Thank you for forwarding the pond report, Abrehart Ecology are very well regarded in this area and I would concur with the report’s conclusions – with the exception of progressing a planting scheme, as I would prefer to see natural colonisation/regeneration here. If you do progress any planting, ensure that specimens are of native origin and are free of invasive non-native contaminants.

Thinking practically, you may struggle to progress an acceptable desilting program for all of these ponds (you need good access, ideally somewhere to pump water to, and somewhere to dispose of material, which can be significant) lack of desilting will mean that the wildlife potential of these ponds will continue to be somewhat limited. It is likely that desilting is most practical in the three smaller ponds, even partial desilting can be beneficial if the ponds are otherwise of good clean water. You could explore the possibility of ‘mud pumping’ in the larger pond – but its likely to be a significant hurdle and expense, and the aim is to remove organic matter build up rather than deepen the pond.

Improving the water quality in the ponds should be a priority – identifying contaminant inputs and removing these should be first on the list, then reducing leaf-fall into the water as far as practical, reducing or discouraging fish within the ponds would also be desirable, as they can be rather bad for stirring up sediment, consequently reducing oxygen availability and making it hard for plants to establish.

At a smaller scale, limited bank re-profiling could be beneficial and provide some bare substrate for plants to establish, this should be done at the same time as any desilting or partial desilting that you progress.

The general principles of:

* Clean water
* Lots of light
* Minimal organic silt accumulation (and leaf fall burden)
* Varied underwater topography (bathymetry)

Should be considered when planning management actions.

All ponds progress to terrestrial habitat eventually, so will need management periodically to keep them as water features, these habitats, well managed, will make a great contribution to the biodiversity of the town.

I cannot be more specific on advising without visiting the sites myself, and think that the conclusions of the Abrehart Ecology report are sound for you to progress management without needing additional visits from me.

I hope that is helpful, do get in tough if you need anything more.