

From: Jill Colclough <Jill.Colclough@NFDC.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 June 2024 16:41
To: Graham Flexman
Cc: Mark Jeffries; Paul Relton
Subject: NM11 Ballard Lake access and enhancement project
Attachments: 500 concept V1.pdf; NM11 Concept design report V1.docx

Dear Graham,

Please find attached documents detailing the design concept for Ballard Lake. The 1:500 concept plan should be self-explanatory, but I also attach a document that outlines the background, describes the site in more detail and expands on the principals behind the proposals.

I had hoped that members of Amenities Committee would have a chance to review before the next meeting, July 9th, but I am aware of current restrictions in the run up to elections and will therefore leave it to you to distribute or not as part of the agenda package, and therefore how it is presented to committee.

In the meantime, if you have any comments, please get back to me,

Regards

Jill Colclough CMLI
Senior Landscape Architect
New Forest District Council
Tel: **02380 285464**

My usual working days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday AM

Jill.colclough@nfdc.gov.uk
www.newforest.gov.uk



The information in this electronic mail (email) and any appendices to it is the property of New Forest District Council. It may contain confidential information. It is intended for the addressee only. Communications using this email system may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with relevant legislation.

Please examine the full terms of this disclaimer by clicking on the following hyper link: [Email Disclaimer](#)

Our privacy notice can be read here: [Privacy Notice](#)





This email was sent using the New Forest District Council Corporate Email Service.


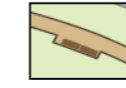


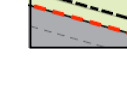
[New Forest District Council](#)



1:500 Concept Layout

KEY

-  Site boundary
-  Existing vegetation and woodland
-  Existing footbridges
-  Existing hoggin footpaths, repaired and resurfaced where required

-  Proposed buff coloured tarmac footpaths
-  Seating indications, set in surfaced bays
-  Proposed 'beach' with retained edge
-  Proposed new bridge with viewing platform
-  Proposed boundary fence

CONCEPT NOTES

- 1 New boundary fence to Scout Hut
Timber post and rail
- 2 New boundary feature
Traditional horizontal bar estate railing with feature gateways and small gaps. Opportunity to plant hedge behind
- 3 New buff tarmac footpath route
2.0m wide, with seating bays
Final route to be determined
- 4 New bridge extended to create shaped deck over the water, for viewing and hearing sound of water (if budget allows)
- 5 Enhanced grassland with areas of wildflowers and new tree planting
- 6 New sitting area on 'promontory'
Form elevated seating area by reshaping retained edge of lake, also provides slope into water
- 7 Wrap boundary feature along Fernhill Lane to road bridge, to provide robust, characteristic boundary to Sinc. woodland edge
- 8 Retain and repair existing footpath route
- 9 Replace seating and enhance these tranquil spaces with new lakeside planting
- 10 Remove concrete boundary markers
Enhance planting of woodland edge if required



Rev.	Description	Date & Reviewed

Service
Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure:
Planning Policy and Strategy

Status
Information

Location
NM11 Ballard Lake

Drawing Title
Concept

Scale
1:500 @A2

Date
June 2024

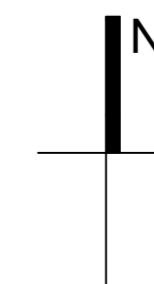
Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Approved
JC		RP	PR

Contract no. Drawing no. Revision

NM11-01



DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING





Ballard Lake Access and Enhancement Project
Concept Design
Discussion Document

Introduction

This document accompanies the Concept Plan, ref: NM11-01

It describes the project background, the site, the opportunities and constraints present, and the concept proposals in more detail, and is intended to be used for discussion purposes.

As well as the background below, it is important to note the site's significance to the town of New Milton as:

- A major green and blue infrastructure asset: strongly meeting all the criteria for well-functioning GBI
- Its character: reflecting New Milton's connection to the New Forest
- Its contiguous Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation
- Its 'Gateway' location in and out of the town centre

Background

NM11 Ballard Lake, phase 2 – Access and Open Space Enhancement project has been approved by the Portfolio Holder (Planning and Economy) for inclusion in the NFDC Recreational Habitat Mitigation programme for 2024/25.

It follows phase one of this project that delivered, in 2018, an enhanced walking route, connecting Ballard Lake Park to Walkford via Ballard Wood and open green spaces at Chatsworth Park.



*Phase 1 opening event, 2018
Footpath through Ballard Woodland*

Phase two of the project aims to deliver an enhanced visual, accessible and ecological environment at Ballard Lake Park, retaining the best and most valued features and will include new footpaths, seating, fencing and street furniture, and planting.

NFDC's phase 2 project will follow closely behind New Milton Town Council's lake dredging, which will increase the capacity of the lake and improve water quality and fish health. At the same time, land drainage will be installed to the south of the lake to relieve slow draining surface water. The lake banks will be repaired, reinforced and new aquatic planting undertaken.

Phase two will expand this work to provide a surfaced walking route, connecting the routes delivered in phase 1, new bridges (if required), new seating and street furniture, and new, appropriate planting that enhances biodiversity, while seeking opportunities to enhance the sensory experiences of sound.

This site is in a strategic position at the 'gateway' to New Milton and offers a unique opportunity to strengthen and define its 'of the Forest' character, and its historic connections to the Fernhill Manor Estate.



Existing site structure

The project site is part of a wider recreational green space that consists of Ballard woodland and Ballard water meadow, both sitting to the west of Great Ballard Lake and all interdependent in providing a connected and large Green Infrastructure component of northeast New Milton and the Town Centre, that provides vital ecosystem services to its residents.

The woodland, water meadow and Pond Copse are all designated as Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, for either woodland or wet meadows, while the lake itself has a long history: being part of the Fernhill Manor Estate and is noted as a 'fishing lake'. Today, the lake is a vital component of the surface water storage network, collecting surface water run-off into streams from the north and west and discharging into the Danes Stream to the east.



Areas designated as Sinc.

The south of the lake is an open area of grassland, with one or two fine tree specimens that provide a setting for the lake, which is framed, to the north and east, by woodland. The boundary adjacent to Lake Grove Road is open, simply marked by a low, utilitarian rail which allows unfettered access and offers views of the lake from the street. This boundary also has a few pollard lime trees, which are small and poorly formed, offering little amenity or habitat.



*Existing southern boundary,
opportunity to repair and enhance*

This area, in combination with the woodland cover of Pond Copse that extends to the Lake Grove Road junction with Fernhill Lane, provides a distinct 'of the forest' character and 'gateway' into and from the town centre, marking the transition from settlement to countryside.



*Pond Copse extends to junction with
Lake Grove Road*

Informal hoggin paths follow the rear edge of the lake, crossing the small feeder streams with simple timber footbridges, that allow longer views over the lake in contrast to a more enclosed character north of the scout hut, created by woodland and vegetation.



The lake itself has a natural form, relatively unchanged in over 100 years, directed by the feeder streams and outflow, and underlying topography. The banks have a continuous revetment, discouraging actual contact with the water. The island is used for nesting and roosting by permanent waterfowl, such as Mallard duck and Canadian geese.

Solar panels are sited on the island that powers aeration pumps to help maintain water health in periods of high heat. Unfortunately, their appearance is somewhat incongruous, with no opportunity to mitigate.



Concept Layout

Existing Vegetation:

There are no proposals to undertake any work within the woodland areas.

Existing individual trees to the south of the lake will be retained generally, where they are valuable.

There are a number of small and poorly formed groups and individual trees, such as the existing pollarded limes along Lake Grove Road, that may be removed to facilitate new features, such as a new boundary treatment and footpath route, any proposed tree removal will be subject to consultation.

Recently planted trees will be retained or replanted where possible.



*Pollarded Lime trees along
Lake Grove Road*



*Recent tree planting to be retained or replanted where possible.
This image also shows the existing wet ground conditions and worn, compacted soil around seating*

New boundary treatments:

A new boundary treatment is proposed to Lake Grove Road and Fernhill Lane) to the road bridge) that will serve to:

- Protect the Sinc woodland where it extends to Lake Grove Road
- Provide a distinct and robust treatment that reflects and promotes the site's location at the 'gateway' to the town.
- Provide a new and distinct boundary and entrance feature opportunity to Lake Grove Road

Using traditional horizontal bar estate railings that enables gateways with ornamental posts and small gaps to retain informal access (from Fernhill Lane, for example). This type of railing is robust and traditional – a commonly associated with 'estate' land, but is also highly transparent, so no views of the lake are lost.(There is a local example around Great Ballard Lodge)



Example of estate railings



*Estate railings painted white at
Great Ballard Lodge*

Scout Hut boundary: The existing boundary consists of temporary chestnut pale fencing that has collapsed in places.

Replace with timber post and rail.

New footpaths:

A primary purpose of this project is to provide a surfaced walking route across the park from Lake Grove Road, connecting to existing informal routes to the Woodland and Water meadow, and north of the lake. A surfaced footpath will enable the site to be more accessible in wet months of the year.

The exact footpath route will be determined by existing trees to be retained and existing desire lines, and using the existing landform.

This route will be 2.0m wide and surfaced with a buff coloured tarmac.



*Ashley Rec.
Example of colour, material and width*

Repaired and resurfaced footpaths:

To ensure the existing routes around the north of the lake are consistent, resolving localised wet spots and embedding existing raised service structures.



Existing raised service structure

The route will be 1.5m – 2.0m wide, surfaced with hoggin.



*Ballard Wood.
Phase 1 footpath*

Existing Footbridges:

There are 4 existing timber bridges on this site which are in a good state of repair. It is not intended to replace these, except to replace or extend the bridge over the outfall to Dane Stream.

Proposed new bridge:

The concept is to provide a purposeful stopping point to enjoy views over the lake with the sound of moving water over the concrete rip-rap as the lake discharges to the Dane Stream under the bridge.



*Existing footbridge (image taken from
Fernhill Lane)*

The proposed new structure would have a curved deck extension over the lake edge (subject to appropriate consents).



Example structure

Historically, Fernhill Lane forded the Deans Stream where it now crosses over a road bridge, which is still evident. The forded lane was accompanied by a footbridge in a similar location to the current footbridge, which would have afforded wide views over the lake, woodland and agricultural land, and towards the town crossroads.

New sitting area on ‘promontory’

On the southern side of the lake the existing landform provides a very subtle terrace (on which the existing seating is located) that extends to the lake edge, creating a slightly higher bank (and a previous location of a willow tree). By extending the footpath and creating a new seating area, and lowering the bank, this sense of elevation will be enhanced.

The concept is to cut back the lake bank, retain it along side the new path and create a sloped entrance into the lake)



Looking towards promontory from the Scout Hut side

The site is richly provided with seating in a variety of locations, offering a choice of openness, opportunities for socialising, and more tranquil spots for quiet contemplation. Existing seating will be replaced in similar locations, where particular seats are memorial benches, the memorialising will continue.



Existing tranquil seating location.

Repair ground and enhance with new planting

Proposed planting:

New planting will be undertaken for specific purposes: to make a valuable contribution to the existing ecology, to enhance and maintain the sites' distinct character, and to enhance particular spaces within the site.

Planting may include new tree planting, new hedges, enhanced grassland with summer meadow areas south of the lake and lake side planting where required.

Signage and Street Furniture:

There is an opportunity to replace existing signage and could be incorporated into a new entrance feature, as part of the proposed boundary treatment.

The 'GreenWay' routes will be marked, as phase 1, with low key roundel attached to existing furniture or waymarker posts.

Seating will be replaced with the same quantity, if required. New seats and picnic benches will be set on a hard surface, either as an extension to the footpath material, or areas of hoggin.

2 replacement wastebins will be provided, to be agreed.





PROPOSED REPLACEMENT TREES ADJACENT FORMER KFC SITE

3 mature maple trees sited on the upper tier footway of the western elevation at the now former KFC site were felled without warning on 16th May.

Subsequent enquiries found that the trees were not on the adopted highway but on private land. The managing agents for the property cited that the trees were felled as the roots were causing pavement disturbance, affecting the parapet wall foundations and drainage/utility services. There was no TPO or other protection on these trees so no prior permission was required.

To replace the trees in the same place by excavating and planting is not practicable for the very reasons stated by the managing agents. However the Town Council propose to replace the original trees with 3 flowering cherry trees this autumn each planted in a self watering planter. The planters will be carefully chosen to ensure that they are right for the suggested trees. As with anything grown in a container/planter there would be slightly more maintenance than those grown in the ground, this would be mainly watering. The chosen self watering containers will have built in capillary dispersal matting and a water reservoir so that the tree compost is left moist at all times. The planting medium will also be carefully chosen to ensure good water retention. The filling of the 3 container reservoirs would take no longer than 20 minutes per week in a dry summer and much less through winter.

Whilst it is generally best to ground plant trees, where there are possible issues with services, foundations etc, container planted trees are perfectly acceptable as an alternative and will establish well

The cost of the planters are £170 each, £510 for the three.

Flowering Cherries £135 each, £405 in total.

Planting medium for all three £75

Total for all three planters £990.

The managing agents have given permission for the Town Council to place the three planters back in the same location and have also agreed to contribute £500 towards the total cost.

The balance could come from our SLA budget and it is therefore recommended that the Town Council replace the trees as proposed.

Below is an example of how container tree planters can look and also the type of planters proposed, either are more than suitable.

