

NWT Sweet Briar Marshes

A new space for nature and people in our city



Concept designs by sheilsflynn

Sweet Briar Marshes over time

Development of the reserve will take place in phases over the next five to ten years to complement work to improve habitats for wildlife and increase biodiversity. In addition, some of the design ideas will need planning permission which will take time and might require more funding or consultation. The phasing diagrams below give an idea of the order of events, but this may change as the project develops.

Phase 1. Securing the site



Phase 2. Access and moving around the reserve



Grazing will be essential to maintaining the meadows on Sweet Briar Marshes.



This stage - most of which will be complete when the reserve opens to the public in 2024 - involves securing the site with new or repaired fencing and adding new pedestrian gates. This will make the area safe for a small herd of cattle which will graze and create varied grass heights and a mosaic of habitats for wildlife.

Signs, information and maps will be provided at the entrances and will be updated when future stages are completed. Cycle racks will be provided at each of the two main entrances so that cyclists can leave their bikes and explore.



Marked routes around the reserve allow people to explore while minimising disturbance to wildlife.

The main route - the Upland Route - will have a hard surface but will remain in keeping with the natural and unspoilt feeling. Seating will be provided at regular intervals as resting points and places to enjoy nature. This route will allow people of all abilities to move across Sweet Briar Marshes.

A second series of paths will form the 'West Loop' which will provide walks through the wetter scrub area and connect to the 'Upland Route'. This loop will be on more uneven and at times wetter ground. It will be created in a way that is adaptable and ensures that wildlife is not affected.

An important priority which emerged from the consultation was accessible parking and an accessible toilet to enable people of all abilities to visit the site and connect with nature. We believe that the best location for this is at the end of Burnet Road where it joins the Marriott's Way, but we need to ensure that this does not damage any valuable natural habitat, get the agreement of landowners and make sure it is acceptable for planning permission.

We will also be discussing with our neighbours other paths that could join Sweet Briar Marshes - such as linking to the Riverside Walk at Mile Cross Marsh and Marlipit Meadow.



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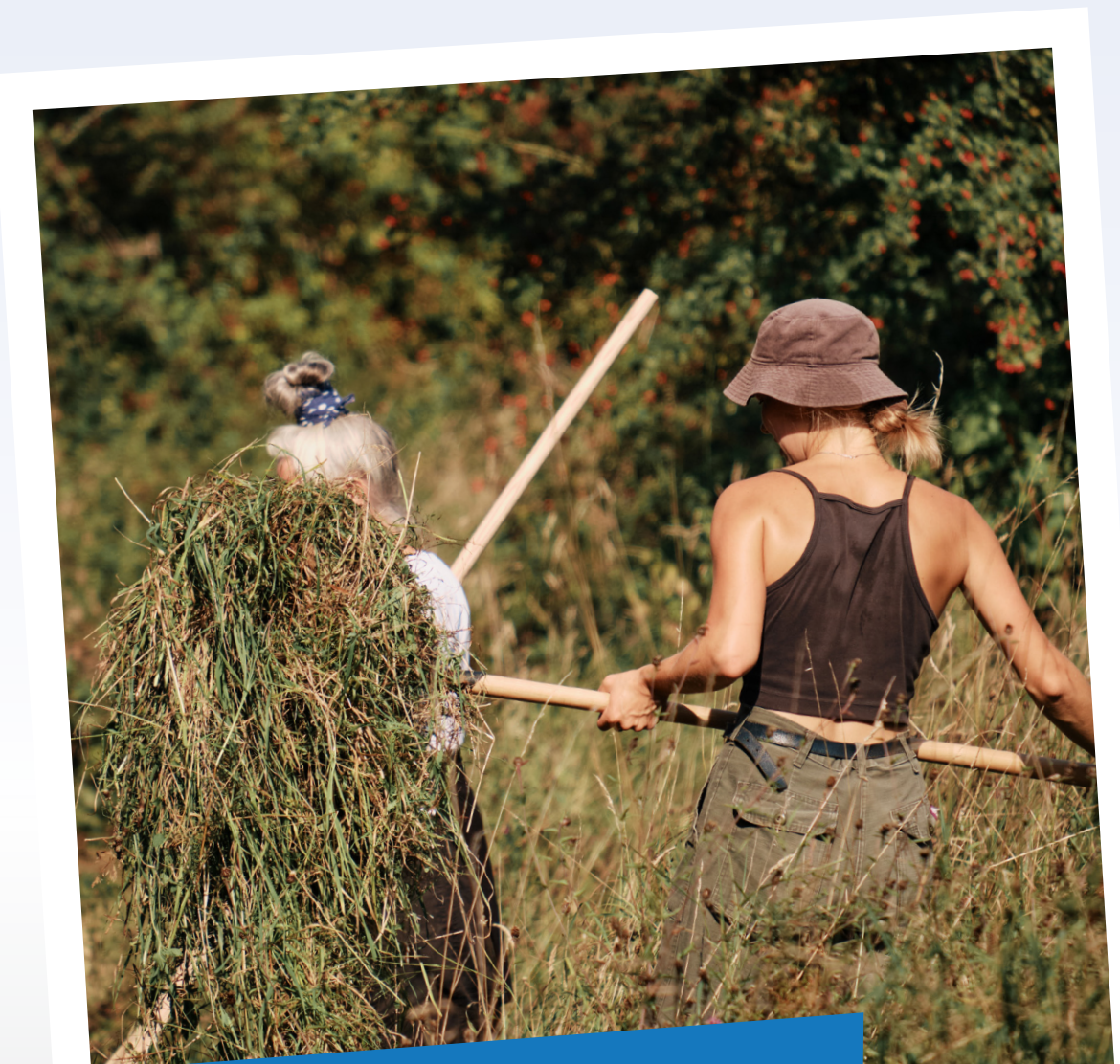
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Sweet Briar Marshes over time

Phase 3. Hub and facilities



Phase 4. Bridge, boardwalk and aerial walkway



Our wonderful volunteers will continue to help us care for Sweet Briar Marshes.

From the east section of the 'Upland Route' there are good views over the most sensitive and protected parts (Site of Special Scientific Interest/SSSI) to the flood meadows. A series of lookout decks are proposed along this route at gaps in the treeline, with seating nearby. Other smaller lookout points and bird viewing screens will be provided in appropriate locations. In the western section another point of lookout will provide views both east and west along the flood meadows.

We hope to provide outdoor natural 'classrooms' on and next to Sweet Briar Marshes for our valuable work with schools and young people. These areas will have natural log seats and removable shelters.

We hope that other facilities which were highlighted during the consultation can be provided in the area around Burnet Way, Sweet Briar Industrial estate and Sloughbottom Park. This could include facilities for volunteers and an information point and possibly refreshments. This will all require detailed planning and discussions with our neighbours.



Sweet Briar Marshes will be a catalyst to inspire more people to care for nature.

This stage aims to provide a further range of facilities and links. An exciting suggestion from our family consultation day was the idea of an aerial walkway. This is shown linking from the outdoor classroom through the tree canopy and connecting to Sweet Briar Marshes. This would connect the area at the end of Burnet Road and a pedestrian bridge over Marriott's Way and the 'Upland Route' creating an 'East Loop'.

We are also planning to talk with local residents about the possibility of a new pedestrian bridge over the river Wensum to connect the western side to the Riverside Walk and Hellesdon Road.

On the western side a raised boardwalk would provide a viewing point close to the river.

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Facilities

The following images are intended to give an indication of the types of facilities that could be provided at or near Sweet Briar Marshes. All of the elements to be provided will be subject to a detailed design process and consultation. Planning permission and other approvals will also be required.

Hub

The final location(s) and extent of the Hub is subject to further detailed design and discussion with our neighbours. However, we would like to provide accessible parking, toilets, a base for reserve staff and volunteers and visitor information. The preferred location, near Sweet Briar Road Industrial Estate may be influential on the design with the use of robust industrial materials.



Paths and decks

The main access path – the Upland Route – will cater for all users and will be designed to cope with wet conditions. Provision will be made for visitors who are visually impaired and further consultation is planned with Inclusive Norwich to agree the details. In parts of the site, boardwalks might be used to avoid damage to sensitive areas.



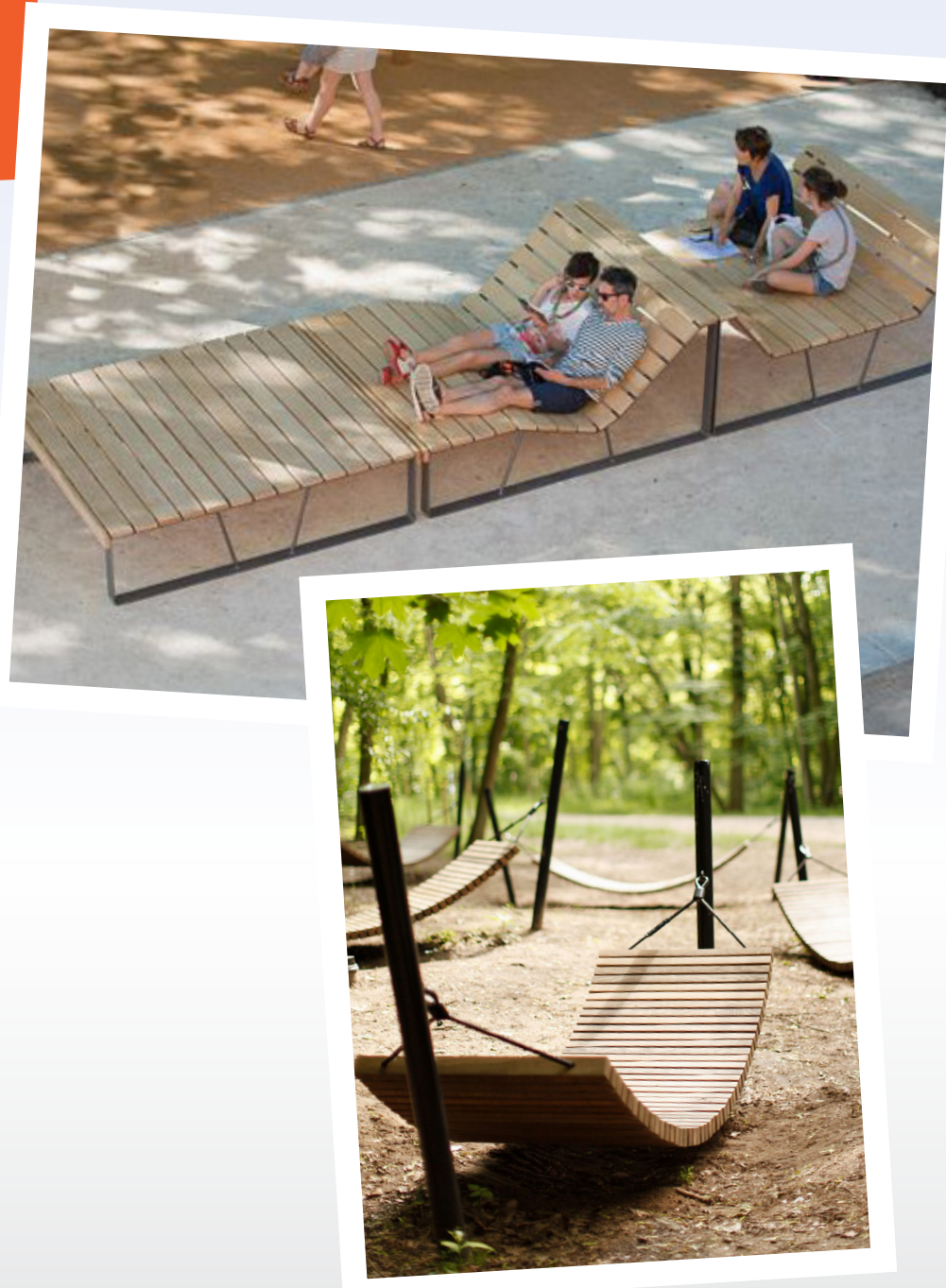
Lookouts

From the east section of the 'Upland Route' there are good views over the SSSI to the flood meadows and 'islands'. A series of lookout decks are proposed along this route at gaps in the treeline. This will allow visitors to get close to the SSSI but without encroachment into the sensitive parts of the site. The lookouts will have seating and information about the SSSI.



Seats and benches

A range of robust seating is proposed for the site. Seating will be located at various locations along the main routes. The seating will vary to cater for a range of users and age groups.



Bird viewing

A number of bird viewing points have been identified at key locations.



Aerial walkway

An exciting suggestion from the consultation process was the idea of an aerial walkway. This is shown on the concept plan linking from the outdoor classroom through the tree canopy and connecting to Sweet Briar Marshes, creating an 'East Loop' as well as joining up to other pathways.



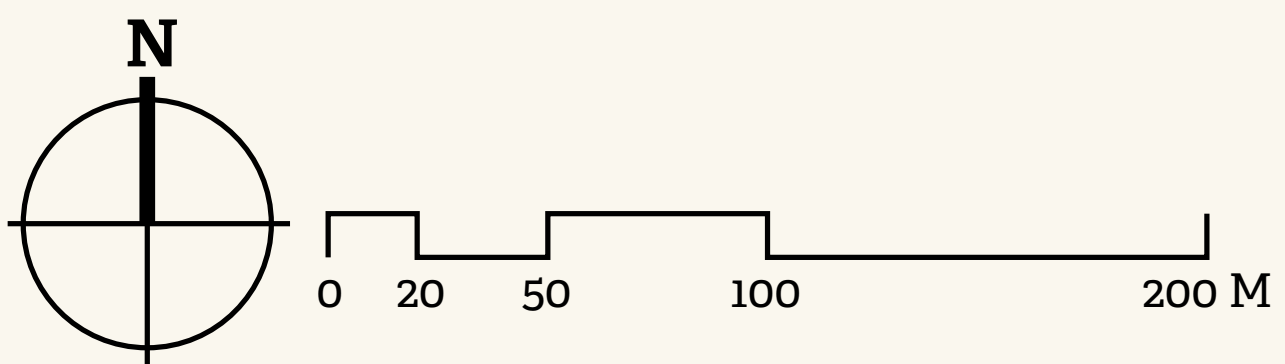
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Concept design plan

Concept designs by sheilsflynn



- Main entrance
- Secondary entrance
- Proposed hub
- Footpath
- Informal footpath
- Aerial walkway
- Bridge / boardwalk
- Outdoor classroom
- Lookout deck
- Bird viewing
- Lookout deck with bird viewing
- Pond dipping
- Proposed accessible parking
- Parking
- Bus stop
- Public house
- Community centre



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Aerial view

Proposals for Sweet Briar Marshes*

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*Some proposals shown will need planning permission

