

***Proposal for London Wildlife Trust management of Gondar Gardens Nature Reserve:  
(Opportunities and Aspirations for the site)***

**1.0 Background**

London Wildlife Trust (LWT) have been approached by James Blake Associates & Linden Homes and Wates Developments to act as managing agent for Gondar Gardens Nature Reserve (NW6); following the proposed redevelopment of a portion of the site for residential dwellings. The developer is in the process of submitting a planning application to London borough of Camden for said development and will be including details of LWT's proposal for the long term management and use of this valuable community and wildlife site.

**2.0 London Wildlife Trust**

London Wildlife Trust is the only charity dedicated solely to protecting the capital's wildlife and wild spaces. We manage around fifty London-wide nature reserves and campaign to save important wildlife habitats, engaging London's diverse communities through access to our nature reserves, volunteering programmes and education work. London Wildlife Trust has been delivering a range of projects in Camden for the last 27 years and currently manages 3 of the boroughs Nature Reserves including our flagship site Camley Street Natural Park. We run a diversity of environmental schemes for a wide cross section of the local community, some of our current portfolio of projects in the borough include:

- Curriculum linked educational programmes for preschool and primary school children.
- Forest Schools programmes.
- Volunteering opportunities for vulnerable adults including learning disabled adults, physically disabled adults and adults with mental health support needs.
- Volunteering programmes for all ages and abilities.
- Training schemes for at risk children and youth offenders.
- Accredited training opportunities for adult learners.
- Structured training to encourage engagement with the local environment (John Muir Award).
- Delivery of environmental community events for borough resident.
- Youth training and career development.
- A range of contracting services including landscaping, design, ecological reports and surveys.



**3.0 The Terms of the agreement**

Following the completion of the development Linden Homes propose to gift the remainder of the site *Freehold*, to LWT (see associated Landscape Plan from James Blake Associates). The developer also proposes to furnish LWT with the appropriate tools and equipment to manage the site including resources and welfare facilities for the delivery of our educational and ecological operations on site. There will also be an allocation of Section 106 funding to LWT to cover the management costs of the site in future years.

#### **4.0 The Site**

Gondar Gardens covered reservoir is currently a site of borough importance grade II, and is primarily a neutral grassland habitat with bordering trees and shrubs and a selection of grassland slopes. The site is currently the only known site in Camden for slow worm populations and as such is of significant importance with regards to the boroughs ecology and warrants protection and enhancements in line with the borough BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) targets. As well as slow worm populations the site also provides a habitat and forage site for a selection of Bat species, also a priority wildlife species within the boroughs biodiversity action plan. The trust aspires to preserve and enhance these habitats, with the site coming under our management and propose to manage Gondar Gardens as a valuable community resources and sanctuary for wildlife.

#### **5.0 Our Vision for the Site**

London Wildlife Trust's primary objective for this site is to safeguard and enrich the existing habitats and increase wildlife populations' onsite. We believe that the site should be protected and retained in the long term as an inner city Nature Reserve, and also a site which local people can enjoy and which will promote learning and environmental awareness through access on a periodic basis throughout the year.

London Wildlife Trust plans to carry out a selection of the following activities onsite:

- Annual maintenance programme to protect and enrich the current habitats onsite.
- Delivery of a programme of educational opportunities to local schools onsite primarily in the spring and autumn.
- Delivery of a regular volunteering programme onsite where local people will have the opportunity to access the site and get involved.
- Delivery of periodic community events and open days on site, where local people will be able to gain access to Gondar Gardens.
- Regular wildlife surveys to actively monitor the wildlife populations one site, with aspiration for the site to be up graded from Grade II to Grade I borough importance.



We are proposing that the site remains closed to the public for the majority of the year, only opening for schools visits and periodically for specific community events and volunteering sessions. In this way we hope to safeguard the habitats and wildlife onsite and also not to infringe on the privacy of local residents surrounding the site.

#### **6.0 Next Steps**

LWT agrees to collaborate with James Blake Associates in the development of a detailed management plan for the site (to be reviewed every 5 years) if the current scheme is successfully granted planning permission. LWT will also consult with Linden Homes concerning the most appropriate date for the Nature Reserve to pass under the management of LWT; this could be before the completion of the housing scheme if seen as appropriate by all parties.

### **7.0 Getting Involved**

The team at LWT prides itself on our inclusiveness and we will be keen to actively involve local people in our operations at Gondar Gardens. LWT is a membership organisation and we would encourage local residents to join our membership in order to be kept up to date on current development for this site and also our work across the capital.

One of our first goals will be to establish a friends group for Gondar Gardens, which will be an opportunity for local residents to get involved, access the site for events and assist LWT in protecting the site for future generations. Local people will also be welcome to get involved in our volunteering programmes both in Camden and further afield and we plan to deliver a range of informative and educational events onsite throughout the year which will provide the opportunity for local people to learn more about the site and the wildlife on their door steps.



### **8.0 Finding out more**

Should you wish to find out more concerning the work of London Wildlife Trust and our involvement with this site, please contact our Camden Area Manager who will be happy to answer any of your questions.

*Phil Paulo, LWT Area Manager, 10th January 2012*

**Direct line:** 020 7833 2311

**Email:** [ppaulo@wildlondon.org.uk](mailto:ppaulo@wildlondon.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.wildlondon.org.uk](http://www.wildlondon.org.uk)