



North Hyde Park Neighbourhood Association

Established 1971

Climate Change Working Group - Proposed Alternative Management in Parks

Site Name: Woodhouse Moor Park

21st October 2020

Site No: 40183

Ward: Little London & Woodhouse

The North Hyde Park Neighbourhood Assn has represented the residents of the Headingley Hill and Hyde Park Corner areas for five decades. As such the Association thanks Leeds City Council for its letter of 5th October 2020 inviting comment on these proposals for Woodhouse Moor.

Principles and Purpose

NHPNA understands that the Council's objective is to reduce the City's overall CO2 emissions, and that planting trees is one of the tactics that will contribute to achieving that goal. Woodland creation is not, however, the same as planting trees, as woodland is much more diverse, natural, and messy than the ordered layout of parkland, or avenues of trees alongside a thoroughfare. Woodland is also not the same as a Moor, which remains the status of the soil and drainage of much of the area under discussion.

Location

Woodhouse Moor is in four parts, see map overleaf:

- A. Upper Moor - the park bit - is the back garden for thousands of people in flats or small terraces; it is where they come to relax in the sun, chat to friends and play casual sport. It isn't woodland, and indeed, it has relatively few areas of undergrowth (around the bowling green, and around the allotments) and only one of Scrub (in the middle of its South-East facing edge, by the reservoir (area A2 in the map).
- B. Lower (or Cinder Moor) - below Rampart Road, the other side of the A660 - once a cricket field, now a cinder covered area variously used as car parking, venue for noisy funfairs, Covid testing drive-in, emergency ambulance park etc. It has a perimeter of grass and small trees.
- C. Monument Moor - also the other side of the A660 - mostly grassed, but also given over to parking for Circus lorries and other event transport.
- D. Little Moor - outside LL&W Ward (in H&HP) the opposite side of Woodhouse Street, under Woodhouse Cliff - an area of grassland with some mature trees. It has a disused play park, but other than that is little used - people sitting in the sun prefer not to do so along a fairly main road, so go to the upper Moor a couple of hundred metres away.

Council Proposals



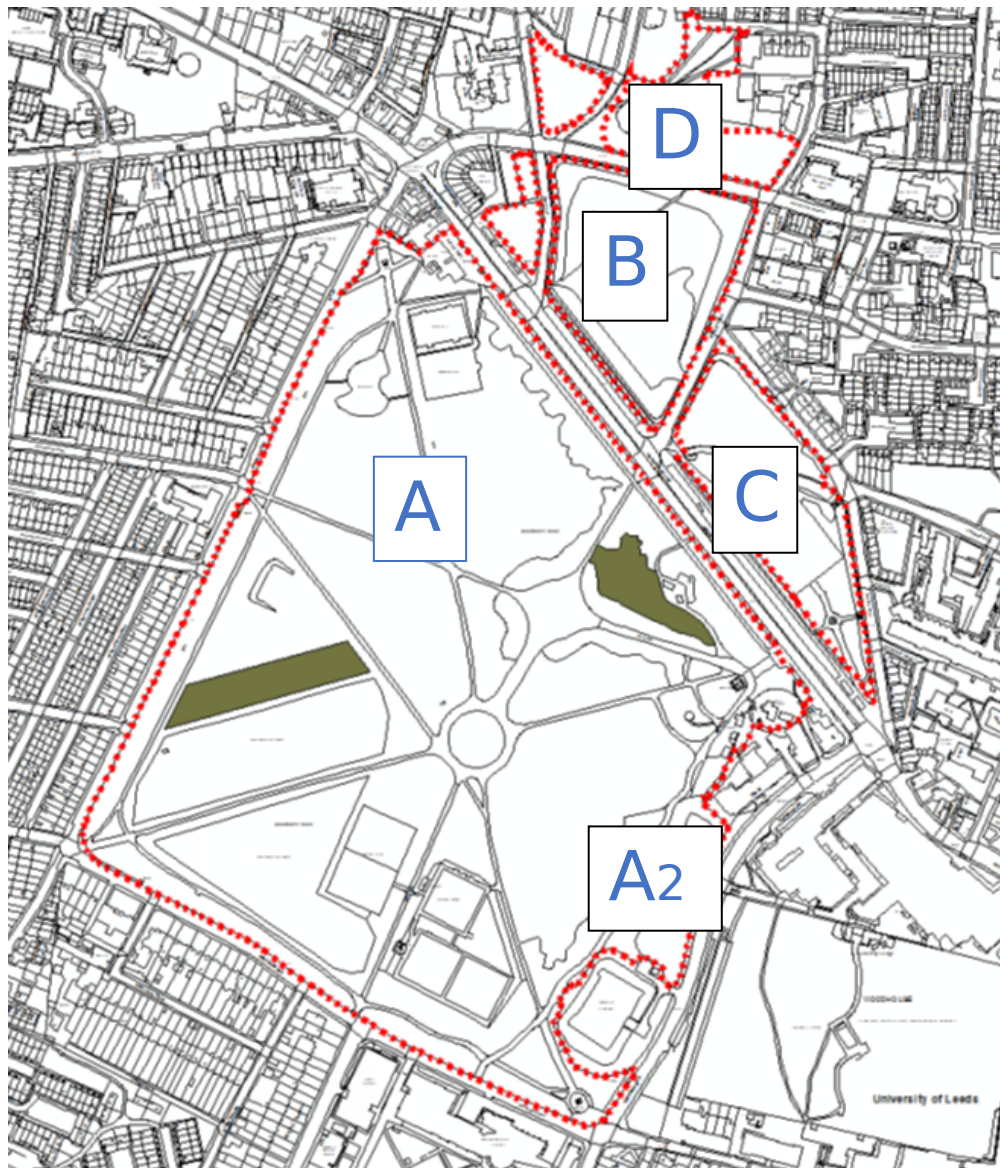
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The City Council proposals are to plant whips in two areas of the Upper Moor – a tetrahedral strip North and slightly West of the allotments, and in an irregular patch currently encircled by mature trees adjacent to Akmal’s restaurant.

NHPNA comments are as follows:

The Association regrets the choice of the space alongside the Allotments for planting – this is a West-inclined slope much loved by sunbathers in the late afternoon, and the area proposed removes a significant portion of it. NHPNA strongly suggests that this strip is made much narrower, or preferably removed entirely.



The area adjacent to Akmal's is quite moist (it is a Moor...) so little used for sitting on or games, so NHPNA believes it would be suitable for planting with whips, and that preference is given to species tolerant of moisture, like Alder, Aspen and Birch. This area will need to be securely fenced to prevent it being trampled on Bonfire

nights.



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NHPNA suggestions are as follows:

Though included in the general area of Woodhouse Moor, no proposals are made regarding the three areas adjacent to the Upper Moor. NHPNA believes this should be rectified:

Priority should be given to restoring substantial trees in the “avenue” where there were once Elms along the A660, and that these trees should be protected using steel guards (as illustrated) which would be proof against casual vandalism and hopefully glancing blows from traffic. ¹ Not only would this be visually attractive, but it would frame the Monument and reduce the windswept feel in the winter months.



By “substantial trees”, the Association has in mind native forest trees, especially Oak, Hornbeam and Beech, or possibly the Eurasian Sweet Chestnut which will all grow to a good size (thereby fixing a lot of Carbon) and provide habitat for indigenous wildlife, especially insects at the bottom of the food chain. The Association has excluded Ash and Horse Chestnut as both are afflicted by disease and are therefore likely to require replacement before long.

NHPNA suggests that the central part of Monument Moor between the statue and Rampart Road be considered for planting of whips instead of the strip by the Allotments. This area is little used currently, and would provide a staging post for smaller wildlife between the Moor and St Mark’s Churchyard. Ideally the Association would like to see the western end of Monument Moor reclaimed from its barren existence as a lorry park.

NHPNA also notes that over the last decade the substantial trees on the lower end of Little Moor have had a number of casualties – these could be replaced with protected, large indigenous species standing on the grassy bank as the survivors currently do, but coming closer to the street. If the redundant playpark is not going to be used, then the fencing could be used to protect a significant “monumental” tree and surrounding bushes, rather than be left to become urban scrubland. The Association suggests a copper Beech, or a Lebanon Cedar, or a tall conical species like a Sequoia.

In all areas of the Moor, the avenues of smaller trees along footpaths have a number of gaps; these trees are planted close together, but the Association believes it should be possible to fulfil Cllr Pryor’s commitment to have these gaps

¹ These examples are £149 each from an ironworker in the West Midlands – it should be possible to source locally, perhaps with heritage lottery or similar grant funding.



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plugged, and suggests that the infill uses smaller flowering or fruit-bearing species rather than more of the current types.

On this point, NHPNA is very conscious of the large number of Sycamores in this area, in gardens, on Woodhouse Ridge as well as around Woodhouse Moor. Along with a few other Maple/ Plane relatives, and the Linden/ Limes - these tend to shed branches, which are therefore a hazard to passers-by, and the sycamores in particular are less beneficial for British wildlife than native species. As the Lindens and Sycamores die off, or if any have to be removed for other reasons, the Association is keen to see them replaced with slightly smaller native species like Rowan, Whitebeam, Hawthorn, Service, Field Maple, wild Cherry or Birch.

Finally, members of this Association appreciate the colour that the bulbs planted alongside the A660 and Hyde Park Road in the spring, and would also like to suggest that parts of the edges of the existing Moor be replanted with wildflowers. Unlike grass, this would attract a huge range of pollinators, seed eaters, and their respective predators and therefore add significantly to the diversity of the area's wildlife. Unlike grass, wildflower verges need only be mown twice a year rather than fortnightly, so can be a low cost as well as a high-sustainability option.

The Association is happy to work with other interested bodies, like

- Woodhouse Ridge Action Group,
- South Headingley Community Assn
- Friends of Woodhouse Moor
- Little Woodhouse Residents' Assn

to seek alternative funding for some of the more significant plant acquisitions, and would look to the council to facilitate their planting and making safe.

Love and kisses...

NHPNA