to connectivity.

The site is included within the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) Regeneration Area. Wormwood Scrubs makes a significant contribution to local open space provision and there will be a need to accommodate new visitors and residents accessing the site for recreation and wildlife opportunities. Without an overarching masterplan and strategic investment this potentially poses a risk of unacceptable pressure on existing habitats and recreational facilities. One facet of the masterplan includes an 'early activation project' for OPDC: access improvements to The Scrubs in order to improve connectivity to the site from the OPDC development area to make sure visitor access is considered and managed.

Wormwood Scrubs comprises 80 hectares (200 acres) of open space located in the northern section of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The site is the largest open space in Hammersmith and Fulham and has been protected for public use since the commencement of the Wormwood Scrubs Act 1879.

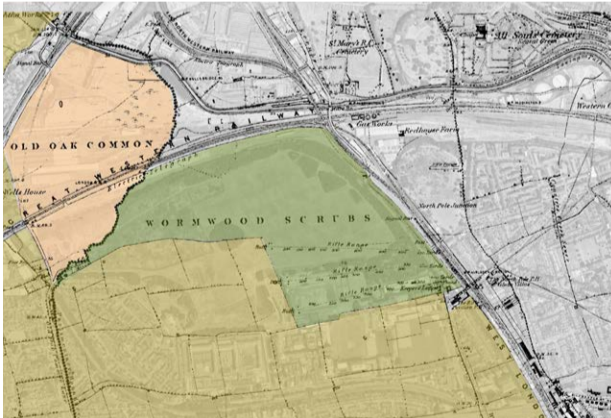
The eastern section of the Scrubs is largely mown grassland with sports pitches set out. Several areas of the site are designated as a Local Nature Reserve and a large proportion of the western side of the site is identified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), comprising long grassland and scrub. We want to protect and enhance these features.

Programme for the works



Site history and evolution

1870



The Scrubs has no woodland, it is primarily an open field amongst arable farmland

1890



Railway infrastructure increases, the Prison is completed and the form is similar to today with woodland planted to the NW

1945



The western corner was filled with infrastructure, perhaps linked to the anti-aircraft gun site and 'box-barrage'

1990



New islands of trees in place on the common with the path parallel to Scrubs Lane added

1910s



London to Manchester aeroplane race

1941



Women at the anti-aircraft gun site

1950s



Parachutists and residents gathering to watch

Map of Wormwood Scrubs today



Site Issues and Analysis



Access & Interpretation

Entrances require improvement, and better signage and interpretation is required, especially the entrance from Old Oak Common Lane



Management & Maintenance

The site has great potential for improved management and maintenance, particularly to enhance biodiversity



Sports & Recreation

The Gaelic football pitches are currently located inside the SINC and are detrimental to ecology



Protecting Ecology

Habitats could be better connected and reinforced, to ensure protection from the densification of surrounding areas



Trees

The more established woodland is contained along the north perimeter, the woodland planted in the 1980s requires investment



Water

Standing water and ponds could significantly improve ecology, but need to be carefully sited and sensitive to current use and ecology

Biodiversity Net Gain

The masterplan aims to increase the biodiversity value of the site.

The habitats on site have been surveyed and classified in line with DEFRA guidance. This includes habitat condition, connectivity and strategic significance assessments.

The assessment identifies that the grassland areas of the site show significant potential for ecological improvement and the woodland areas would benefit from diversification.