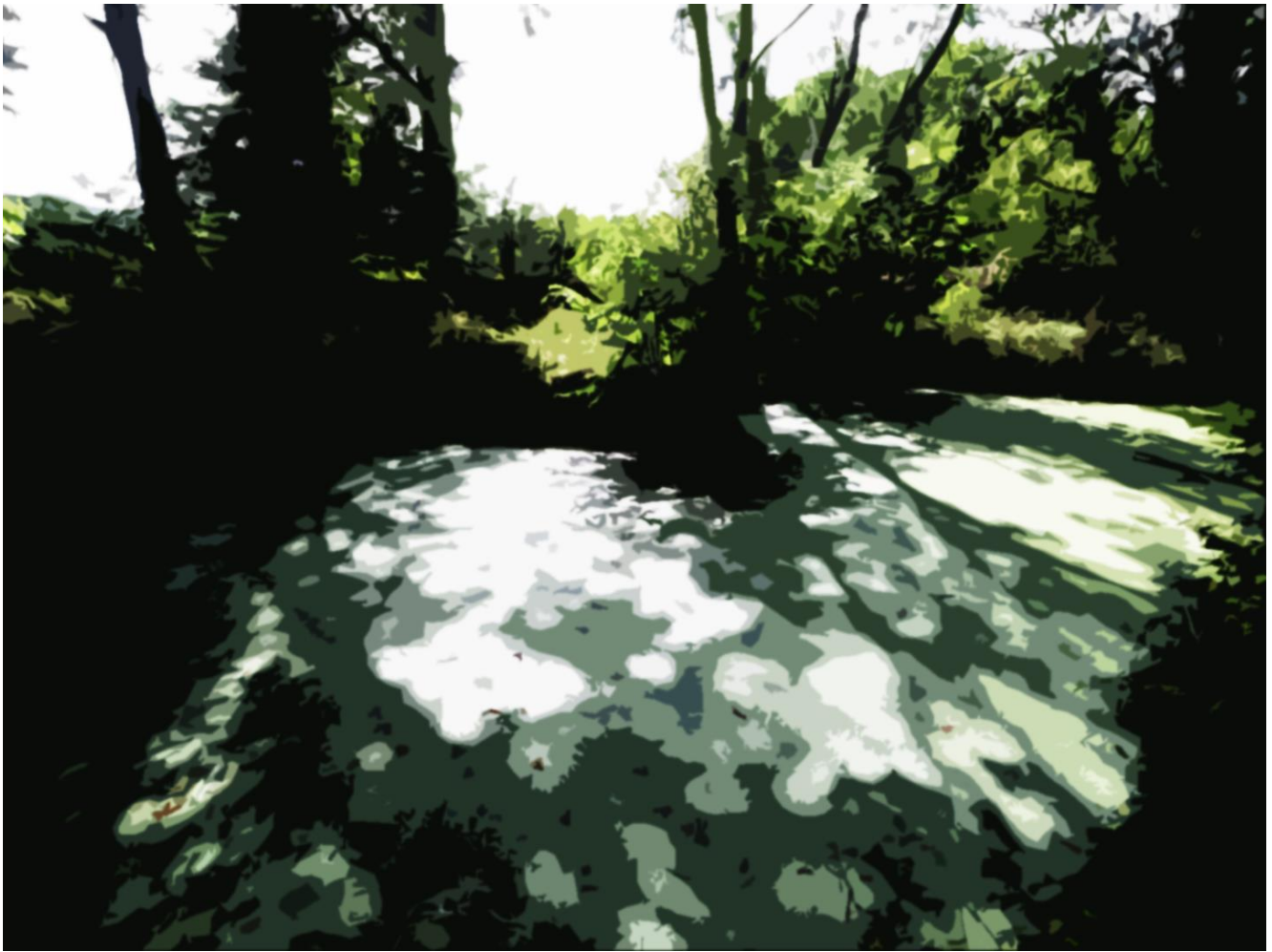


Creating a boundary round the ponds in Holton Wood

The unrestricted access and steep slopes around the ponds in front of the cabin in the woods at Holton have been identified as a potential hazard for children attending the Forest School. It has therefore been deemed necessary to create a boundary around these ponds. There are any number of possible approaches to this.

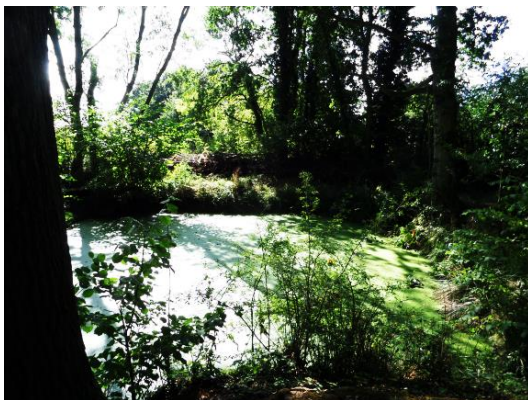


The solution I suggest is informed by four aims;

- 1. To enhance safety for people using the woods*
- 2. To use the woods and its harvest products to make a boundary.*
- 3. To give the children a role in its construction and development,*
- 4. To give the children a sense of engagement with it, with the intent of celebrating it and why it is there.*

It is intended that the boundary becomes:

- *an evolving handcrafted structure that the children will contribute to and change over time. The section in front of the cabin will become "The Gallery", a place for creating and presenting projects using materials from the woods.*
- *A physical boundary is a manifestation of a limit. This can be an imposition. However knowing where the boundaries are ,in all senses, is an important life skill. Creating , acknowledging and respecting boundaries helps us to stay safe and create and nurture a healthy place within them. The fence could be an imaginative teaching aid and learning opportunity.*



The nature of the structure

The fence will be constructed using a range of materials and methods. Some elements will be simple arrangements of vertical posts and horizontal binding in two rows. Elsewhere some trees and shrubs growing around the pond will be layed into the fence to make it alive. In other places willow will be planted and/or willow setts driven in, to create a living willow structure. Two gates will also be made to permit controlled access to the ponds.

The aim will be to create a different character in different parts of the boundary. It will also facilitate continuing opportunities to interact with the boundary itself through managing it. The boundary, with its many tones and textures, will become a presence in the space; like trees, ponds and paths.

Aesthetics

The boundary could form part of a redesign of the vista seen from the cabin. A number of the trees that block light coming in and views out are to be felled. This will open it up. However the view that would be opened up needs a frame.



The sides of the frame would be formed by the trunks of trees revealed by the felling of others. The top would be the boughs above. The new fence would complete the framing of the borrowed landscape beyond.

Timing and practical considerations

The work could commence once the leaves fall in the wood. The boundary has a number of different textures that would need different approaches.

Approximately 150 Hazel stakes (c5-6 feet long) and many binders would need to be cut and collected. These would need to be pointed. I estimate that this would take 1 person 3 days.

The stakes would be banged in at intervals of c0.8m all the way round the ponds. Some laying of existing shrubs would then be undertaken. This would take 1 or 2 days.

Two rows of binding would be wound on. 6 person days would be allocated to this work. It is hoped that children could be involve with installing the binding.

A trench would be dug and mulched and willow planted/banged in in places. The extent of this work and the possibility that some would need to be cut elsewhere and transported makes it hard to estimate the duration of this task. I suggest 4 person days would suffice.

Finally a day would be allocated for some activities relating to the boundary with the children (making spiders, snakes, patterns, textures ...)



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