

Kett's Heights Management Plan Proposals Consultation

January 2018

Introduction

This is a summary of proposals for the management of Kett's Heights over the next 10 years (2018-2027). It is taken from a draft Management Plan prepared by the Norwich Fringe Project (which manages the space on behalf of the site owners, Norwich City Council) following discussions with Council officers and the Friends of Kett's Heights Executive Committee. The Management Plan aims to provide a framework for future management of Kett's Heights by both the Council and the Friends of Kett's Heights.

Kett's Heights is a public open space, open at all times. It is 1.7 hectares (4.2 acres) in size, and as the plan overleaf shows, runs north-south from Kett's Hill to Gas Hill, varying in width. The site contains the remains of a medieval chapel, and 19th century garden terraces, and is so named for having been the location where Kett and his followers massed to lay siege to the city in their rebellion in 1549. It is one of the three strategic viewpoints overlooking Norwich designated by the Council as a site the views from which should be taken into account when city centre developments are considered, and is a popular location for viewing the city centre, for example when there are firework displays.

It is used regularly by local people for recreation, and is also used by larger numbers for events, such as tours led by the Friends of Kett's Heights and theatrical performances (in 2017 by Common Lot and Crude Apache) which can attract audiences in excess of 200.

There are a variety of paths running the extent of the site. The only access to Kett's Heights is from the main road (Kett's Hill). This path is surfaced with gravel, and in sections is marked either side by railway sleepers. The network of paths around the site and on the terrace levels are either tarmacked or not surfaced. There is no vehicle access onto the site. A former access from the site of the former gas works, shown on the plan, has long been out of use due to subsidence.

The site is within the Thorpe Hamlet Conservation Area, but individual structures, such as the chapel remains, do not have any statutory protection, nor are any of the trees subject to individual tree preservation orders.

Your comments are welcomed and should be **sent by 14th February 2018**. They can be sent to the Friends of Kett's Heights via the contact page on our website:

<https://www.kettsheights.co.uk/contact-us.html>

or to the Norwich Fringe Project, Norman Centre, Bignold Road, Norwich, NR3 2QZ

Tel: 01603 423303

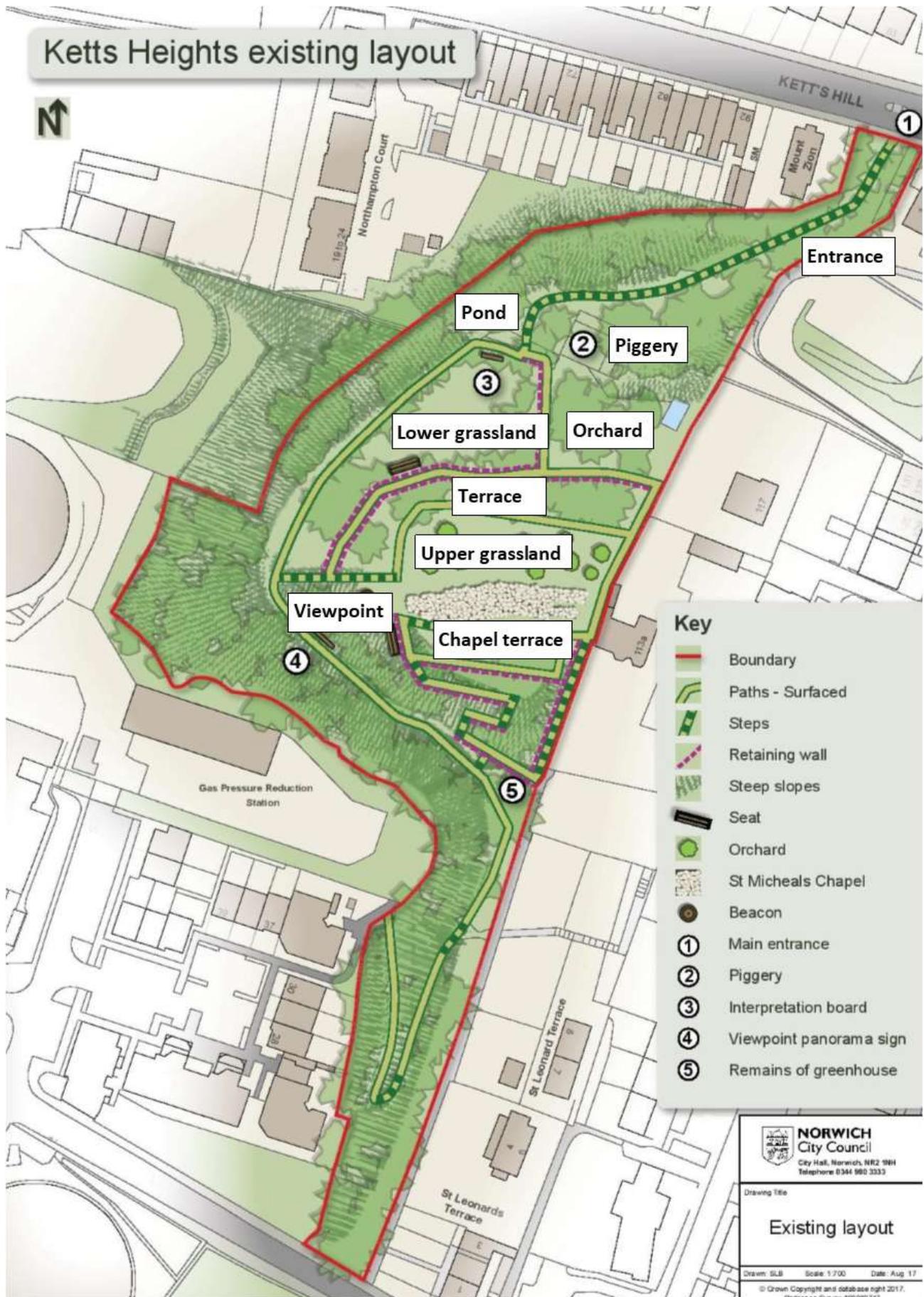
Mb 07733102013

Email: matthewdavies@norwichfringeproject.co.uk

Web: www.norwichfringeproject.co.uk

[any comments sent to the Friends will be forwarded to the Fringe Project]

Please note that the Management Plan is a flexible working document which may be added to and amended over time.



The vision

The City Council's proposed vision for Kett's Heights is that it should be:

"A safe and well managed open green space, providing views across the city sky line, enhancing biodiversity and bringing the local community together, resolving the issues of anti-social behaviour and limited resources through partnership working with the Friends of Kett's Heights."

How this vision would be delivered, in relation to specific parts of the site or specific issues, is set out in the remainder of this document.

Proposed Management Objectives

- Create a safe woodland for the local community to explore and enjoy
- Manage the woodland areas on a block rotation system
- Develop a greater mix of woodland tree species
- Develop a community orchard
- Thin out trees in certain areas, in order to allow more light and create a more varied habitat.
- Where appropriate improve and maintain views
- If feasible and resources allow create step free access to the viewing point
- If feasible and resources allow enhance and remodel the hard standing viewing area
- If feasible and resources allow sensitively conserve and upgrade the chapel ruins to act as a focal point for a variety of activities and events
- If feasible and resources allow carry out restoration work to the chapel ruins
- Replace rotten fence on upper green, adjacent to lower green
- Maintain path network and banks/flint walls
- Develop, enhance and maintain the bio-diversity of the woodland
- Work with the Friends of Kett's Heights and local community to assist and support the site's management.
- Improve access and interpretation

Constraints

The following constraints may affect work on the site:

- Steepness of slopes
- Access only via a stepped path : no vehicular access
- Active intermediate pressure National Grid gas pipeline running through the site approx 50cm below the surface
- Unfenced vertical walls at the edges of some terraces
- Historic features

Detailed proposals

The sections below list the proposed actions, who will do it, and when it is proposed to happen. The following abbreviations have been used : NCC – Norwich City Council, including work done on its behalf by Norwich Fringe Project or contractors such as Norse; FKH – Friends of Kett's Heights (undertaking voluntary work under overall supervision from NCC).

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Grant

There may be an opportunity to develop an application for a heritage lottery grant. This would need to be a separate project from the management plan, although aspects of the bid would link into the management plan.

The elements of the HLF bid would be a separate piece of work, led by Tim Mellors, Norwich City Councils Landscape Team, in partnership with Norwich City Council's Green Spaces Team who would need to approve the bid. The Friends of Kett's Heights and other groups would be involved in the bid process.

The bid would focus on the heritage, access and interpretation of the site. Other areas of interest could be the future management of the pond, piggeries, steps, terraces, paths, access for all, terrace wall and chapel.

Management proposals applying across the site

Woodland, including wooded slopes and the terraces

Proposed action

- Develop an age structure to the woodland by selectively thinning out a mixture of young and old trees and managing the woodland areas on a 10 to 20 year block rotation
- Selectively thin out specific trees along the banks in order to create glades and allow light in to the under-storey.
- Maintain for safety; remove dangerous trees and dead or decaying branches over-hanging the paths
- Use the halo effect as a management tool to remove trees around the larger, best specimen trees. Haloing means selecting one tree and carrying out thinning, coppice clear felling work around that tree to enable it to develop and grow.
- Carry out selective removal of ivy from around the best specimen trees, creating a metre gap from the base. Ivy should be retained where possible and only cleared from trees where there is a need to see how what condition the tree is in.
- Agree arrangements for dealing (e.g. removal or burning) with timber and brash resulting from the woodland management work.

By : NCC working with TFKH

Timing : Ongoing, with additional work at specific intervals for rotational clearance

Terraces, paths and flint, brick and clinker walls

The site is made up of a series of terraces linked by a network of paths and steps created by the gasworks in the 19th century. Some paths are surfaced, others have a rough surface. Some steps were reconstructed in the 1980s. The Friends of Kett's Heights have recently cleared surfaces and repainted the railings and regularly sweep the steps.

Proposed action

- Manage trees which do or may cause damage to the integrity of the walls.
- Repair or repoint walls as necessary.
- Continued regular maintenance of path surfaces
- Repaint railings as needed

By : NCC working with TFKH (some major wall work may need external funding)

Timing : Ongoing

Access to the site

Proposed action

- Investigate options for improving access for all through the removal of the sleeper style steps on the entrance path from Kett's Hill
- Investigate the reinstatement of the footpath between Kett's Heights and Gas Hill via William Kett Close.
- Review vehicle access to the site and explore the options for creating vehicle access into the site through Ladbrooke Place.

By : NCC, would need external funding, e.g. from Heritage Lottery Fund

Timing : 2019

Interpretation

Proposed action

- Update and replace current site interpretation

By : NCC in conjunction with FKH, may need external funding

Timing : 2019-2020

Community Involvement

Proposed action

- Work with the Friends of Kett's Heights to carry out routine maintenance work across the site
- Clarify and prioritise current management of the site with the Friends of Kett's Heights and establish a shared vision.
- Carry out training on planting and maintaining a community orchard.
- Seek training for the specialist skill sets needed to manage the specific heritage and landscape features on the site.
- Work in partnership with the Friends of Kett's Heights and other local volunteers to encourage a positive attitude to the management of the site
- Work in partnership with the Friends of Kett's Heights and other groups to promote and encourage the use of the site through events, work days and other appropriate activities
- Explore other environmental educational learning opportunities for examples Forest Schools

By : NCC in conjunction with FKH and other parties

Timing : ongoing

Antisocial Behaviour

Proposed action

- Work with the Friends of Kett's Heights to look at ways to resolve antisocial behaviour
- Encourage visitors, friends group and the local community to report antisocial behaviour to the police
- Work in partnership with the Police on this issue
- Regular active management of the site, with the Friends of Kett's Heights running regular volunteer work days and events will help to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Regular litter picking
- Bring the site into active management, which the Friends group are achieving will help to make the site look cared for, this will help with reducing and managing anti-social behaviour
- Encourage the local community to use the site and take ownership of it to help increase foot fall on the site from people not being anti- social

By : NCC in conjunction with FKH and other parties

Timing : ongoing

Monitoring

Proposed action

- Produce an annual work plan in September of each year, with a six monthly meeting to review the work plan and progress
- Consider monitoring the wildlife and visitor use.

By : NCC in conjunction with FKH and other parties

Timing : ongoing

Management proposals for specific areas (see plan on page 2)

Entrance

Proposed action

- Remove the trees which are affecting the structural integrity of the wall
- Investigate repair of wall alongside the path
- Remove many of the trees that make the entrance dark and unwelcoming, consider new planting to make the area more attractive

By : NCC in conjunction with FKH, may need external funding

Timing : Ongoing

Piggery

Proposed action

- Review the storage of brash at this location
- Longer term review the condition and use of the piggery

By : NCC and FKH

Timing : 2018-19 for review

Pond

Proposed action

- Review the management of the pond and the iron stanchion posts

By : NCC and FKH

Timing : unspecified

Orchard

Proposed action

- Review the management of the plum trees and either coppice or low pollard them to a manageable height
- Cut back the vegetation around the plum trees
- Consider planting of replacement trees or planting of new fruit trees in other parts of the site

By : NCC and FKH

Timing : ongoing

Lower grassland

Proposed action

- Continue grass cutting under the NCC grounds maintenance contract
- Carry out remedial pruning work on the apple tree

By : NCC (FKH may do the pruning)

Timing : ongoing

Terrace above lower grassland area

Proposed action

- Repair or replace the fence on top of the wall
Continue grass cutting under the NCC grounds maintenance contract

- Remove trees on the terrace, then manage as wildflower meadow

By : NCC

Timing : fencing 2018-19, other work ongoing

Upper grassland

Proposed action

- Continue conservation cut under the NCC grounds maintenance contract to manage the area as a wildflower meadow

By : NCC

Timing : ongoing

Viewpoint

Proposed action

- Restore and maintain the view across the City skyline from the viewpoint
- Consider whether there are other views from within the site that could be improved by selective clearance of trees

By : NCC with support from FKH, may need external funding

Timing : ongoing

Chapel terrace

Proposed action

- Chapel Wall – survey and carry out any restoration work
- Remove the scrub and sapling trees, bruise bracken, remove when it has died
- Consider options for subsequent management : possibilities include heathland or wildflower meadow

By : NCC with support from FKH, may need external funding

Timing : ongoing