

Proposal for the Development of an Upton Court Park Master Plan



Parks, Open Spaces and Allotments Team

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Background

Slough's parks and open spaces are well used and valued by local people. They encourage health and wellbeing, provide safe places for children to play, promote civic pride and support biodiversity. However their long term viability continues to be threatened through reductions in funding and public subsidies and therefore we need to develop a vision for how parks can be managed and maintained, how they can generate income and use resources differently to make the greatest difference and opportunities to address local people's priorities and needs. We hope to launch the town's ten year parks and open spaces strategy in 2021, which will detail the authority's vision and key priorities for the future.

At 68 hectares, Upton Court Park is Slough's largest park and provides a venue for events, clubs and sporting activities including football, rugby, hockey, cricket, moto cross and remote control model sports. The park also features three play areas catering for all age ranges and abilities.

Upton Court Park is home to a broad range of biodiverse habitat which providing important wildlife shelter, feeding and breeding grounds. These include open meadow and grasslands, woodland and wetland habitats.

Upton Court Park affords impressive views to Windsor Castle with great walking and cycling links to the town and beyond. Upton Court Park needs development to release the parks considerable potential as a go to 'Destination Park' for local residents and visitors from outside the borough.

Upton Court Park is a remnant of the former Upton Court Farm purchased by Slough Urban District Council in the 1930s. After some years of continued use as a farm the development of the park we know today began.

The proposals in this document are aimed at improving the quality of the experience for park users whilst further enhancing biodiversity through blue and green infrastructure enhancements.

The proposals can be worked up to form a comprehensive master plan to co-ordinate park improvement works to maximise benefits to residents in terms of recreation and biodiversity. And be used to help bid for funding.

1.Key drivers

- 1.1 The Covid 19 pandemic has put parks in the spotlight for their role and the value placed on them by local residents during lock down; a respite from the home environment
- 1.2 Upton Court Park is underutilised in all aspects and has the potential to be developed as a key destination park

- 1.3 There is very limited external grant funding available for parks development nationally so more innovative routes need to be identified to secure funding for improvements e.g. soil importation.
- 1.4 There is a legal requirement to provide appropriate mitigation against the increased demand and impact on the Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation. Buckinghamshire Council deal with through adoption a Supplementary Planning Document that requires new residential development comprising ten or more homes located within 5.6km from the Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation to provide financial contributions towards the Burnham Beeches Access Management Scheme. If the Council does not adopt its own charge for suitable compensation/mitigation for proposed major residential developments in Slough, within the same distance of Burnham Beeches the Council would not lawfully be able to approve those developments.
- 1.5 The recent loss of funding (circa £250K) through the Horlicks development to Burnham Beeches was a major disappointment for the council. Developing Upton Court Park as potential 'suitable alternative natural greenspace' is the opportunity to keep funding in the Borough enabling us to invest in our parks in the future.
- 1.6 Natural England has set criteria for the provision of accessible green space "Providing Accessible Natural Greenspace in Towns and Cities – A Practical Guide to Assessing the Resource and Implementing Local Standards for Provision". Following discussions with Natural England, they have confirmed that rather than spending financial contributions outside of Slough, they would be keen to see the funding remaining in Slough. A 2020 visit by Natural England to Upton Court Park was very positive in regard to meeting requirements for funding from proposed development sites.
- 1.7 Establishing Upton Court Park as a designated 'suitable alternative natural greenspace' could be the start of being able to secure a regular source of funding through legally required financial contributions associated with many major residential development for ecological and related leisure improvements for Upton or indeed any of Slough's parks and green space; subject to these projects coming forward and meeting the criteria required by Natural England.
- 1.8 As new residential development proceeds there will be a significant flow of Section 106 funding identified for ecological and leisure improvements from those developments
- 1.9 Major issues with the blue infrastructure contained within the park and the immediate surrounding area; with major water courses blocked after years of poor maintenance has caused flooding issues and poor drainage across the park and drying up of some of the wetland habitats.

- 1.10 Potential for income generation from more large scale events, hire of facilities and the proposed visitor centre
- 1.11 External funding opportunities from soil importing for landscaped bunds, possible grant funding from national governing bodies of sport and, after 2023, Biodiversity Net Gain money
- 1.12 The recently completed Playing Pitch Strategy for the borough highlights Upton Court Park as a priority open space for future playing pitch provision, but the condemned changing facilities does not allow for this.
- 1.13 The Council has a general duty to increase biodiversity under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It *“...places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”*

2.Feedback from Natural England

2.1 The planning and parks team have been in dialogue with Natural England looking at potential mitigation against the loss of future funding to Burnham Beeches from developments in Slough. Following a positive site visit on 10 September 2020 with senior officers from Natural England to Upton Court Park we received feedback indicating the following as likely to be considered as mitigation being relevant to natural habitat/biodiversity and attracting more visitors to the Park. Subsequent discussions with Natural England have refined the areas/projects relevant to natural habitat and their importance re mitigation relevant to Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation. These are shown in the costings table (appendix C) and in a separate Mitigation Strategy document. Natural England requested the relevant proposals and background information be within a mitigation strategy together with costings for capital works and maintenance for at least 80 years.

- The wetlands project
- The spiral viewing mound
- Screening of the M4
- New paths need to be gravel and resin bound, no tarmac.
- Biodiversity improvements around the site, to be extended to offer more for the environment
- Seating, bins, and infrastructure at the park entrances
- Visitor centre will encourage people in, but it will need to be sympathetically designed in keeping with the park if possible.
- A Park Ranger service will massively increase mitigation contributions due to the in perpetuity nature of keeping someone on staffing rotas.
- Current car park is perfect
- Opening up of vista from main park down the avenue with views of Windsor Castle
- New extension to play area
- Cycle projects cannot be used as mitigation.

3.The proposal(s)

3.1 Appendix A details the proposed enhancements for the development plan. They are broken down into specific packages of projects that could be delivered independently and at different timescales when funding becomes available. The packages include:

1. Walking and cycling infrastructure
2. Blue infrastructure and wetlands developments
3. Improvements to the park's infrastructure
4. Recreational landforms
5. Cycle sport, recreation and physical activity
6. Assault Course
7. Play area improvements
8. Biodiversity and environment improvements
9. Main Infrastructure
10. Events
11. Park Ranger Service
12. Visitor centre, café/restaurant and changing facility

It is important to note that only certain elements above are relevant to natural habitat etc. and of those, Natural England currently only treat selected projects as suitable as mitigation in relation to new residential development and Burnham Beeches. A separate mitigation strategy states what the current mitigation related projects are. Only these can benefit from Burnham Beeches linked developer contributions.

A plan of the proposals is at Appendix B (Masterplan). Initial capital costs and long term maintenance cost estimates are at Appendix C. Details of the calculation of the minimum 80 year maintenance costs are in a background paper separate from this report.

4.Financial Implications

4.1 It is important to note that all costs are indicative and are estimates at this point of time. Work will need to be commissioned to work up the full masterplan and costs and it is proposed to use the in-house landscaping and design team at the Council to enable this. Specialist advice will also be commissioned e.g. surveys of the park, specialist landscaping etc.

4.2 Funding for the delivery of the master plan is expected to come from a variety of sources over many years. Full implementation can only happen if funding is available. Bearing in mind the Council's current circumstances it will not be able to fund projects for many years. Consequently, many of the projects are aspirational particularly those not associated with sport or natural habitat for which there is a greater chance of funding. Likely funding sources are:

- Developer contributions via planning obligations (Sec 106) or a future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in connection with increased demand for recreation space.
- Developer contributions via planning obligations/CIL in connection with mitigation to reduce visitor pressure on Burnham Beeches as per feedback from Natural England above (re the Local Planning Authorities duties under the Habitats Regulations).
- Biodiversity Net Gain funds. Post 2023, The Environment Act will require developers to ensure there is a net gain in biodiversity on their development sites. If this is not possible, the developer will be required to contribute to enhancements off site. It is important to note any Net Gain projects must be over and above any Burnham Beeches mitigation projects; there can be no overlap.
- Income from controlled soil importation for planned mounding.
- The Football Foundation new capital programme for infrastructure works. This could provide grant funding towards changing facilities proposed to be incorporated with the new visitor centre.
- Other grant opportunities.

5.Risks

1. Natural England does not agree to the detail of Upton Court Park proposals re mitigation.
2. Funding may not be available, even long term, for all the elements proposed.
3. Some proposals can only progress if planning permission is gained.
4. Senior officers do not support the plan.
5. Members do not support the plan or funding proposals.
6. Without the plan Upton Court Park continues to be underused by the community and falls into further decline and dilapidation.

6.Taking forward the master plan

1. This document can be treated as an initial master plan and be linked to The Mitigation Strategy in relation to the natural habitat/biodiversity proposals to address Planning matters. But it is a stand-alone plan for the Park.
2. Next steps are report to CMT and Cabinet.
3. Completion of the 10 year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2022 – 2032.
4. Feasibility work commissioned
5. Obtain more accurate costings

7. Appendices

A Project details

B Plan of proposals (Upton Court Park Full Masterplan)

C Costs summary

D Wetland area ecological study; plans of existing and proposed (TVERC wetland restoration and improvement)

Appendix A Project details

1. Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

Upton Court Park is well provided with walking and cycling routes through and connecting to the National Cycling Network incorporating Sustrans Route 61.

The park is well used by walkers and cyclists, some who came specifically to visit the park where others are passing through as part of their onward journey. As well as the National Cycle Routes, there are links to other great walking and cycling destinations such as the Jubilee River and through Eton College grounds to Windsor and the Great Park in the south and links through parks to the canal towards Uxbridge and beyond into London. Using the string of parks and Cinder Track to the north connects to Farnham Royal and routes to Burnham Beeches.

Enhancing these through routes will encourage more people to adopt walking and cycling as part of their regular routine, improving their health, reducing traffic congestion and reducing carbon emissions.

The new Smart Motorway bridge has now reopened on completion of works; this is the main link to the Jubilee River, Eton and Windsor. The replacement bridge has improved what was a worn out surface and has improved the overall look to this southern entrance/exit to the park.

Improving the Sustrans Route 61 link eastwards through to Ditton Park will bring more walkers and cyclists to the southern section of the park. Lighting to this area would make park users feel more secure when using this as part of a circular walk around the park.

A new circular 3KM route with a mixture of close mown and unbound gravel surfacing, 1Km of Coxwell gravel path and 2KM levelled and mown grass path are proposed. These will greatly improve accessibility and movement throughout the park

We intend to extend the new path at the front of the park that has been recently installed as part of a safe route to school scheme. This will link the existing path to the main driveway as part of creating a loop around the park. Improvements to the driveway include patching and resurfacing to make the whole length uniform and fit for continued use. Although the capacity of the existing car park is adequate, improvements to signage road markings and barriers are

New mown paths will be created through the Jubilee Wood and meadow areas to increase interest and new options for people wishing to explore different parts of the park and linking educational and biodiversity trails.

2. Blue infrastructure and wetlands development

The wetland area towards the centre of the park is a result of natural run off down the slope from upper levels of the park and a system of ditches and streams that run to its southern and eastern edges. In recent years the site has begun to gradually change to become drier although still liable to flood at the southern half of the area during wet seasons. In the last two years, only the lower area seems to retaining water all year round. As a result of this reduction in wetland area, some invasive native and non-native species have begun to take over the understorey leading to a loss of important wetland habitat.

Our intention is to return the lower southern part of the area to quality species, rich wetland and retain the northern part as oak dominant woodland all with a meadow edge using appropriate native species. We also intend to introduce a management schedule to the areas to ensure that the system of stream and ditches have an improved flow into and away from the wetland, work to coppice and make safe the crack willows and by creating the correct environment, encourage the re-establishment of natural native species.

Part of the area currently under canopy will be opened to light to create habitat for important invertebrate species such as dragonflies, waterborne insects and their natural predators.

Public access to the wetland and educational opportunities are a high priority and working with partners the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust we can make huge improvements to the biodiversity of the area. Improved public access is an important aspect of the project and will enhance educational opportunities to tell the story of a rare and declining natural environment.

As part of the public access to the wetland, we will install a walkway through to a central viewing area and across to the drier oak woodland. Interpretation panels will explain the importance of this habitat, site history, what flora and fauna can be found and maps to show how this area and connecting watercourses works as part of the greater sustainable urban drainage of Slough and the surrounding area.. Appendix D is a diagram of current and proposed improvements to wetland area. A summary of the wetland improvement works and potential phasing is below:

Phase 1. Restore streams and ditches feeding and draining the wetland area. Vegetation removal, de-silting and habitat restoration. Some works lay outside the wetland restoration.

Phase 2. Woodland management and clearance and eradication of invasive species, restocking with appropriate species where required and creating a meadow edge.

Phase 3. Creation of an area open to light and shallow excavation of the main wetland area to create a deeper habitat pond.

Phase 4. Installation of boardwalks, central rotunda and information signs and connecting gravel paths.

Phase 5. Eradication of invasive species

Phase 6. Create meadow edge on northern edge of wetland (just beyond the core wetland area)

Additional work beyond the core wetland area will be firstly improvement and restoration of further stretches of stream and ditch corridor feeding and draining the wetland (0.85km of stream habitat in 2 sections upstream and downstream) and creation of a rill to link main wetland and seasonal ponds. Implementation of the full extent of stream corridor related proposals will need the adjacent land owner's agreement.

Subsequent management and maintenance of the wetland will fall mainly to Slough Borough Council but we intend with the help of the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT) to introduce a volunteer workforce similar to the successful group set up for the Salt Hill Stream project.

Regarding the wetland area Appendix D includes a habitat assessment carried out by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. It describes the site in detail from an ecological perspective and includes some management suggestions.

3. Improvements to the park

Extra tree planting

As part of the council's commitment to tree planting, we will continue to plant trees to replace those that are dead or dying or where we need succession planting in the future. Where possible we will try to keep species similar to those currently in the park but may need to change these where current species are suffering from a widespread disease such as horse chestnuts and ash.

Jubilee Wood enhancement

Jubilee Wood planted as part of the Queen's golden jubilee celebration has established well but is in need of enhancement and expansion. We will replant and create trails through the



wood to make it more accessible and to allow different circulation routes through the park.

Jubilee Wood also features open areas of meadow and woodland fringe which will also be improved with the proposals.

Jubilee Wood existing Layout Plan

Extra seating and bins

Increased footfall into the park will require an increase in amenities such as benches and bins.

These will be allocated to higher traffic areas of the park and will be suited to match existing quality furniture. Non-conforming park furniture will be replaced. Sustainably sourced timber benches and litter bins will be provided in the more natural areas of the park to complement the signage.



Timber benches and litter bins for natural areas

4. Recreational landform, paths and trails

To reduce noise from the M4 motorway at the southern end of the park, we propose to build noise attenuating bunds including a viewing mound with a spiral access path affording views to Eton College, Windsor Castle and beyond.

The bunds and viewing mound could be self-funded by the controlled importation of appropriate inert licenced fill from companies who have successfully provided zero costs schemes before.

The bunds and viewing mound would be planted to represent natural landforms and would feature paths that would be used for walking and cycling.



Spiral Viewing Mound



Grass mown path through naturalised area

5. Cycle sport, recreation and physical activity

BMX track

With the current high interest in cycle sport and recreation, it is fitting that there is renewed interest in the existing BMX track.

Working with a group of enthusiasts we will restore the track that has been unused for over a decade, bringing it back into use as a dual circuit to cater for beginners and experts.

This track was a very early example of the development of the sport in the UK. In the infancy of BMX as a sport, this track hosted championship meetings including the World Championship in the early 1980s.

While the sport has moved on professionally, the track can be brought up to a good standard suitable for amateur sport with modern updates to keep it interesting. The area around the track is suitable for development of new facilities such as a pump track which is a tarmac surface with smaller bunds suitable for younger people and those using scooters etc.



1986 BMX World Chamionships held at Upton Court Park [BMX Championships Slough](#)

Velodrome

To cater for those keener on road bikes, we propose to build a velodrome into the edge of the noise bund utilising its shape both as part of the bowl structure and as informal seating to view bikes riding the circuit.

This whole complex will be popular with a variety of park users for casual or more demanding riding.



With a view to future income development, it is felt that this area could be independently managed by a group or semi-professional outfit who may charge for certain elements or to train cyclists.

Cycle training circuit

An early feature of the park lost to development was the cycle training circuit. This was where junior cyclists were trained road safety on a circuit that featured road junctions and roundabouts to enable children to learn road safety off the main roads. Although this approach is no longer currently supported, it would be a great feature that parents could use to good effect to ensure that their children are more familiar with the workings of the road system prior to using it for the first time.

Mountain bike trails

As previously mentioned, the bund to the southern extreme of the park will have trails for mountain bikes sign posted routes to cater for different abilities. These will encourage casual cyclists to challenge themselves and improve their bike skills.

6. Assault course

There is demand in the local area for a venue for events such as Tough Mudders. Setting up for events such as these is costly. As facilities are only available sporadically, we propose to install permanent elements of equipment in a location that can be enhanced for events such as these with supplementary equipment not suitable for year round use.



7. Enhancement to play facilities

The play facilities towards the central area of the park were installed after a successful application for Lottery funds some years ago. The theme of the play area is based on evolution and included elements of social and active play. The play area will be extended and improved, replacing damaged and worn equipment and adding more elements of natural play. The area will link to the adjoining wetland and also create space for Forest Schools.



8. Biodiversity and environmental improvements

Upton Court Park hosts a wide range of flora and fauna much of which is not seen or celebrated.

Along with the wetlands development proposal, we intend to create more bio diverse areas in the park improving the existing habitat types and introducing educational elements enhanced by themed events focusing on increasing interest and understanding of the natural world and our place in it. Interpretation boards will be installed to provide information on these habitat types

The park has several habitat types which support a range of species, all of which are of significance to the local and national environment. The following habitat types together with the blue infrastructure proposal for the wetland habitat and stream network are the key focus areas in the park.

Wild flower meadows/bee corridors

A wildflower meadow, created towards the eastern edge of the park has created a lot of interest and comment. The original meadow was created to bring colour and attract insects.

We intend to enhance this meadow and create the beginning of a bee corridor that will eventually create a route for pollinators through the whole of the borough. These will be seeded with natural locally appropriate species of flower with additional plants to attract bees in particular.

We also propose to create a wildflower woodland margin along the northern boundary of the wetland which is costed as part of the wetland improvements. This will further add to biodiversity of the park.



The inclusion of meadows and bee corridors has an aesthetic advantage as well as supporting endangered bee species and other pollinators.

Community orchards and foraging trails

To enhance the amenity of the park and add interest we propose to introduce community orchards and foraging trails where people will be able to view fruit and berries as they develop and to pick and eat them when they are ripe. Orchards bring an extra range of native species especially of insects that are an important part of biodiversity and huge benefit. Foraging trails will encourage people to look around to find edible fruits and nuts,



creating an interesting and healthy rewarding walk. The orchard and trail will have signage to highlight species and varieties of fruit, their uses and benefits.

9. Main infrastructure improvements

As part of the whole park improvement to make it a destination park, there is a need to make it easy to find attractions in the park and have welcoming entrances.

Entrance improvements and signage

The park has large iconic signs from Upton Court Road to make entrances easier to find whilst driving. These signs highlight access points to the main car park and eastern driveway.

This eastern driveway requires resurfacing due to its poor condition. Supplementary signage at the north east entrance is required to direct to the sports clubs based at the south east of the park and the rugby club.

We have procured a suite of signs for parks across Slough. These include information signs as well as entrance/byelaw signs. All will be created to a house style to create a corporate image across all parks. Upton Court Park signs and noticeboards will be created in this style. The circular walks and natural areas will feature informative signs along the routes providing information on biodiversity, history and walking distances relevant to their placement.

Vehicle entrances by necessity are not elegant as they have to be able to control access to commercial vehicles and prevent unauthorised access. We intend to investigate improving these to make them more welcoming to legitimate users.



Examples of entrance and information signage

Main drive/avenue

One of the parks unique aspects is a good view of Windsor Castle down the main driveway.

The original gate was destroyed some years ago in a road traffic accident so now there are just retractable bollards.

We intend to replace gates at this location with a new styled entrance to enhance the view of the castle and add to the quality feel of the improved park.

To enhance this area further the existing lamp columns will be improved by fitting heritage style lamp heads and base embellishments.

10. Events

Upton Court Park over the years has hosted a variety of small scale and large events including the annual firework display, Slough Show, dance and music events, dog shows, fun runs and Slough Mela. It has the capacity to host events attracting 20,000 +. The developments proposed for the park, we believe will enhance its attractiveness for events opening up opportunities for the council to maximize income generation.

11.Park Rangers

To increase security, support biodiversity and to enhance the visitor experience we propose to employ a park ranger service to manage the park, be on hand to advise or help park users, be a point of contact for emergencies and create a greater feeling of safety. The park ranger service would also assist in the running of events and promote public awareness of the park's natural features by organising and hosting events such as nature walks, tree planting, pond dipping, bug hunts and bat evenings. The ranger service would also liaise with the public, clubs and community groups that use the park to ensure all users and visitors have a say in the smooth running and management of the park.

12.Visitor centre, café/restaurant and changing facility

Upton Court Park requires a top quality focal point and facility to enhance the visitor experience. A park with the attractions and facilities the size of Upton Court Park would

usually have a visitor centre and conveniences that are a standard requirement for visitors to spend time there. Currently, there is no provision for refreshments and toilets within the park which limits the amount of time visitors will stay and their likelihood of revisiting.

We propose to demolish the existing end of life wooden changing rooms and replace them with a building that will accommodate both community and commercial uses including a base for the rangers and ecology and history interpretation.

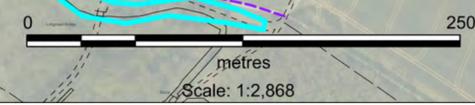
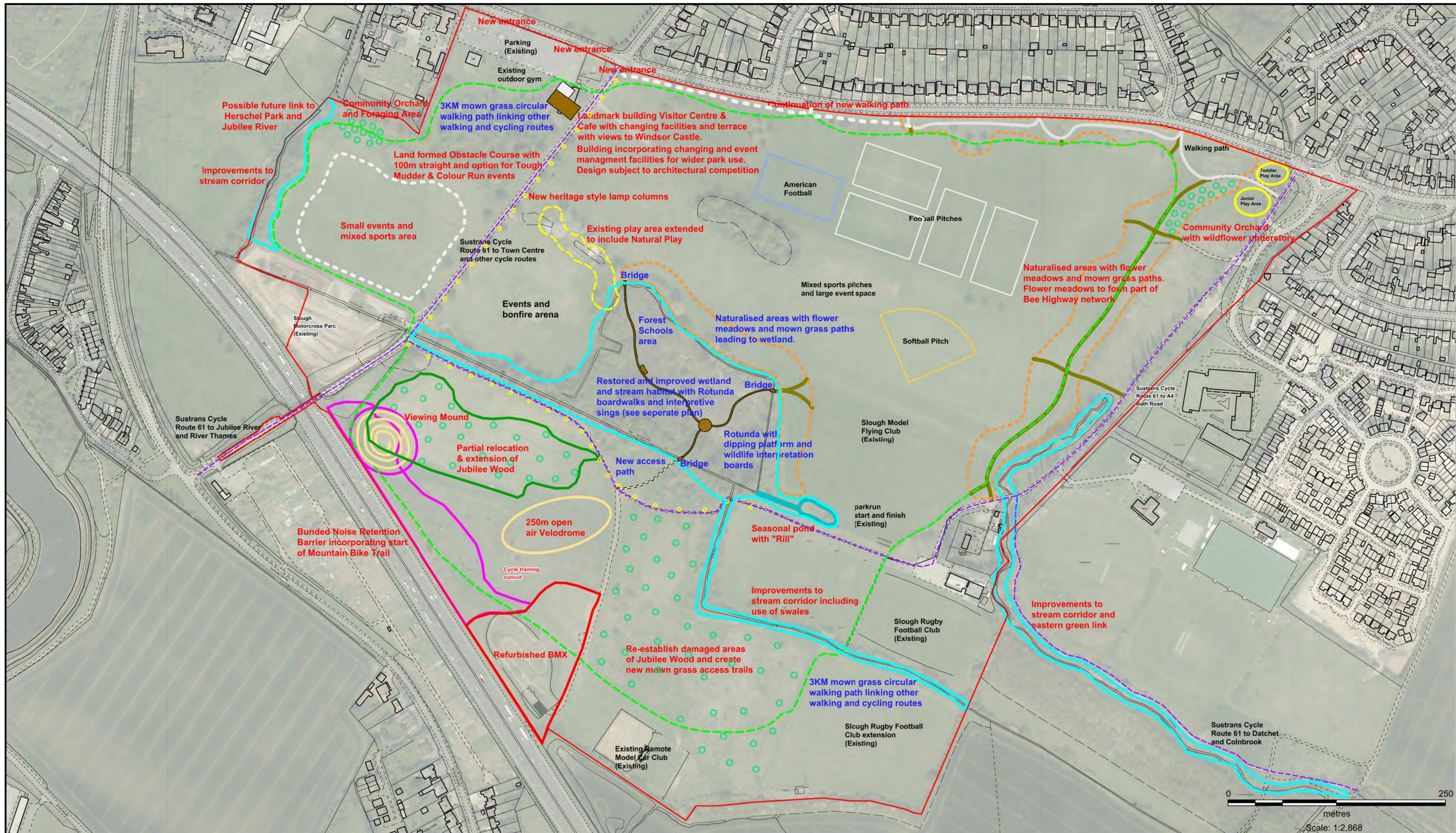
This building would be subject of an international architectural design competition; to design and build a truly iconic building that would enhance the park and take advantage of the views to Windsor Castle.

A top class restaurant and cafe, with a roof terrace would attract visitors from a large catchment area as well as catering for local residents.

Building design concepts



Upton Court Park Full Master Plan



Key: **Blue text** Mitigation Works
Black text Existing features
Red text Other Master Plan works

Green dashed line 3KM Circular Walk
Blue solid line Wetland area core works
Red solid line Park extent

(to scale at A2) 2/9/22

Appendix C Upton Court Park Master Plan Proposals - Costs Summary (V6)

Natural habitat related packages

Items marked "Yes" in NE column are Natural England eligible mitigation

Master Plan Item	Packages	Projects	Details	NE	Estimated Costs (capital)	Maintenance cost over 80 Years
1	Walking and cycling infrastructure	Create continuous walking and cycling routes in park to join existing networks	3KM route mixture of close mown and unbound gravel surfacing. 1Km of Coxwell Gravel with timber edging and 2KM levelled and mown grass path	Yes	£ 6,000	£ 60,000
2	Blue infrastructure and wetlands developments	Central wetlands restoration (core area, margins and access)	Restore streams, ditches and open wetland area. Create access and walkways and information signs, Irradication of invase species. create meadow edge	Yes	£ 280,000	£ 420,000
		Pond and rill	Linking main wetland to seasonal ponds		£ 75,000	£ 300,000
		Improvements and restoration of stream corridor	Vegetation clearance, de-silting and habitat restoration to 0.85km of stream habitat (2 sections)		£ 190,000	£ 120,000
3	Improvements to the park	Removal of dead trees whole park including Jubilee Wood			£ 17,500	£ 180,000
		Extra tree planting whole park including Jubilee Wood	120 standard trees		£ 18,000	£ 180,000
		New seating and bins along walking routes	Phase 1	Yes	£ 12,000	£ 105,056
		New seating and bins along walking routes	Phase 2		£ 12,000	£ 105,056
4	Recreational landforms	Mounds and bunds	Veiwing mound, 350m length bund and landscaping, Paths and mountainbike trial. (Potential funding through soil import scheme)		£ 1,200,000	£ 270,000
8	Biodiversity and environment improvements	Bee corridors/ flower meadows	2 No. flower meadows, 1 x 32,640m2, 1 x 10,840m2		£ 15,000	£ 300,000
		Interpretation boards (Phase 1)	Suite of notice and information boards showing natural heritage	Yes	£ 10,000	£ 87,546
		Community orchard and foraging trails	2 Community Orchards totalling 2500m2 of mixed fruit trees and bushes. Foraging trails through orchards with interpretive signage		£ 30,000	£ 120,000
		Interpretation boards (Phase 2)	Suite of notice and information boards showing natural and built heritage		£ 10,000	£ 87,546
11	Park ranger service	Vehicle, tools, 2 full time park rangers	5 years x 2 staff FTE		£ 400,000	£ 667,319
Total Natural Habitat Items					£ 2,275,500	£ 3,002,523
TOTAL					£	5,278,023

SBC Aspirational Recreational Packages

Master Plan Item	Packages	Projects	Details		Estimated Costs (capital)	Estimated Costs P/A (revenue)
1	Walking and cycling infrastructure	Extension of new walking path from centre Upton Court Road entrance to main gate	345LM x 2.5m wide tarmac path with pcc edgings. (Path to same specifaction as existing recent path)		£ 100,000	TBA
5	Cycle sport, recreation and physical activity	Outdoor Velodrome	250m banked tarmac track and landscaping/infrastructure (Possibly run by a club/volunteers)		£ 185,000	TBA
		BMX Track refurbishments	Reprofiling and creating new surface configuration (Possibly run by a club/volunteers)		£ 80,000	TBA
		Cycle training circuit	Installation and landscaping junior road training circuit		£ 40,000	TBA
6	Assault course	TuffMudder style	Creating land form and infrastructure/ equipment		£ 28,000	TBA
7	Play area improvements	Enhancements to existing play area	Reconfigure and add to existing play		£ 150,000	TBA
9	Main infrastructure	New main gate	Design and install new feature gate to main driveway		£ 25,000	TBA
		New heritage style lights	Install new lamp columns to main driveways appropriate to setting/view		£ 28,000	TBA
		Resurface main drive	2400m2 tarmac resurfacing of existing drive		£ 170,000	TBA
		Resurface East drive	2800m2 tarmac resurfacing of existing drive		£ 198,300	TBA
10	Events		Externally provided with possible income to council		£ -	TBA
12	Visitor centre, café/restaurant and changing facility	New build - café / restaurant, changing facilities, community space / classroom. Some elements of the facility may be eligible for NE consideration	Revenue costs covered by franchise		£ 5,000,000	TBA
Total SBC Aspirational Items					£ 6,004,300	

Appendix D – TVERC habitat assessment of wetland area

DRAFT

SITE NAME		SITE CODE		CENTRAL GRID REFERENCE			
Upland Court Park Wetland		SU97Z02		SU987786			
SURVEY TITLE	DATE SITE SURVEYED		DATABASE CODE				
LWS assessment	14/06/2012						
DISTRICT / UNITARY	PARISH / WARD		SURVEYOR(S)				
Slough	Non-civil parish		Helen S Miller				
ASSESSMENT OF SURVEY (inc time taken, weather conditions and any limitations)							
1020 - 1315 hrs. (excl. travel)							
16 deg c. 80% cloud. Sun. F2-3. No precipitation							
Wet ground conditions and tall swamp vegetation made detailed mapping of vegetation difficult due to poor visibility and unsafe conditions. Some areas where impenetrable due to collapsing crack willows. Uncertain safety of ground conditions.							
LANDOWNER NAME AND ADDRESS:							
Mr Kelly Slough Borough Council St. Martins Place, 51 Bath Rd. Slough SL1 3U							
Access Permission from: Ollie Kelly							
SITE STATUS (At time of survey):							
NNR	SSSI	pSSSI	LWS	LGS	LNR	BBOWT Res	Other Res
Common land	Private land	AONB	ESA	SPA	SAC	Other	
MANAGEMENT BODY							
Slough Borough Council							
OTHER DETAILS							
SITE AREA (ha)		MAJOR ASPECT		MAJOR SLOPE		ALTITUDE (m)	
2.88		South		Depression		20	
GEOLOGY (solid / drift from Geology maps)							
Bedrock:	London clay formation						
Superficial:	Shepperton gravel member						
Soils	Neut	Cal	Acid	Clay	Loam		
	Sand	Peat	alluv	Rock	Scree		
	Spoil	Water logged	Poorly drained	Freely drained	Other		
SPECIAL INTEREST OF SITE							
UK PRIORITY BAP SPECIES:			1: Reed bunting				
LEGALLY PROTECTED SPECIES:			1 (historic): frog				
RED DATA BOOK SPECIES:			none				
NATIONALLY SCARCE or NOTABLE SPECIES:			none				
BIRDS OF CONSERVATION							
Red list:			2 historic records: song thrush, starling				

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Amber list:	3 - 2012: green woodpecker, whitethroat, reed bunting; 2 additional historic records: chiffchaff; house martin	
PRESENT USE AND MANAGEMENT OF SITE		
None apparent although indications of historic coppicing of the oaks in the northern woodland		
HABITATS ON SITE (Phase 1 and/or BAP priority Habitat classification)	ADJACENT LAND USE/ HABITAT (Phase 1 classification)	BOUNDARIES TO SITE (river, ditch, fence, hedgerow etc.)
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland. Swamp. Stream/wet ditch. UK BAP habitats: wet woodland; lowland fen	Amenity grassland. Broadleaved plantation. Tall ruderal/ephemeral vegetation. Japanese knotweed.	South: ditch. North, east & west: clear habitat boundary (woodland: amenity grassland)
SITE DESCRIPTION		
Brief overview:		
<p>The site is located in the River Thames corridor on the south-eastern edge of Slough, north of the M4 and Windsor. It is a semi-natural oasis amid a large expanse of amenity grassland park with localised planted copses. A children's adventure play ground is situated to the west.</p> <p>The site comprises, a large area of tall herb fen fringed with scrub and a strip of mixed broadleaved woodland on all sides. The northern edge, extending up a slight slope, comprises mesic woodland dominated by oak. The woodland along the east, south and west is dominated by willows and wetter ground conditions. There is substantial evidence of a gradual drying and lowering of the water table at this site. The 2003 survey noted that over a short period of five years, between surveys, the vegetation had changed from a predominantly wet fen, with sedge species occurring throughout to one where aster and willowherb and scrub encroachment is the norm. The current situation suggests that the drying out, although still evident, is slowing/stabilising. There are ditches along the north and south boundaries and mostly wet at the time of survey.</p>		
Detailed description:		
<p>Central wetland/fen: This area forms the central section and main bulk of the site with affinities to S5, S6/7, S28, OV24-OV27 NVC communities. It comprises a mosaic of locally dominant species poor swamp communities, including mono-species stands of greater willowherb, sedge, reed grass with bramble at the woodland edge. Himalayan balsam appears to be more dominant than in the previous survey conducted in 2003, although may be a reflection of timing of survey (2003 - September; 2012 - June). The vegetation suggests that the system is drying out, for example 1) north edge: abundance of aster species and nettles 2) the oaks and hawthorns, species of drier conditions, appear to be growing well with no sign of ill health resulting from wet soil conditions. 3) bramble is invading in the east with increased meadowsweet, greater willowherb and aster species taking over the from the sedges. The latter also had a less strong growth form/smaller tussocks than the norm. 4) Himalayan balsam (associated with damp but not waterlogged soils) is invading areas dominated by reed grass, a species normally associated with very wet conditions.</p> <p>Mesic woodland: The elevated terrace along the northern boundary supports the main area of mesic woodland on this site. It has a more or less closed canopy of oak (English (D) & Turkey (R)) with an understory of scattered elder (R), hawthorn (O), blackthorn (LA), bamboo (LD). The ground flora is dominated by bare ground and Himalayan balsam with scattered nettle. There is a slight decline in Himalayan balsam in the east where the canopy is denser and nettle is more abundant. The woodland strip ends abruptly to the north with the intensively managed playing fields. This woodland has affinities to W10 but lacks key indicator species as a result of the dominance of nettle and Himalayan balsam. In the north-west, this habitat forms a transition into the wetland (see below).</p>		

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Wet woodland: Wet woodland, dominated by willows, occurs on the east, south and west edges. Himalayan balsam and nettle dominate the ground flora. Where the canopy is more open, bramble is locally dominant. Other species generally occur at rare occurrence, with the exception of: orange balsam (LF), gypsywort (LF), yellow flag iris (LA), greater willowherb (LF), Yorkshire fog (LA), rough meadow grass (F). This woodland has affinities to W6 but the variant where willows dominate over alder.

Other features: In the north of the site is a heavily shaded stream/ditch with a maximum width of 1.5 m and graded banks. Fool's watercress and duckweed are locally dominant where the water is deeper, although rarely was deeper than 0.15 m. The substrate was composed of deep leaf litter and sand. The stream/ditch was drier and narrower (1 m) in the east with steeper (30-60 degrees), taller (0.75 m) banks. Invading Himalayan balsam. A similarly shaded wet ditch occurs along the southern edge.

ECOLOGICAL SITE EVALUATION

Typical species:	
Woodland:	2 - holly, guelder rose
Grassland - acidic:	none
Grassland - calcareous:	none
Wetlands:	10 - reed bunting; reedmace; great willowherb; bittersweet; hedge bindweed; reed canary-grass; greater pond sedge; lesser pond sedge; reed sweet grass
Heathlands:	none
Notable species:	See "Special Interest of Site"
Recommendations:	
Boundary change:	Extend along the ditch in the west: this habitat is an extension to the willow woodland in the south and east of the current site. The woodland in the south of the sites extends beyond the current boundary (ditch) but there are no physical boundaries on the ground or indicated on the map. No apparent reason for 'indent' on western boundary.
LWS status:	Retain as LWS. Extend along ditch in the east
Surveys:	Wetland/swamp invertebrates

ECOLOGICAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS

Current management	Tick	Current condition	Tick
Management enhances overall		Good ecological condition	
Management maintains overall		Satisfactory ecological condition	
Potential for management to improve ecological interest	yes	Potential for improvement of ecological condition	yes

Comments

The vegetation composition suggests that the wetland is drying out since the last survey in 2003. The drying out of the wetland is likely to result in increased invasion by Himalayan balsam and scrub. However the scrub invasion appears to be more from existing specimens growing rather than new ones establishing. Increasing the wetness of the site, particularly early on in the growing season, may help control the invasion of Himalayan balsam and woody species. The change in vegetation towards species more associated with drier conditions may reflect the natural changes in water table as a result of the two very dry winters (2011/2012), rather than a permanent drop of water table. Therefore the situation should be assessed in detail before drastic changes are made to the systems drainage. Control adjacent Japanese knotweed to avoid potential spread into the woodland/wetland.

Local Wildlife Sites Slough 2012: Upton Park Wetland SU97Z02

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Local Wildlife Site - Habitats 2012

September 2012



Phase 1 Habitats

- Upton Park Wetland
- Broadleaved woodland - semi-natura
- Swamp

- Target notes (1-9)
- Photos (1-10)

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Scale: 1:2 500

Local Wildlife Sites Slough 2012: Upton Park Wetland SU97Z02

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 **Local Wildlife Site - BAP Habitats 2012**

September 2012



BAP Habitat

-  Upton Park Wetland
-  Lowland fens
-  Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
-  Wet woodland

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Scale: 1:2 500

Diagram of current and proposed improvements to wetland area

Upton Court Park Wetland Restoration and Improvement Scheme

Existing Wetland



Existing Wetland Watercourses



Proposal

