

Frogs, toads and newts
Cambourne, Cambridgeshire
 Kier Construction's Eastern region

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Small scale permanent

Project overview

New build Primary School on the outside of Cambourne village, 9 miles west of Cambridge. It is in semi-rural area build on former farmland.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

As a former farmland it had typical rural UK species but relative monoculture of crop with addition of pesticides restricted biodiversity growth. No mature trees present on site or close proximity.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

Project has landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan and is on BREEAM scheme, however the key aspect of this submission relates good environmental management and early decision making based upon enhancing biodiversity.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

In the UK great crested newts population has declined greatly. There were no newts present during ecological survey but

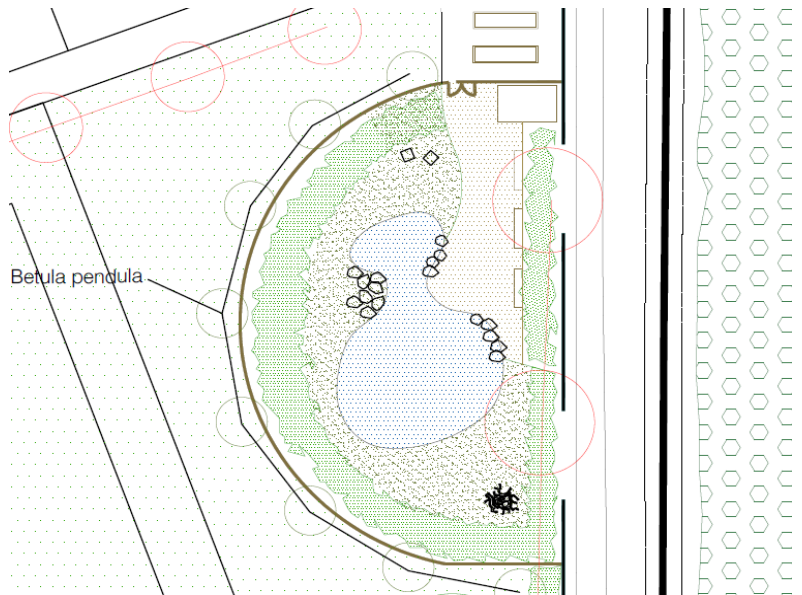


Photo: Drawing of pond

they have been noted in this area. One of the aims of Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan was to create and maintain sustainable habitats which will increase biodiversity.

Pond was agreed as it provides attractive visual and teaching amenity, giving children at this school opportunity to learn about British wildlife as well as refuge for creatures.

As pond matures it will attract wide range of diversity of plants and invertebrates and high population of amphibians. Species selection and

management is designed to produce habitats meeting Cambridgeshire criteria for country wildlife site standard.

It is estimated that newts may be present in spring in the pond just in time for breeding season. Introduction of varied habitats has significantly increased biodiversity capacity and long term benefits for the wildlife.

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.

Further information

Additional enhancements will be carried out on the site at the later stages, including native tree and scrub planting along southern and eastern boundary to provide 2m wide shelter belt for the benefit of wildlife.

All new hedges will comprise locally native species designed to provide wide range of feeding opportunities, including nectar, pollen, nuts and berries, for invertebrates, birds and small mammals.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

At Kier we want to make a positive change to improve the habitat opportunities for the local population of this specie and provide local children with excellent learning opportunities with their school grounds.