

## Wirral Council

Regeneration and Environment Directorate

Parks & Countryside Service

# Royden Park

**Management Plan 2016-2020**

(Updated January 2017)



<b>Management Plan written and updated by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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## Introduction

Wirral Council has produced this document in conjunction with the advisory group and Friends Group of Royden Park to provide a framework for the future development of the site.

We encourage suggestions from park users and the wider community to this plan.

If you wish to find out further information about this document or submit any suggestions please contact the Parks and Countryside Service at Wirral Council on 0151 606 2004 or email [streetscene@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@wirral.gov.uk) or write to:

**Wirral Council  
Delivery Department  
Parks & Countryside Service  
Cheshire Lines Building  
Canning Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 1ND**

## The wider policy context

Wirral Council's Parks and Countryside Service are based within the Delivery Directorate of Wirral Council.

### CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Council's Vision is that Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here.

### DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES

The Environment and Regulation Department's role is to protect the environmental quality of key locations across the borough in order to influence investors to operate their businesses and encourage new investors. Parks and countryside site maintenance and land uses will be re-aligned where appropriate to achieve resource and economic efficiencies whilst promoting health, social and environmental benefits to our communities.

### Parks and Countryside Service Objectives for 2014/24

The Parks and Countryside Service have produced a 10 year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy that will inform and direct the next 10 years for the service. It is

available online at: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/leisure-and-culture/parks-beaches-and-countryside/parks-development-and-maintenance>

The Strategy sets out how Wirral Parks and Countryside Service will aim to attract and retain investment in the borough through provision of attractive and well managed parks and open spaces, whilst being accessible; and providing positive and healthy activities for all local people, communities and visitors to enjoy. The service also intends to contribute to the environmental sustainability and biodiversity of Wirral to achieve a good balance by protecting habitats while supporting economic growth.

## Site Information

**Name:** Royden Park

**Typology:** Wirral open spaces assessment November 2010 (based on PPG17 guidance) = Major Park

**Primary purpose:**

Intensively managed park of greater than local significance, providing accessible, high quality opportunities for formal and informal recreation and children's play including community events.

**Location plan:**



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**Address:** Hillbark Road, Frankby, Wirral

**Grid reference:** 324236, 386087

**Primary classification:** Major Park

**Ward:** Greasby, Frankby & Irby

**Size:** 36.99 hectares

**Facilities and features:**

- Amenity grassland including events / picnic field
- Lowland heath sites
- Car parks
- Informal Camp site
- Sandstone quarry cliff face
- Public toilets
- Model railway
- Mere (with licensed fishing)
- Victorian Coach House and Tea Servery
- Walled garden
- Permissive horse ride
- Hillbark House – mock Tudor style mansion (now in private ownership)
- Hillbark Lodge (at main entrance and in private ownership)
- Stable Cottage (tenanted)
- Seating
- Mixed broad leaved and coniferous woodland

**Tenure:**

The site is owned and managed by Wirral Council, Delivery Department, Parks and Countryside Service.

**Brief description:**

The site is designated a Country Park and comprises natural grassland, mixed woodland and lowland heath. It provides an amenity for informal recreation and has a wide variety of features. Royden Park is designated a SBI (Site of Biological Importance).

**History**

Originally farm and heath land the site was privately purchased in the 1820s by Brian John Robin. During the 1860's the then owner Septimus Ledward JP built a sandstone house called 'Hillbark' on the estate and the area was planted and landscaped to include glasshouses a dovecot and bowling green.

In 1928 the estate was conveyed to Earnest Royden who demolished the residence built by Septimus Ledward and proceeded to move, brick by brick, his mock Tudor

house known as Bidston Court, built near Bidston Hill in 1891 for the soap manufacturer R.W. Hudson, to its present location. The house later became a home for elderly people, and after some time of being vacant is now a 5 star hotel known as Hillbark House.

Following the death of Sir Earnest Royden in 1961 the estate was conveyed by his executors to Hoylake Urban District Council and opened as a public park. Following local government re-organisation in 1974 Wirral Council now manage the site.

## **Resources**

There is currently no dedicated capital budget for improvements to the park.

Grounds maintenance is funded from the annual maintenance revenue budget. The Area Parks Manager has overall responsibility for grounds maintenance. This is carried out by an operative responsible for the volume grass mowing / hedge flailing and a forestry team carrying out off-ground tree work.

The Ranger is based on site assisted by a Grounds Maintenance Staff for the park. They carry out all conservation projects on site assisted by volunteer groups and individuals. Projects include tree coppicing, tree removal, maintenance of the butterfly meadow in front of Hillbark House, hedge laying and fencing erection / maintenance. Other duties include guided walks, interpretation, liaison with adult groups, event organisation and educational programmes.

The walled garden is maintained by the Wirral Evolutions who operate a project for individuals with special needs.

## **Partners and Stakeholders;**

- Advisory Group of Royden Park
- AWAC (Association of Wirral Angling Clubs)
- WMES (Wirral Model Engineering Society)
- Grounds maintenance staff
- Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- British Horse Society
- Wirral Evolutions
- Footpath and Open Spaces Preservation Society
- Wirral Ramblers
- Walking for Health
- Educational groups
- Conservation Volunteers
- West Wirral District Scout Association
- Coach House users
- Hillbark Hotel



## Green Flag Analysis and Assessment

The intention is for the park to continue to meet the required standards as defined by the **Green Flag Award Scheme**; further details concerning the scheme can be found at [www.greenflagaward.org.co.uk](http://www.greenflagaward.org.co.uk).

A number of improvements have been achieved during the life of this plan to date. These include new site interpretation boards including maps at strategic entrances to the park. There is new signage in and around the main facilities buildings and a community notice board. Tarmac has been included on some major pathways and the overflow car park has been substantially upgraded at a cost of £60 000

The intention is for the site to continue to achieve the standards as defined by the Green Flag Award Scheme. The condition of the site has been assessed using the following criteria as defined by the Green Flag Award scheme:

1. A welcoming park
2. Healthy, safe and secure
3. Clean and maintained
4. Sustainability
5. Conservation and heritage
6. Community involvement
7. Marketing
8. Management



## Green Flag flying at Royden

### 1) A welcoming park

There are many access points into the park with the main entrance being on Hillbark Road near the junction with Montgomery hill. This entrance boasts an impressive sandstone lodge (in private ownership) and substantial sandstone gate pillars. There is signage indicating site name and related information, some of which is incorrect and would be best replaced / re-sited.

The main drive is a road with speed humps. There is no separate pedestrian footway. The main drive is bordered by pastureland managed by tenant farmers. This area has the landscape features of 'old Cheshire' with spinneys, hedgerows and ponds.



Main Drive

Car parking is situated at the head of the drive on both sides. It is generally informal, unsurfaced and within mature woodland. An additional area of small unit pavers and improved tarmac parking on the old events field has now been added to improve the general parking situation. A one-way system around the main car park operates to ease congestion.





New Surfaced Car Park in 2016

There is direction signage to the park from the main roads surrounding the park in the form of brown heritage style street signs. These are located on Telegraph Road, Frankby Road and Hillbark Road. There are numerous pedestrian entrances into the park from Thurstaston Common and statutory footpaths from Montgomery Hill and Hillbark Road that offer a free from traffic approach to the Park. New interpretative boards have been installed that link with Thurstaston Common Local Nature Reserve.

#### Typical access point

Adjacent to the main car park is the Coach House housing various displays and hosts art and crafts organisations, wild bird displays, art exhibition, wildlife workshops and other functions throughout the year. A tea servery and public toilets are situated in this area adjacent to the Court Yard. The Rangers office and Walled Garden are alongside. A tenanted cottage is also attached. In addition the events field, model railway, informal campsite (for organised groups only) and Roodee Mere are all close by.

#### **Accessibility for all**

In 2013 there was a successful application for application for English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) funding to provide two accessible footpath trails within the Park, so that the site can be more easily accessed by all abilities.

Both trails start and finish at the car parks, and interpretation boards and way markers were included.

A plan of the Park's footpaths and bridleways is provided in appendix 7.

Also a Site Access Audit is carried out under the Country Park Accreditation Scheme to safeguard access for all.

Access for fishing on Roodee Mere has been improved with improved platforms and access paths.

## **Buildings**

The public convenience building is situated in front of the Coach House. A disabled facility is situated in the courtyard of the Coach House. They are open between 9.00am to 5.00pm most days. The facilities are basic and re painted each year, and well used.

Improved use and provision of information boards has been implemented to better link with the park users.

## **2) Healthy, safe and secure**

### ***Dog fouling and Anti-social behaviour***

*Dog fouling in Wirral is controlled under the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral Fouling of Land by Dogs Order 1998, which implements the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996. It applies to all land within the borough boundaries, with certain exceptions. Cemeteries and enclosed children's play areas where dogs are already prohibited are covered by separate bye-laws which came into force in 1991 and 1992.*

*Signs are provided at entrance points indicating the park is a 'clean it up' area. Dog walkers are asked to wrap droppings and place in a litterbin. Dog fouling is classified in law as litter for street cleaning purposes, and can be disposed of in Council litterbins. Dedicated 'dog waste only' bins are not provided. Many dog walkers do use the park's litterbins for disposal.*

*Since the introduction of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act in 2014, the Local Authority has the power to make Public Space Protection Orders, and issue Community Protection Notices. At time of writing this legislation is in its early days, and more details are likely to emerge as the new powers bed-in.*

*Wirral Council operates a 24 hour Community Patrol force, established to provide a response to any concern notified to them regarding anti-social behaviour on Council owned land. The patrol can be contacted on: 666 5265.*

The whole of the Wirral Council area is designated under Dog Control Orders (that implement section 55 and 56 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005). These provide increased levels of enforcement for five offences prescribed in a dog control order. These are - failing to remove dog faeces, not keeping a dog on a lead, not putting a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer, permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded and taking more than a specified number of dogs onto land. Failure to comply can result in a prosecution and a maximum fine of up to £1,000. Alternatively offenders may be offered a £50 Fixed Penalty Notice. Wirral's Community Patrol Officers have been authorised to issue notices. In August 2007 a media campaign 'Don't give a dog a bad name' was launched to highlight the new powers.

Signs are provided at entrance points indicating the park is a 'clean it up' area at the entrances. Dog walkers are advised to wrap the droppings and place in a litterbin. Dog fouling is classified in law as litter for street cleaning purposes and can be disposed of correctly wrapped in Council litterbins consequently dedicated 'dog

waste only' bins are not provided by the Council. Many dog walkers do use the park's litterbins for the disposal of removed faeces. The siting and type of waste bins has been improved recently utilising a 'hooded type' as they are also used for dog waste.

Thermoplastic dog clean up signs have been sealed onto ground in three locations close to the car parking.



Clean it up signs on post and thermoplastic on ground.

### **Anti-social behaviour**

Wirral Council operates a 24 hour Community Patrol force, established to provide a response to any concern notified to them regarding anti-social behaviour occurring within Council owned land. The Patrol can be contacted on telephone number 666 5265.

The Parks and Countryside Service is represented on the ASB Governance meeting, a forum consisting of the following agencies Merseyside Police, Community Safety, Youth and Community groups and other partner organisations. Serious issues regarding security in Parks and Countryside sites are raised at the meeting with the intention of providing a multi-agency approach to addressing any problems.

Wirral Council operates a 24hr Community Patrol force providing a measured response to any act of vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

Incident reports compiled by Wirral Council's Community Patrol are made available to the Parks and Countryside Service and are provided to the Area Parks Manager.

Wirral Council has an up to date Health and Safety Policy.



**Sponsored Dog Waste bags dispenser situated in the car park**  
**Hard and soft landscaping inspections**

Site based staff carry out regular inspections to identify defects within the park that present a safety problem for staff, users and adjacent residents. The following items are appraised:

1. Paths, steps, ramps
2. Walls, fences, gates
3. Buildings
4. Furniture – signs, seats, litterbins
5. Soft landscape – grass, planted areas
6. Trees

Members of the public also report problems to site based staff on a day to day basis, they provide an 'eyes and ears' service which supplements the work of paid staff, and represents a valuable contribution to the running of the park.

Maintenance of the buildings on site is the responsibility of the Council's Asset Management team.



Notice Board



Site interpretation board



### **3) Clean and well maintained**

The onsite Rangers and volunteers carry out litter picking and general inspection and the walled garden is maintained by Wirral Evolutions.

Horticultural maintenance is carried out in accordance with the 'Royden Park Service Requirement' (Appendix 3).



Roodee Lake with fishing peg

#### **Tree Inspections**

Vulnerable trees are identified by parks staff as part of daily patrols and reported to the Area Manager, whereupon urgent safety work is carried out directly as needed.

Conservation and amenity tree work is carried out where resources allow, by the mobile tree team as part of the winter works programme, or by the Rangers onsite. If required, contractors are brought in from outside the Council.

For details on council owned trees near to or overhanging private property, please refer to the council's policy published on the council website available at:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/transport-and-streets/roads-highways-and-pavements/highway-maintenance/highway-trees>

## **4) Sustainability**

Wirral Council has an Environmental Policy that the Parks and Countryside Service adhere to.

Water and energy consumption in the park is monitored and where necessary modification is made to minimise wastage, in line with the authorities Environmental Policy.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (C.O.S.H.H.) assessment records of the chemical based products used within the park together with pesticide records are retained at the district depot. Chemical storage and usage within the park complies with the requirements defined within the current pesticide handling legislation.

The equipment storeroom that adjoins the offices is used to store chemicals in a proprietary steel chemical bin. Only chemical for adjacent heath land management is stored on site. Fuel is also stored at this location.

Motorised mowing equipment used at the park is checked for emission levels.

The Park is well served by public transport and benefits from the installation of cycle racks to the car park area.

Any forestry work carried out on site recycles the brash by chipping and spreading on the horse routes or other locations that warrant its use. Some are logged up and removed while large logs are generally left on site to rot and some brash is used to create habitat piles.

No pesticides are used within the Park.

All plant waste is composted and used within the walled garden.

All paper and cardboard is collected fortnightly by the Wirral recycling service.

Peat is not used in any capacity on site.

The introduction of a 'Strebel' Gasifier has been commissioned to provide hot water and central heating to the outbuildings and offices within the Park. This is to replace the existing boiler and provide high performance from an optimum low pollution wood-burning boiler.

## **5) Conservation and Heritage**

### **Built Conservation**

Hillbark House is a grade II listed building and 5 star hotel, and a dominant feature within the boundary of the Park.



The main complex of a Coach House and associated buildings and walled garden are fine examples of Victorian architecture.

There is a historic perimeter sandstone wall which is also a major feature of the site, along with the main entrance sandstone gate pillars.



Coach house and facilities buildings

## **Nature Conservation**

Royden Park is designated a Site of Biological Importance (SBI), the site citation is included as Appendix 4.

A biodiversity plan (Appendix 5) has been produced encompassing flora and fauna within definitive compartments on the site. It includes botanical surveys, tree surveys, bird and butterfly surveys amongst others and was written in conjunction with the Wirral branch of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust 'Wirral Wildlife'.

The woodland, grassland and wetland habitats are identified by zone (Appendix 8) and the detailed work programme for each habitat and for each zone are held on site by the Ranger.

Acid meadows are divided up into compartments and each is cut consecutively on a rotation to conserve wild flora.

Frankby Mere wetland is managed as a late hydroseral site – a wetland which is undergoing the natural process of gradually succeeding into woodland.

Standing and lying wood is made safe and retained where possible, to provide nesting and roosting habitat for birds and bats.



SBI Acid grassland

## 6) Community involvement

Royden Park has an active Advisory group who meet with officers from Wirral Council and other stakeholders. They represent a wide variety of interests including local resident groups, 'Friends Groups', badger, bat, owl and other wildlife groups, horse riders, walking groups, dog walkers, and model railway engineers.

There are themed topics to these meetings:

Community Involvement - with representatives from Social Services, Scouts Association, Local Amenity Society, Local residents, Friends Group and the neighbourhood Police.

Visitor Services - with representatives from Association Wirral Angling Clubs, Wirral Model Engineering Society, Peninsular Arts and Crafts Association and other Coach House user groups, Dog Clubs.

Access - with representatives from Wirral Footpath and Open Spaces Society, Wirral Rambles, British Horse Society, Public Rights of Way Officer, Access Officer, Wirral Cycling Campaign.

Habitat Management - with representatives from the National Trust, Wirral Wildlife, North West Bat Group, Wirral Barn Owl Trust, Wirral Badger Group etc.

The walled garden is a particular feature of the site and is funded and run by staff and trainees under the supervision of Wirral Evolutions.



Walled garden features

Educational use of the park via links with schools and youth groups continues through the Rangers as a priority, including 'Forest Schools' a new initiative which aims to increase young people's confidence and re-connect them with their environment.

The Universities of Liverpool utilise the Park for research activities.

Use of the informal campsite for organised groups is promoted.

The local scout and other local groups plant in designated areas within the Park using a variety of shrubs, flowers and bedding plants.

The Wirral Model Engineering Society provides train rides to the public on Sundays and Bank Holidays, weather permitting, throughout the year. They have their own website at:

<http://www.wirralmodelengineeringsociety.co.uk/>

A wide range of activities and events is provided to encourage people from all sectors of the community to get involved in the Park. The Ranger and stakeholders

produce an events programme including nature clubs, guided walks, children's activities, wildlife watching creative workshops and task activity days.

Voluntary organisations and the Friends of Royden Park operate the Tea Servery regularly throughout the year.

Various displays and interpretation material is available in the Coach House. This is also a venue for Art and Craft organisations, Art Exhibitions, Musical Functions, Displays of Birds of Prey, Wildlife workshops, Themed events, talks and a variety of functions.

Volunteers from all walks of life help with various conservation tasks throughout the year.



Tea Servery and Coach House craft display

## 7) Marketing

### Wirral Parks Survey

This was undertaken in 2012 to find out what visitors think about their parks, beaches and countryside, and to inform management of Wirral's Parks. The Wirral



Parks Survey Consultation Summary can be viewed here:  
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/downloads/5916>

Important general information was learned from the survey including the following:

Peak times for use are afternoons, followed by mornings and evenings. Evening use is greater on weekdays than at weekends. The majority of visits are from half an hour to two hours. Around one in five people visit for more than two hours.

One sixth of Wirral people visit parks, beaches and open spaces for events. A quarter said more events would encourage them to use these places more.

Less dog fouling and more and better toilet provision stand out as the top two things that people say would encourage them to use parks, open spaces and beaches more, with 53.7% and 46.5% of responses respectively.

Almost three quarters of people rate Wirral's parks, beaches and open spaces as having a very good or good standard of cleanliness and being maintained in a very good or good condition.

### Information

The Wirral Council web site: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk) has information about Royden Park. Wirral's tourism website also carries promotional information, including guided walks which begin and end at the park: <http://www.visitwirral.com/coast-and-countryside>

Hillbark hotel have their own website at:  
<http://www.hillbarkhotel.co.uk/>

Information leaflets and posters are on display within the Coach House/Court Yard.

Information boards offer people an ever-changing provision of information on events and management proposals in the Park. Interpretation boards throughout the Park provide clear maps, which highlight footpaths, features, buildings and other points of interest.



## **Events**

The Rangers and Friends Group run an annual events programme which provides plenty of opportunities for people to get involved which are publicised on the Wirral Council website and through one-stop shops and libraries, facebook, press and local messengers as well as advertised on posters in the local area.

## **8) Management**

The Area Parks Manager is responsible for the management and maintenance of the site. Enquiries about the management of the park should be directed to the West Wirral Area Parks Manager on: **0151 606 2004**. Email: [Streetscene@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:Streetscene@wirral.gov.uk)

The Parks and Countryside Service like other public services around the country is experiencing budgetary pressure and face challenging times to deliver service improvements.

**Current Wirral Parks and Countryside Service organisation chat.**



## Action Plan

Actions	Lead Officer	Target date	Resource	Complete
<b>A welcoming place</b>				
Provide new site information board to main car park	Local Team Leader		Completed	√
Provide signage and improve aesthetics to remaining entrances. Provide user friendly signage in Main Car Parks indicating points of interest.	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	Requires Additional Funding £5K	
Consider provision of pedestrian footway to main drive	Local Team Leader	2016/17	Requires Additional Funding £10K	
Improve and provide additional car parks. The present overspill car park requires landscaping and additional car spaces within the existing car parks is recommended within a sympathetic environment	Local Team Leader	2016	Requires Additional Funding £70K	√
Upgrade / create two circular footpath trails	Local Team Leader		Approx. 30K to be funded by EWIGS and Wirral Council	√
Line marking on Main Drive to indicate Car Parks and Yellow No Parking lines down each side.	Local Team Leader	2016	Requires funding £1 - £2K	√

<b>Healthy, safe and secure</b>				
Improve toilet facilities	Local Team Leader		Requires Additional Funding £5K	√
Standardise and re-position waste bins	Area Parks Manager		Requires Additional Funding £2K	√
Annual Site Safety Inspection	Area Parks Manager	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Re-erect / repaint dog signage to entrances	Area Parks Manager	2017	From existing resources	√
Remove all graffiti as it occurs	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Improve sight lines in car parks	Area Parks Manager		Completed	√
Apply anti vandal paint to building roof-lines	Local Team Leader		From existing resources	√
Instigate rolling programme of sandstone walling repairs	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	

Ensure barriers / gates are locked each evening	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
<b>Clean and well maintained</b>				
Improve surface management of muddy footpaths	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Improve path surface around Roodee Mere	Local Team Leader	2018	Funding to be sourced	
Improve fishing pegs/platforms around Roodee Mere	Local Team Leader		From existing resources / Environment Agency	√
Produce annual winter work programmes to reflect this plan	Area Parks Manager / Local Team Leader	2017 / 2020	From existing resources	
Continue rolling programme of footpath resurfacing	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Rectify flooding at Hillbark Road horse ride	Local Team Leader		From existing resources / Environment Agency	√
Improve drainage to areas identified in plan and ensure drains are well maintained	Local Team Leader	2017 / 2020	From existing resources	
Selectively prune vegetation around Roodee Mere	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Assist Wirral Evolution staff with Walled Garden	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Provide dog waste signs and encourage dog owners to use the bins. Installation of Dog Poo Bag	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	√

dispenser				
<b>Sustainability</b>				
Manage Frankby Mere as wetland habitat	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Encourage recycling with grey bin	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Extend bicycle racks	Local Team Leader		Completed	✓
Assist in Strebel Gasifier project	Local Team Leader		Completed	✓
Carry out woodland management as identified in plan annually	Local Team Leader	Ongoing		
Carry out grassland management as agreed in plan annually	Local Team Leader	Ongoing		
<b>Conservation and heritage</b>				
Renovate main entrance pillar	Local Team Leader		Completed	✓
Improve / maintain Victorian building complex	Senior Area Manager / Asset management	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Maintain and enhance biodiversity of site	Senior Area Manager	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Refurbish main user buildings	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	Raise funds through projects	
<b>Community involvement</b>				
Support and work in partnership with stakeholders	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Retain Green Flag Award	Local Team Leader	2016	From existing resources	
Work with stakeholders providing events / attractions	Local Team Leader	2015/ 2018	From existing resources	

Encourage / extend educational site use	Local Team Leader	2015 / 2018	From existing resources	
Promote campsite for organised youth / community use/educational use	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
<b>Marketing</b>				
Improve Wirral Council website for site	Head of Parks	2017	From existing resources	
Update Park notice boards weekly	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Link events to Social Media	Local Team Leader		From existing resources	
Maintain production of newsletter	Local Team Leader	Ongoing	From existing resources	
Provide community notice board	Local Team Leader		Completed	✓
Produce and update General Park leaflet and Walled Garden leaflet	Local Team Leader		Funding to be sourced £500 for 5000 copies	
Consider market research study	Local Team Leader	2018	From existing resources	
<b>Management</b>				
To work with stakeholders to gain external funding	Senior Parks Development Officer / Local Team Leader	2017 / 2020	Funding to be sourced	
To provide an income generation	Local Team Leader	On going	From income funding projects	
Create system to monitor grounds maintenance / development	Area Parks Manager / Local team Leader / Friends	2018	From existing resources	
Maintain / review management	Local Team Leader /	2017 / 2020	From existing resources	

plan	Senior Parks Dev. Officer			
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## Income Generation

Project	Detailed information	Participants	Facilities and Provisions
Retail outlet	Selling of produce such as Fruit and Vegetables grown on site, tuck shop, ice cream parlour, souvenir shop within the Coach House/Court Yard	Friends Groups and volunteers, societies.	Purchase in bulk through reputable outlets
Café	Extend current premises to provide a full menu and offer outside catering	Outside Catering organisations.	Extend Premises
Angling on Roodee Mere	Selling of day tickets Sponsored Fishing Competitions	Staff, Friends Groups and volunteers	Ticket office and fishing tackle. Upkeep of pegs etc.
Adventure Activities	Aerial suspended rope walks in trees	Franchise to exterior company	External contract
General events and activities	Guided walks, school groups, family events, Outdoor clubs	Staff, volunteers, Trusts, organised groups	Provide a set fee to individuals, groups,
Rent an Outdoor area with basic provisions	For organised outside activities such as theatrical productions, exhibitions	Outdoor play productions, static shows	Instate ground with provision of essentials, possible electrics.
Ice Cream sells	Increase the ice cream van capacity.	Vendors or tea servery participants	Purchase of supplies.
Plant sell of home grown trees and plants	Grown in containers small tree and plant specimens. Container grown	Staff, volunteers	Plant pots, plant feed, display stands.

These projects are suggested to provide an income, some large scale while others are day to day ongoing activities.

The amount each project will provide is uncertain however it is anticipated that an annual nett profit could be achieved once the expenditure of facilities and provisions are out sourced.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Royden Park Service Requirement

### Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection

Collect and remove litter and refuse from all of the sites included within the service requirement. In the case of adopted highway verges this responsibility is limited to the occasions immediately prior to grass cutting activities. Government guidance and Regulations for the disposal of noxious or hazardous waste, for example empty chemical containers or 'sharps' shall be followed.

Inspect and empty all litter bins, and dispose of the rubbish, clear all litter from around each bin.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 does not specify frequencies and this requires the requisite standards to be maintained by:

- ensuring familiarity with site plans and locations
- programming works effectively
- applying resources appropriately

Litter control shall conform to the Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006).

The park shall be maintained to Grade B standard in accordance with the Code of Practice Part 1: litter and refuse

- Predominately free of litter and refuse apart from some small items

The maximum response time to restore to Grade A standard (no litter or refuse) if it falls below Grade B shall be 1 day; this means by 6pm the following day.

Ensure that all staff uses their reasonable endeavours to collect and minimise the effects of litter on the sites, whenever it is encountered in the pursuance of their duties, whether or not those duties are primarily litter control.

### Sweeping and cleansing

This requirement is applicable to all surfaces other than grass within all sites. The entire surfaces of all tarmac, concrete or paved areas, rubberised surfaces and tiles, including play facilities and safety surfaces and other surface areas including loose surfaces such as bark and shale shall be kept clear in accordance with the

Environmental Protection Act 1990: Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (updated November 2006) to Grade B standard.

Sweeping, including gutters and drainage channels within the surface areas, shall be carried out by appropriate methods that do not damage or disrupt the surface.

Surfaces shall be washed down whenever necessary in order to maintain a clean and useable area.

All paths and hard surfaces shall be swept at even intervals and be kept cleared of grass cuttings following mowing operations.

All slippery surfaces caused by whatsoever nature, shall be made safe by the removal and / or treatment of the hazard.

All hard surfaces shall be maintained in a substantially weed free condition including moss and algae growth.

### **Fallen leaves**

Fallen leaves shall be regularly cleared from areas of:

- main entrances and key pedestrian routes and paths
- visitors' centres and attractions
- ornamental grass areas
- soft horticultural features such as bedding and herbaceous borders
- surfaces within play areas
- grass sports pitches and facilities
- all weather sports pitches and facilities

Leaf clearance shall take place so that the features remain:

- in good horticultural condition
- and / or useable for sports play
- and / or with a safe, well drained hard surface

Any leaves that have accumulated into drifts or are unsightly or damaging to plants and bulbs shall be removed as a priority.

The operation shall be carried out frequently throughout the autumn in order to facilitate shrubbery and rose bed cultivation, and to prevent leaves from spreading back onto lawns, paths, hard surfaces, sports and horticultural features. Where necessary, after leaf clearance, beds shall be lightly pricked through to remove footmarks.

The final clearance of all autumn leaves shall be completed by the end of December in each year of the contract period.

### **Graffiti and fly-tipping**

Information on graffiti and fly-tipping shall be collected. Data shall provide such data to the Service Manager on a weekly basis as part of his weekly exception reports.

Data for incidents of graffiti shall include:

- date
- location
- surface type
- paint type
- description including offensive characteristics

Offensive or racist graffiti shall be reported as a priority. This shall be reported to the Service Manager within one hour of identification, to enable this to be removed by the Employer's specialist operator within 24 hours.

Fly-tipping shall be defined as any single quantity of tipped material that cannot be lifted by two members of staff and removed from the site. If tipped material can be lifted by two members of staff, it is deemed to be covered by the litter control clauses of this service requirement.

All instances of fly-tipping shall be reported to the Service Manager.

### **Grass maintenance**

The use of growth regulators will not be permitted.

All grass cutting machinery used across the entire range of standards shall be appropriate and fit for the purpose of achieving the specified standard.

On each occasion that grass cutting takes place the following shall be achieved:

- an even, uniform sward to the requisite height across 100% of the surface area, including all obstacles, grass margins, weed growth, seed and flower spikes and bents.
- Litter on areas to be mown shall be removed immediately prior to mowing.
- any litter subsequently shredded as a result of the mowing operation, shall be collected and removed

Should grass exceed the maximum permissible height, the grass shall be brought back into conformance by frequent repeat mowing.

The use of herbicides around obstacles and margins shall not be permitted on ornamental and associated grass areas. The use of appropriate herbicides to kill growth around obstacles and margins in other areas shall be permitted unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan or by instruction from the Service Manager. In such areas, the maximum bandwidth of kill shall not exceed 50mm.

The edges of turf adjacent to hard surfaces, cut backs, planted borders, beds, channels and kerbs shall be kept maintained to a neat even line. On each occasion of re-cutting all finished bed edges shall be sharp, neat and vertical.

In the case of ornamental lawns all cuttings, clippings or other mowing arising's, no matter where they fall, shall be removed for recycling or reuse immediately on completion of the operation.

All cuttings, clippings or other mowing arising's across the complete spectrum of grass mowing operations which land on hard surfaces, shrub borders or flower beds shall be cleaned up and removed immediately on completion of mowing.

Arising's that fall on general grass/amenity grass, highway urban verges and rural verges shall not normally require removal, unless excessive growth has occurred, in which case arising's shall be collected and removed for recycling or reuse.

Unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant site management plan, grass areas over naturalised Narcissus, Galanthus and Crocus bulbs etc., shall remain uncut from the commencement of the grass cutting season to the third week in May, unless the bulb leaves have died down sooner, at which time the grass and bulb tops shall be cut and removed and the areas brought into conformance with the surrounding areas. Subsequently these areas are to be maintained to the same standard as the rest of the area.

In drought conditions, subject to the approval of the Service Manager, the height of cut shall be adjusted so as not to cause added stress and damage to the sward. If grass growth is at a standstill an obligation remains to control grass and weed flower spikes by cutting.

On resumption of mowing operations after adverse weather conditions have caused them to cease, ensure that a return to the appropriate standard is achieved by increasing the frequency of mowing.

**Hard landscape infrastructure: hard surfaces – roadways, pathways, car parks; parks and green spaces site infrastructure – benches, lighting, fencing, walls (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)**

Undertake a rolling programme of condition surveys of the hard landscape infrastructure of the park.

#### **Hard surfaces weed control**

Undertake a programme of effective weed control on all hard surfaces including roads; footpaths, car parks, steps, ramps and bridges Including the bases of all walls and fences where adjoining hard surfaces, along kerbstones and around landscape and park furniture . The use of residual herbicides shall not be permitted.

#### **Hard surfaces gritting, salting and snow clearance**

Hard surface gritting, salting and snow clearance is required to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a road or footpath is not endangered by

snow ice.

Although there is no requirement to treat all roads and footpaths there are locations where this is required. The sites and areas to be treated are limited to those where essential only access is required which includes to cemetery chapels, access for planned burials, visitor and community centres and known problem locations and hazardous gradients.

Treatment shall include pre-treating to prevent ice from forming and post treating when ice has formed or snow has accumulated.

### **Benches and seating**

All benches and seating, including picnic benches & tables, shall be kept clean at all times, and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material.

### **Fences, railings, walls, gates, handrails, stiles, boardwalks, revetments and bollards**

Any minor repairs such as loose bolts, protruding nails and sanding of sharp edges shall be undertaken. All other repairs must be reported to the Service Manager.

Defects which represent a hazard that cannot be repaired immediately must be made safe until an effective repair can be undertaken.

Regularly maintain gates, locks and mechanisms to ensure good working condition.

### **Notice boards and signs**

Keep all signs, signposts and notice boards clean at all times and in good order through the use of such means as repainting or re-staining surfaces according to type of material of construction.

### **Hedges – ornamental and non-ornamental**

Maintain all ornamental and non-ornamental hedges to their previously cut height, width and shape, ensuring that the top and sides of each hedge are cut neatly so that all growth is removed to the point of the previous cut on the old wood. Maintain hedges to ensure the safe and free flow of motor traffic along adopted highways and other vehicle routes, and to ensure the safe and free flow of pedestrians and cyclists along adopted highway footpaths and all other access routes across sites.

All trimmings shall be removed for recycling or reuse.

The base of the hedge shall be left clean, tidy and vegetation free on every occasion the hedge is cut.

### **Planting areas general – replacement, renewal and new planting**



Where requested by the Service Manager proposals for replacement, renewal and new planting of shrubs, roses and hedging shall be submitted.

### **Public toilets**

Be responsible as key-holder for opening, closing and securing the buildings.

Maintain public toilets to a sufficiently high level of cleanliness to protect public health and maintain good appearance.

Toilets shall be kept free from unacceptable odours. All sanitary ware shall be kept free from all, stains; dirt and any build-up of lime scale or dry germ. A streak and smear free finish shall be achieved.

Replace where necessary all consumables such as toilet rolls.

Use best endeavours to conserve supplied utilities including electricity and water, and arrange access for the reading of meters by the utility suppliers.

Store all equipment and materials in a safe condition and provide and display the necessary warning signs/barriers to ensure public safety during cleaning operations.

Remove any graffiti as part of the cleaning operation.

Comply with all the responsibilities and requirements on waste collection and disposal.

Inspect the premises after each cleaning operation and notify the Service Manager immediately of any fitting or part of the building requiring repair or replacement.

### **Trees and woodland**

All tree work shall be undertaken in accordance with BS 3998: 2010 'Recommendations for tree work'. Be responsible for making all necessary checks to determine if there are any laws and regulations, including Tree Preservation Orders that would affect any work proposed, and to ensure that all permissions and licences are gained prior to proceeding with work.

All persons employed to undertake tree work, shall be suitably trained and qualified and shall be in possession of appropriate certification.

Consider all paths, grassed areas, pavements, kerbs, approach roads, manhole covers, fences, walls, overhead cabling etc. that are either adjacent to or on the work area. These are to be preserved in good condition and make all necessary arrangements to make good any damage to the entire satisfaction of the Service Manager.

Include for stump removal and subsequent surface reinstatement following tree felling in highways locations. Stumps intended for permanent retention should be cut at a specified height and left free from snags.

On completion of all tree work ensure that the work area is thoroughly cleaned and is left in a condition appropriate for its intended use.

All timber and brushwood resulting from tree work shall be disposed of. The only exceptions to this shall be at woodland locations where the Service Manager may instruct timber and brushwood to be retained on site. The Service Manager may on occasion instruct delivery of brushwood chippings to sites within the Borough where these materials are required for composting, mulching, or creating footpaths or bridleways.

Refer to section 'Waste management including recycling of biodegradable waste' (green waste).

### **All trees and woodland – emergency and out of hours call out service**

Provide a 24 hour, 365 days a year, emergency and out of hours call out response service for trees or limbs that have collapsed or are in a dangerous condition. A response unit consisting of a minimum of two suitably trained staff with appropriate vehicle and equipment shall be provided within one hour's notice following notification of an event by the Service Manager or emergency services authority. Incidents of this nature are often associated with high winds, collision damage, root severance and acts of vandalism.

Provide sufficient labour, vehicles and equipment required for emergency tree work operations. Heavy lifting equipment and cranes will need to be obtained as soon as reasonably practicable for special operations.

### **Trees in parks**

Have a duty of care to ensure that users of parks, green spaces, cemeteries, churchyards and golf courses and all adjacent land and neighbouring properties are not at unreasonable risk from possible failure of trees. As part of the regular site health and safety inspections assess and act on any tree related risks.

### **Individual trees in parks and green spaces – arboriculture management**

Undertake reactive management of selected trees in parks, green spaces, golf courses, cemeteries and churchyards in response to hazard risk identification, through an agreed programme of work. This may be supplemented by requests/complaints received from members of the public and others.

### **Individual trees in parks and green spaces – replacement and renewal**

Undertake occasional requests for commemorative and other tree planting within cemeteries, parks and green spaces.

### **Vandalism and third party damage (see also Cleansing: litter, rubbish & leaf collection)**

Work with community stakeholders and partner organisations to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour in sites covered by the service.

### **Soft landscape**

Rectify minor incidents of vandalism or third party damage to soft landscape features including trees, planted and grassed areas within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor incidents of damage caused by any other source.

### **Hard landscape infrastructure**

Rectify minor damage to fencing, gates, walling, furniture, signage, notice boards, lighting and surfacing and other hard landscape infrastructure resulting from any act of vandalism or third party damage within 24 hours, inclusive within his routine maintenance activities. This shall include any minor damage caused by any other source. Minor damage shall be defined as requiring no more than 1 hour of labour per occasion to rectify with a minimal requirement for materials.

For more significant incidents of vandalism or third party damage make safe immediately.

## Appendix 2: S.B.I. Citation and Plan

**Site name:** Royden Park

**Site code:** B13

**Ward:** Frankby

**Grid Reference:** SJ242858

**Area:** 29.4 ha

**Date of Notification:** 1954

**Date of Revision:** 1999

**Status:** Adjacent to Thurstaston Common SSSI. Owned by WMBC

**Description:** Royden Park is an area of coniferous and mixed plantations with two large meres, grassland and gorse areas. Frankby Mere is dry in summer and shows succession through to willow carr. Both meres are surrounded by Rhododendron thickets, which are important thrush roosts. There is acid grassland to the south and west of Hill Bark, with small patches of heath land. A large colony of common spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) with some southern marsh-orchid (*D. praetermissa*) grows on the damp grassland west and south west of Hill Bark. There is a large bat roost in Hill Bark.

**Criteria for selection:** (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)

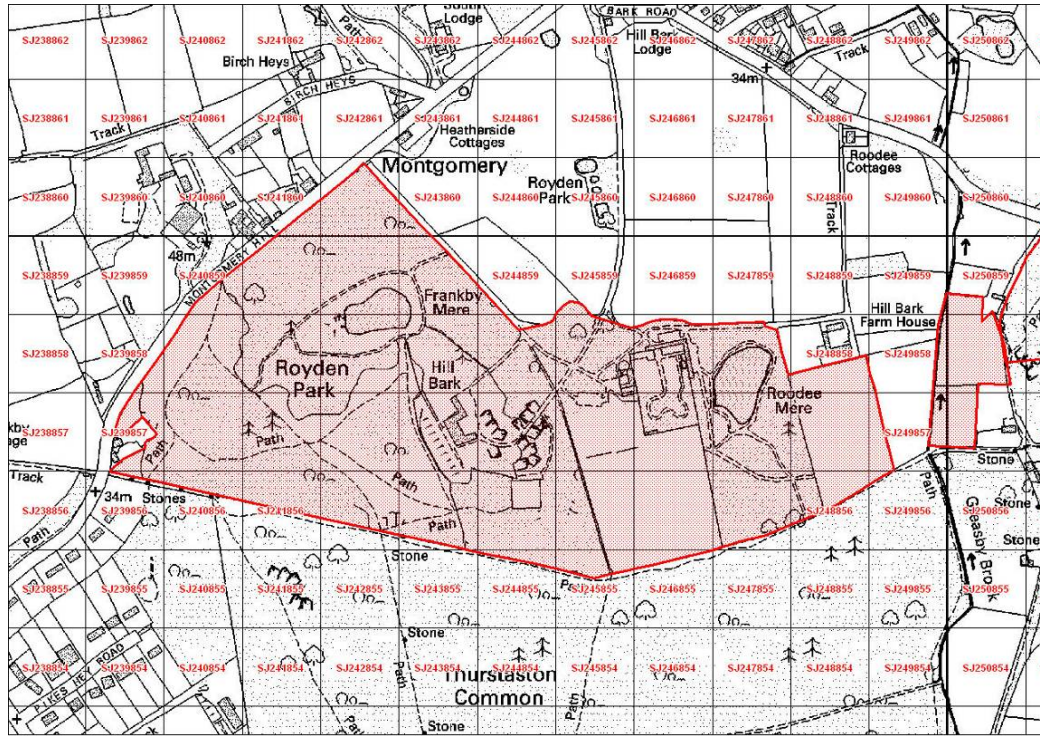
<b>Habitats:</b>	<b>Percentage:</b>
Woodland - coniferous (plantation)	
Woodland - mixed (plantation)	
Grassland - acidic (unimproved)	
Open water - standing water	
Swamp and mire - margin/inundation	
Heath land - dry heath	<10%

**Most recent survey:**

Plants	2016
Mammals	2010
Birds	2016
Butterflies	2016

**CONFIDENTIAL:** Protected species present

# Royden Park B13



B13 Royden Park SJ242858

## Appendix 3: Historical, Biological and Physical

### 7.1 Historical

#### 7.1.1 Land use and landscape history

Roman period - Farmsteads featured on or nearby the site. Oval/sub-rectangular crop marks, often found in river valleys and low outcrops represent single enclosed farmsteads, often without trace of field systems (Higham 1986) are discussed by Philpott (1988). These are highlighted a field in Thurstaston some 3-400 metres to the north west where over a dozen Roman brooches, a scatter of Roman pottery, a key and coins have been found dating from the late 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Century.

Thurstaston and Irby area has yielded much material the Roman period.

Concentrations of 4th Century coins found at Irby Mill (adjacent to Thurstaston Common) are associated with a feature interpreted as a farmstead enclosed ditch.

Dark Ages - Place names locally provide evidence of Saxon influence.

Frankby derives from the Danish noun Frakki and the ending denotes farmstead. Irby is a settlement of the Irish Norsemen. Thurstaston combines both Saxon and Norse elements, viz. 'Thorsteinn's farmstead' from the Saxon tun, and the Old Norse personal noun Forstein, anglicised Thurstan, (Mc Neal Dodgson 1972).

1086 - Thurstaston had become a manor with four plough teams.

Domesday Cheshire shows little surviving woodland in Wirral. Much of the landscape was open heath and arable by this period.

Early 12<sup>th</sup> Century – The Hundred of Wirral was afforested, but seems to have been ordinary countryside to which Forest Law was applied.

1384 - The people of Wirral were suffering from damage done by the beasts of the forest and the vigour of the Forest Laws (which had been in existence for 250 years). A great extent of the heathland area existed within this time.

1817 – Thurstaston Common. Early enclosures within the common waste of Thurstaston are those of Benty Farm and Hillside Farm. Benty Farm appears on the 1817 estate map as a farm of approximately 25 acres. Tithe apportionment of 1849 indicates that there was 200 acres (80.94 hectares of uncultivated moor at Thurstaston, which is not much different to the extent in 1817. Features that indicate strong landscape evidence for grazing are where the herding of cattle and sheep are to be seen leading to Thurstaston village known as a 'Head-dyke funnel'.

The area now covered by Royden Park was part of a large private estate. This was landscaped and planted since about 1860.

1820-30 Bryan John Robin, who resided at Grove Hill, West Kirby, bought the estate as a unified ownership up to the time of his death in 1855.

In 1865 the trustees of Mr. Robin conveyed it to Septimus Ledward Esq. J.P. who built a sandstone house called 'Hillbark' on the site of an ancient tithe barn. The

house was erected between 1868 and 1870 and the surrounding grounds were laid out with gardens and glasshouses, a dovecote and a bowling green.

Enclosures Act 1883, provided for the sub division of Thurstaston Common. 45 acres, which included the summit of Thurstaston Hill, was allocated to the Birkenhead Corporation to be managed as a place for public recreation. Five acres was set aside as field gardens for the poor of Thurstaston parish and a further plot was to be held in trust as a site for a new school which was not built until 1906.

Boundary Stones on the west and northern boundaries of the common suggests a once open landscape with the possibility of a more extensive common 'waste' shared by the townships of Thurstaston, Caldby and Frankby.

Field name and landscape evidence point to the existence of former heathland in the part of Frankby Township now occupied by Royden Park.

1870 - shows Irby Heath covering a large area from Irby village to Thurstaston, connecting with Caldby Heath.

1916 – 27.5 acres were presented to the National Trust by its owners Sir Alfred Paton.

1916 – 1925 – further large donations were made to the National Trust.

1928 - The estate now known as Royden Park was conveyed to Mr. E.B. Royden of Bidston Court, who married Mary the daughter of Morrect Smith. Earnest Royden demolished the residence built by Septimus Ledward. He proceeded to move brick by brick his mock -Tudor house known as Bidston Court built near Bidston Hill in 1891 for the soap manufacturer R.W. Hudson, to its present location.

1961 - Following the death of Sir E.B. Royden the Park was opened as a public park and conveyed by his executors to Hoylake Urban District Council.

1974 - Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.

1981 - Ranger Service introduced.

### 7.1.2 Archaeology

A couple of sites stated by Cowell (1987) have been identified on the Wirral. One at Greasby (OS Grid reference 257862 Sheet No. SJ 28/38) where flint scatters were found and partial excavation revealed a number of manmade pits, small post and stake holes and a possible hearth.

A second site at Thurstaston (OS Grid reference 252833 Sheet No. SJ 28/38). Similar assemblage of material to the Greasby site although there is a greater density of material on the surface.

## **7.2 Biological**

### 7.2.1 Biological Communities

#### (1) Woodland

##### a) Coniferous and mixed coniferous/broad-leaved

The conifer and mixed woodland is a major feature of Royden Park. Much of this woodland consists of Corsican Pine *Pinus nigra var.maritima* Scots Pine *Pinus sylvatica* mixed with Silver and Downy Birch *Betula pendula and pubescens* some Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Pedunculate and Sessile Oak *Quercus robur and petraea* and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*.

Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* predominates as an understory shrub throughout much of this woodland. Holly *Ilex aquifolium* dominates in patches with a mix of Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* Elder *Sambucus niger* Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Dog rose *Rosa canina* scattered throughout.

b) Broad-leaved

Beech *Fagus sylvatica* and Oak *Quercus robur* and *petraea* are mixed in with the above woodland with Birch *Betula pubescens* and *pendula* and Oak *Quercus robur* and *petraea* woodland dominating on the south side of Royden Park adjacent to Thurstaston Common Heathland.

Willow *Salix sp* surrounds Frankby Mere. This is cut on a coppice rotation every five to ten years.

(2) Heathland - National Vegetation Classification

NVC type H4a Dry Heath – *Calluna* – *Ulex gallii* heath.

NVC type H9e Dry Heath – *Calluna* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* heath.

NVC type M16 Wet Heath – *Erica tetralix* – *Sphagnum compactum* heath.

(3) Grassland

A wide area of acid grassland exists to the southwest of Hillbark House (private) which has been divided up into sections. Each section is cut on a different cutting rotation. This is presently every three, four and five years.

The picnic site, campsite and Events field is cut regularly throughout the growing season.

(4) Mere / Wetland

One permanent mere, Roodee Mere exists with open water and stocked with fish by A.W.A.C. who also hold permits to fish this throughout the year. The second mere, Frankby Mere only holds seasonal water and dries up in the summer. A wetland/marsh habitat surrounds the area.

Other small wet hollows and ponds exist within Royden Park and Thurstaston Common.

(5) Gorse scrubland, bracken and heathers

On part of the western boundary of RP adjacent to Montgomery Hill road is an area dominated by Gorse *Ulex europaeus* with Western Gorse *Ulex gallii* and patches of heather *Calluna vulgaris* with Bell Heather *Erica cinerea* in some of the open spaces. An area of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* exists between the Gorse and coniferous woodland. This is cut and raked in the growing season.

2.2 Flora and fauna

Notable species:

Flora

Common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*

Southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*



Heather *Calluna vulgaris*  
 Bell Heather *Erica cinerea*  
 Cross-leaved Heath *Erica tetralix*  
 Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*  
 Field Mouse-ear *Cerastium arvense* Very rare in Cheshire  
 Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*  
 Corn salad *Valerianella locusta* Rare in Cheshire  
 Bog Pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*  
 Wild arum *Arum maculatum* Rare in Wirral  
 Pignut *Conopodium majus* Indicator species of undisturbed grassland/woodland  
 Primrose *Primula vulgaris* Rare in Wirral  
 Lesser spearwort *Ranunculus flammula* Uncommon in Wirral  
 Birds foot *Ornithopus perpusillus* Uncommon in Wirral  
 Pillsedge *Carex pilulifera* Uncommon in Wirral

## Fauna

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*  
 Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* L(passage)  
 Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*L  
 Greater Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* L  
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*L  
 Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*  
 Badger *Meles meles*  
 Pigmy Shrew *Sorex minutus* L  
 Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*  
 Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri* Kuhl  
 Noctule Bat *Nyctalus noctula* Schreber  
 Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*  
 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*  
 Land bug *Alydus calcaratus*  
 Green Tiger Beetle *Cicindela campestris*  
 Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*  
 Oak eggar moth *Lasiocampa quercus*  
 Heathland Spiders *Atypus affinis*  
                                   *Euophrys frontalis*  
                                   *Oxyptila atomaria*  
                                   *Phrurolithus festivus*

## **7.3 Physical**

### 7.3.1 Climate

The sea influences climate. Tends to be milder than inland areas.  
 Meteorological records are available from the Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory at Bidston.  
 Average annual rainfall is 740mm.

### 7.3.2 Geology

Triassic sandstones of the Bunter and Keuper Divisions dominate solid geology. Underlying geology is predominantly Upper Mottled Sandstone of the Bunter Division of the Trias, which outcrops at Thurstaston Hill and forms a plateau dipping gently to the northeast.

Hard siliceous veins rise in low ridges.

A hard but shallow bed of coarse-grained sandstone extends northwards for some 500 meters from the summit of the hill, giving rise to a prominent escarpment above a broad valley to the west. This is the lowest of the Keuper basements beds now known as the Helsby Sandstone Formation (Johnson 1985).

The drift geology is a product of successive glacial episodes. Deposition of tills by the Devensian ice sheets has left a partial thin covering on the plateau, whilst a much deeper covering is found beneath the coastal lowlands at Thurstaston and beneath the present Dee Estuary, (Brenchley 1968).

### 7.3.3 Geomorphology and Hydrology

#### 7.3.3a Geomorphology

The highest point within Royden Park and Thurstaston Common countryside area is the sandstone escarpment of Thurstaston Hill that rises to 90 meters (295 feet) above OD 0.75 kilometers inland from the Dee coastline. The hill represents the northern extreme of a NW-SE escarpment running parallel to the coast and extending as far as Shotwick in South Wirral. The escarpment runs northwards from the summit of Thurstaston Hill and a broad valley, approximately 0.5 kilometres wide and over 50 meters deep, separates the hill from Caldly Hill to the west. Brenchley (1968) considers this to have been caused by glacial action. To the east of the ridge, four dry valleys, drain eastwards dissecting the dip slope before joining a SE-NW dry valley which in turn sweeps westwards toward the escarpment. The point at which the drainage channel crosses the sandstone ridge gives rise to a feature of geomorphologic interest. Here the band of hard Keuper sandstone is reduced to less than one metre thick and water falling over the scarp edge has caused undercutting of the beds of softer Bunter sandstone that lie draining immediately under the Keuper. An example of headward erosion.

Another landform of local interest is Thor's Stone, an upstanding outcrop of Bunter sandstone about 250 metres north of the summit of Thurstaston Hill. Situated between two dry valleys and completely isolated from the surrounding sandstone plateau by a moat – like depression seasonally filled with water.

A significant fault running N-S along the east side of Thurstaston Common would appear to control the valley along which the Greasby Brook flows in a northerly direction.

#### 7.3.3b Hydrology

All the land area to the north of the summit of Thurstaston Hill drains in a northerly direction to join the Birket drainage basin, which joins the Fender basin and flows into the Mersey at Wallasey Pool. Only the southern, and part of the southwestern slope of Thurstaston Common drain into the Dee Basin.

Human activity has highly modified the hydrology. Drainage ditches lead from the eastern side of Benty Farm to the Greasby Brook and they probably accelerate drainage of small blocks of wet heath on the eastern side of the Common.

### 7.3.4 Soils

Siliceous soils of the Bridge North Association have developed over the Bunter sandstone.

Soils are generally heavily leached and acidic with a thin layer of partly decomposed humid material developed from the litter of heather's, gorse and heath grasses.

Boulder clay deposits underlay Benty Farm. Perched water tables exist above the boulder clay and seasonal flushing with surface water has resulted in the development of peaty gleyed podzolic soils.

## **Habitat Work Programmes**

### 8.1 Woodland

The mixed woodland in Royden Park was planted and landscaped over the period from the 1840's and was formerly part of a large private estate. It is essential to retain a mixed woodland and grassland landscape as originally planned. A continuity of tree cover needs to be maintained with special efforts made to preserve specimen trees and shrubs.

Minimise rates of change.

- Ensure tree cover is maintained by protecting existing woodland within Royden Park.

Encourage maturity by maintaining long rotations.

- Remove invasive and a selection of introduced tree species where appropriate.
- Selectively thin areas of woodland to allow light to reach the woodland floor.

Encourage native tree species

- Remove rhododendron where appropriate.

Encourage diversity

- Protect with fencing or other methods, patches of woodland to allow natural regeneration and where warranted the planting of certain tree species.

Encourage restocking by natural regeneration

Ensure a selection of Specimen trees are maintained.

- Replace suitable selected specimens when dead or diseased.
- (Peterken 1996)

### 8.2 Grassland

Ensure the acid grassland is maintained.

Cut on long term selected rotations

- The grassland to the south and west of Hillbark House is divided into different compartments. Each compartment is cut on a different yearly rotation. This varies from three, four and five year rotations.
- Irby Quarry meadows have survived a longer cutting rotation.

The acid grasslands are still on reasonable condition, but require continuing management to ensure their botanical interest. Many of the unusual species such as Heath Speedwell, Early Hair-grass and Field Mouse-ear are present in small quantity, reliant on mole-hills to provide open areas for regeneration, or threatened by encroaching scrub (or all three). It is essential that some management effort is put in to controlling scrub in these areas if the acid grasslands are to persist. Botanically, these are the most valuable of the habitats at Royden.

Remove cuttings to reduce nutrient levels.

Encourage diversity

- This is important to maintain the botanical diversity within this habitat as a large colony of Common Spotted Orchids (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) and Southern Marsh Orchids (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) thrive here.

Maintain populations of rare and local species.  
(Sutherland and Hill 1996)

### 8.3 Wetland

Areas of wetland succession add diversity and increase the bio-diversity of the site. A target habitat within the UK BAP. (Supporting a range of invertebrates and nesting birds)

Frankby Mere is an example where succession into a late hydrosereal community with reedmace, flote grass and soft rush has developed.

- Maintain open water by reducing vegetation succession.
- Maintain an active coppice regime on the willows that surround the Mere.

Roodee Mere provides an open water habitat for the benefit of stocked coarse fish (Crucian and Ghost Carp), water birds and associated wetland plant species.

- Bank side fishing to take place from suitable fishing pegs/platforms in accordance with the AWAC rules and regulations.
- Fishing rights are leased to Association of Wirral Angling Clubs (AWAC). Stocked with Crucian and Ghost Carp by AWAC. Other fish have been stocked by the Ranger Service over the years and consist of Rudd, Gudgeon, Wild Carp and Catfish.

### **References**

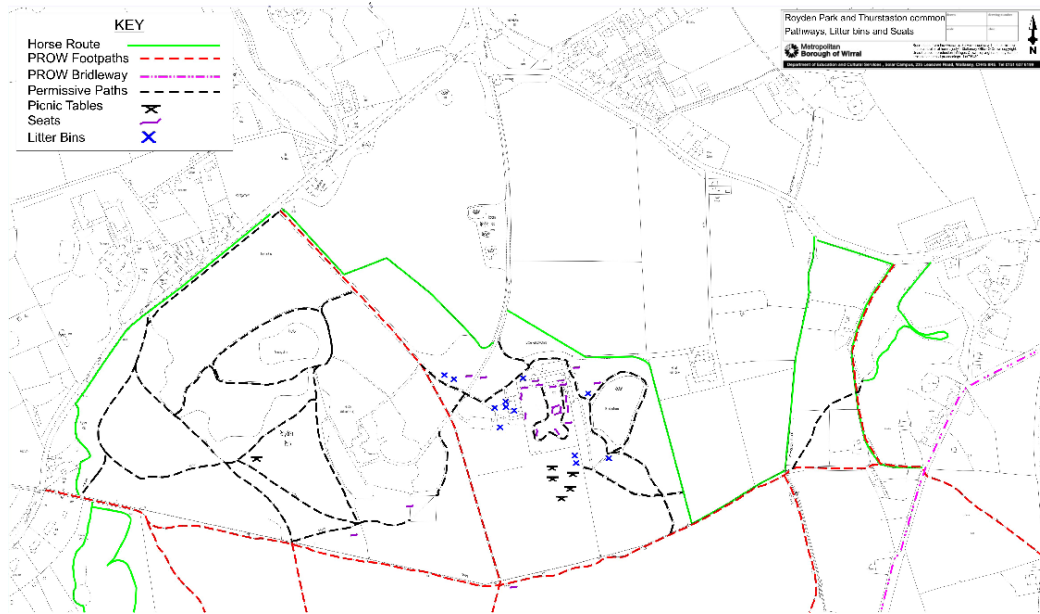
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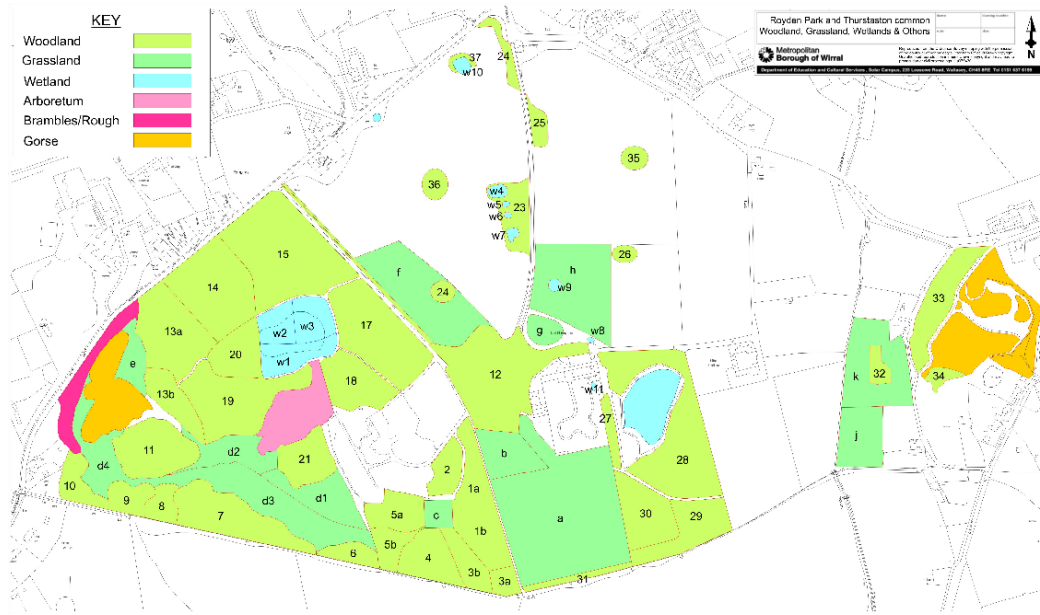
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## Appendix 4: Footpaths and Bridleways



## Appendix 5: Habitat Zones



**Appendix 6:**

**Response to Green Flag Judge's Feedback 2014**

**Name of Green Flag Park: Royden Park**

**Desk Assessment Feedback**

Criteria	Recommendations	Response
Presentation	None	
Health, safety and security	None	
Maintenance of equipment, buildings and landscape	None	
Litter, cleanliness, Vandalism	None	

Environmental sustainability	None	
Conservation of heritage and nature	None	
Community Involvement	None	
Marketing strategy	None	
Overall management	None	
Additional comments	Management plans makes good use of photographs and maps, it covers the issues required by the Green Flag and covers them well. One issue that was not mentioned by the judge 'What happens to the waste when it leaves the site' this needs to be looked into to quantify how much goes to Land Fill, Incinerated or Recycled. This is something we need to monitor for future requirements.	Most of the green bag waste does go to the land fill. However a recycling grey bin also operates within the Park situated in the Court Yard close to the Tea Servery

#### Field Assessment Feedback

Criteria	Recommendations	Response
A Welcoming Place	None	
Healthy, safe and secure	None	
Clean and well	None	



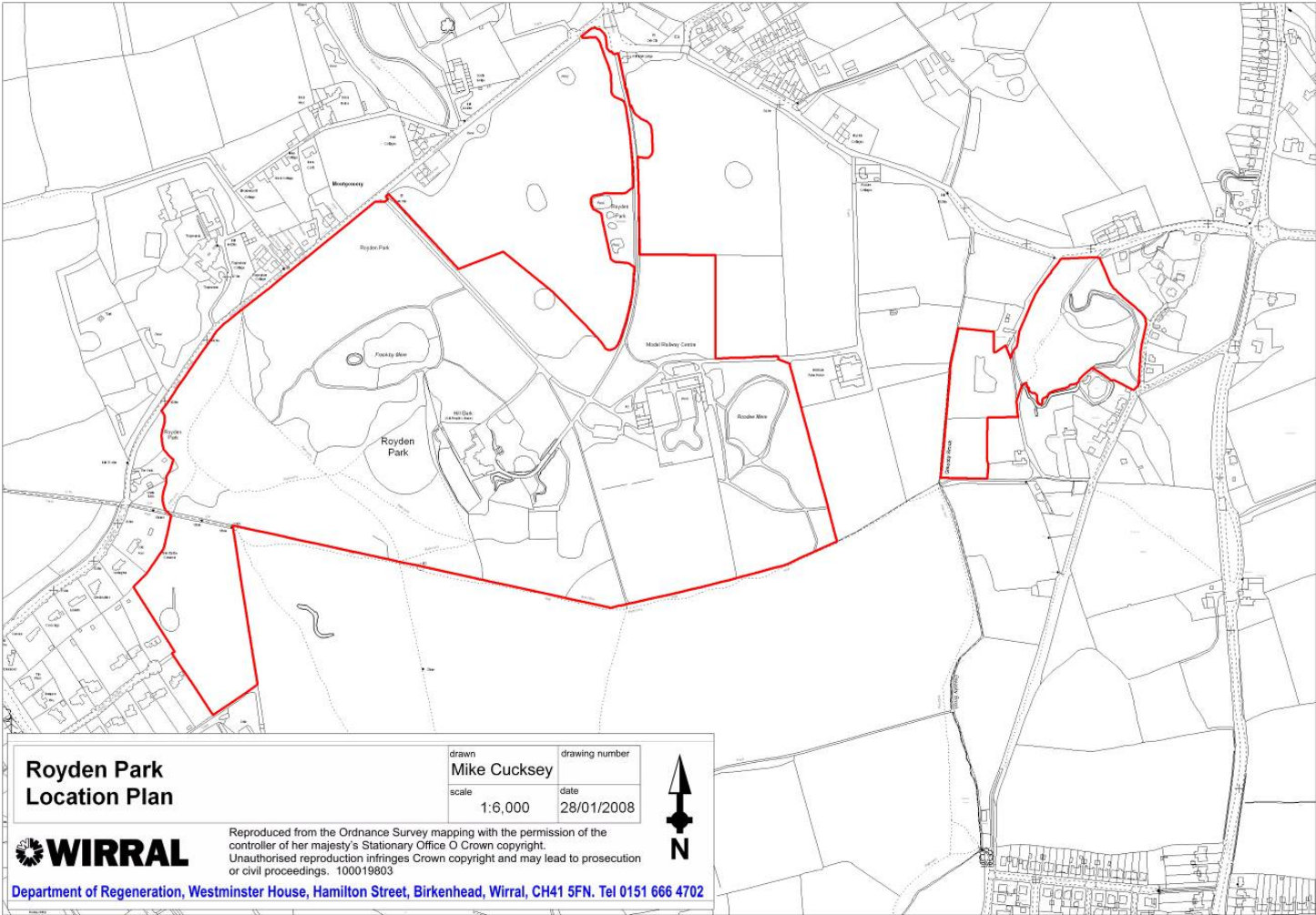
maintained		
Sustainability	None	
Conservation and heritage	None	
Community involvement	None	
Marketing	It may be time to look into Social Media Sites, it seem the way things are going	Looking at Twitter as does Birkenhead Park
Management	None	
Additional comments	<p>This site was a pleasure to walk round it has a good natural woodland feel to it which indicates its good management, pathway are marked well and relevant information to the distances can be seen on information panels. One mere is now being turned into a wetland area after the original Victorian drainage collapsed.</p> <p>One of the may outstand observations was the adult classes held here for disabled people. Introducing them to proper skills such as handling horticultural and woodland machinery as well as the restoration of the kitchen gardens. The store for the equipment is extremely organised with secure control over it.</p> <p>Security, you meet lots of dog walkers you do not seem to get away from them so there is always somebody in site and they are friendly, some thinning out to provide a 3 meadow field rotary system has been introduced and seem to be working.</p> <p>This is an excellent site and the Judge was pleased with what he saw and how everyone had worked so well to make it such a successful site.</p> <p><b>WELL DONE TO EVERYONE YOU DESERVE A GREEN FLAG</b></p>	Following good practice and sound management policies.

## Appendix 7: Project Bank

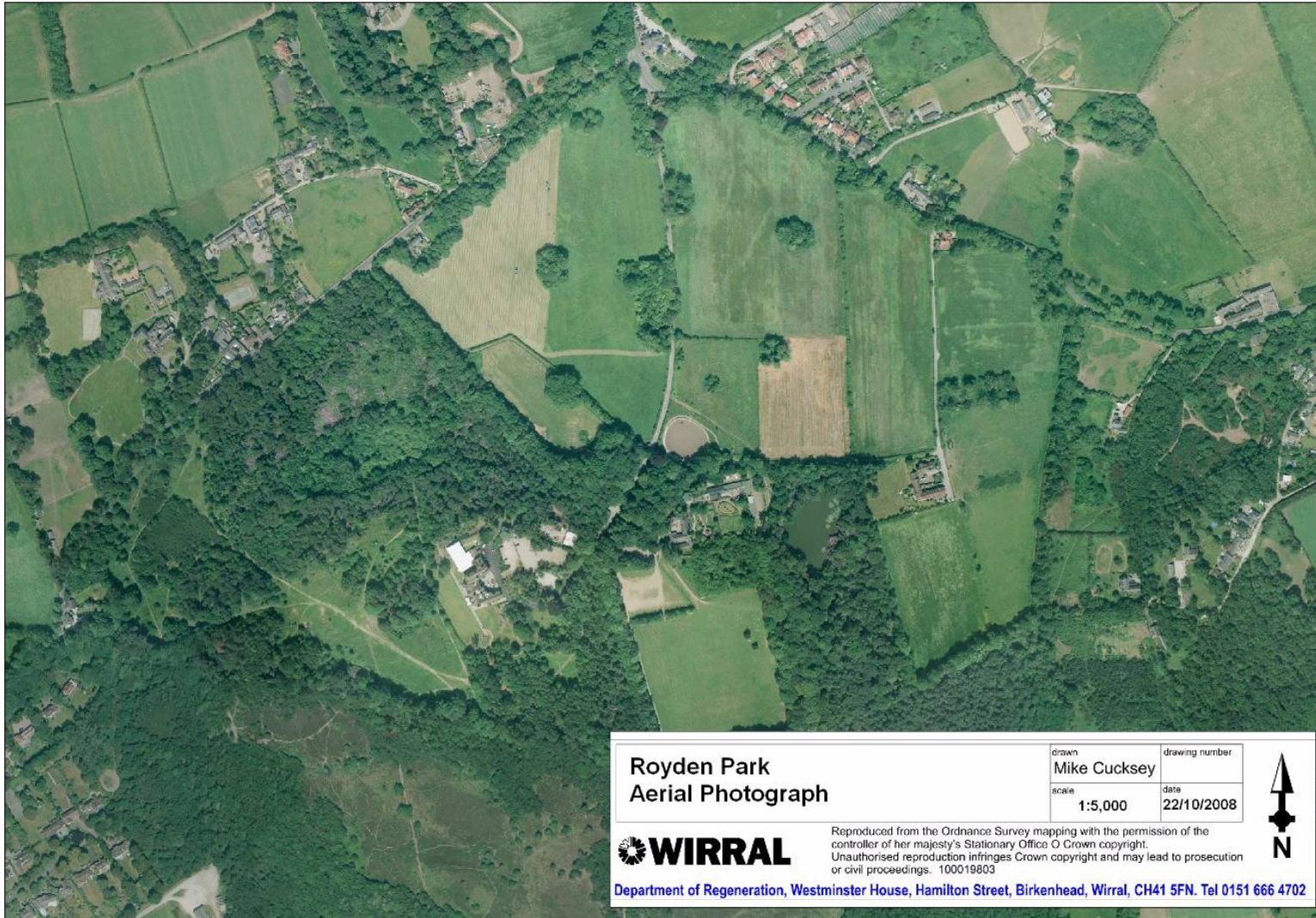
PROJECT BANK		
Project	'Ballpark' cost estimate (inc design)	Justification, policy fit and evidence of need

	<b>and contract management fee)</b>	
Improve existing car parking. The present overspill car park requires landscaping and has the potential to provide additional car spaces	£70k	To be established
Provide additional car parking – the question of additional access to the SSSI would need to be addressed to prevent potential erosion and impact on the nature conservation interest of the site	£150k	To be established

**Appendix 8: Location Plan**



**Appendix 9: Aerial Photograph**



**Royden Park  
Aerial Photograph**

drawn	Mike Cucksey	drawing number
scale	1:5,000	date
		22/10/2008



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