

Ranelagh Gardens Park Enhancement Works

Concept Development Report August 2017
Dublin City Council



Team.



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Introduction & Rational for New Planting Areas.

Ranelagh Gardens Park is where we celebrate Richard Crosbie and Ireland's first manned balloon flight in 1785. Indeed the Park, as it exists today must look something of a green and blue oasis from the air, evidenced by its use by so many of our urban birds, such as moorhen, pigeons, gulls, mallards garden birds and even a rather tame Heron. The Park is well used by local people in a wide variety of ways, as part of a commute to and from work, as a place to play, rest, relax or enjoy a walk through. The Park is also richly diverse in its habitats and microhabitats, making it a magnet for birds and insects in particular.

Residents' and Dublin City Council have gone through consultation process and improvement works to the Park have been agreed. The children's playground has been installed and is well used, bringing a vibrancy to the park. The next phase of improvement works include New Plantings and the creation of a new Bird Zone to the Park.

Additionally children from 5 local schools participated in walk and talk journeys in their neighborhood with the Dublin City Council Biodiversity Department and Birdwatch Ireland. The children drew images of their interpretations inspired by these educational walks. The children worked up the images with the Mobile Print Workshop to make beautiful prints of their interpretations.

Inspired by this work and the outcomes of the Part 8 agreed concepts of Ranelagh Gardens Park, we consider the Park as a flagship for Biodiversity. The new planting is selected with a criteria to be, where possible pollinator friendly. Pollinators will in turn attract birds. Bird requirements of Food, Shelter, Water and place for Nesting are provided. The planting and design for the planting is considered with the intention to harmonize with the all of the parks user requirements, be they people, birds or pollinating insects.

New planting to the archway entrance, as we walk into the park, new planting at the playground, new planting to replace some of the existing edge planting to the grass areas herald a welcome color and life to the Park. The Island planting is considered for beauty and as an ideal habitat for the water birds such as Moorhen and Mallard. The Bird Zone, with new naturalizing bulb plantings, woodland edge habitat creation and additional flowering perennials will bring life to the newly mounded corner of the Park. The walk and rest opportunities around the pond with new planting surrounding and to the pond itself provide a rich seasonal display which also creates new complementary habitats for water birds and pollinating insects. It is clear from visiting the park, as it is now, how people, young and old enjoy engaging with and observing the birds of the park. The new planting improvements build on the parks existing diversity, bringing beauty, additional seasonal interest and sustainability to the much-loved Ranelagh Gardens Park.

We referenced heavily, for all planting areas to the park the following publications and data sources.

1. The Biodiversity Data center's work entitled Councils: actions to help pollinators. All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, Guidelines 4. National Biodiversity Data Centre Series No.12, Waterford. November, 2016.
2. Bird-Friendly Landscape Design Guidelines - City Of Vancouver Executive Summary. Michele Campbell, Vancouver Board Of Parks And Recreation Park Planning And Park Development. 2013
3. Birds of St Stephen's Green in Autumn & Winter 2012. Report to the Office of Public Works. Prepared by Stephen McAvoy & Olivia Crowe, BirdWatch Ireland December 2012



Man + pollinating insects inter-dependence in harmony.

Habitat creation of pollinating insects through provision of minimum 75% pollinator friendly species throughout the new planting in the park.
(Recommended by the Biodiversity Data Centre.)

Habitats Riparian

New edge planting at pond and island provide riparian habitat.

Habitats Water

Pond habitat potential enhanced by new submerged and floating planting. Water quality should also be optimized with planting and maintenance work to the pond.

Bird Zone. Habitat for Urban Birds.

Area of Park becomes habitat to support urban bird life. Planting selected to provide Food, Shelter + Nesting opportunities. Woodlands edge planting with pollinator friendly planting leads into naturalized bulb grassy lawn.

Habitats Meadow.

Flower species allowed to emerge, by changing cutting management to 6 week rotation in the Bird Zone. Trail areas of wildflower are grown along steep banks of the lawns.

Habitats Island.

The island has a degree of separation from human access, it can be enjoyed from a distance of the paths.

New planting can optimize opportunity for provision of food, shelter and nesting for urban water birds such as Moorhen and Mallard.



5 Schools Engagement

DCC Biodiversity Department + Birdwatch Ireland.



Dublin City Council Biodiversity Department, Birdwatch Ireland & Mobile Prints Works collaborated with five local schools to raise awareness of urban bird life in the Ranelagh area. The children explored locally what urban birds are and how to recognise them by eye and ear. They also learned about where the birds live and nest locally, how to feed and support the birds by interventions such as bird boxes, bird feeders and bird friendly planting. This work inspired the prints exemplified here, created in a Mobile Prints Workshop. The five schools collective work inspires the creation of the New Birdzone.

1. Food



In Ranelagh Gardens Park we plant so as to extend the feeding seasons for birds and pollinating insects. We do this by planting hundreds of new bulbs which naturalize in the lawn of the Bird Zone in spring and autumn. Through summer the lawn is allowed to grow and flower, and newly planted perennials and trees provide seeds and berries into winter. Throughout the Park we have new pollinator friendly planting areas at the entrance, the island and the pond.

2. Shelter



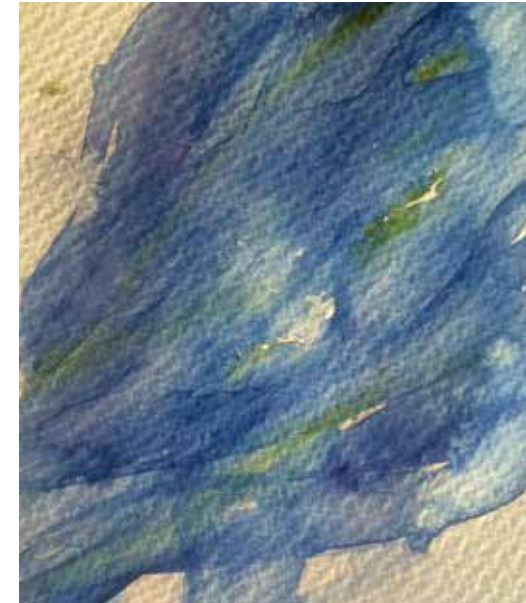
Ranelagh Gardens Park is a natural haven for birds with its many trees providing shelter. We plant more flowering trees to continue to provide for this habitat into the future. New trees are also planted to replace these trees that have been identified as being unhealthy and in need of removal.

3. Nesting



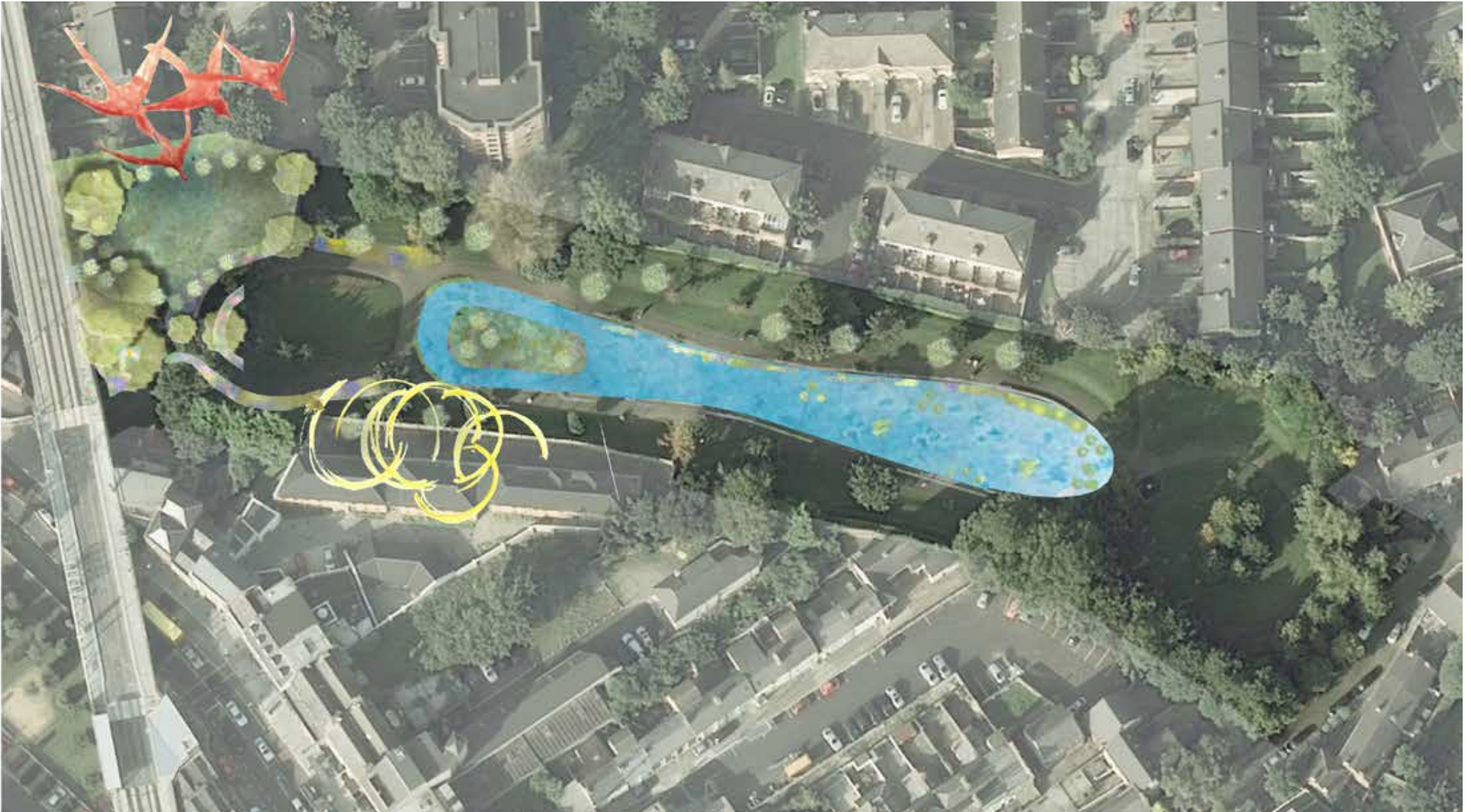
The many trees and the Island provide a rich diversity of nesting opportunities for the many different species of birds who come to live in the Gardens.

4. Water



All birds need access to water and visitors to Ranelagh Gardens Park are treated to the sight of many birds enjoying the pond. In addition to this the new bird zone has a naturally occurring wet area in the lawn. Rather than providing drainage to this area we allow it to inundate with water seasonally. This is known as 'messy ecology' a type of care to the park which cherishes unpredictable, natural occurrences which benefit wildlife and bring joy to visitors of the park to observe.

We consider the Park as a flagship for Biodiversity. The new planting is selected with a criteria to be, where possible pollinator friendly. Pollinators will in turn attract birds. Bird requirements of Food, Shelter, Water and place for Nesting are provided. The planting and design for the planting is considered with the intention to harmonize with the all of the parks user requirements, be they people, birds or pollinating insects.



Zoning of Habitat Enhancement Planting

The Birdzone

Habitat to support bird life. New Woodland Edge and naturalised bulb plantings. New Trees. Lawn area maintained in 6 week cutting cycle to allow emergence of wildflowers. New perennial pollinator friendly planting, minimum 75%

New Trees, Replacements to Damaged Trees, Wildflower Areas & Planting Around Pond.

Replacement trees who must be removed for health and safety reasons. Trial areas of wild flowers along banks. New Perennial Planting around pond. Pollinator Planting minimum 75%

New Planting to Pond.

Submerged and Floating planting help clean the water and provide additional habitat opportunities for pond life.

New Entrance Planting.

New Perennial Planting
Pollinator Planting minimum 75%

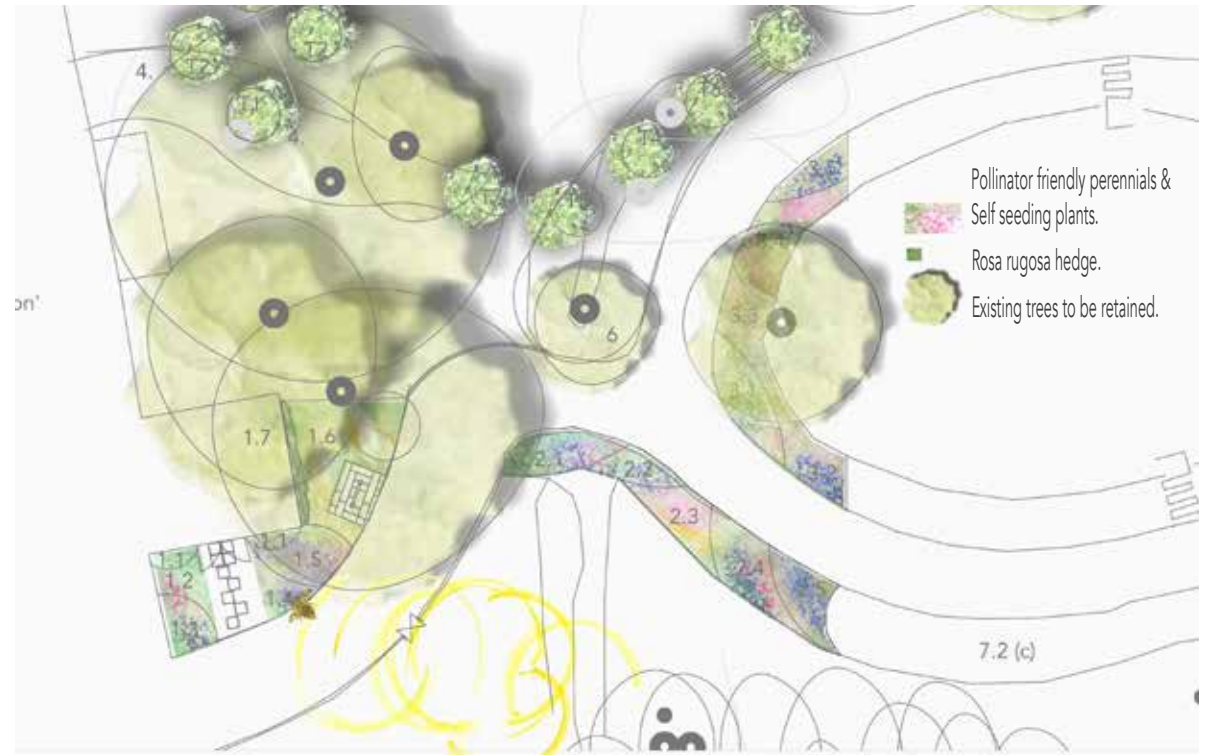
New Island Planting.

New Tree, Wild rose, Wildflower & Perennial Planting
Pollinator Planting minimum 75%



New Entrance Planting.

New planting to the archway entrance, as we walk into the park, new planting at the new and well used playground, new planting to replace some of the existing edge planting to the grass areas herald a welcome color and life to the Park. Over 75% of the new planting is pollinator friendly mixed planting. Range of perennials for beautiful extended seasonal interest.





The Bird Zone.

New Trees and Edge Habitats to provide a long season of interest for birds and people.

Spring: Woodland edge habitat with flowering trees providing Shelter and Nesting opportunities.
Lawn area, with masses of naturalizing spring bulbs.

Summer: 6 Week grass cutting allows emergence of flowering plants for pollinators to lawn area.
Edge planting of pollinator friendly flowering perennials.

Autumn: Woodland edge habitat with trees now in berry additionally providing Shelter and Nesting opportunities.
Lawn area, with masses of naturalizing autumn bulbs. Edge planting of pollinator friendly flowering perennials, into autumn.

Winter: Woodland edge habitat with trees providing Shelter and Nesting opportunities over winter.
Lawn area will not be cut over winter, bulbs such as snowdrops emerge.



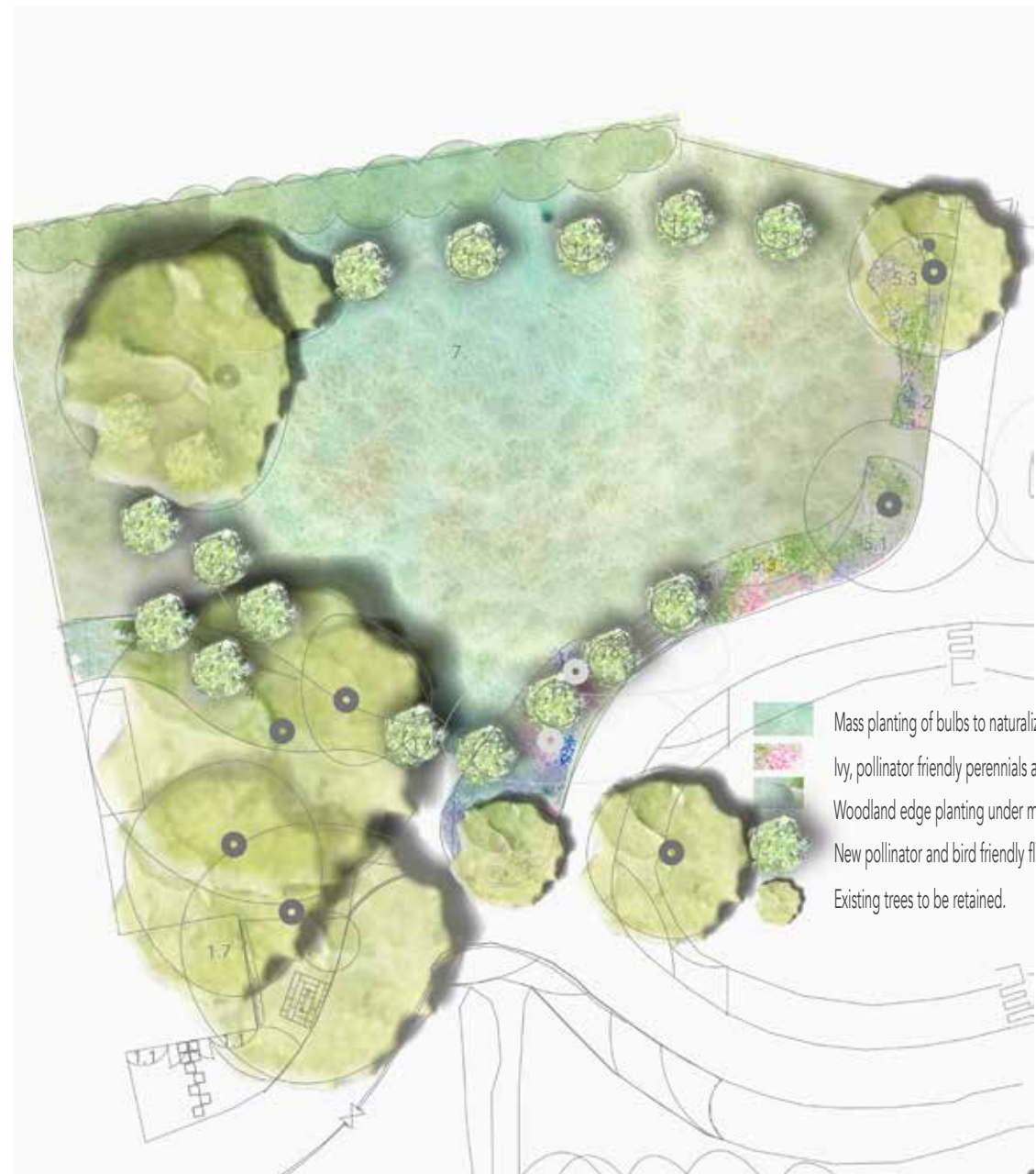
Trees: Spring Flowering and Autumn Berries.

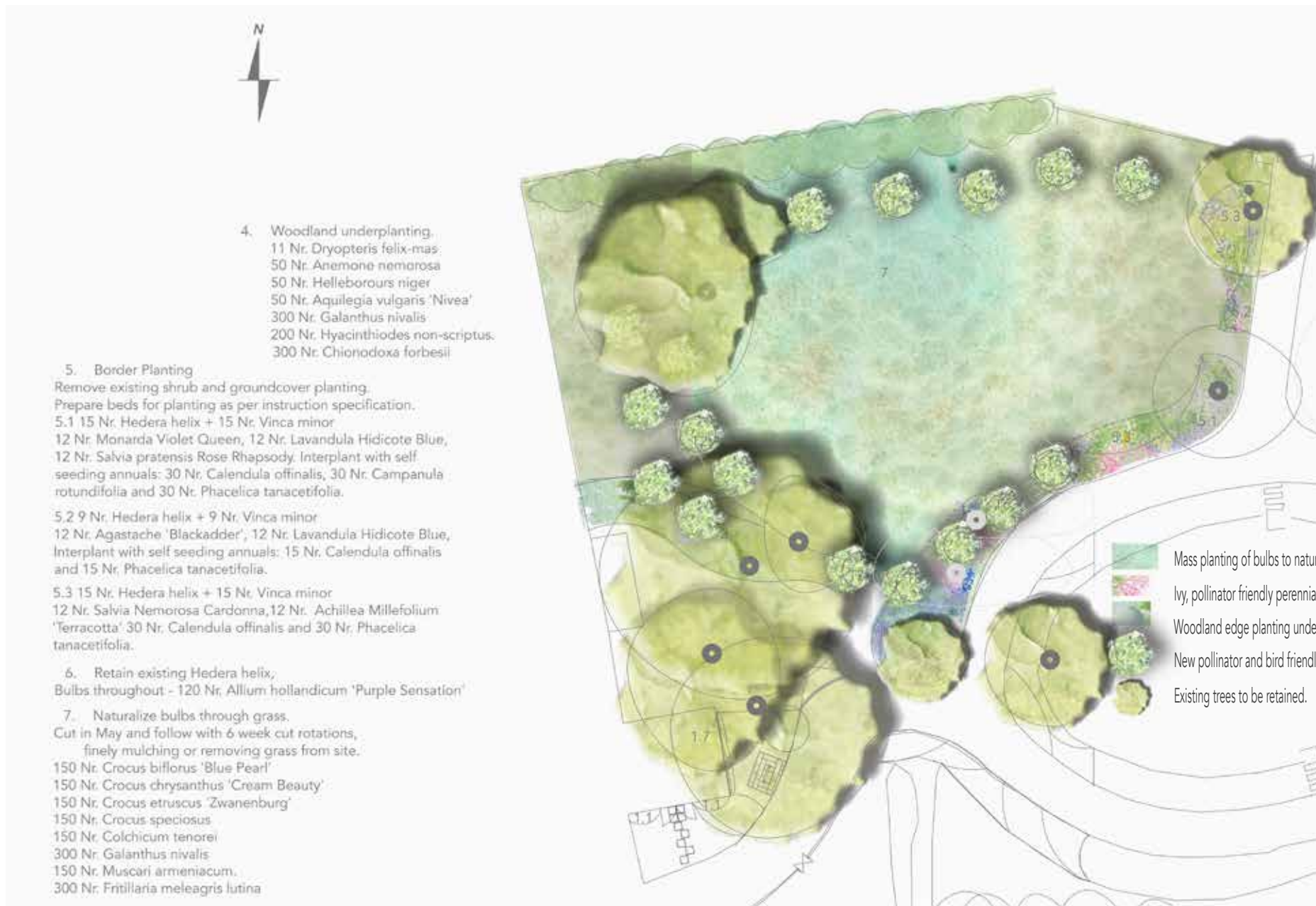


Naturalizing Bulbs to extend the season of interest.



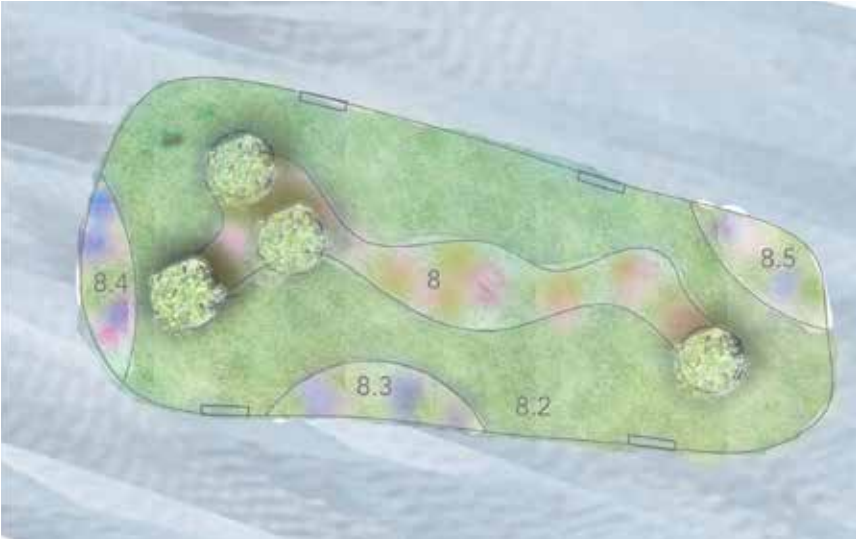
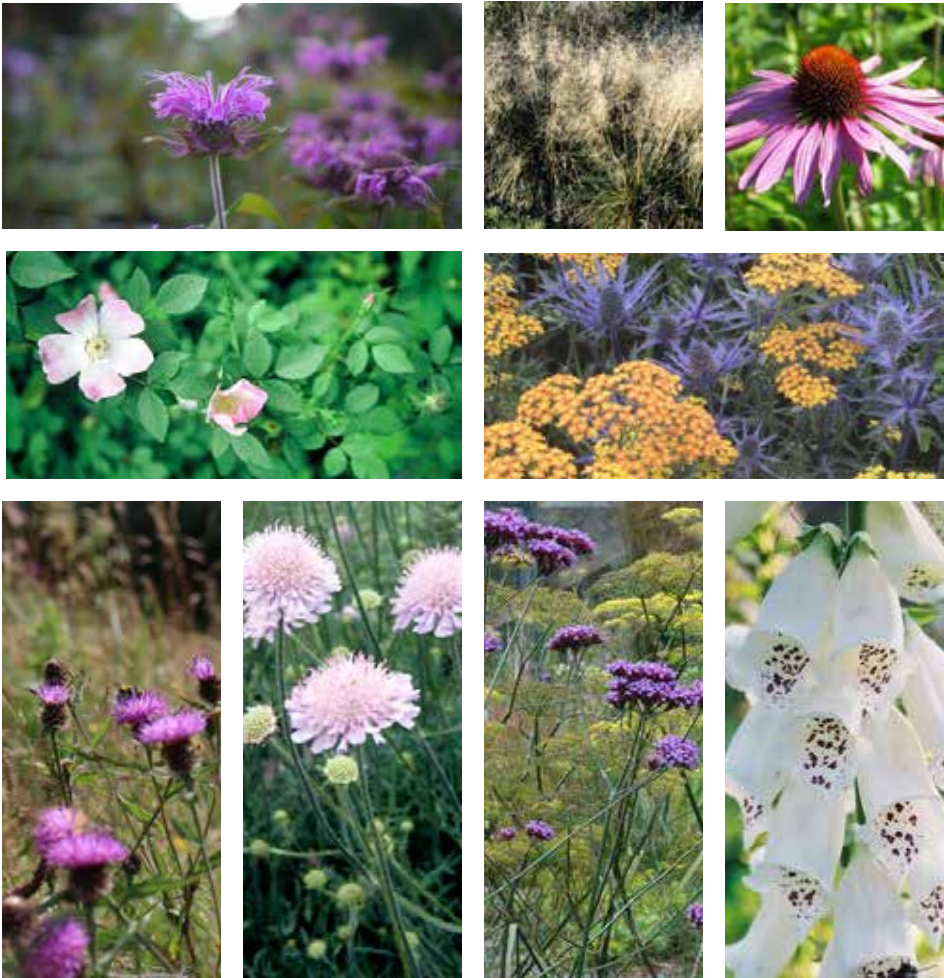
Pollinator friendly perennials provide colorful display.

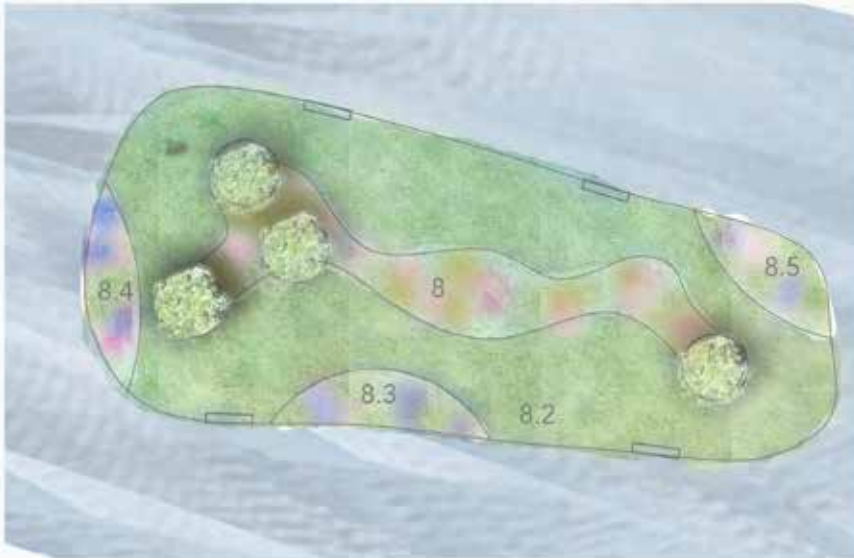




New Island Planting.

The Island planting is considered for beauty and as an ideal habitat for the water birds such as Moorhen and Mallard. The planting scheme here is inspired by the classical layered heights through trees, shelter for birds through provision of native woodland edge planting of our wild rose Grass and self seeding flowering meadow flowering plants are complemented with flowering perennials groupings.






8. Planting to Island


Remove Ex. Island vegetation including root layer. Prepare ground for planting.

Provide bird access to pond at min 4 points by stepping in existing raised wall of island.

 80 Nr. *Rosa canina* @ 2/M underplanting to trees.

 8.2
145 M sq. Wild Flower Mix Allow uncut in winter, cut back once in spring before growth begins and nesting season starts. Flowers May - September.

Birdsfoot Trefoil, Black meddick, Cowslip, Devils Bit scabrous, Meadow buttercup, Field scabious, Hemp agrimony, Kidney vetch, Ladys bedstraw, Ladys Anne's Lace, Lesser knapweed, Meadowsweet, Mullein, Oxeye daisy, Purple loosestrife, Ragged robin, Red campion, Red clover, Ribwort plantain, Rough Hawsbit, Sorrel, St. Johnsworth, Wild angelica, Wild carrot, Yarrow, Yellow agrimony, Yellow rattle, Teasel, Corn marigold, Corn poppy, Corncockle, Corn flower, Scented marigold.

 8.3 11 Nr. *Deschampsia a cepitosa* 'Goldtau' + 9 Nr. *Echinacea purpurea* Magnus

8.4 9 Nr. *Achillea millefolium* 'Terracotta' + 9 Nr. *Echinops ritro* 'Veitche's Blue'

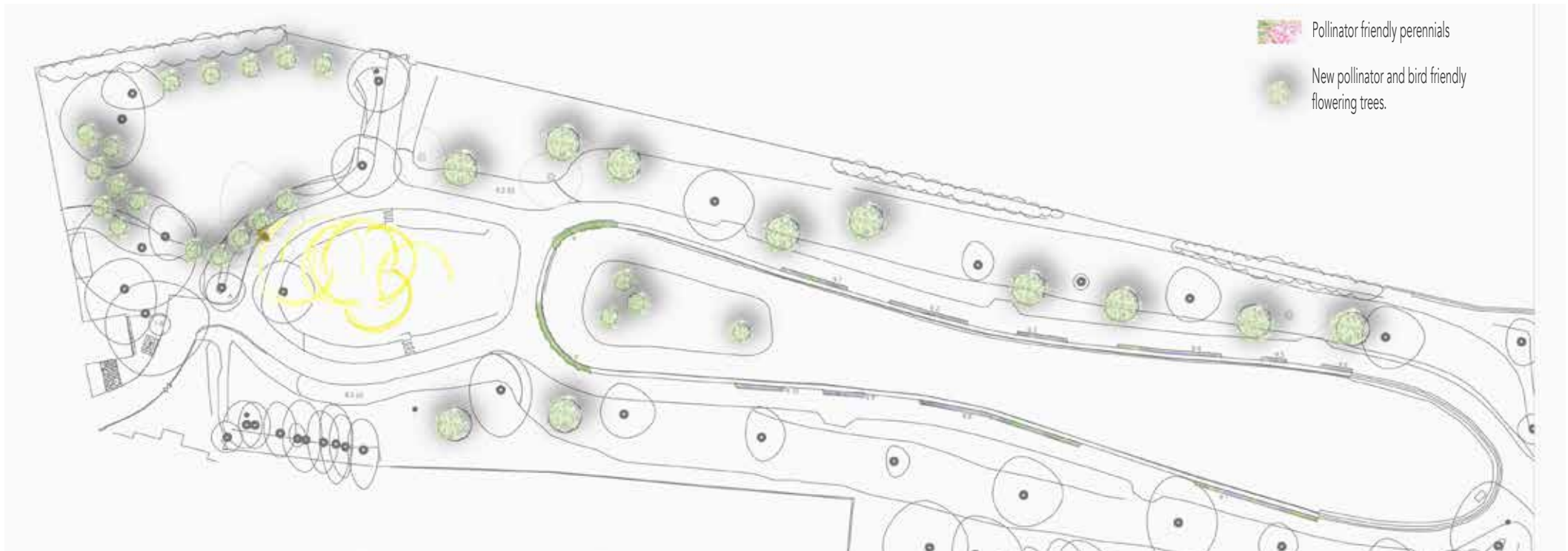
8.5 7 Nr. *Digitalis alba*, 7 Nr. *Monarda* Voilet Queen + 7 Nr. *Verbena* bondriensis

New Trees, Replacements to Damaged Trees Wildflower Trail areas & Planting

Around Pond.

Some of the existing trees in the park are unhealthy and new specimen trees are proposed to replace them. These trees become features within the park. New pollinator friendly colorful perennial planting to the pond surround.

Trail areas of pollinator friendly Wildflower along the two steep edges to lawn areas.



New Trees, Replacements to Damaged Trees

Wildflower Trail areas & Planting Around Pond.

8.2 Wildflower: Planting to sloped banks. Remove existing vegetation and prepare ground to supplier instructions.
8.2 (b) 75 M sq. + 8.2(c) 78 M sq. Trail Area of Pollinator Friendly Wild Flower Mix.
Allow uncut in winter, cut back once in spring before growth begins and nesting season starts. Flowers May - September. Birdsfoot Trefoil, Black meddock, Cowslip, Devils Bit scabrous, Meadow buttercup, Field scabious, Hemp agrimony, Kidney vetch, Ladys bedstraw, Ladys Anne's Lace, Lesser knapweed, Meadowsweet, Mullain, Oxeye daisy, Purple loosestrife, Ragged robin, Red campion, Red clover, Ribwort plantain, Rough Hawksbit, Sorrel, St. Johnsworth, Wild angelica, Wild carrot, Yarrow, Yellow agrimony, Yellow rattle, Teasel, Corn marigold, Corn poppy, Corncockle, Corn flower, Scented marigold



9. Pond Border Planting
Beds surrounding Pond Generally: Retain Cotoneaster + trim plant back so there is no overhang to the edge of the pond.
Remove all other planting.
Prepare beds for planting as per instruction specification.

Plant additional as outlined below.

9.1 5 Nr. Nepeta 'Walkers Low' + 5 Nr. Monarda Violet Queen.

9.2 +3. 7 Nr. Deschampsia cepitosa 'Goldtau', 5 Nr. Astartria major 'Claret, 5 Nr. Monarda Violet Queen + 5 Nr. Echinacea purpurea Magnus

9.4. 7 Nr. Salvia pratensis Rose Rhapsody + 7 Nr. Salvia nemorosa Cardonna

9.5 +6. 7 Nr. Deschampsia cepitosa 'Goldtau', 5 Nr. Agastache 'Blackadder' + 3 Nr. Echinacea purpurea Magnus

9.7 Breakout Bed to be scheduled when doing reinstatement works to path. Plant 7 Nr. Festuca mairei, 5 Nr. Armonone hupehsis 'Hedspen Abundance', 5 Nr. Salvia greggii x sep. phylum + 5 Nr. Schizostylis coccinea f. rosea.

9.8. 12 Nr. Lavandula Hidicote Blue.

9.9 +10. 7 Nr. Nepeta Walkers Low + 7 Nr. Salvia nemorosa Cardonna

Trees:

Prepare ground as per instruction specification.

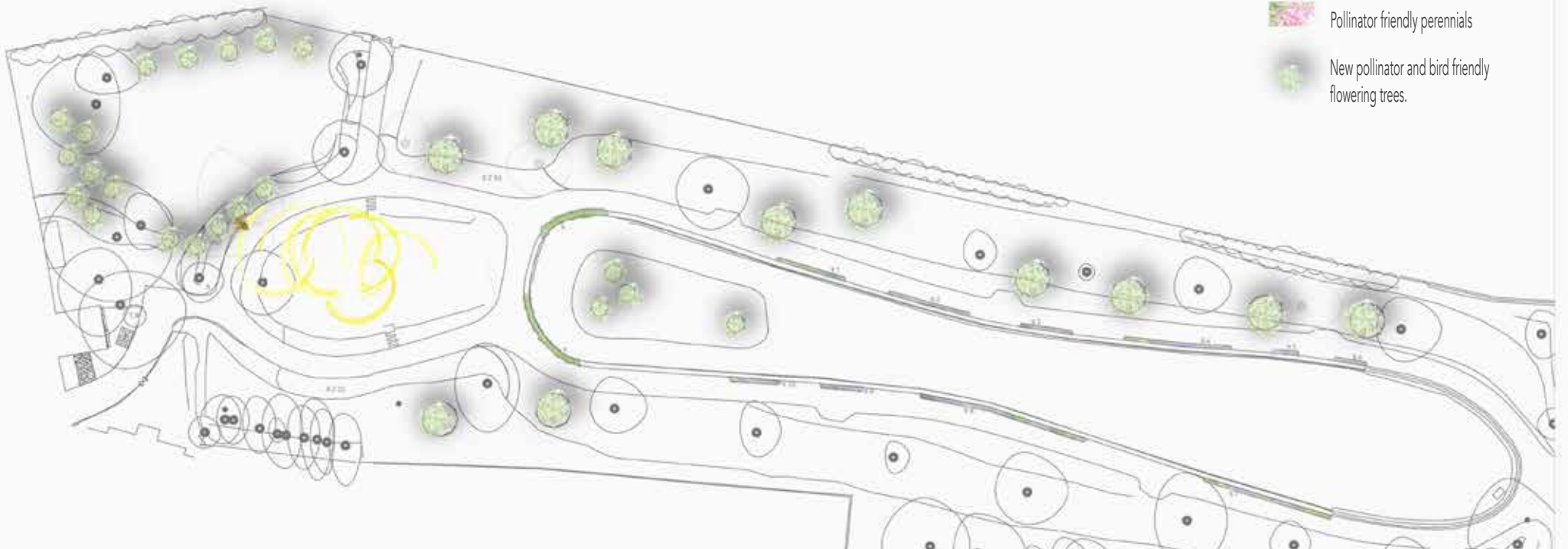
- T1. 1 Nr. Quercus petraea
- T2. 3 Nr. Prunus padus
- T3. 2 Nr. Prunus avium 'Early Rivers'
- T4. 2 Nr. Prunus avium 'Sunburst'
- T5. 2 Nr. Prunus avium 'Lupins'
- T6. 3 Nr. Creataegus monogyna 'Stricta'
- T7. 7 Nr. Betula pendula
- T8. 2 Nr. Betula pendula 'Youngii'
- T9. 2 Nr. Liquidamber styraciflua 'Penwood'
- T10. 2 Nr. Magnolia denudata
- T 11. 4 Nr. Prunus semuleta 'Tai-Haku'
- T12. 1 Nr. Arbutus undeo 'Atlantic'
- T13. 1 Nr. Betula pendula 'Tristis'



Pollinator friendly perennials



New pollinator and bird friendly flowering trees.



New Planting to Pond.

Pond planting extends from along its edge into the shallow waters providing a variety of reflected colour, hue and form throughout the seasons. Floating lilies extend colour and habitat across the water and provide shade, helping to prevent algal growth. Submerged plants add oxygen to the water, removing nutrients and assist in preventing the growth of algae. The mosaic of planting has been specially selected to provide a range of habitats, particularly to pollinating bees.

