

Ecology Strategy – From the THFC bid papers, with comments

C. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

Area 3a* is an ecologically rich riparian habitat rooted around Cuffley Beck to the south. There are opportunities to engage local school children in tree planting activities throughout this area.



This is area 3a today. As you can see it is thick with young healthy trees. All were planted naturally without human intervention

Area 3b can deliver an enhanced wildlife corridor along the sites northern boundary with Whitewebbs Wood connecting to new nature reserve at Dickenson's Meadow. The Club's bid proposal is centred on the creation of a regionally (potentially nationally) significant leisure and ecological asset for Enfield through:

- the establishment of a pioneering 'Habitat Bank'

in response to biodiversity net gain requirements set out in the forthcoming Environment Bill, as a means of securing long term funding for the asset and to aid Enfield's planning and development control work;

- the creation of additional woodland meadow on restored historic parkland



Something like this perhaps except that this is what it looks like already. Nature at work not THFC

- improvements to existing public and permissive rights of way to improve public accessibility and enjoyment of an improved recreational facility;

- a restored historic landscape and naturalised landscape of great scenic and biodiversity value;



Again, Nature is well ahead of THFC

- the potential to significantly enhance the schools access programme proposed as part of the adjacent Spurs Environmental Centre and Nature Reserve.

These community benefits would be directly funded through the Club's investment and delivered by both the Club and its charitable Foundation and to the same level of excellence evident throughout the Club's Stadium and Training Centre campuses.

The Club would wish to work closely with the key stakeholders including Capel Manor** and London Wildlife Trust** for example, and the wider local community, in order to ensure that the facility meets identified needs.

The opportunity arises through the development of the landscape masterplan (page 29) to provide a unique facility for the promotion of biodiversity conservation within the site, alongside low impact countryside appreciation, recreation and access.

The Government is mandating the delivery of biodiversity net gain (BNG) as part of the development process through the Environment Bill. This requires every development to deliver at least a 10% gain in baseline biodiversity as a result of the development project in order to make it compliant with policy.

The Club have been at the forefront of its provision in respect of proposals for Western Field and the incorporation of Dickensons Meadow into a biodiversity enhancement plan for the area. (Promised many years ago but yet to be delivered)

Although not initially forming part of the formal Habitat Bank area, the Club proposes that the majority of the golf course and adjacent seminatural woodland be incorporated into a landscape scale project where the historic landscape will be restored and biodiversity enhanced.

The benefits for local communities and for regional (sic) biodiversity will be substantial. The existing site benefits from the provision of quiet recreation, where people can rebalance their busy lives by engaging with nature. The conversion of a large part of the golf course to a landscape rich in biodiversity where its historic importance as parkland is restored, will be a major attraction to local people. The concept will be to convert a large area of the existing golf course into a mosaic of broadleaved woodland 'coups' surrounded by wildflower meadow, identifying as parkland that was once the prevalent feature of the landscape. Historic parkland with meadows provides habitat for scarce plants, rare invertebrates, and especially pollinators. The capacity for the site to absorb people in quiet recreation is significantly increased as a result.

The concept will restore the landscape quality and, integrated with the adjacent woodland and riparian system of Cuffley Brook, will produce a naturalized landscape of great scenic value and high biodiversity significance in the region.

The project will create the first Habitat Bank in the southeast region, being the main way that BNG is to be delivered across the Country. Its 'in perpetuity' management, once the wood meadows have been created by the Club, could provide funding through the raising of 'conservation credits' that other developments in the area would be able to purchase for their own BNG requirements.

The implementation of this site-wide Habitat Bank would create a long-term income stream to sustain the Habitat Bank.

The Club would also take on the responsibility of the site's management in partnership with stakeholders.

The value of creating such a Habitat Bank is that other areas within LBE's ownership which have significant biodiversity potential (such as land to the east of the site and south of the Club's training grounds) could be brought into the Habitat Bank to provide a biodiversity resource of regional or even national standard.

Notes

*Area 3a, as you know, has so many young trees growing there that they require some thinning.

** Neither Capel Manor nor London Wildlife Trust have been a stakeholder in Whitewebbs. Others have.

Habitat Banks and BNG might be a good thing or they might be a way of enabling developers to make a lot more money and wash their consciences green. Can we trust an organisation planning to cover 40+ acres of beautiful meadowland with Astroturf and plastic reinforced grass with protection of biodiversity?

BNG <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain>

2C. LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

2.10 The proposed site will be broadly characterised by four landscape character areas:

- ① Sports pitches - the Club is proposing 5-6 natural grass and 2 artificial pitches.
- ② Restored Historic Parkland - informed by the layout of the original 19th century parkland landscape reinstating lost parkland trees and historic designed vistas.
- ③ Whitewebbs Wood - a series of landscape and ecological interventions and management to enhance the recreational and ecological value of the existing woodland.
- ④ Enhanced riparian landscape around Cuffley Brook to the south providing a valuable ecological link to Whitewebbs Wood.
- ⑤ Enhanced wildlife area to north connecting Whitewebbs wood with new nature reserve at Dickenson's Meadow.

