



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

AREA PANEL 3 22 June 2005

Report of the Director of Commercial Services

PETITION SEEKING REVISED OPENING HOURS FOR THE HISTORIC SECTION OF ARBORETUM PARK

PROPOSED ACTION

To maintain the opening and closing time of the Park as approved by Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultation

There have been several forms of consultation about the restoration and operation of Arboretum Park dating back to 1997. From the earliest proposals, the erection of fencing around the historic section of the Park has not been changed. The need for fencing is to protect the investment that has been made in restoring the assets in the Park. There has been support for this proposal throughout the process.

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| March 1997 | for stage 1 of HLF bid – carried out by CAG Consultants. |
| 5 and 19 May 2000 | Representatives of local organisations invited to identify and develop ideas for inclusion in the project. |
| 10 June 2000 | Public exhibition of proposals in Arboretum Lodge. |
| 11 – 25 June 2000 | Proposals exhibited in Peartree Library. |
| 1 July 2000 | Public exhibition of proposals in the Park. |
| December 2002 | Planning application submitted. |

Attendance

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) were a major contributor to the scheme and it was part of the approved scheme that whenever the historic section of the Park is open that there will be the presence of a Park Ranger. One of the roles of the Park Ranger is to deter anti-social behaviour such as vandalism. Our operating plan for the Park assumed the proposed opening hours and the approved budget does not allow for extended hours.

Reasons in request for extension of opening hours

The Park is used by residents for walking dogs and exercising before going to work

Response

Although the historic section will be closed, the recreation side of the Park is open all hours.

The proposed opening time of 8am will ensure that all gates are unlocked by then. There are 13 gates to be unlocked and this process will commence at 7.30am so, depending on the access point being used, people may be able to use the historic section at 7.30am.

Residents cross the park to go to and from work

Response

This was recognised when the initial plans for the restoration was prepared. A footpath/cyclepath equipped with street lighting and CCTV was the first phase of the development work. A second, similarly equipped path was also constructed linking Grove Street to Moreleston Street. It was believed that these paths would provide safer routes than paths through the Arboretum where trees and the aim of historic restoration limit the effectiveness of CCTV. The length of diversion was not considered to be very long.

Families would like to enjoy the Park after supper during the summer

Response

We acknowledge that the Park can be busy with users especially when it is still light. We have tried to achieve a balance between access and the cost of staying open. The additional opening hours being sought by the petitioners would result in additional expenditure of £13,100 per year. The proposed closing time of 8pm in the summer is the time that the first of the gates will close. We estimate that it will take up to one hour to close all the gates and ensure that the Park is clear of people. Depending upon the egress point from the Park, some users will be able to enjoy the Park up to 9pm.

Vandalism

As the byelaws have yet to be approved, we are unable to lock the Park overnight and we have already experienced vandalism. This has included graffiti, smashing of lighting, theft of plants, breaking of a glass ceiling and damage to ornamental features. Most of this has occurred at night and reaffirms the need for the gates to be locked.