

Lodge Biodiversity Enrichment Programme

Extracts from 9 documents quoted verbatim.

1. BHCCAT Executive Committee 13.9.06 Open Meeting minutes.

Item 6.2 Lodge, Island & Fish Pond biodiversity enrichment proposals to rejuvenate ecologically failing priority habitat (*ponds & lodges*) in Local Biodiversity Action Plan. 2-year programme: create wildlife habitat at western end of Lake allowing for possible reintroduction of rowboating in half of Lake nearest to Boathouse. Aquascience (Bognor Regis) report, recommendations & quotation: “...*Lake..locked in an algal-dominated state allowing for little aquatic biodiversity...ammonia released..contaminating the waters downstream...bioremediation measures to improve water quality and increase aquatic biodiversity... silt..being stirred up by..bottom-feeding fish.. exacerbating release of ammonia..transfer to adjacent fishing lake... Treatment of sediment with champagne chalk..to accelerate microbial breakdown of organic fraction in sludge... installation of 48..barley straw units..to suppress..blue-green algae... installation of ..floating reedbeds..to restore..vegetation to..Lake margins... Rowing boat barrier limiting human activity within designated wildlife area... Ecological survey..when development commences..and 1 year after...*” - cost £19,900. Trust conservation volunteers to regenerate Island’s natural woodland biodiversity - expenses £1,400. ML & Trust to disseminate progress of project to public - £1,500. Total £22,800 cost. 8.9.06 submitted £22,800 grant application to Sita Trust, completed by Catherine Hartley (ML Projects Development officer), Saul and Peter.

2. BHCCAT Executive Committee 13.12.06 Open Meeting minutes.

Item 5.2 Lodge, Island & Fish Pond biodiversity enrichment proposals to rejuvenate ecologically failing priority habitat (*ponds & lodges*) in Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP): create wildlife habitat at western end of Lake allowing for possible reintroduction of rowboating in half of Lake nearest to Boathouse. Graham Jones (Greater Manchester Ecology Unit LBAP manager) recommended reinforcing proposals with additional reed beds; therefore grant bid to SITA Trust withdrawn. Intention to submit revised bid before next SITA Trust deadline 29.12.06. With view to restoring Island’s natural woodland biodiversity, Saul and Peter carried out floral survey 6.11.06.

3. BHCCAT application 14.12.06, written by Peter Milner (BHCCAT Secretary), Catherine Hartley (MCC Irk Valley Project Officer) and Saul Mearns (MCC North Area Parks Warden), to SITA Trust for grant to carry out following.

...The aim of this project is to rejuvenate an ecologically failing habitat – ‘ponds and lodges’ - in the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (GMBAP)...

Measures to increase biodiversity in the lake and surrounding area would best be implemented during the autumn and winter to cause minimal disturbance to the ecosystem. Works started in the autumn or winter must stop in March of the following year at the latest in order not to disturb herons nesting on the wooded island in the middle of the lake...

As a result of the high phosphorous and nutrient levels the lodge has a large content of blue-green algae. To combat this 48 barley straw bags will be installed for a season (cost covered by Manchester Leisure). This will assist with the removal of the blue green algae but also allow the reed beds time to establish and become effective in the filtration of the water.

To establish a long-term management solution reed beds will be installed to enable natural filtration of the water and increase biodiversity. The reed beds will be enclosed with bird-proof mesh to enable the plants to establish.

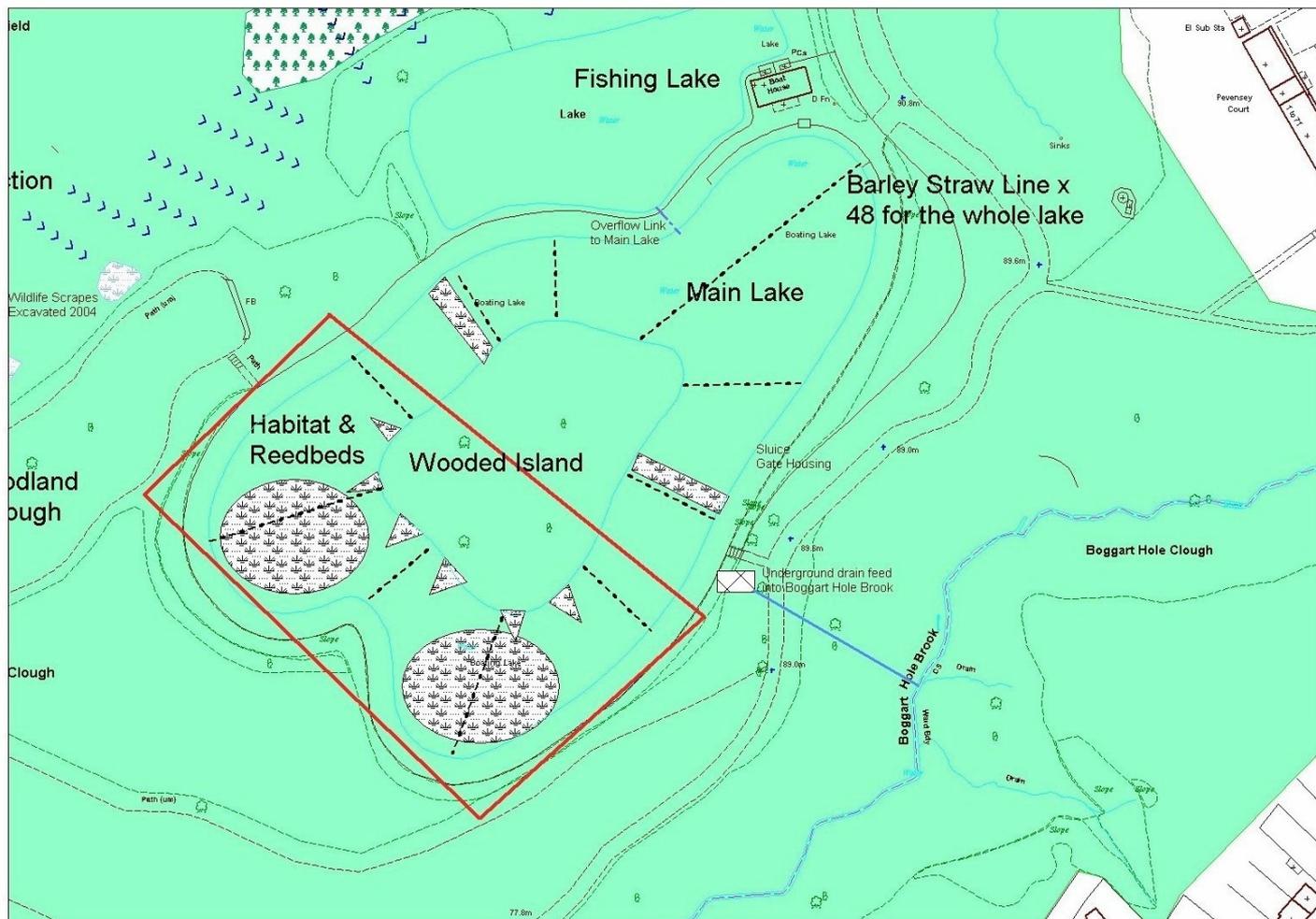
We aim to install reed beds covering a total area of 4,155 square metres, which will make up 50% of the area to be dedicated to wildlife; see maps for details of the location. A base of revetment stone and clay will be used so that the reeds can root and spread in this brick lined lodge, which is currently too deep for reeds to root...

To establish sustainable vegetation in the lodge a number of reed beds will be placed throughout the lodge. These will vary in size. They will help filter the water and provide additional habitat. As we have experienced problems with establishing vegetation previously because ducks and geese grazed it all, the reed beds will have a mesh around them which will not allow any access. In the selection of vegetation we aim to consult with a local ecologist who has a supply of locally grown reeds.

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The reeds will comprise two large beds situated in the widest portion of the lodge, and triangular areas created by laying Island Willow trees and planting the reeds into some broken down straw, to make up a substrate level. The Willow will act as a natural barrier to discourage Canada geese from grazing on the reeds.



Puddling clay and Willow will also be used to create a physical barrier from the middle of the island to the bank on each side establishing a wildlife area where the boats are not allowed...

The location of the natural barriers will also create a deterrent for the large numbers of Canada geese that frequent the lake discouraging them from using the site. The reed beds will be protected by bird-proof mesh.

There is also a large population of bottom feeding fish which regularly stir up the silt. The fish will be netted by a contractor and relocated to another nearby water body, under licence from the EA. On agreement with local fishermen the smaller lodge will be the primary fishing location with the large lodge being used for boating and wildlife. Fish cannot be transferred into the smaller lodge as it has already reached capacity. Fish relocation licence to be obtained through the contractor from the Fisheries Department of the Environment Agency

Due to Health and Safety requirements and as many of these operations are specialized tasks, contractors will be employed to undertake them.

The central Island is in need of some woodland management to bring it into a favourable condition for maximum benefit to wildlife. This includes woodland thinning (mostly Sycamore & Privet) and shrub removal (e.g. invasive Rhododendron). BHCCAT will undertake this work through the use of their regular Saturday volunteer group...

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Species that will benefit from the project: Pipistrelle Bat (listed as a UK Priority Species in GMBAP), Reed Bunting, Bittern (both Priority Species in UKBAP and red listed: species which have suffered 50% or greater decline in numbers in the last 25 years), Bearded Tit, Marsh Harrier, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Water Rail, Grey Heron, Moorhen, Coot, Mallard, Grebe, Tufted Duck, Starlings, Swallows, Emperor Dragonfly, Common Toad, Common Frog, Diving Beetle, Water Beetle, Mud Snail, Smooth and Palmate Newts...

4. Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project / Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (Graham Jones) letter **15.12.06** to BHCCAT Secretary (Peter Milner).

...Re Boggart Hole Clough Enrichment Programme.

...As coordinator for the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan and lead partner for the GM Ponds and Lodges BAP, I write to offer you my support in your application to Sita Enriching Nature Fund for the above project...

5. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit Principal Ecologist (Derek Richardson) letter **18.12.06** to SITA Trust.

...Re Lodge restoration project at Boggart Hole Clough, Manchester.

The Greater Manchester Ecology Unit provides advice and guidance to, and on behalf of, the ten district councils of Greater Manchester on wildlife and nature conservation issues. The Ecology Unit selects sites of local nature conservation importance in Manchester and is responsible for preparing and implementing the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

Boggart Hole Clough has been selected by the Ecology Unit as a Site of Biological Importance in Manchester, and supports important habitats listed in both the UK and the Greater Manchester BAPs.

The Ecology Unit considers that the project to restore the lodges at Boggart Hole Clough will improve the nature conservation value of the site and will directly contribute to targets set out in the GM Biodiversity Action Plan for the ponds and lodges HAP.

The Ecology Unit therefore supports this project, and the corresponding bid to the SITA Trust for financial support for the project...

6. Groundwork Landscapes quotation for above project, **18.12.06**.

Preliminaries

Set up site, mobilise plant & general overheads £2,500.00

Maintenance of plant and site cabins etc 12 weeks £2,400.00

Clearance

Water levels reduced minimum 500mm by Manchester Leisure.

Allow for forming clear pathways & Herras fence protection £400.00

Earthworks - imported fill & construction of island habitats

Provide and lay 200mm nominal size revetment stone to form ramp into lake & bases for 2 islands £20,479.20

Provide and lay puddle clay cores to 2 islands £88,156.25

Allow for excavation and clearance of access points upon completion of islands £540.00

Provide and erect 1m high galvanised wire mesh fence on 1.5m stakes 75mm dia at 2m centres £2,860.00

Construction of barriers

Provide and lay revetment stone ramps to access barriers £805.00

Provide and lay puddle clay and shape 2.5m wide at base and 1m wide at top average 0.8m deep £3,100.00

Provide and plant into puddle clay bare root willows at 600mm centres in double off set rows £403.20

Allow for excavation and clearance of access points upon completion of islands £540.00

Total excluding VAT £122,183.65

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7. BHCCAT Executive Committee 7.3.07 Open Meeting minutes.

Item 8.2 Grant application to SITA Trust for Lake, Island & Fish Pond Biodiversity Enrichment Programme. Email 22.12.06 from Peter to Kate Engel (SITA Trust Project Manager): "...we will not be submitting a revised application before the 29.12.06 deadline as originally intended. Reaching the standard of enrichment required by the Greater Manchester Ponds and Lodges Biodiversity Action Plan has taken the cost of the project beyond the amount of the SITA grant potentially available. Stone and clay for construction of two island reed beds is the greater part of the cost. In association with our partners, most particularly the GMEU and MCC, we will rework the design of the islands in an attempt to reduce costs, and obtain further estimates. We will also try to source match funding. Our intention now is to submit a revised application to SITA before the 27.3.07 deadline..."

8. BHCCAT Executive Committee 6.6.07 Open Meeting minutes.

Item 7.4 Lake biodiversity enrichment. SITA grant bid abandoned – comprehensive scheme (2 island reed beds, 2 boat barriers, etc) as originally planned too expensive for grants available. Rework design e.g. for island reed beds use recycled bricks rather than stone, and silt from Lake bottom rather than all clay. Proceed on experimental basis, carry out in stages, e.g. Trust volunteers could help create experimental island reed bed; perhaps apply for grant to extend scheme when see what works. Saul collecting materials including recycled bricks & welded mesh for gabions.

9. BHCCAT Executive Committee 5.9.07 Open Meeting minutes.

Item 7.5 Lake biodiversity enrichment. Proposal to create experimental island reed bed involving volunteers. Saul collecting materials (recycled bricks & welded mesh for gabions) in Visitor Centre yard. Programme for June / July 2008 ? Water level would need to be lowered. Apply for grant for volunteers' expenses e.g. insurance, waders, tools, refreshments, publicity, and for additional materials e.g. clay and reed rhizomes / seedlings.

See also BHCCAT 23.12.06 doc Island biodiversity: preliminary report.