Pangbourne River Meadows and Recreation Ground Vision Plan

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Landscape Architecture
Masterplanning
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3 BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

To meet the Biodiversity criteria for grant funding, the following improvements are proposed for Pangbourne Meadow and the recreation ground:

Enhance Meadow Biodiversity

- Review Surveys: Review the results of the Ecological Surveys and consider any associated recommendations. Tailor the proposals to enhance existing conditions.
- Permanent Water Features: Explore the potential to install features like ponds or scrapes to support wetland ecosystems, and attract diverse wildlife. Look to tie in the proposals with wetland enhancements proposed beyond the site to the south-east.
- Expand Wetland Planting: Introduce more native wetland species to improve biodiversity, support flood resilience, and add visual appeal to the meadows. Depending on the results of the surveys, this could be through improved maintenance or new planting.
- Other Biodiversity Enhancements: Explore the addition of other beneficial features such as habitat piles and the installation of bat and bird boxes.
- Update Maintenance Plan: Produce a new maintenance plan to tie in with the proposed enhancements. Key activities should include different mowing régimes for recreation and for habitats, invasive species removal, and enhancement of existing natural habitats.

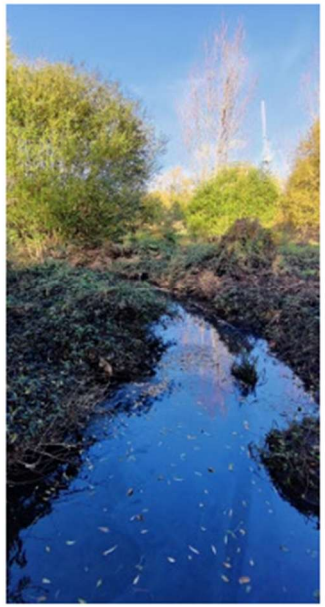
Strengthen Recreation Ground Boundaries

- Assess Feasibility: Determine the extent to which the boundary vegetation can be enhanced without compromising the sports pitches
- Establish a Native Ecotone Boundary: Create a graded, native vegetation buffer transitioning toward the recreation ground.
- Screen Railway Visibility: Identify any existing gaps in the screening of the railway and, where possible, introduce additional screening vegetation to reduce visual impacts from the electrification infrastructure, satisfying additional Mend the Gap (MTG) criteria for visual impact mitigation.
- Develop a Maintenance Plan: Implement a maintenance plan to preserve the ecotone and prevent boundary encroachment onto the recreation ground.
- Specimen Trees: Clear vegetation around select specimen mature trees highlight them in the landscape.

Signage

- Place informative signs throughout the meadows and recreation ground to highlight the species native to the North Wessex Downs, Thames floodplains, and surrounding areas. This will enhance engagement with the enriched biodiversity and increase public awareness.
- Increase location signage from village centre and train station to the river meadows.

Note: All proposals are contingent on an ecological survey; detailed plans will follow once survey results are available.



4 PROSPECTIVE MEADOW IMPROVEMENTS

The Parish Council aims to enhance Pangbourne Meadows, building on existing habitats. The focus will be on both accessibility and biodiversity, creating a resilient, engaging natural space for the community.

Accessibility Improvements

Explore ways of formalising existing routes and creating new connections that would be usable for a larger portion of the year. These board-walks and pathways could include viewpoints and observation areas, offering visitors scenic perspectives of the river meadows and surrounding Thames landscape.

Way-finding and information boards

By improving accessibility, a large wetland loop walk could be promoted, signposting connections between Pangbourne Meadows to other nearby Mend the Gap projects. This could expand recreational opportunities and foster a greater appreciation of the area's natural beauty and biodiversity. Information boards could enhance peoples appreciation of the habitats that are being created and managed.

5 PERMITTED WORKS - PAVILION ACCESS

As part of the consideration of the site as a whole, HDA will seek to re-evaluate the approved pathway (Application No. 23/00978/FUL) providing additional detail as required. The proposed route runs from the existing car park to the facilities on the eastern side of the recreation ground. This new pathway is intended to improve access to these facilities by providing a durable, flood-resistant route.

Route Considerations

- Existing Features: The pathway route should be carefully planned to avoid disrupting existing features, including play equipment, the picnic area, grass pitches, the ditch and tree roots.
- Enhanced Access: The pathway could connect to the potential vehicular access and existing track to the north, to provide upgraded access across this section.
- Arrival Area: Ending the pathway at a designated arrival or staging area would allow users to easily disperse to various facilities.

Material Considerations

The primary function of the pathway is to provide an accessible, flood-resistant route across the recreation ground. To achieve this, the pathway should be flat, sufficiently wide, and permeable. Potential material options include:

•Permeable Resin-Bound Gravel
•Tarmac (permeable)
•Reinforced Grass Grid
•Trailflex

Recommended Material - Trailflex

•Potential No dig construction
•Permeable - SuDS compliant
•Recommended for flood zones -
•Flexible - can tolerate ground movement
•Low Cost

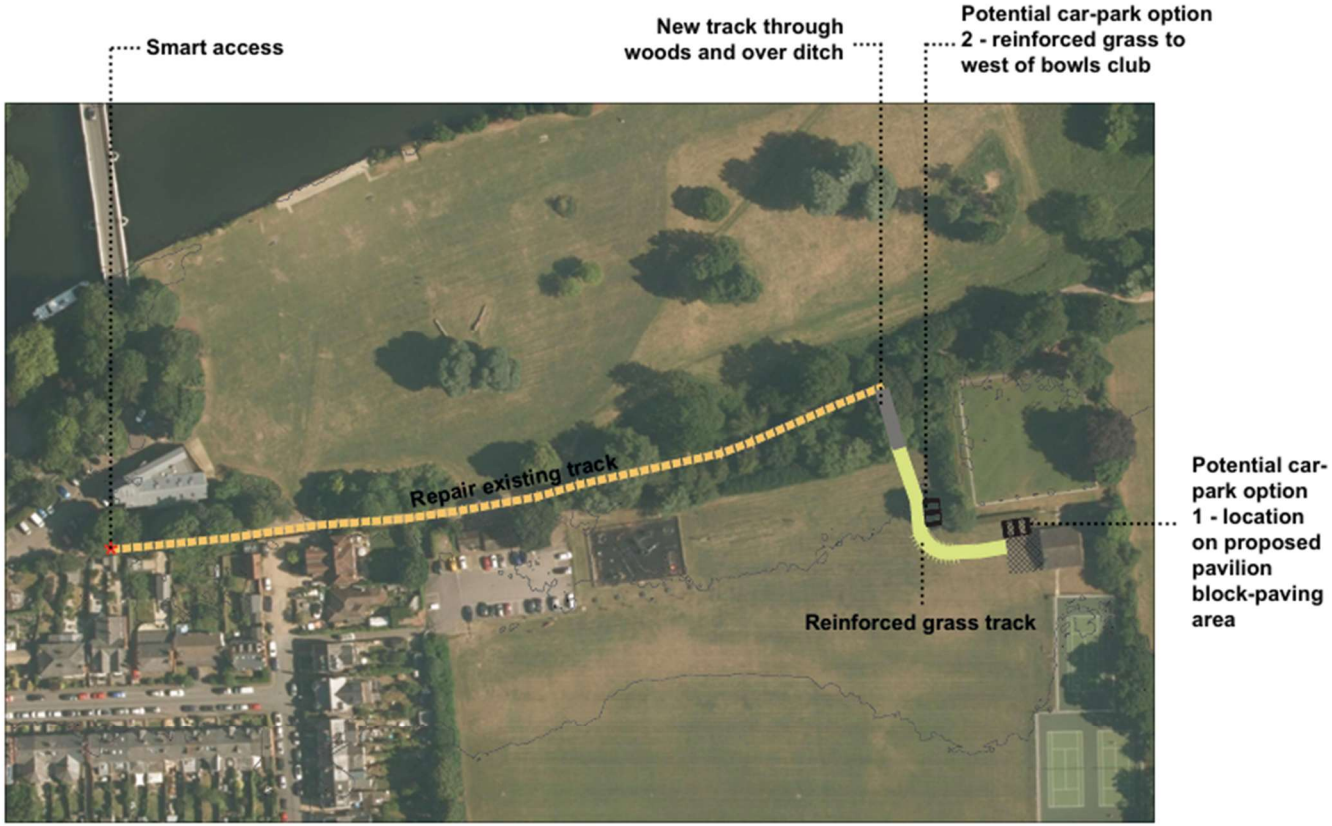
6.1 OTHER POTENTIAL WORKS - TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

HDA has explored the option to create both a better pedestrian access the river meadows and recreation ground, and a vehicular connection to the bowls and tennis areas, utilising the improved existing track, crossing the ditch and passing through the tree belt. This could allow for a new car park dedicated exclusively to users with restricted mobility to allow improved access to the recreation ground's facilities, providing the shortest possible distance between parking and the existing amenities. It would also allow a more suitable route for maintenance vehicles, avoiding driving over existing pitches.

New Access
New access would be complimented by repairs to the existing track such filing pot holes. The new access would have to be mindful of the trees with potential for trees to be removed to accommodate a new vehicular route. Under-story planting would be removed and the existing ditch would need to be culverted, and its function as a drainage feature retained.

Smart Access
To enhance security and restrict access to the new car park at the beginning of the track, a coded and fob access electric gate are proposed. This will not only help prevent unauthorized vehicular access to the meadows but also mitigate anti-social behaviour. Importantly, the access solution must accommodate the needs of existing businesses along the lane

Restricted mobility car-park
The additional car park, either aligned with either the southern or western edge of the bowls green, could provide several DDA compliant parking bays. To preserve the natural character of the green space, the surface could be constructed using a type of reinforced grass, which would offer a stable, permeable surface that blends with the surrounding landscape while providing the necessary durability for vehicle access.Two options are illustrated on the plan.



Pros	Cons
Providing restricted car-park reduces distance to facilities	Smart access would be difficult to manage
Upgrades existing track	Requires tree survey and drainage input
	Crossing and culverting ditch to expand footprint of road potentially difficult to get consent within flood zone
	Large variation in costs due to unknown variable
	Only upgrades access to facilities, does not benefit all recreation ground users
	Planning permissions likely
	Gravel track may need more frequent repair