

GATED ACCESS BETWEEN EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS AND ST LAWRENCE DRIVE

ITEM 1

Cabinet Member	Councillor Sandra Jenkins
Cabinet Portfolio	Environment
Officer Contact	Damien Searle – 01895 556 650
Papers with report	Map

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	This report informs the cabinet member of a petition that has been received requesting the provision of a gate at the St Lawrence Drive entrance to Eastcote House Gardens
Contribution to our plans and strategies	A clean and attractive borough, A safe borough, A borough where children and young people are healthy safe and supported.
Financial Cost	None if recommendation is followed
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents and Environment Policy and Overview Committee
Ward(s) affected	Eastcote & East Ruislip

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

- 1) Notes the petition and discusses with the petitioners in detail their concerns;
- 2) Notes also the background to the request for the gate, as set out in the report,
- 3) Subject to the above, either:
 - a) asks officers to conduct a wide consultation of local residents and site users and report back to cabinet member
 - b) rejects the request for a gate

INFORMATION

CABINET MEMBER PETITION HEARING

20 JANUARY 2010

PART 1 – MEMBERS, PRESS & PUBLIC

Reasons for recommendation

To understand the resident's concerns and determine what feasible measures can be introduced to directly address these concerns whilst still allowing legitimate use of the site.

Alternative options considered / risk management

- 1) That a gate is installed

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

The committee has not considered the report.

Supporting Information

A petition of 39 signatures and 5 supporting emails was received requesting:

“The provision of a gate across the access point into Eastcote Gardens from St. Lawrence Drive.”

- 1) This petition was submitted following a series of anti-social behaviour incidents which coincided with the start of the summer school holidays. As a result the frequency of visits by the Ranger Patrol team, Police and local Safer Neighbourhood Teams increased. On Friday 31 July the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams stopped a group of 14 youths (all from out of borough) entering the site. Although there have been isolated and minor incidents since, Green Spaces are not aware of any major or series of incidents since.
- 2) A recent survey of site users (20 Sept, 2009) showed the main reasons people visited the site were to walk/stroll (45%), walk the dog (15%), visit the walled garden (42%). Walking on site is therefore the primary reason for 60% of visitors. Installation of a gate will negatively impact on a good proportion of visitors.
- 3) Factors relating to locking and unlocking:.

Unlocking –

- a) Although every effort is made to unlock sites as early as possible, regardless of what time the gate is unlocked there will be users of this popular cut-through that will be negatively affected.
- b) Provision of keys for local residents to unlock park gates has been trialled at other sites and has proven to be highly unsuccessful. For this reason this option has been refused at other sites.
- c) There will be an on-going fee for our contractor to add this to their unlocking rota. This is currently ~£50/year

Locking –

- d) Currently Ranger Patrol Officers lock 14 sites in the north of the borough and are currently at capacity.
- e) Locking times currently stand at:
 - Jan, Feb, Nov, Dec = 4pm
 - Mar, Oct = 5pm
 - Apr = 6pm
 - Sept = 7pm
 - May June, July, Aug = 8pm

Hence, for a good part of the year residents returning from work, school, local amenities, or simply out for a walk will not be able to use this cut-through.

- 4) Following an article in the Eastcote Park Estate Newsletter - Oct 2009, which indicated that the Council had decided to install this gate, Council Officers received 5 telephone calls and 2 letters objecting to the gate within 1 week of the newsletter's distribution.
- 5) It should also be noted that this petition has 39 signatures, however this path is a major footway for local residents from the Eastcote Park Estate (some 290-odd residences). *(2001 census data registers 2.52 residents per household in the ward. Based on these figures, the 39 signatures represents only 5% of Estate residents.)*
- 6) Cost of installation - Based on the price for similar gate installations it is estimated that a gate at this location will cost in the order of £1,500.

Financial Implications

Supply and install of gate = ~£1,500

Addition to unlocking rota = ~£50/year

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

As the anti-social behaviour that this scheme is aimed at stopping has already been significantly reduced, at least in Eastcote House Gardens itself, through Police involvement, then no residents or site visitors will be negatively impacted by the gate's installation and limited opening hours.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

If a gate is to be installed it is recommended that a survey of the full Eastcote Park Estate residents and visitors to Eastcote House Gardens site users is carried out in order to determine if installation of a gate at the Rodney Gardens entrance to the site is desired by the majority of the people who use this access.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Legal

It is a matter for the Cabinet Member to determine whether or not the gate ought to be installed, taking into account the considerations in this report.

In all cases, there must be a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer recommendation. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account."

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received Aug 2009



Proposed location of gate being requested - marked with X

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