

CPRE

BANBURY RESERVOIR PARK - PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS

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1. SCOPE OF DOCUMENT

- 1.1 This document sets out the principles and proposals for a substantial new park in Upper Edmonton called “Banbury Reservoir Park” (BRP).

2. THE NEED FOR A NEW PARK IN SOUTHEAST ENFIELD

2.1 Parks and greenspaces deliver significant benefits and people need access to good quality parks for relaxation, exercise, socialising and play.

- 2.1.1 Access to parks is associated with better physical and mental health, community cohesion and environmental benefits. Natural England estimates that £2.1 billion per year could be saved in health costs by improved access to greenspace and a review of the benefits of London’s greenspace found that greenspace could save some £950 million per year by contributing to better physical and mental health.

- 2.1.2 Parks and greenspaces also deliver benefits for: **the climate** (e.g. carbon dioxide offsetting through woodland creation and storm and flood risk management); **sustainable food production** (e.g. organic, locally grown produce); **sustainable transport** (e.g. encouraging cycling and walking through creating better and safer connectivity); **biodiversity and wildlife protection**; **tourism and green jobs**; and helping to foster **local identity and pride**.

2.2 There is not enough accessible greenspace in Edmonton.

- 2.2.1 Enfield Council’s Blue and Green Strategy (Adopted May ’21) sets a quantity standard for parks and amenity greenspace of 2.15 hectares (ha) per 1,000 population, areas below this standard are defined as having a ‘deficiency’ of greenspace.
- 2.2.2 The Audit accompanying the Blue and Green Strategy shows that the southeast of Enfield has a deficiency of greenspace. For example, **Upper Edmonton currently has 0.28 ha of park and amenity greenspace per 1,000 residents**.
- 2.2.3 The Audit also shows that areas to the east of Edmonton do not fall within the 15-minute accessibility catchment target for parks or allotments/community growing areas.

2.2.4 The eastern section of Enfield is dominated by the Lee Valley National Park (LVRP), but Enfield Council has expressed concerns about accessibility to the Park. The Enfield Characterisation Study notes that connections are restricted by physical barriers such as industrial land and rivers.

2.2.5 Despite the presence of the LVRP, the Mayor of London classifies 22% of the borough's population as lacking access to nature.

2.3 The deficiency of greenspace in Upper Edmonton is set to increase.

2.3.1 The population of Upper Edmonton is predicted to grow by around 30,000 people over the coming decades.

2.3.2 As a result, the deficiency of greenspace in Upper Edmonton will increase and additional deficiencies are predicted in terms of the provision of space for children and teenagers.

2.3.3 There is also a risk that population growth will negatively impact existing greenspaces, such as Tottenham Marshes and Epping Forest, and the current users of these spaces.

2.3.4 Enfield Council is aware that the borough has significant accessibility issues to the LVRP and that severance issues have knock on effects elsewhere. For instance, a key regional issue is the recreational pressure on Epping Forest.

PRINCIPLE #1:

New greenspace is needed in southeast Enfield to help improve accessibility to parks and greenspaces, respond to current and predicted deficiencies, and protect and enhance the amenity and biodiversity of the existing greenspaces.

3. LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL VISIONS AND POLICIES

3.1.1 The principal ‘vision’ of Enfield’s Blue and Green Strategy is that: *“By 2031, Enfield will be London’s greenest borough, forming the cornerstone of London as a national park city”*.

3.1.2 The ‘aims’ underpinning the Strategy are:

AIMS OF GREEN AND BLUE STRATEGY	
1	Achieving a 25% increase in blue-green infrastructure in Enfield, whilst protecting and improving existing assets;
2	Ensuring residents can access blue and green spaces within 15 minutes walking distance of their homes and businesses
3	Making places more distinctive, healthier, attractive and culturally inclusive
4	Achieving a fairer distribution of blue-green infrastructure to overcome deficiencies
5	Creating wilder, more natural spaces to enable biodiversity to thrive, support the restoration of ecosystems and increase interest among people
6	Creating a healthy and safe water environment, with increased resistance to flooding and drought
7	Providing innovative and multi-functional spaces and activities to meet the needs of all users

3.1.3 Enfield’s **Climate Emergency Plan** states that by 2030, Enfield will have a natural environment that enhances biodiversity, provides significant protection against flooding and which helps to mitigate overheating in London, and that by 2040 Enfield will have achieved a net increase in green infrastructure of 25% compared to today.

3.1.4 Enfield also has a duty to co-operate with neighboring boroughs and a key local issue is recreational pressure as such Epping Forest (SAC) given the potential population growth in the east of Enfield. Mitigation through SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) has been identified as a possible response.

PRINCIPLE #2:

A major new district park in southeast Enfield / Waltham Forest is needed to help Enfield Council achieve its aims, particularly the vision and aims of Enfield’s Blue and Green Strategy and its Climate Emergency Plan, and to provide a mitigation option to relieve the pressure on Epping Forest.

3.1.5 The London Mayor has said that he wants to make London the greenest global city and has a vision that 50% of London will be green space. The London Plan policies for Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment state that boroughs **should**:

- identify opportunities for addressing environmental and social challenges through strategic green infrastructure interventions (G1);
- protect the Green Belt (G2);
- promote the creation of new areas of publicly-accessible open space particularly green space, ensuring that future open space needs are planned for, especially in areas with the potential for substantial change (G4);
- protect Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) (G6);
- identify areas of deficiency in access to nature (i.e. areas that are more than 1km walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC) (G6);
- identify opportunities for tree planting in strategic locations (G7) and;
- identify potential sites that could be used for food production (G8).

PRINCIPLE #3:

A major new district sized park on Green Belt land in southeast Enfield is needed to achieve the Mayor's green vision for London and the ambitions set out in the new London Plan.

3.1.6 In the Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities section of the NPPF it states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. (91c),

3.1.7 The NPPF also sets out relevant policies in: Chapter 11 - Making Effective Use of Land; Chapter 13 - Protecting the Green Belt and; Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

PRINCIPLE #4:

A major new district park on the Green Belt land identified in the Proposal is consistent with national planning policy.

- 3.1.8 The land that would form BRP is within the Lee Valley Regional Park.
- 3.1.9 The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) has previously said it wants to use the land that will form BRP as parkland. The LVRPA identified the land within its **Framework Proposals** as an area that could be reconfigured to deliver numerous park benefits, including improved accessibility, sport and recreation use, community benefits and benefits for biodiversity and the environment.
- 3.1.10 The LVRPA says that there are areas of land (adjacent to the North Circular and within Enfield's boundary) that have long sat in a poor state not contributing to LVRPA objectives.
- 3.1.11 Section 12 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 identifies the LVRP as a place for recreation, leisure and nature conservation. Although the LVRP straddles the boundaries of several local planning authorities this statutory remit seeks to define the LVRP as a distinct place. *"It shall be the duty of the Authority to develop, improve, preserve and manage or to procure or arrange for the development, improvement, preservation and management of the park as a place for the occupation of leisure, recreation, sport, games or amusements or any similar activity, for the provision of nature reserves and for the provision and enjoyment of entertainments of any kind."*

PRINCIPLE #5:

A major new park on the land identified in the Proposal is needed to support the above stated ambitions and remit of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

4. UNDERUSED GREEN BELT LAND NEAR UPPER EDMONTON

- 4.1 There is approximately 60 hectares of largely unused or poorly used Green Belt land bordering Upper Edmonton. Approximately 34 ha is in Enfield, with the remainder in Waltham Forest.
 - 4.1.1 The land is within the boundary of the LVRP and approximately 9-10 ha is within the site boundary of the Meridian Water development.
 - 4.1.2 The land is classified as Green Belt and as an Area of Special Character and an Archaeological Priority Area. A large proportion of the land is classed as an Area of Metropolitan Importance for Biodiversity.
 - 4.1.3 The land is currently in 13 separate plots which are owned by Thames Water, Waltham Forest Council and a number of private investors.
 - 4.1.4 Most of the land is derelict and wasted space that is fenced off from public use, which obstructs the openness of the area, is off-putting to potential visitors, and means the area lacks identity and is not a coherent space.
 - 4.1.5 The current layout and poor accessibility of greenspace in and across the area also hampers connectivity.
 - 4.1.6 Some plots are currently benefiting the community (e.g. Cheney Road Park) but overall the land is not being used as effectively as it could be in terms of potential benefits for climate change, food production, sustainable transport, biodiversity and wildlife protection, tourism and green jobs; and helping to foster local identity and pride.

PRINCIPLE #6:

Green Belt land identified in the Proposal will be protected from development in line with NPPF and London Plan policy.

PRINCIPLE #7:

The land identified in the Proposal will be brought back into more beneficial use as publicly accessible greenspace and parkland and/or be used more effectively for public amenity and/or environmental benefits.

5. BANBURY RESERVOIR PARK PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS

THE OVERALL VISION

PRINCIPLE #8:

The 13 plots of Green Belt land identified in the Proposal will be used to create a coherent new District Parkland space with a clear identity, with improvements and attractions which you would expect to find in a large district park, which encourages a much improved use of the space and reflects consultation with local residents and stakeholders, which fills gaps in provision as appropriate (for example a need for playing pitches) and which is managed and marketed as a coherent whole, with the involvement of the existing and new local communities – adhering to the Aims and Objectives set out below.

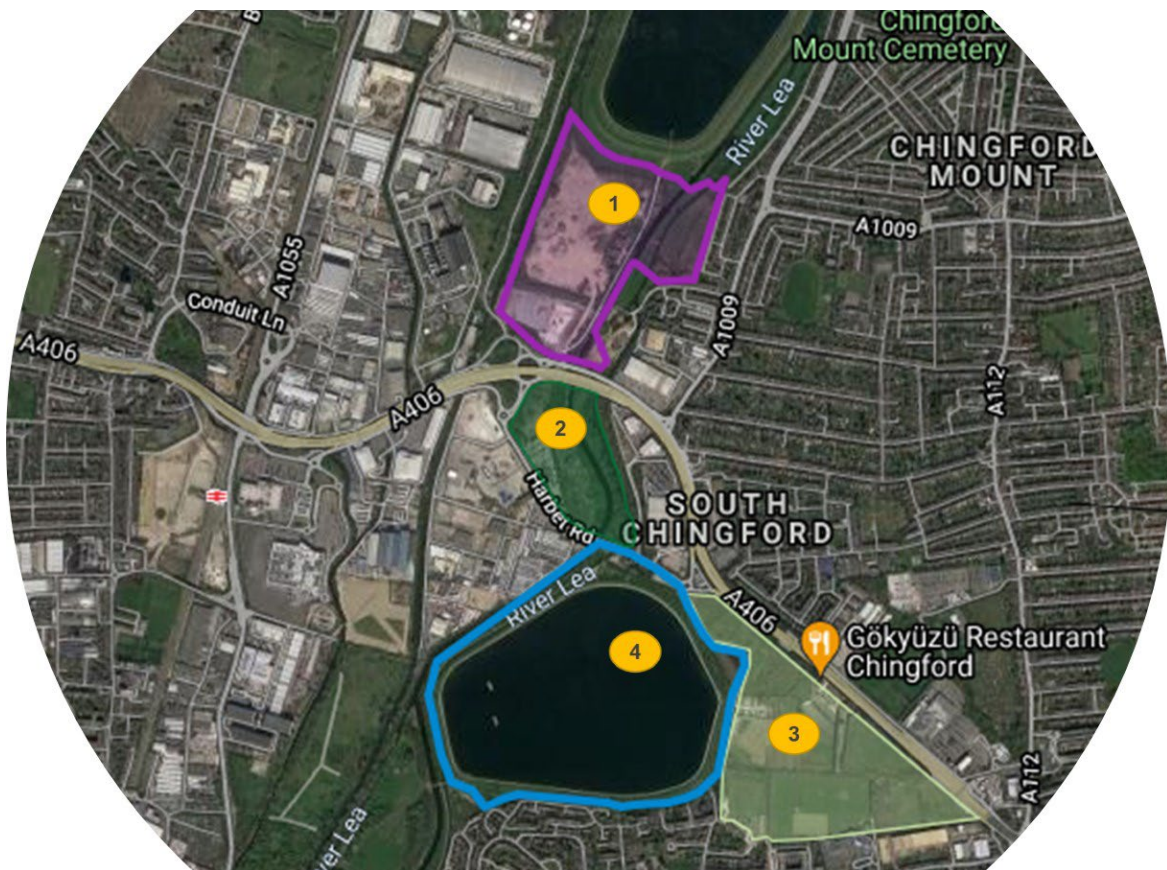
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE PARK

1. **Community:** A park that local people can feel an affinity with and an affection for, as well as a sense of community ownership and participation.
2. **Safe and Welcoming:** A park that can be enjoyed **by all** without fear or intimidation.
3. **Inspiring:** A destination that people will feel motivated to visit regularly.
4. **Health and Wellbeing:** A park that encourages broad participation in beneficial activities.
5. **Environment:** A park that delivers wildlife, biodiversity and climate change benefits.
6. **Accessible:** A park that is easy to visit, whatever the weather.
7. **Connected:** A park that improves sustainable access to the LVRP and surrounding areas and eases pressure on pinch points and other greenspaces.
8. **Efficient:** A park that makes the best use of the available land and infrastructure.
9. **Protection:** A park that helps to protect and enhance London's Greenbelt and the LVRP for the benefit of future generations.
10. **Employment:** A park that encourages employment and volunteer opportunities in the green economy and community-based activities.

PARK AREAS

5.1 Banbury Reservoir Park will consist of four main areas:

1. The Northern Wetlands
2. Edmonton Marshes
3. The Folly Lane Triangle
4. Banbury Reservoir



The Northern Wetlands

5.1.1 Consisting of land to the north of the A406 and south of the William Golding Reservoir. The River Lee and River Lee Flood Relief Diversion Channel run through the site. The planning authority for the land is the London Borough of Enfield. Approximately 27 ha is owned by Thames Water and a second smaller area to the east of about 0.76 ha is owned by Seasons Property investment. The Thames Water site is used by Camden Plant and by the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) as a laydown area for building work. Planning documents indicate that the site should be returned to park usage once building work is complete. Land owned by Seasons Property is used for dumping building materials and for lorry parking.

PRINCIPLE #9: The Northern Wetlands

The land will be restored and returned to appropriate parkland use as soon as possible.

Existing bridges and paths will be brought into more beneficial public use, to enable access to the wider LVRP and connect with other pedestrian and cycle routes.

The land will be used to create a more open and cohesive parkland character in keeping with the wider LVRP, with improved openness and unrestricted views across the Park.

Opportunities will be explored for new habitat creation alongside flood mitigation, with potential to create a softer river edge to the River Lee Diversion and establish new planting and the creation of wetland habitats and nature conservation to improve biodiversity and encourage wildlife.

Opportunities for sports, recreational and community uses across the area, with a particular focus on activating the western edge of the Park bordering the Lee Navigation towpath (e.g. spaces for community activity, sports pitches, natural play area, urban gym, flat water canoeing and refreshments) will be investigated.

New pathways, nature/fitness trails and cycle routes will be implemented on the eastern part of the site, including a safe pedestrian and cycle route under the A406 to connect the Northern Wetlands with Edmonton Marshes.

Edmonton Marshes

- 5.1.2 Consisting of land located to the south of the A406 and north of Banbury Reservoir. Approximately 8 ha of Green Belt land owned by Thames Water, which is currently inaccessible to the public and used for fly-tipping.
- 5.1.3 Most of the land (6.4ha) benefits from planning approval for a new park as part of the Meridian Water development. The detailed Design and Access Statement (DAS) which accompanied the planning application sets out the proposed design and refers to the potential for pedestrian and cycle links to the Northern Wetlands in the future.

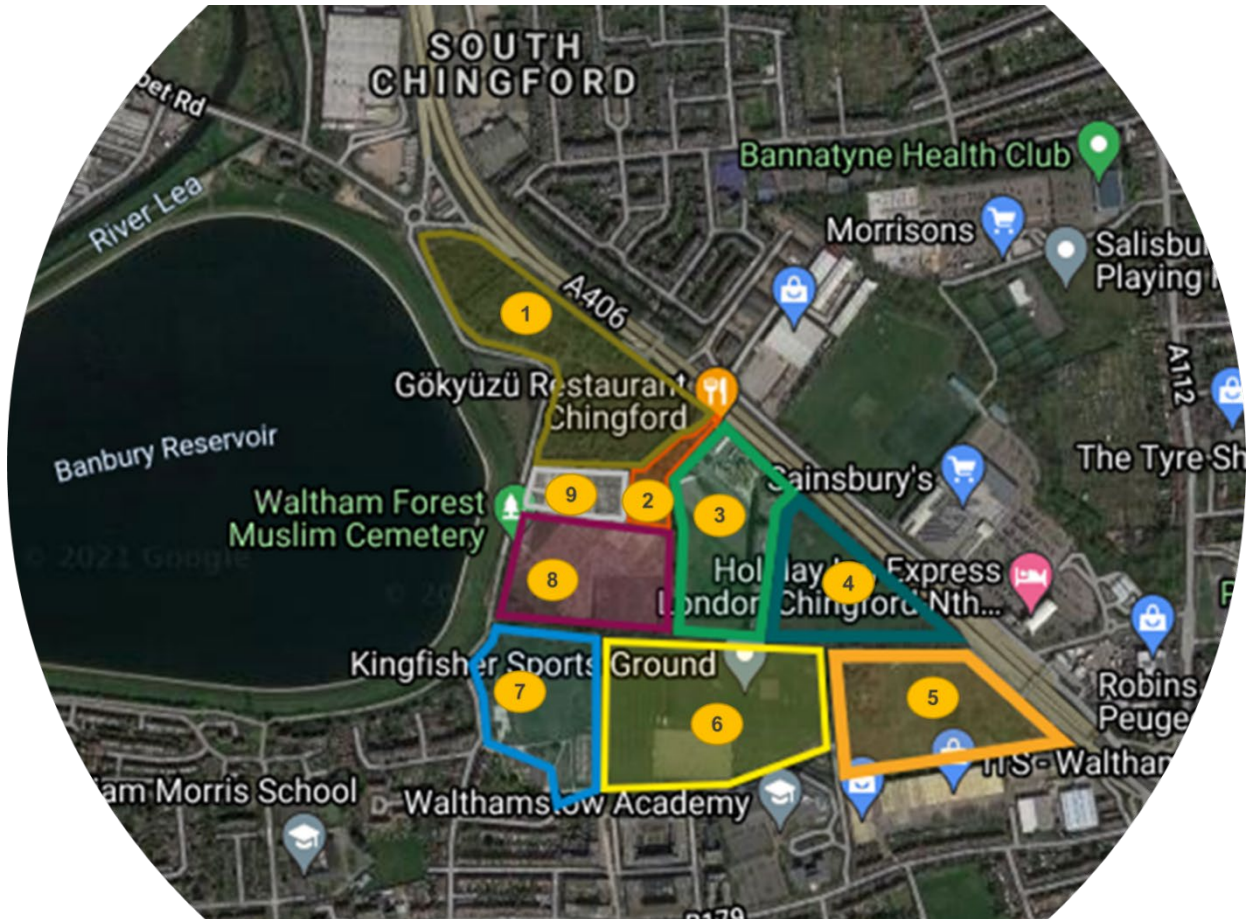
PRINCIPLE #10: Edmonton Marshes

Land to the east of the already approved park will be incorporated into the design of Edmonton Marshes as necessary to facilitate safe pedestrian and cycle connections to the Northern Wetlands, via newly created cycle routes and pathways beneath the existing roads.

Permeability and routes between Edmonton Marshes and the Folly Lane Triangle and areas of the Banbury Reservoir to the south and east of Edmonton Marshes will be improved.

Folly Lane Triangle

5.1.4 Consisting of nine plots of Green Belt land located within Waltham Forest to the west of the A406 and to the east of Banbury Reservoir and Folly Lane.



5.1.5 Some of the land is underused and suffering from some neglect.

Plot 1: Folly Lane Community Woodland is owned by Waltham Forest Council, which is currently difficult to access and underused.

Plot 2: Approximately 0.6ha of Greenbelt land currently owned by Goldings Estates and fenced-off from public use.

Plot 3: 3.17ha of land owned by Eastnow Estates, currently used for adventure golf, restaurants, parking and container storage. Around half the site appears to be unused.

Plot 4: 2.63ha of fenced off and unused land. The land is owned by Waltham Forest Council.

Plot 5: This 3.6ha site is a fenced off and was formerly a sports field. It is owned by Blackhorse Ventures Ltd. The site is adjacent to a ramped/step-free bridge across the A406.

The remaining plots consist of: Plot 6: Kingfisher Sports Ground / Britannia Playing; Plot 7: Cheyney Road Park; Plot 8: Burial ground and Plot 9: Designated Gypsy and Traveller site

PRINCIPLE #11: Folly Lane Triangle

Measures will be taken to create a far more cohesive, open and harmonised landscape.

Safe and attractive east to west routes and paths across the Folly Lane Triangle for cyclists and pedestrians will be created to improve usage and connect local communities with the wider LVRP, train station, and other amenities at Meridian Water.

Steps will be taken to create and/or improve visitor welcome and access points to the area. Improvements to the Academy Way entrance to the Park will be explored in order to make it a more welcoming and more clearly defined entry point to the Park.

New entry points for pedestrians and cyclists will be created near to existing A406 road bridges and subways to the east of the site to help make the best use of the existing infrastructure, improve connectivity, and encourage sustainable travel.

Opportunities to improve ecological interest within the area, as well as opportunities for community farming, a broader sports and recreation offer and significantly improved routes and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists will be explored.

Some sites (Plot 6: Kingfisher Sports Ground / Britannia Playing; Plot 7: Cheyney Road Park; Plot 8: Burial ground and Plot 9: Designated Gypsy and Traveller site) will benefit from improved connectivity and improved landscaping of the surrounding area but will not be subject to significant change.

Banbury Reservoir

5.1.6 Banbury Reservoir is a defining feature of the area. There are footpaths next to the reservoir, but these are fenced off from public use. The area is around 46 ha, including the reservoir itself. The reservoir and land immediately adjacent to it are owned by Thames Water.

PRINCIPLE #12: Banbury Reservoir

Opportunities to enable the reservoir to become a destination point and marker for visitors to LVRP will be explored.

New secure and accessible pathways and routes surrounding the Reservoir will be created and existing pathways improved and brought into public use.

Routes to improve connectivity with Tottenham Marshes, Edmonton Marshes and Folly Lane Triangle will be created to help ease pressure on the towpath next to the River Lee Navigation.

Circular style routes will be created for recreation and fitness trails.

Signposting and information will be installed to help visitors engage with the area's history and wildlife.

Opportunities for using land surrounding the reservoir for community farming, rewilding and improved ecological interest will be investigated.

Opportunities to use the reservoir for recreational use e.g. for sailing, rowing, canoeing and swimming will be explored.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Arrange meeting to discuss and agree Principles and Proposals.
- 6.2 Create shared road map / delivery plan, including milestones, proposed timescales and responsibilities.