

Presentation given by Steve Meays of Mires Beck Nursery on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

# Conservation Management Plan

Riverside Walkway Nature Reserve



## Background

- Mires Beck Nursery has expanded greatly since its foundation in 1994 and has recently explored new avenues of work. These have included rapidly expanding the Tree team to produce over 150,000 trees a year and increased the range and production in the Wildflower team of Yorkshire provenance wildflowers.
- A Habitat Team has been created, led by the Habitat Project Officer, to offer advice and guidance to local groups interested in protecting, managing, and enhancing their local environments.
- The team boasts decades of experience in the conservation and environmental fields, working in a wide range of habitats across the country.
- The Habitat team contacted North Ferriby Parish Council in Autumn 2020 and were asked to visit several parcels of land owned by them. In particular, the Parish Council were interested in advice on the continued and long-term management of the Riverside Walkway.

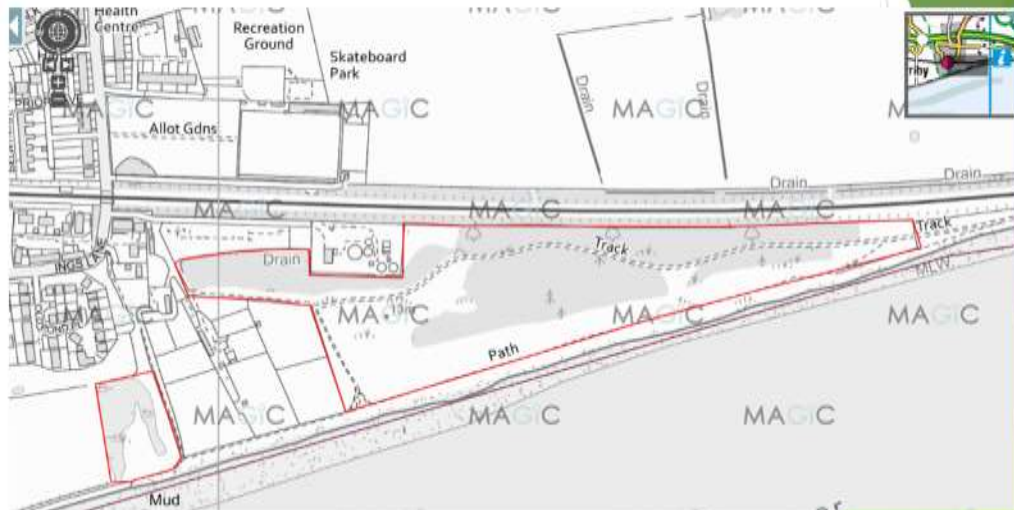


## Location

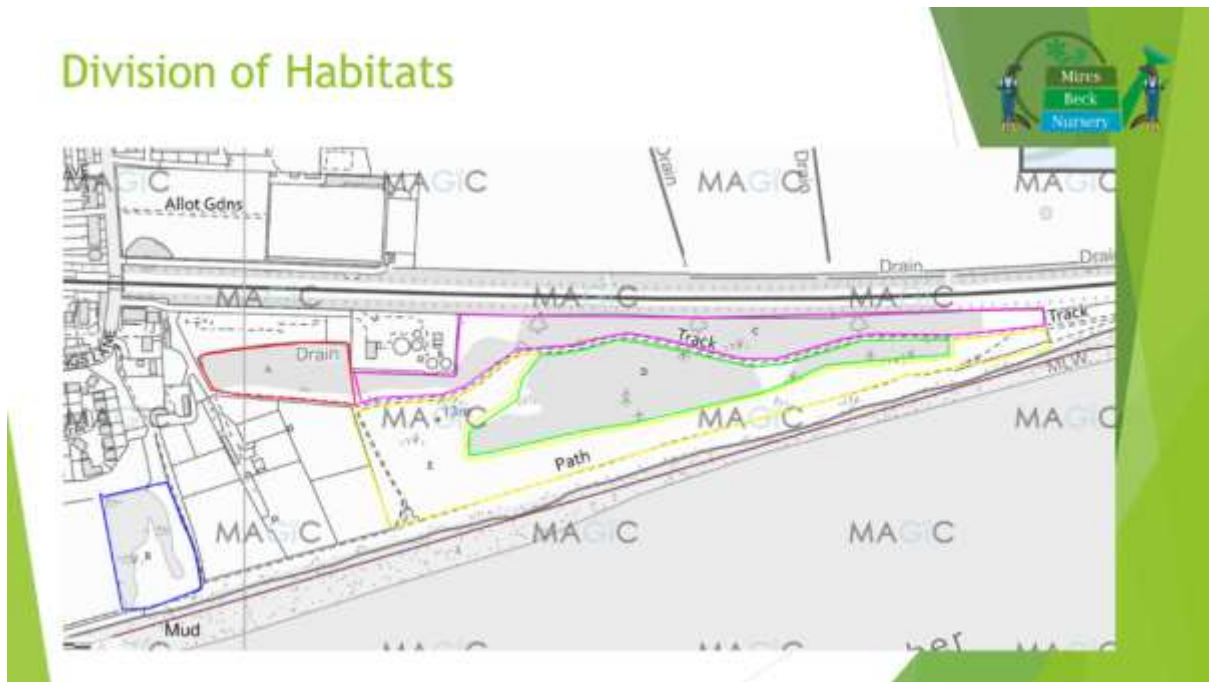


The location covered by the management plan is split into two sections. The main Riverside Walkway Nature Reserve and the reed pond 200m to the East.

## Area of work



## Division of Habitats



### Practical Management

See map above for the division lines of each management area. While these areas are not exclusively one habitat (which would be a very complicated map) each has a dominant habitat.

### **Woodland**

Large areas of the Northern reserve are covered in woodland with a mixture of deciduous and coniferous species. These trees were all planted at roughly the same time (within a few years), at standard 2m spacings and have grown at a similar rate.

### **Scrub**

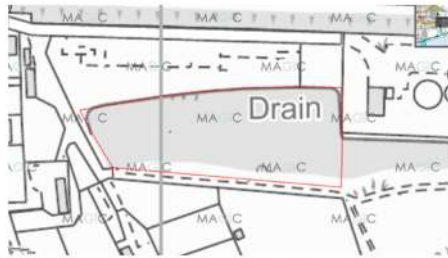
Scrub is often described as a 'successional habitat', meaning that it is temporary and in transition between one habitat (more open areas such as grassland and heathland) and another (generally woodland).

### **Grassland**

There is a large area of open grassland to the South of the site which is currently mown once a year. Set grass paths are also present which are mown more frequently. The grassland is bordered by and interspersed with scrub.



## Area A “Enchanted Woodland”



- The trees in this area are very close together and are competing for light, growing too tall and becoming unstable. A selective felling of weaker trees will allow crown growth and root development.
- Two glades will be created and planted with native Yorkshire provenance wildflowers.
- An under-canopy will be planted of Hazel and Holly to improve the woodland structure and offer increased habitat potential for wildlife.
- All brash generated will be made into “Brown Hedges” to further increase biodiversity.



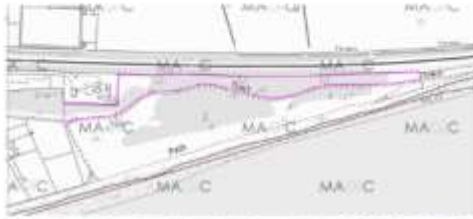
## Area B, Brick pits Pond



- Each year the main annual works will be the pulling of *Phragmites australis* from the Eastern bank of the pond, running parallel with the path.
- Also some *Phrag* removal from the Western edge near the sluice.



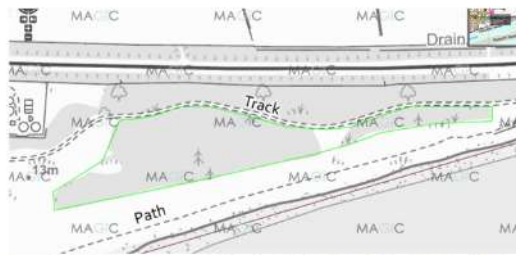
## Area C, Northern Wood



- The trees in this area are very close together and are competing for light, growing too tall and becoming unstable. A selective felling of weaker trees will allow crown growth and root development.
- This area also has a high number of Sycamore trees which should be targeted for felling first, leaving native trees to take over.
- Trees to remain in the centre of the wood should be formatively pruned of branches up to head height.
- The woodland floor will be planted with native shade loving plants to both increase the biodiversity potential and enhance the experience of visitors.
- An under-canopy will be planted of Hazel and Holly to improve the woodland structure and offer increase habitat potential for wildlife.



## Area D, Central Wood

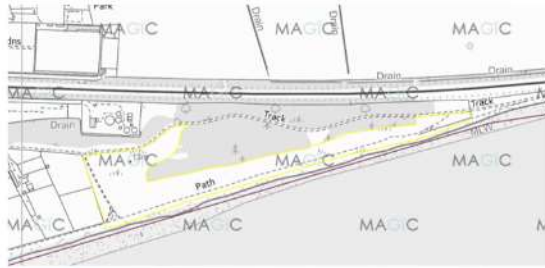


- Limited felling will be needed here as the space between trees is often wider, though dead or especially weak trees (trees struggling to grow) should be felled, allowing space for strong trees.
- Planting of native Yorkshire provenance woodland wildflowers.
- Scrub areas at the fringes of the woodland should be monitored and occasional removal of trees spreading into the meadows should be carried out. This will prevent the loss of the meadow.





## Area E, Meadow



- Selected native, perennial wildflowers will be planted in clumps throughout the meadows and allowed to spread naturally.
- Encroachment by woody plants onto the meadow and the fringes should be monitored and, where needed, these species should be removed to prevent the gradual reduction in size of the meadow.
- The annual cut of the wildflower meadows should continue as this will encourage seed spread and germination the following year.



## General Works

- Installation of various designs of song bird boxes across the site.
- Installation of bat boxes in prime locations.
- Installation of Owl and Kestrel boxes.



# Volunteers!!

