

3. Site Infrastructure

3.1 Access

Running in parallel with the River Rea and passing east-west through the LNR is the Sustrans Cycle Route. Built in 2000 and forming part of Route 5 of the National Cycle Network (NCN), this 2.5m wide surfaced track enters the LNR through an open access point to the north of the River Rea at Westhill Road and leaves through another open access point at Popes Lane. The Sustrans Cycle Route also passes through the Peafield Site.

Merecroft Pool has two rights of way passing through it. The first one enters the site through a wooden kissing gate located along the northern boundary with Wychall Lane. From here it travels in a south easterly direction before coming out onto West Hill Road through an open access point. The second right of way passes east west through the southern meadows from a metal kissing-gate on Beaks Hill Road to another metal kissing gate on Meadow Hill Road. A third footpath running between these two rights of way and along the eastern fringe of the main water body allows access across the site.

Vehicle access is via one of two metal 5-bar gates. The first gate is located along Beaks Hill Road and the second along Meadow Hill Road. A wooden 5-bar gate is located on Wychall Lane providing access to the northern meadows.

The Recreation Ground can be entered through one of three open access points. The first access point is located along its eastern boundary with Westhill Road, the second located at the junction of Wychall Lane and Meadow Hill Road. whilst the third is located opposite Wychall Park Grove. The site is open along its entire southern boundary with Wychall Lane via a low metal kick-rail. Vehicle access is via a metal swing gate located opposite Wychall Park Grove.

The Reservoir site is accessible through two open access points. The first access point is located opposite Wychall Park Grove and the second along its western boundary with Popes Lane. Vehicle access is via a metal swing gate located opposite Wychall Park Grove and a wooden 5-bar gate located along Popes Lane.

The Peafield site is accessible via two open access points. The first access point is located along its southern boundary with Wychall Road and the second along its eastern boundary with Popes Lane. Vehicle access is via the open access point on Wychall Road which allows access onto the Sustrans Cycle Route, and also via a metal swing gate located on Wychall Road. A narrow gate is provided for walkers.

A detailed access audit was carried out in March 2008 by the Friends of Kings Norton Local Nature Reserve (FKNLNR) that examined the levels of access to and across the LNR. Following the audit nine recommendations were made that would allow for the development of appropriate access across the site. The audit report together with the recommendations can be seen in appendix 4.

3.2 Boundary Structures

Merecroft Pool is bordered by housing to the east and west and a mix of new and old iron and wooden fencing with hedgerows to the north and south.

The Recreation Ground is bordered to the north by a six foot chain-link fence that surrounds Catesby Business Park as well as the remains of a former mill race and associated bank running up to towards Eckersall Road. The southern edge of the site is bordered by housing and a wooden kick rail.

Wychall Reservoir is bordered by six foot steel palisade fencing along the railway line and factory units to the north. The southern edge of the site is bordered by housing and the six-foot steel fencing that surrounds St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic High School. The eastern edge is bounded by the dam structure with a wooden fence running along the top. To the west along Popes Lane is a palisade fence. Contained within this site is the fenced section which surrounds the overflow structure at the southern tip of the dam. This structure is surrounded by six-foot steel palisade fencing.

The Peafield site is bordered by six-foot steel palisade fencing along the railway line to the north, housing to the south and west and wooden fencing along Wychall Road and Popes Lane.

3.3 Other Structures

Merecroft Pool has within its boundaries a wooden KNLNR welcome sign located at the southern access point on Beaks Hill Road, whilst a wooden notice board is located at the access point on Meadow Hill Road. An interpretation panel is installed near Beaks Hill entrance with information about the site history, its flora and fauna.. The site has two life rings located around the main water body.

The Recreation Ground has two wooden KNLNR welcome signs and two wooden notice boards provided by Birmingham City Councils Parks Ranger Service. One of each can be found at the access points along Westhill Road and opposite Wychall Park Grove. Two bridges exist within the site. One bridge allows passage over a small drainage ditch whilst the second allows passage over the river. An interpretation panel is installed near the river bridge.

Wychall Reservoir has two interpretation panels, located near the access points at each end of the cycle path, at Popes Lane and opposite Wychall Park Grove. These panels provide a brief description of the site along with flora and fauna. The site has two life rings located along the Sustrans Cycle Path.

Towards Popes Lane there is a large steel structured wooden tread bridge which carries the cycle path over a concrete spillway.

The Peafields contains the structural remnants of a board walk and an interpretation panel is installed at the Wychall Road entrance.

3.4 Map Coverage

The area first appears on the Tithe Map of 1844. Since then it has appeared sequentially on various Ordnance Survey maps:

Yea	Scal	Editio
189	1:250	
190	1:250	Second Edition
191	1:250	
193	1:250	
195	1:2500	SP 07 First Series
195	1:250	SP
197	1:1000	SP 07 NW
197	1:5000	Sheet 139 First Series

The above are available to view upon request within the Local Studies Department of the Central Library.