An exemplary park made from recycled waste, Ealing’s Northala Fields proves that creative design can be economic. Inert landfill waste from the nearby Wembley Stadium and Westfield Shopping Centre developments was imported to the site to build the park’s centrepiece four eye-catching conical shaped mounds. Unusually the construction of Northala Fields was self-funding with the gate fee for the imported material covering the entire project costs. This was advantageous to both the council and the residents of Ealing.

Following a public consultation on the former Kensington and Chelsea Playing Fields a design competition was held. This resulted in the initial proposals and design concept for the park: art from land. LDA Design was appointed as landscape architect to carry out the detailed design proposals and manage the delivery of the park.

There is a spectacular view across the capital from the tallest mound, which is 25 metres high, and the South Bank’s London Eye is visible on a clear day. These manmade ‘hills’ have become a distinctive landmark for thousands of commuters travelling on the adjacent A40 while providing a destination for the communities around the park. They are also an effective buffer from the noise, air and visual pollution created by this main artery in and out of London.

Construction began in summer 2004 and the park was officially opened four years later. Northala Fields now provides a large area of west London with excellent recreational facilities in an attractive setting. Sustainable design and construction methods were employed throughout the park with recycled materials including timber, plastics, concrete and bricks used in gabion walls, benches and pathways. By blending site-won materials with crushed import, different growing media were designed in order to support diverse wildflower meadows.

The park includes a new amphitheatre with hand carved seating, boating and fishing lakes and two play areas. These are all linked by a pathway network for pedestrians and cyclists. The aesthetic design is strongly defined by the diverse ecological habitats created in the wet meadows, grassland and woodland.
Case Study

NORTHALA FIELDS

SCHEME
Northala Fields

CLIENT
Ealing Council

LOCATION
Northolt, West London

PARTNERS
Civils Contractor: CJ Pryor
Landscape Contractor: CR Swift

BUDGET
£5.5 Million

AREA
18.5 Hectares

SCHEDULE
Completed 2008

1 One of the four conical landforms
2 Photo © Kit Logan Photography
3 The park has become a much-valued resource for the local community
4 Looking across the lake
5 The view from one of the mounds

VISIT
www.lda-design.co.uk