

Westcroft Open Space Improvement Scheme

Introduction

Westcroft Open Space is located on Westcroft Close, Cricklewood, London Borough of Barnet (centroid grid reference TQ 24267 85641). The site is approximately 550m² in size, and comprises hardstanding, introduced shrubs, trees and amenity grassland. The site is surrounded by a metal fence on three sides, and there are three benches present. The use of the site is currently negligible, mainly being used by dog walkers. It has been neglected over the years, and the current management is limited to the mowing of the grassland and the pruning of the shrubs.



Figure 1 Map showing the location of Westcroft Open Space (circled in red).

Proposal

The proposed improvement scheme would be carried out in two stages. Stage one comprises the preparation of the site and stage two comprises the proposed enhancements.

Stage One

1. Arrange for the tree department to fell four silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) and grind out the stumps (Figure 2).

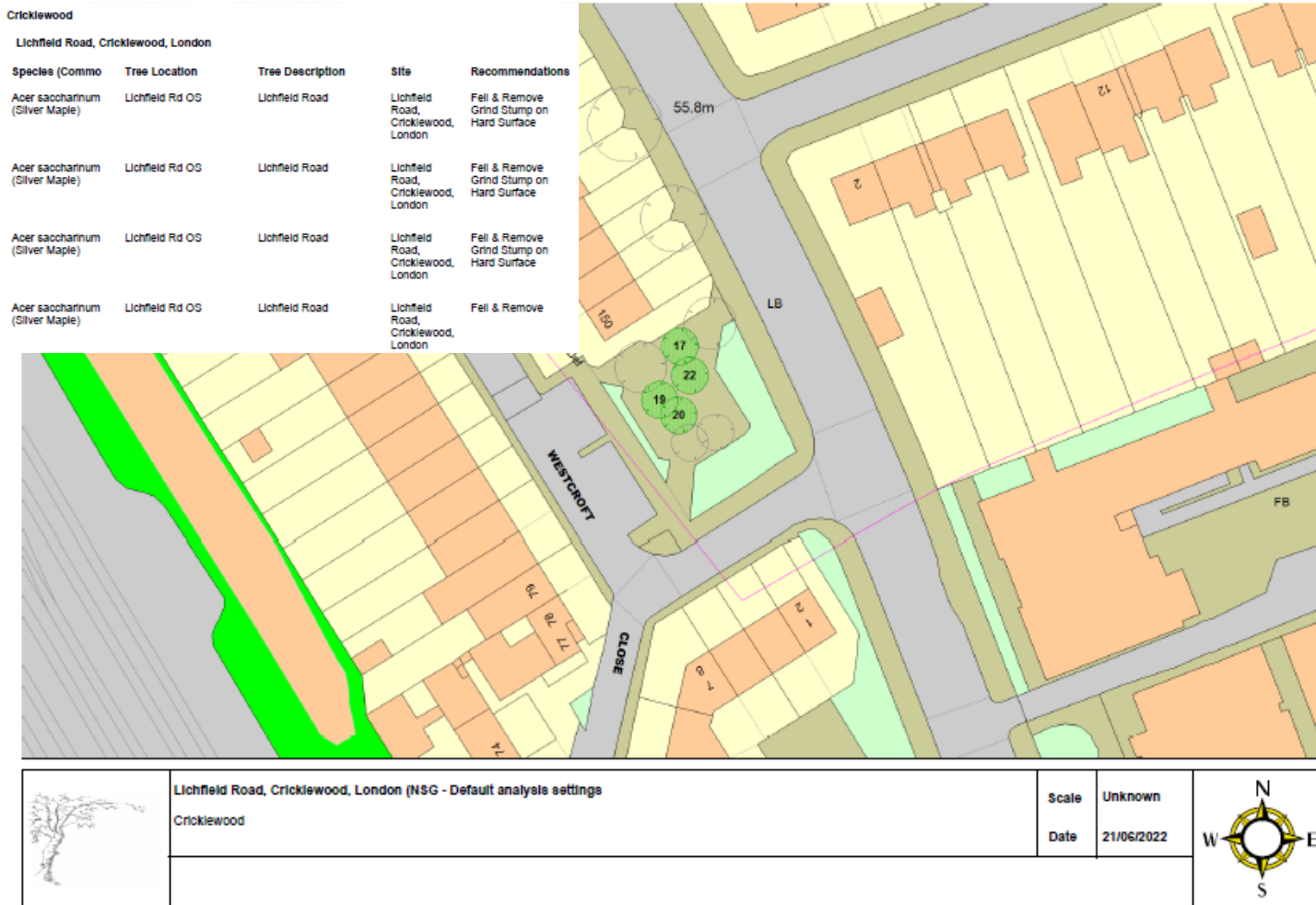


Figure 2 Map showing the proposed trees to be felled (trees 17, 19, 20 & 22).

2. Remove all the paving slabs and clear the rubble below (Figure 3).



Figure 3 The existing paving slabs and hardstanding that surround the trees (to be removed).

3. Remove the old wooden slack benches (Figure 4).



Figure 4 The existing wooden benches.

4. Remove all dead vegetation and clear the brambles
5. Break up the tarmac leading to Lichfield Road and around the paved area (Figure 5).



Figure 5 Tarmac to be removed

Stage Two

After the site has been prepared, the following enhancements are proposed.

Amenity

1. Widen the grass verge on the western boundary of the site to double the current width. This will continue to be managed by the Grounds Maintenance team.
2. Install a knee-high wooden fence with two entrances in the centre of the one space.
3. Install 2 concrete chess tables diagonal from each other inside the newly created area (Figure 6).
4. Relay a new tarmac footpath along the existing shrub bed and straight through the newly created area (narrowing the existing shrub bed).
5. Install 2 x RN6 benches (Figure 7).
6. Install 1 x Trevor Iles bin (Figure 8).



Figure 6 An example of a concrete chess table that could be added as part of the enhancement works.



Figure 7 An example of the RN6 benches that could be added as part of the enhancement works.



Figure 8 An example of the Trevor Iles bin that could be added as part of the enhancement works.

Biodiversity

1. Gap out the shrub bed with native species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) or blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). Further examples can be found in Table 1. below.
2. Add topsoil, bulb planting and woodchip new habitat around trees. Pollinators would benefit from the addition of plants rich in a pollen source throughout the year. In order to ensure a nectar source year-round it is important to use plants that are relevant to the season. The table below includes examples of plants that thrive through the different seasons that could be added to create a pollinator friendly area.

Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Flowering Cherry Crab Apple Hawthorn Bugle Daffodils Pulmonaria Sea Thrift Alliums Grape Hyacinth	Lavender Agastache <i>Erysimum</i> 'Bowles' 'Mauve' Scabious Comfrey Foxgloves Cardoon Echinops	Sedums Single-flowered Dahlias <i>Verbena bonariensis</i> Anemones Autumn Asters <i>Actaea simplex</i>	Snowdrops Crocuses Hellebores Winter Honeysuckle Ivy Mahonia Winter Aconites

Table 1 Examples of plant species that grow in different seasons that would benefit pollinators and bird species.

3. Plant low maintenance species along the north-eastern fence line, such as holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).
4. Bird box (Figure 9) on existing trees to mitigate for the loss of four trees as part of the site enhancements. All bird boxes should be installed at a height of 3 to 4 metres above ground level, one per tree. The boxes will be attached to the relevant trees using aluminium nails or straps (copper nails will not be used) to avoid damage to the trees.
5. Bat box (Figure 10) on existing trees. The tree mounted boxes will be installed at a height of at least 3 to 4 metres using aluminium nails or straps (copper nails will not be used) to avoid damage to the relevant trees. They will be mounted facing south-east, south or south-west to maximise solar heating during the day.



Figure 9 An example of a bat box - Vivara Pro Beaumaris WoodStone® Bat Box Midi (www.vivarapro.co.uk).



Figure 10 an example of a bird box - Woodstone® Seville Nest Box 28mm (www.vivarapro.co.uk)

6. Pollinator (solitary bee) signage (Figure 11). Ideally on an easter-southern elevation so that the box is in full sunlight.



Figure 11 An example of the pollinator habitat that could be added as part of the enhancement works (www.grassroofcompany.co.uk/habitat-planters)

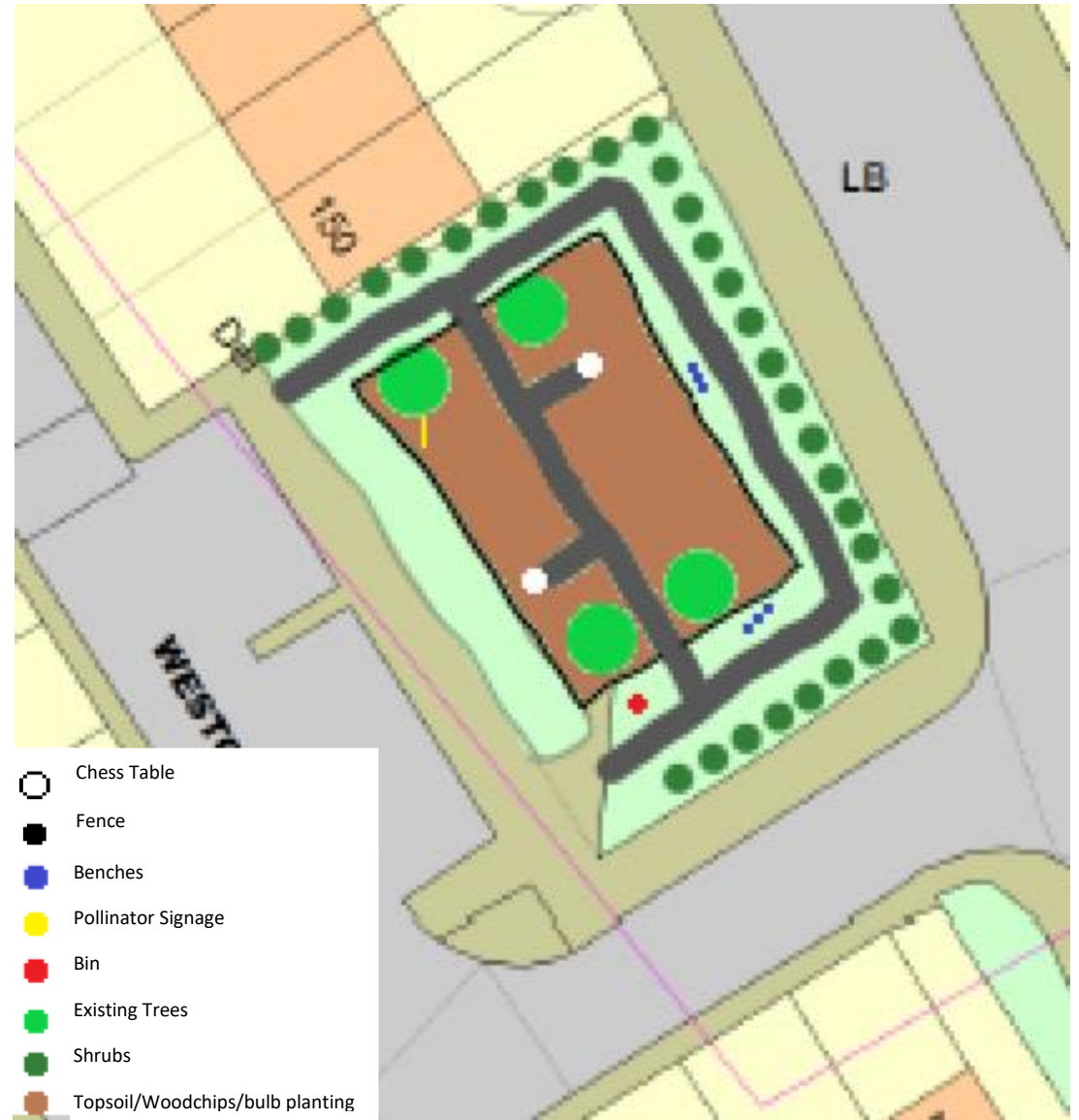
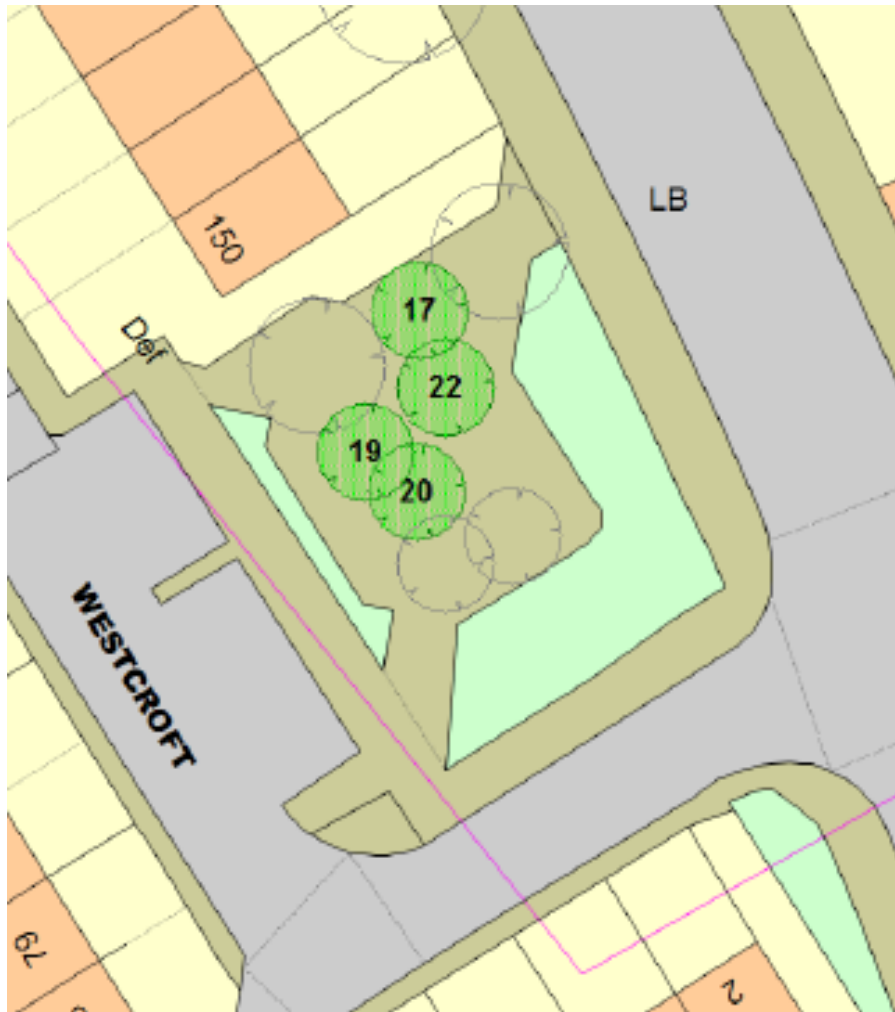


Figure 12 The existing space (left) and the space with proposed enhancements (right).