

Bottesford Beck Pond Creation and Outdoor Classroom

Planning Statement

Introduction

The Friends of the Beck is a community group which was established due to the growing concern amongst residents about the state of Bottesford Beck, particularly pollution, littering and dog fouling, and the growing risk of flooding created by the extreme weather that seem to be affecting many parts of UK.

The group started in 2012, but has had great success in a short period of time. Recent campaigns include improvements to rights of way, the creation of rain gardens and educational projects. The latest proposal is to work with North Lincolnshire Council to create up to three new ponds between Baldwin Avenue, Bottesford, and Bottesford Beck. Between the ponds, there will be an outdoor classroom, comprising a circle of re-used tree stumps. The ponds themselves will have dipping platforms for use by local schools. The number of ponds created will depend on the level of funding available.

Details are shown on the attached drawings. Current spot heights are derived from LIDAR data. Proposed contours are approximate, with relative levels being more accurately represented than the absolute levels. Actual levels may vary slightly, depending on the amount of spoil dug out and the area available to spread any excess.

Benefits

The ponds will help to store surface water run-off from the Bottesford area, prior to discharge to the Beck. This will help to slow down the response of the Beck to high rainfall events.

The ponds will be created in accordance with Freshwater Habitats Trust guidance and shall be allowed to develop naturally, for the benefit of biodiversity. Care shall be taken not to introduce fish or plants, guarding against non-native and invasive species in particular. Work may also be carried out on existing ponds, to control invasive species such as New Zealand Pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii*.

The dipping platforms and outdoor classroom shall enable local schools to study biodiversity in accordance with the National Curriculum, whilst minimising travel costs.

Policy

In the interests of brevity, only relevant extracts of relevant policies are given below:

National Planning Policy Framework

“109. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures...”

“118. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

- ..development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be permitted;
- opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged...”

North Lincolnshire Core Strategy

“CS16: North Lincolnshire’s Landscape, Greenspace And Waterscape

...The creation and maintenance of the network of landscape, green space and waterscapes will be secured by a range of measures, including protecting open space, creating new open spaces as part of new development, and by using developer contributions to create, improve and maintain green infrastructure assets where appropriate.”

CS17: Biodiversity

The council will promote effective stewardship of North Lincolnshire’s wildlife through:

3. ..Maintaining and promoting a North Lincolnshire network of local wildlife sites and corridors, links and stepping stones between areas of natural green space.
4. Ensuring development retains, protects and enhances features of biological and geological interest and provides for the appropriate management of these features.
5. Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity by designing in wildlife, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for.
6. Supporting wildlife enhancements that contribute to the habitat restoration targets set out in the North Lincolnshire’s Nature Map and in national, regional and local biodiversity action plans.
7. Improving access to and education/interpretation of biodiversity sites for tourism and the local population, providing their ecological integrity is not harmed.

“CS22: Community Facilities And Services

The provision of new community facilities, or the improvement of existing community facilities, which meet the needs of local residents will be supported in principle. Good quality services and facilities will be provided that meet the needs of local communities and are accessible by public transport, cycling or on foot...”

CS23: Sport, Recreation And Open Space

The council will work with its partners, appropriate agencies and the voluntary sector to ensure the provision of good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation and open space facilities, which meet the needs of the local communities, will be secured and improved. In particular, provision will be sought to address identified deficiencies or that will benefit deprived groups and meet the needs of local communities...

Local Plan Saved Policies

LC6 - Habitat Creation

Provision will be made for the creation of nature reserves and new wildlife habitats both in rural and urban areas. Where appropriate, in granting planning permission, the creation of such areas will be required for the following types of development:

- i) in association with the reclamation of former mineral workings and waste disposal sites;
- ii) in association with schemes for derelict land clearance;
- iii) on land which is no longer required for long term agricultural use.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the creation of habitats such as wet and dry heathland, wet woodland and reedbed in keeping with local and national biodiversity targets and provision of habitat for protected species.

LC7 - Landscape Protection

Where development is permitted within rural settlements or within the open countryside, special attention will be given to the protection of the scenic quality and distinctive local character of the landscape. Development which does not respect the character of the local landscape will not be permitted.

LC11 - Areas of Amenity Importance

Within important amenity areas, development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect their open character, visual amenity or wildlife value or compromise the gap between conflicting land uses. Where development is permitted, measures shall be taken to minimise their impact or, where necessary, make a positive contribution to such areas.

DS13 – Groundwater Protection and Land Drainage

All development proposals must take account of the need to secure effective land drainage measures and groundwater protection in order to control the level of water in the land drainage system.

The Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (3rd Edition)

The local BAP includes the following target:

“Create 200 new wildlife ponds and scrapes/flushes where appropriate in Lincolnshire by 2015.”

This proposal complies with all of the above policies which promote biodiversity enhancement.